

CRIBBED AND COUNTING

Anna Wagner



IMAGE: Jack Dunnett

Anna Wagner is a graduate from Hamline University's Creative Writing Program. Her work has previously been published in *Fulcrum Journal* and *Eastern Iowa Review* with nominations for Best of the Net, Best American Essays, and a Pushcart Prize. She lives in Minnesota and wishes it was sunny everyday.

We sit on the bed, cribbage pieces
replaced with paper clips, and the board lies

between us.

There is a sun sinking
behind the curtains, a sky
we haven't touched

for eighteen days.

I almost forget
we are sick.

*Fifteen two,
fifteen four,
fifteen six.*

We try to tame fevers like red foxes.
They run for weeks, and I think

about pressing our burning bodies
together. To be over
two hundred degrees,
which is enough

to deactivate
a different
sickness. I reach
for any answer.
Pyrexia isn't meant
to last

like this. He counts his crib while I count
Tylenol tablets. We wash them down

with lemonade we can't taste.
A symptom named
ageusia. Another game
we've had to play

for eighteen days.

I almost forget
we are sick.

*Fifteen two,
fifteen four,
fifteen six.*

