

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Ellyn Maybe: "People"

Ellyn Maybe · Tuesday, October 22nd, 2013

Ellyn Maybe was named by [Writer's Digest](#) as one of ten poets to watch in the new millennium. Her work has been included in many anthologies, including *Word Warriors: 35 Women Leaders in the Spoken Word Revolution*, *Poetry Slam*, *Another City: Writing From Los Angeles*, *Poetry Nation*, *The Outlaw Bible of American Poetry* and *American Poetry: The Next Generation*. She was on the 1998 and 1999 Venice Beach Slam teams. She was seen reading her work in Michael Radford's (*Il Postino*) film *Dancing at the Blue Iguana*.

*This poem was originally published in [Beyond The Valley of the Contemporary Poets Anthology](#) (1999).*

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## PEOPLE

there are people  
 who hold an abridged tablet  
 of the ten commandments  
 in the space between their teeth and jaw.  
 there are people  
 who come into a room  
 with stardust on their breath  
 like a lullaby of backward halitosis.  
 there are people  
 who hold the planets together  
 by clicking their achilles heels three times.  
 there are people  
 who skywrite  
 without an airplane  
 without a net.  
 there are people  
 who twirl a room  
 like a rodeo for the sheepish.  
 there are people  
 who have bowling parties in their pajamas  
 while the rest of the world  
 seems like a pin

waiting for an angel to step out onto the dance floor.

there are people

who seem to have eyeball upon eyeball

like gumballs in an arcade of vision.

there are people

who walk into a room

a thermometer preceding them.

there are people

who wear their weather like perfume.

there are people

who know the cuckoo is the state bird

of most states of mind.

there are people

who went to the same high school

and spent each recess

in the lost and found room

uttering their phonetic name.

there are people

who will have conversations

deep as deathbed soliloquies

and never speak again.

there are people

who make whatever street they're on

Telegraph Avenue 1964.

there are people

who write a shopping list

in hieroglyphics.

there are people

who look up at the sun

8000 times a day

and lack an eclipse.

there are people

who drag questions

from the tongue

like photos one second

before the crisp of a fire.

there are people

who ask nothing

and your heart sits like a blank check

in a bookstore that sells only elegy.

there are people

with a little past

behind their ears.

there are people

with a newscast on their eyebrows.

there are people

no matter how many apples they held

teachers resented them.

there are people  
who ring many doorbells  
but won't let themselves in.  
there are people  
who light candles half the week  
and swallow swords the rest.  
there are people  
who memorize the footprints  
made by the snow.  
there are people  
who dine on shivers.  
there are people  
who chew on icicles  
all year round.  
there are people  
who pray  
with the nostalgia of baseball.  
there are people  
who laugh at life  
openmouthed like a kiss.

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