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| I. *The Poem I am Planning*  My idea is to give the city a poem to reflect its past and dreams.  The poem I will write will contain the city's life in full, its jazz, its parks, its lights, its art, libraries, schools, orchestras, and certainly its poets, artists and their grand celebrations, and even for the way a favorite  book sits lightly in a child's hands at bedtime.  A poem with room for every  good thing that is ours.  The poem I want to write will hold the dark moments, too, when tornadoes tear through, when we drive others away, when we lose our own, when fire blizzards strike, when the broader world comes with its demand for soldiers made to die in foreign lands.  Here, in this poem I am thinking of, is room to mourn our lost children, room to welcome strangers, | inflamed with shadows,  at home with birds, the sharp  eyes of coyotes, raccoons,  the broad symmetry of grass and sky, with pointillist flowers meant to beautify and adorn the chambers of our lives.  Wandering we get a sense of the land beneath the clouds, the shapes of their shades moving with grace. The light, then shadow, then light again, reflects something in our hearts, and we move like clouds over the grasslands and fields, bed down with rivers of light; asleep in the backseat of peace, in the mystery and intimacy of night the way the first ones experienced night, and our  need to live and pass on the best  of our vision in poetry, as gentle  as the rise of the land, its sweeping fall, a vision of words that buzz and sting, words that curve outward as we pass, words left by the wake of our passing. |

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| A picture containing diagram  Description automatically generated  This poem is the original work of Will Reger, Inaugural Poet Laureate of the City of Urbana, 2020. Please do not copy or distribute without written permission. Contact the author at wmreger@gmail.com | **A Poem for Urbana**    Will Reger  Inaugural Poet Laureate  2019-2020  Written at the request of the Urbana Arts and Culture Commission for the City of Urbana, to celebrate its history, vibrant culture and life.  Presented to Mayor Diane W. Marlin on October 29, 2020 |