



WINNER
Poetry

BY ROZA ETEMAD

Manhattan Slaves



Roza Etemad is an Assistant City Attorney with the City of Phoenix. She has been writing poetry for close to 20 years. Currently, she is working on multicultural children's books, hoping to have her first book finished by the end of 2008. Aside from creative writing, her interests include oil painting, yoga, Tai chi, culinary and arts venues, travel and wine.

I am one
in 400 plus
skeletons exhumed
like a treasure
buried deep
in an alley
low Manhattan
living and dying
the first black boy
on the block
200 years in the past
mother laid me down
in words of a map –
Negro's Burying Ground.

I am two
feet away
from my father
whose hollow face
still holds strong teeth
in chemical traces
like seeds in his jaws.

I am three
minutes laughing
when I hear
from my skull
with filed incisors
how Congress halted
this vast construction
in our dead honor.

Curious
how much
they treasure
our bones
which withered
in black blood
shed by the white.