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Champagne on the M

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Champagne On The M

We climb the night's spiral
trail to the giant
concrete M
masoned to a steep face
above Missoula, climb one I-beam leg,
whitewashed and looming—the northern lights'
ladder of soft blues
runged in a Gemini rain—climb to celebrate
33 years of breathing, the miraculous
stamina of the heart and how
everything finally comes down
to this involuntary rumble
and punch of one fist-size muscle.

Sara the veterinarian pulls a magnum
of “American Pink Beauty” from her pack
as if delivering a calf or lamb
and I swear we can hear champagne
fizzling in a drizzle high above
the city's neon-streetlight-traffic buzz,
hum, and hiss. So fresh from cloud,
this rain tinctures
our sparkling wine to an elixir
we drink looking up
through long-stemmed crystal, a fairyland
goblet of stars. We huddle closer,
still catching wind, and learn
how hearts have hop-step
ways of keeping cadence
with one another. Our glasses clink
to miracle, to muscle—clink to love
above Missoula—sound so unique
the universe skips a millisecond,
listens,
then gallops with us into pure blue stride.

—For Sara

Paul Zarzyski