

GloMag

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KASHISH JAISWAL



Title of the Cover Pic: The City Of Joy

About The Artist

Kashish Jaiswal is a resident of Kolkata, India, and a student of class IX from a reputed school. She is a young and bubbly girl who is 14 years old and quite passionate about Dancing, Drawing and Painting. She is a music freak like any other teenager, and she loves to play football during recess time in school. She likes reading and often practises Origami in

her free time. Kashish was always keen on drawing, and has been learning to draw since she was just 4 years old. She has been doing sketching, pen stroking, painting, canvas, line drawing, glass painting, etc. In short, she is trying to explore her potential and learn all forms of drawing.

Art Perspective

This sketch is called 'Pen Stroking', and done exclusively just by using a black pen. In this sketch of hers, she has tried to display the busy street of Calcutta (Kolkata). The hustle and bustle of her birth place has its own charm, according to her.

ABOUT GLOMAG

GloMag is the coming together of writers in their diverse manifestations, thoughts, and expressions, and the visual interpretation of these. Sometimes the original thought of the writer gets completely lost in the interpretations. Visual aids help us to decipher the writer's intentions, and at the same time, enhance the reading experience. Perhaps you are sitting in solitude beneath a bough, besides a lake, and you turn the pages. The thoughts capture you, time stands still, and you become engrossed, oblivious to anything but these beautiful writings, expressions, and pictures. Your soul dances in ecstasy, participates in a cosmic experience, it sways and chants. Somewhere someone is telling you about duality, someone tells you about a forlorn house without music, someone shows you how to love, and someone raises questions about existence itself.

And when you come to, the world is still there, the lake is still there, the birds are chirping, shadows have lengthened. Nothing feels the same! You are not the same! You get up reluctantly. It's time to go home.

~ ***Glory Sasikala***

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BACKGROUND MUSIC: 'Summer Kisses Winter Tears' instrumental by Richard Clayderman.

BOOK OF THE MONTH

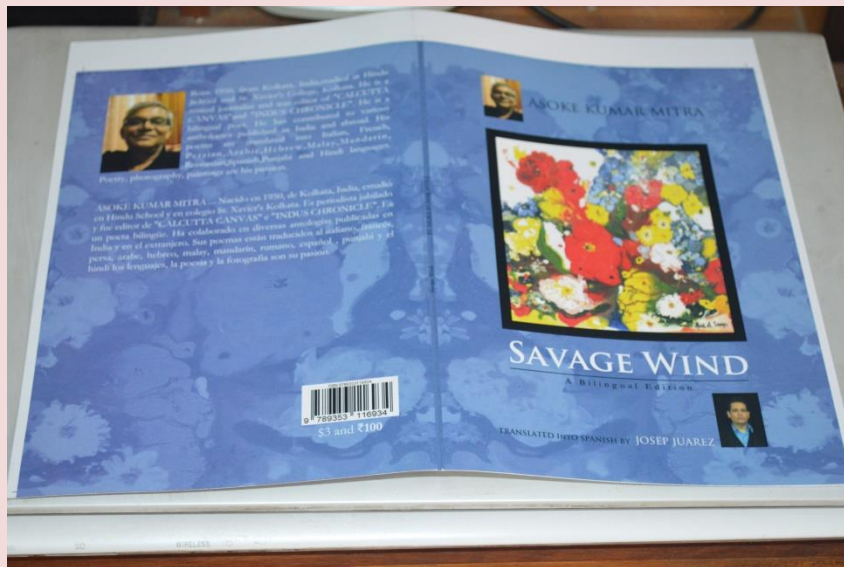
SAVAGE WIND

Cover Page painting by Heidi Alam from Austria

25 poems in English and Spanish translation by Josep Juarez, from Mexico.

Photography and conceptualisation by Asoke Kumar Mitra.

Spanish section is edited by Josep Juarez



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Born 1950, from Kolkata, India, studied at Hindu school and St. Xavier's College, Kolkata. He is a retired journalist and was editor of "CALCUTTA CANVAS" and "INDUS CHRONICLE". He is a bilingual poet. He has contributed to

various anthologies published in India and abroad. His poems are translated into Hindi,Punjabi,Italian,French,German,Polish,Persian,Arabic, Hebrew,Malay,Mandarin,Romanian, Spanish, Azerbaijani, Russian, Uzbek, Kirghiz ,Greek, Swedish. “SAVAGE WIND” is his poetry book, published from Kolkata, India, a bilingual edition, translated into Spanish by Mexican poet Josep Juarez. Poetry, photography, paintings are his passions.



REVIEWS

Dr. Lanka Siva Rama Prasad

LOST IN THE WHIRLS OF A SAVAGE WIND....

At dusk looking at the faded pink graffiti left by the lamp of the day from the window of an empty room of love in the

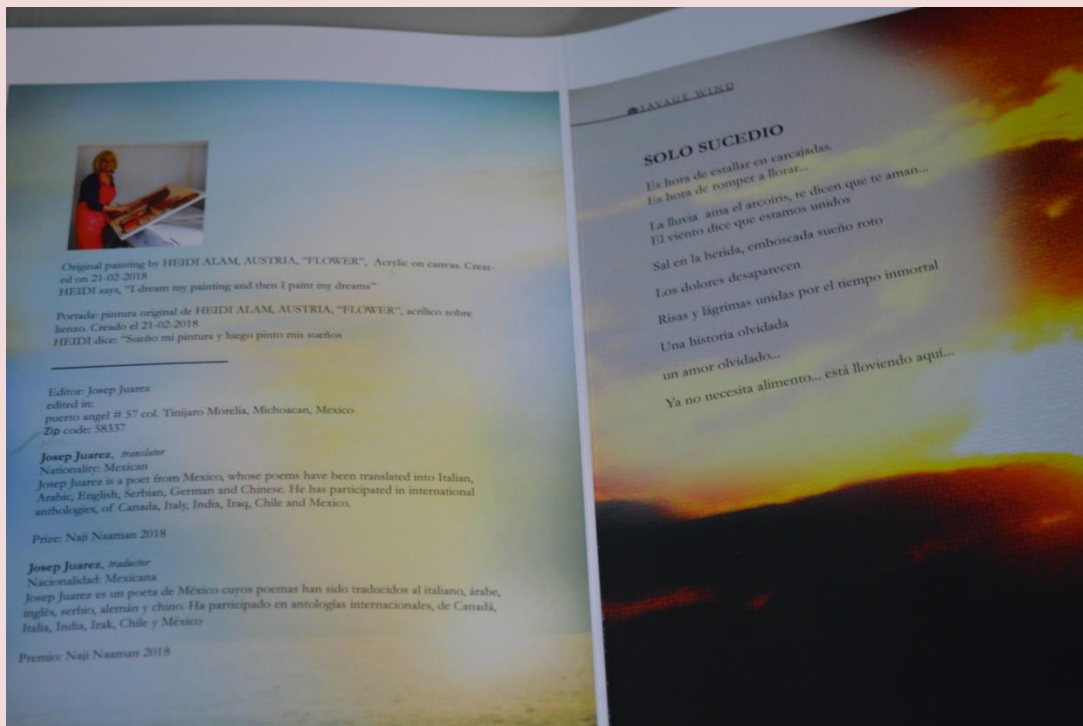
winter chilliness we look for the warmth of the scattered pages in life's brook of a book where memories lie hidden dark corners like the fallen leaves.

The decay is certain but the pain of separation brings about nostalgia painted on the leaves leaving the tree in the whirlwinds of time. Then the lamps of the night appear tattooed by dark and light clouds and the stain of love strains to make a face moth eaten in the annals of life.

Greeks were clever in classifying love as storge, philia, Eros, xenia and agape. further we have self-love, unrequited love, infatuated and courtly love. Love is a tender, passionate, profound, dynamic affection it has its own physiology that dictates physical actions. Once the intensity is lost and angry words in sparks spoil the dreams rapids become wide in drunken silence, the distance between two banks slowly becomes wider and the bridges of adjustment or lust now and then, here and there continue communication in frozen moments in repentance tones and a request for the impossible restoration of love that is tight roped between insanity and truth.

Asoke Kumar Mitra a renowned poet and an erudite scholar, in his poignant search of life and love and their dynamics in the whirlwinds of time presented us with a book of graffiti carved with the memories and ancient tunes. His stylus has blended the styles of occident and orient in a laudable style. His poems have the blended fragrance of petrichor and decay that reminds us the fallen leaves in the gust of untimely rain in winter season knocked by the onslaught of the savage wind.

Josep Juarez did the Spanish version in this bilingual book that retained the original scents and the design of the book is attractive with vivid pictures in the background. This can be a book that gives companionship when you are alone in a winter night sighing in front of the fire-place looking at the fire sparks once you both enjoyed in the torrents of love.



THESE ARE A FEW OF MY FAVORITE THINGS

Linda Imbler: Linda believes poetry has the potential to add to the beauty of the world. Her poetry collections include “Big Questions, Little Sleep,” “Lost and Found,” “The Sea’s Secret Song,” and “Pairings,” a hybrid ebook of short fiction and poetry. Examples of Linda’s poetry and a listing of publications can be found at: lindaspotryblog.blogspot.com



Name: Linda Imbler

Occupation: Retired Educator

Book, Ebook or Audio, which do you prefer? e-book

Fav book: The Lord of the Rings

Fav movie: Harold and Maude

Fav song: Danny Boy

Fav hobby: Astronomy

Fav color: Blue

Fav sport: Yoga

Fav food: Tomato Soup

Fav pet: Antonio, our almost 20-year-old Yellow Tang

Fav actor: Michael Caine

Fav actress: Helen Hunt

Life philosophy: "Walk away from those speaking wicked words and you will always be facing the sun."

One liner describing you: "I trust very few because the devil was once an angel."

or

"If you bring drama to my table, don't be surprised when I get up and leave my plate."

Favorite holiday destination: Key West, Florida

Favorite quote: "Children are the living messages we send into a time we will not see."

Birthday: May 12

Sign off message: "Gonna keep on tryin', Till I reach the highest ground"-Stevie Wonder.

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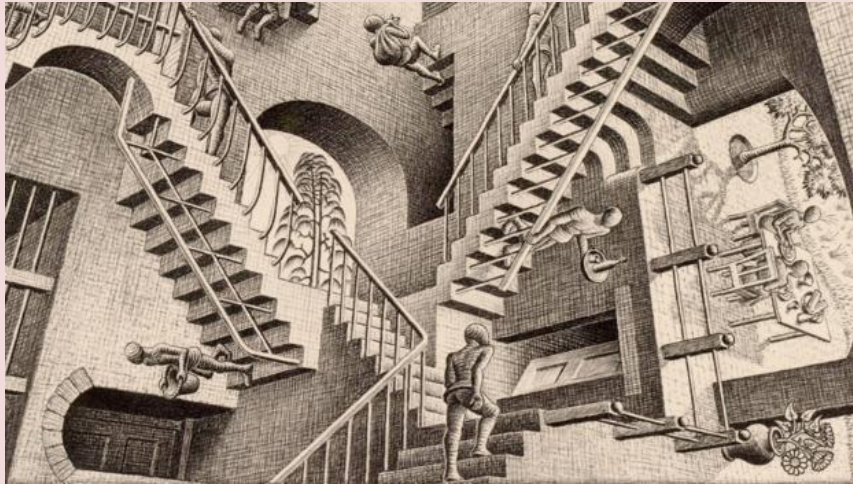
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DIFFERENT ANGLES

The brim of an empty glass waits,
Although incompleteness overflows but kisses late;
While the water witnesses thirst as a mate.

On the cliff of time an egg is laid,
A mother stands on the left side of fate;
And all rights even alright stays in Father's pocket till date.

Colours in motion walk the same in roads two,
A face imprints on every door otherwise names visit
whom?

The blank space elbows to ask, if it could fill up itself too.

Unlatched windows open into infinite perceptions,
Deception lulls while consciousness sleeps in conviction;
The manufacturing of unlimited dreams in a kaleidoscopic
presentation.

Stairs of life neither climb up nor go down,
The snakes become ladders in this town;
Play or participate until now repeats from now on.

Knows every night the Moon is partially dark but always
full,
Easily fits into the bangle made out of curved fingers in a
hollow fistful;
The signature of art in relics of science is ever useful.

If rain has a soul,
Then river becomes the body;

Life swims in an eternal bowl,
Even the Gods live here in custody.

If raindrops are colours,
The river is a painting;
Boats and fishes live to see like viewers,
An endlessness starts and ends in nowhere.

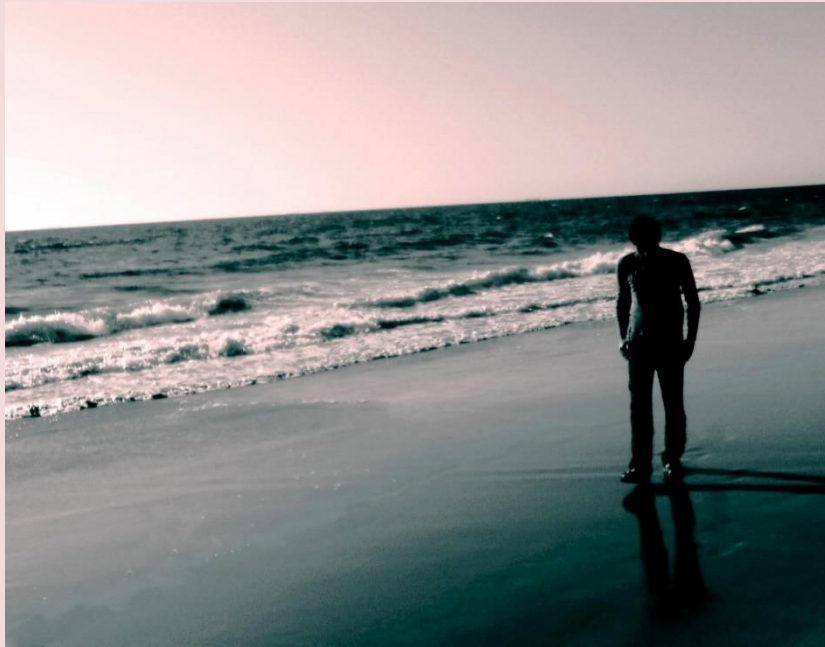
If rain sings itself in a song,
Then river is the dance;
Flawless performance flows for earthly beings,
The celebration simply waits for a chance.

If words do rain,
The river becomes a poem;
Blue ink reaches and drains in pain,
Poetry by nature for carpe diem.

If hope is the name of rain,
Rivers thank by meeting oceans in an Amen;
A drop of life returns back into the skies again.



Aakash Sagar Chouhan: I am a Poet currently residing in Tamilnadu, India. I have worked as Customer Service Rep in various BPOs for the past six years. I feel happy to have contributed to a few poetry anthologies. I also co-author the 'Moms and Sons' book series. Besides this, I have published and compiled two anthologies.



THE INVISIBLE SPIRIT

The night is long, long as
the stars are falling apart
and so my tears are the
rain on the child cheeks
I thought that love would
make us lucky, and happy
until I realized that one of us
must pretend that I'm dead
Trust was the most beautiful
word we have had in our talks

sadly, it was replaced with a
betrayal and dangerous faith
The invisible spirit forgot to
teach me how to die without
weapon, nor a case of twelve
beers, yet the night is still long



Ahmad Al-Khatat: He was born in Baghdad. From Iraq, he came to Canada at the age of 10, the same age when he wrote his very first poem back in the year 2000. He also has been published in several press publications and anthologies all over the world. And he currently studies at the Concordia University in Montreal. He recently has published his two chapbooks “The Bleeding Heart Poet”

and “Love On The War’s Frontline” with Alien Buddha Press. It is available for sale on Amazon. Most of his new and old poems are also available on his official page Bleeding Heart Poet Copyright on Facebook.



AFTER THE FROST

I wander alone in the autumn park
And the paths lead me increasingly towards winter.
The trees have turned their rich palette of colours
Into a mossy nudity of the twisted branches.

The air is empty without birds' chirping
And the joyful chatter of children at play.

The traces of the swan's feathers disappeared from the pond

And kisses of lovers hide deeply in my memory

Winds whistles on lifeless grasses

And break the dry branches with a wailing groan

Moisture spreads a glassy shroud onto the ground

And hibernation - a mirror image of death enters

I notice the melancholic charm of passing away

In the eternal cycle of the seasons

I learn from the fallen leaves, twisted like ancient scrolls,

And crumbling in the gray

Footsteps sound loudly in the silence

Of frozen gravel, cracking on the path

The loud croaking of the flying crow's flock

Points my thoughts in the direction of next spring.



Alicja Maria Kuberska: She is an awarded Polish poetess, novelist, journalist, editor. Her poems have been published in numerous anthologies and magazines. She has published 13 poetry anthologies. She is a member of the Polish Writers Associations in Warsaw, Poland and IWA Bogdani, Albania. She is also a member of the Directors' Board of Soflay Literature Foundation.



REALITY

Hideaway, scales sheared by Mesozoic wind,
a regular summer of '16, potato sack of bruised
lightning & thunder crushing brain cells
theretofore not stimulated but right on point—
brain cells that believe in themselves.

Hideaway, scales sheared by Mesozoic wind,
a regular summer of '16, potato sack of bruised
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theretofore not stimulated but right on point—
brain cells that believe in themselves.



Alan Britt: In August 2015, Alan Britt was invited by the Ecuadorian House of Culture Benjamín Carrión in Quito, Ecuador as part of the first cultural exchange of poets between Ecuador and the United States. In 2013, he served as judge for the The Bitter Oleander Press Library of Poetry Book Award. His interview at The Library of Congress for The Poet and the Poem aired on Pacifica Radio, January 2013. He has published 15 books of poetry, his latest being *Violin Smoke* (Translated into Hungarian by Paul Sohar and published in Romania: 2015). He teaches English/Creative Writing at Towson University.



WHIM

Whimsically I adorned you with grace

Without knowing fully your preface

Suddenly the sky fell on the surface

Our relationship trembled before we could interface

I adored you without being ostentatious

I loved you without being pretentious

I cared you without being pusillanimous

I borne you without being furious

You opted for name and fame demeaning me

You needed comfort and care surpassing me

You craved for wealth and property crushing me

You sought peace and prosperity ignoring me

Now I realize whom can put us in gruesome situation

Not a single positive aspect it has for citation

It has the power to create in our mind sensation

Tactfulness in emotional management curbs it's promotion



Alok Kumar Ray: Dr. Ray is by profession a lecturer who teaches Political Science to both undergraduate and postgraduate students. He is a bilingual poet (writes both in Odia and English) and hails from the Kendrapara district in Odisha, India. A good number of poems written by him have been published in both national and international anthologies, periodicals and newspapers.



DATE OF EXPIRY

On the covers of
the packed perishables,
the air-tight food packets,
the sombre capsule-phials,
I like the finality of expiry-dates.
It helps the mind to decide,
when to discard, without regret.

I choose the surety of ending,
its finitely precise date any day

over oscillations and uncertainties
on its stipulated stay, longevity.
It helps me to be firmly decisive
on whether to hang on with it
or discard, move on, if I may!



Amanita Sen: Her first book “Candle in My dream” was published by Writers workshop. Since then her works have been published in numerous anthologies and journals in her own country and abroad. She works as a mental health professional, is married and lives in Kolkata, India.



GIRL CHILD

Today, Mother, I shed
Helpless tears
For the child you scarred
Whose dependence
You took advantage of
Whose giggles
Of childish joy
You silenced
So ruthlessly
Just because
You were the mother

Of a girl
Today, I shed
Helpless tears
For those years
We could've enjoyed
And spent exploring
A million possibilities
As you nurtured my growth
Into becoming
Who I was meant to be...
Instead you snatched
Away my personality
To make me into
Who you wanted me to be
And,
I became
The person through whom
You could fulfill

Your dream

For you

Today,

I've realized

I will never be

Your daughter

Because

You wanted a son

That I can

Never become.



Ameeta Agnihotri: Two words resonate in her mind: be present. That explains why nothing ever comes between her food and her. “When I am doing my job, I’m there for a reason,” says the lady who has loved food and writing all her life. “It is the present that matters. I believe in giving it my best. Always. Instead of looking at the whole intimidating picture, I set small goals: one step at a time, one day at a time, and like magic, the job is done.” She has 10 books on various subjects to her credit. And has a few ideas up her sleeve. “It’s the publishers that are missing,” she laughs. “The world has gone digital, so it's Instagram stories now.”



THE ME DEATHLESS

I'll never ever decease
Do believe me, please
I'll just cede myself one day
To the One to Whom we pray

I'm rather imperishable
It's quite impossible
For death to wither me
Though you won't ever see

I'll fool you all
After the ultimate call
I'll forsake this frame
To go home from where I came

Many times I told you
I'm not in view
So I'll then go invisible
And you'll realize little

You'll be thinking I'm dead
But the Lord will have decided
Whether I'll be sent to heaven or hell
Only He and I will know; you can't tell.



Aminool Islam: I am a poet residing in Bogra, Bangladesh. I work as an English language instructor. I have contributed to various anthologies. I am currently the sub-editor of a literary magazine named Neeharika.



A WEB OF WEALTH

My dreams need to live.

My aspirations need some air.

My wants have no boundaries.

My goals pave towards success.

I want to be rich.

BUT HOW?

This often hits me... What is wealth?

Does wealth lie in the form of diamonds for the diamantaire, or is it gold biscuits for the gold merchant. Does it mean the crude oil of the Arab or the rolling bucks of the tycoon. Will it place its definition in the tall luxury towers or in the dividends of the volatile equity markets. Is

wealth a huge corpus of a white collar job or is it some highly paid insurance redemptions when one dies?

Today, wealth floats everywhere in different lobbies. We see a virtual wealth around us. In reality, we fail to recognize its original blueprint. *Hence the deficit always.*

Truly speaking, wealth lies in 'you'. You can turn tables around. Money didn't make man. Man made money. The thumb rule never changes. Success cannot be measured vis-à-vis your hefty bank folios. It ain't a number game on the charts. I'd rather call it a jugalbandi of your potential and the right opportunity. *It's an even balance.*

Let's, **decipher the code** to wealth.

Wealth is being kind. It is the abundance of giving. Feed a million mouths with some morsel, and shower yourself with blessings of a lifetime. You will never go to bed hungry.

Wealth is in the green soil. Let its hue be moist. The parched land craves water. Support the harvest and ban eco hazards. Yield more rain and the farmer will never have to suicide.

Wealth is in innocence. Join hands to abolish slavery. Eliminate his deprivation. Make the pen his weapon and the little boy will design a new world.

Wealth is in freedom. Let's re-order peace. Outcast hatred and treat all with equality. End the waging hierarchy war and the lonely soldier will go home.

Wealth is in gratitude. Let the mind never dwell with pangs of wretched jealousy. Make it cash rich. Return back in plentiful kindness. Fill the heart with happiness and there I savour being rich.

I am wealthy, *today!*



Ami Parekh: I am a poet, writer residing in Mumbai, India. I work as a Creative Head. I have contributed to various anthologies. I have one published poem. I have also been published in the Verse of Silence Magazine, November 2018 issue.



A BREACH

The colourful wee bird hardly a thumb's length

Chirped on her window sill

Each morning embalmed in sunlight

Flitting grace, pranced and preened.

Ensconced in her armchair, the enchanted spectator

Chipped in with a word or two.

It gurgled, she chuckled

She tweeted, it danced a jig.

She sounded a long sip

From her honey laced tea
It looked askance
Then danced with glee.
Sizzling with gusto, avian pranks
Enlivened her to a T.

Familiarity fosters fondness
A mutual affinity flowered
An unuttered pledge to remain
Embraced in each other's freedom
Through a hyphenated space,
She on her armchair
The bird on the window sill.

Till one day in a moment's aberration
She thought of ensnaring its frisky freedom,
Stealthily she readied for the take
When off it flew, never to return

For breach of trust

On freedom's harmony.



Amita Ray: She is a retired associate professor of English and Vice Principal of a College in Howrah, West Bengal. She resides in Kolkata and is a published translator as well as a short story writer. An academic of varied interests she has been in the teaching profession for thirty eight years. She takes an active interest in working with the child development unit of an N.G.O. based in Kolkata and is associated with other social organisations at present.



Space, mind, time

Can I reach out?



Amitabh Mitra: He is a Poet/Artist and a Medical Doctor at East London, East Cape, South Africa. He lives in many worlds and narrates his life in hallucinatory stopovers. Words and images tend to amalgamate in many such strange journeys.



IN POETRY'S FIST

Poetry cannot be weighed

measured

judged certified

rewarded awarded

can only be read

and pushed to jump off the ledge and fly

like a cat with a ball of twine

pushing it back and forth

back and forth

waiting for it to unwind

fully

Those that do you play with more

while the ones that have knots in it

make you wave your tail at it angrily

Poetry is that ball of twine

Different colours every time

I read and read hungrily

I read to slake my thirst with it

hunger for life

thirst for life

lust for life

it never dies

it lives

it grows

Poems, poets and poetry

Something more must be in store

around the corner

more balls of twine

great balls of fire

and balls of thunder

Poetry rains and falls on my face

like

an orgy

unslaked

wet, ache

Poetry cannot be judged but some

remain

and some fall away

subjective and relative

like quantum

but absolute in having me in its grip and sway

Am I the dreamer

or the dream,

am I the keeper

or is it the keep?

Am I the snake or the charmer of venom?

Do I draw out its blood and spit to save its life?

Am I the man rising and thrusting into each poem?

I can never have enough of it

Poetry. So I make everyone write it.

Especially the soft birds of the days

They know its secrets, they know its place

They know how it plays out

its sports and games

They know its grace

They know its hands make gestures lovely

Mudras of eternity

They know its hips are languorous and its buttocks sway
savvily

They know the pots it carries on its heads

And no drop of water is spilt on the way

They are its music makers

Dreamers of dreams

They are its songs

They are the ones each day I frame

to make them be found guilty so they can never escape

Poetry is the answer to the questions

Makes me a gaoler

and me, the forever jailed.



Ampat Koshy: He teaches in a college as Assistant Professor in Jazan, Saudi Arabia. He is the author of books like Art of Poetry, Wrighteings: In Media Res, Figs, Allusions to Simplicity (poetry), and co-author of Wake Up India: Essays for Our Times with Dr Bina Biswas and co-editor of The Significant Anthology with Reena Prasad and Michele Baron etc. He also runs The Significant League and has

instituted the Reuel International Prize for Literature. He is a poet and critic and fiction writer of renown in India and abroad plus a Pushcart Prize Poetry Nominee of 2012. His Ph.D was on Samuel Beckett and his thesis was later published as Samuel Beckett's English Poetry: Transcending the Roots of Resistance in Language. He has also co-edited *Inklinks* and *Umbilical Chords*.



https://www.tripadvisor.in/LocationPhotoDirectLink-g304553-d6537124-i122161890-Mysore_Sand_Sculpture_Museum-Mysuru_Mysore_Mysore_District_Karnataka.html

LOVER'S SPREE

Ruddy man on sight

Bulging muscles and a tan

Blown by delicate a frail so slight

Tenders the heart's love for her man

Flying high and wondering why

The big man tries

To understand....stand but falls

For love

Under a lovers couple wire tree

The stone heart now breaks and cries

So then starts a line so fine
Not without a glass of wine
As there were...many a rhyme
Romantic, poetic?
Hard to define
The soul is lost
A pastiche of the classical love story
The hardest of the stock
Melting slowly
Count not just the hard
Even the big and small
Love conquers all



Anand Abraham Pillay: He is a writer, singer, dancer, artist, and athlete. He is a retired Senior Executive from AAI Mumbai Airport. He loves to cook, loves adventure and loves travelling, and is a naturalist.

Imagine a world where the words
you speak appear on your skin.



OH! THE TONGUE

If only mankind could stop and contemplate
Before certain utterances are made
For the perilous power of the tongue
Can sever ties like cutting through ice
It can erupt like a fuming volcano
Gushing molten lava
Or a torturous tornado
Destroying everything in its perilous trail

Oh! the tongue
Yes it's mighty indeed
For it's like none other
It can ruin the calm and peace
Within a few seconds
It can sever the precious heart

With a bullet shattering the soul
It can start a war among nations
It can destroy a love so endearing.

Oh! the tongue
It can wield fear with power
Hurt you like you've never been loved
Bringing tears and endless sorrow
What's expressed in a fit of rage
Can never be easily forgotten or withdrawn
destroying your relationship

Oh! the tongue
Let its power be positive and used wisely
As a healing balm with carefully
thought expressions providing comfort
to the troubled soul and broken heart

Let it calm the raging storm within
Let it resolve conflicts and disputes
Building broken relationships
Let it flow like a peaceful river
effecting lasting joy and happiness

Like the morning sun
Renew your mind and thoughts
For what you think you will become
Choose your words wisely.



Angela Chetty: I am a poet residing in Durban, South Africa. I work as a consultant. I have contributed to various anthologies and numerous journals. I have also published a poetry anthology. I have been honoured as a contemporary poet with the most heartfelt poems.



GROWING UP

The spring has arrived

You are looking beautiful

And fresh

A seed of love has come

Up in your heart throwing

Life into a mess

Your bosoms are feeling

Tight and they need to be

Softly caressed

You need to lie down on

The bed of fresh leafs and
Gently tossed

A worm climbs up your
Slippery thigh and you feel a
Sweet sensation
You need to be tickled by
A lover and spill upon him
Your passion

You are sixteen and a bud
Need to be opened up to the
World of love and care
Wait and watch the surly
Bees to be stung and sip your
Sweet nectar

You will feel sweet pain
And your body and mind will
Be in a swing
The power of love will rule
Your heart and you will need
Many a sting



Anil Kumar Panda (alias Tiku): He is from Brajrajnagar, Odisha, India, and resides there currently. He works as a mine surveyor in coal mines. He writes short stories and poems whenever he gets time.



THE MOON MUSES...

Sometimes I catch you

Watching me from your window

And wonder if that's the sparkle

Of a smile or a tear I see in your eyes.

Often I see you walking in my moonlight,

Looking up at me from time to time.

Quickly I gather my clouds around me

So I do not appear too lonely.

Why do you look at me like that?
With longing in your eyes,
Like there is poetry on your mind,
Like you want to fly into my light.

Do turn and walk back
Into your world of laughing voices,
Of saucepans and piling papers.
Of tinkling music and glowing devices.

Do not sigh at me from your dark balcony
As if your heart is churning like the sea.
For I am afraid your world will think
That you are in love with me.



Anju Kishore: I am a poet residing in Chennai, India. I have contributed to various anthologies. My book of poetry "...and I Stop to Listen" was published in 2018. I am one of the winners of the Great Indian Poetry Award 2018.



WORDS SPILL OUT

Torn open,
words spill from my wound,
leaping off the paper,
cascading to the floor.
Chasing them,
they tumble out the door.
Reaching out, they elude my grasp.
Following I become lost.

An empty ache torments my mind,
wondering where they vanished to.

Capturing one,
then another,
but there is no cohesion.
Phrases running amok in my head,
drift slowly to my pen.

But alas, there is no tale to tell,
only words stacked up one
against another.
They will not align themselves
to paint the image that I hold within.
No panacea for my plight.
Another day,
another week,
and words spill out again.



Ann Christine Tabaka: She was nominated for the 2017 Pushcart Prize in Poetry, has been internationally published, and won poetry awards from numerous publications. She is the author of 8 poetry books. Christine lives in Delaware, USA. She loves gardening and cooking. Chris lives with her husband and two cats. Her most recent credits are: Ethos Literary Journal, North of Oxford, Pomona Valley Review, Page & Spine, West Texas Literary Review, The Hungry Chimera, Sheila-Na-Gig, Synchronized Chaos, Pangolin Review, Foliate Oak Review, Better Than Starbucks!, The Write Launch, The Stray Branch, The McKinley Review, Fourth & Sycamore.



SPIRITUALITY IN THE TIME OF WHATSAPP

WiFi in the mountains,
Spiritual as you please
Everyone's finding enlightenment,
All I want is peace

Fighting terrible battles,
They never thought they wanted to
win
But now that they've got them,
They can't find the peace within.

So off to Maslow Mountain,
We all take a solemn trek,
To fight and find our inner demons
And they ain't as cute as Shrek

When we get to the top,
We don't pause to breathe,
We immediately look around,
For people we want to preach (to)

And therefore whatsapp is full of
Messages and Gyaan
Don't trust any of these,
Go find your own Yin and Yang



Anurag Mathur: He is a trained bean counter, works for a financial services group and has spent almost two decades serving that industry. Whatever little time that has been spared from work or sleep or reflective meditation has – with quite a few well-meaning prods and nudges from friends – been devoted to occasionally tapping to the Muse’s dictats from time to time.



WAY TO SUCCESS

O man! take up one idea
make it your life
always think of it
think over it
dream of it
live on that idea,
Let the brain, muscles, nerves,
every part of thy body
be full of that idea
and for it just leave

every other idea alone
and now this the idea
and the way to success.



Ashish K Pathak: He is a middle school teacher posted at Dharhara block in Munger district of Bihar province (India). He received a letter of appreciation from the President of India for his poem. He has been conferred WUP gold cross medal for his contribution in the world book 'Complexion based discrimination'. He is only one amongst six writers in Asia selected for Marula world anthology in a worldwide hunt.



COME CLOSE

It rains now

The rebel wind and thunder

The lonesome whistle of the train

In the spring's mist,

Under the cloudy sky

The clouds kissed the stars

Our barren hearts in sorrow

Saying goodbye, our silence

Seemed eternal

Something leaving behind

The love we had inside us
Age is just a number you said
The darkness creeps in your eyes
Turns sacred black
We wrote a song

Come close
Goodbye. Without shedding tears
We know all the answers
Come close
Let us watch the rain...



Asoke Kumar Mitra: I am a poet residing in Kolkata, India. I am a retired journalist. I have contributed to various anthologies published in India and abroad. My poems are translated into Italian, French, Persian, Hebrew, Malay and Mandarin languages.



Wrapped in cloth,
my eyes opened
to tears in yours.

Short of expressions,
gazing at your smile,
I found home.

The personification of love,
in care and tenderness
you remain unchanged.

Engulfed in safe arms,

in the comfort of a soft lap

I find my feet

in slippery memory lanes.

Today, the distance

brings us closer.

The present unites,

our imperfect changes

and moments lost in time.

A reassuring touch,

a finger that wipes tears

is all I need

to be a protector of feelings,

that makes you God-like,

and helps me

believe in one.



Ayan Chakraborty: I am a poet residing in Bangalore, India. I work as a software engineer. I have contributed as a writer in various online platforms. My work has also been accepted as a part of a soon-to-be published anthology e-book.



DEAREST SON

I felt sentimental

When you told me straight

You've a yen to settle

With a permanent mate

Well, son,

If you give up the pokies,

For you old mate

She may give up the blokies,

And be a steady date

If your eyes look bright
And you don't reek of pot,
You could attract Ms Right,
She could fancy you a lot

My boy, a dope head
Often ends up
With another dope head -
And their heads'll get stuck

If you eat healthy food,
And get a healthy look -
She may dine with you, Dude,
Or together you can cook

Thinking well of herself,
She won't chose a boozier.

If you look like hell,
She'll think you're a loser

If you drink with grace,
She may think you're refined.

If you're off your face,
She will prove unkind

She'll steer clear of clots,
My boy, believe it.
She may prefer tots,
To smoking a reefer

Son,

You'd best dress neat
And not like a slop.

Look cool, speak sweet,
Just like your old pop

She could light up your head,
She could bring you joy.

Dearest son, see ahead -
See ahead, dearest boy ...

Okay

Thank you!

Type a message...



Barry Pittard: I am a poet, lyricist and short story writer, living in the Hinterland of South East Queensland, Australia. I am a retired (refreshed!) teacher, and have also worked as an NGO among the socially marginalised. I have broadcast on social just and world music themes on community radio. In the theatre, I worked as an actor, director and writer. Presently, I am doing a personal dance sadhana, extensively using the superb music of Uma Mohan.



FOR THE GOLD MOHUR FLOWERS

Goldmohur flowers

Smiling on the tree

I remember you.

Did you promise

To have some tea

Sitting under its shade (?)

Gentle breeze

Will shake
The branches
Flowers will fall
On you and at your feet
To greet and say
Pain will go away
As long as
You keep Spring
Tied to your heart string
See me
I drink Sunlight
To filter
Them to color
Oh Please
Keep smiling.



Bharati Nayak: I am a bilingual poet, critic and translator residing in Bhubaneswar, India. I work in the Government of Odisha. I have contributed to various national and international anthologies and e-books. I have also published three poetry books, two in English language and one in my mother tongue ODIA and worked as co-writer in two poetry Anthologies. I regularly write on on-line poetry site www.poemhunter.com where I am placed among the top 500 poets and offered the title 'Poetic Basil' for my contributions.



BABE

I loved you more than cash rats

Today we hold our child with separated hands

How I long to share my boatish bed with you

Some times in these chambers

the estranged servants of this heaven dine a human stress
away

I out breath reality to men with stone hearts

I remember your smile

it can take a mile to read a verse of a whining man

Speak!

Spill the milk of stolen cow

I grab an opportunity to tour on tollgates to tell you life and half

Babe remember me in your cake



Bheki BO. Nxumalo: He honed his writing and performing skills at FUBA School Of dramatic And Visual Arts, where he did speech and drama. His earlier poetry was published in a book titled FEDILITIES V. edited by Kobus Moolman. He has performed in festivals such as Bosman Weekend Festival, Newcastle Winter Festival, Macufe festival to name a few. He has graced broadcasting medium like SABC,Y fm and Trans Africa radio blowing poetry horn. He is a member of Amavukuvuku music band. He also facilitated children story telling at Xarra Books.



HAIKU FOR 1989

Everglades burning,
chemicals crack open sky.
Do not think. Lament.



Bill Cushing: As we approach Earth Day 2019, I offer one of the few (actually, only two) attempts at haiku. I continue teaching college, being part of my family, facilitating a "9 Bridges" writing group in Los Angeles, editing and writing, and--of course--taking part in the one activity that truly lets me escape the deluge of industry: sailing.



Photo by Daria Shevtsova from Pexels

NICCOL SAYS

Niccol says why are skies blue

I say mama loves you

Niccol says why are there stars in my eyes

We say they are so blue that's why

Niccol says why don't you come home to us

I say coming, I will take the plane, the car, the bus

Niccol says dad's hair is gold so's mine

I say it's soft and fine

Niccol Mikla and Ari say meet mum

and I say she's at home, come



Brishti Manjima Bandyopadhyay: I am from Delhi and like penning poetry. I am a content writer and editor by profession, a part-time versifier by inclination. Hope you enjoy my poem.



Dying on your death bed
is a luxury all cannot afford
times are such
you could die before you blow the candles on your cake
the corner of the street
in a bus in a local
you leave for the day vertical
you may comeback horizontal
crossing the street you could die
before the morsel reaches your mouth
or the tea touches your lips
just as you say your prayer

even before you lay the wreath
death could strike you.

Dying in the death bed is a luxury all cannot afford.



Chandramohan Naidu: He is a retired bank employee, now a freelance writer and photographer based in Chennai, part of the poetry circle which meets first Wednesday of every month. He writes poems to be subsequently brought out into a collection.



HERCULES

“Heroics” can be rather vile indeed,
The things I did to flaunt my lion-skin,
How many wretches did I cause to bleed?
It does not seem so fun now time wears thin.

Zeus is my father, that accursed state
Beyond my choice drew jealous Hera’s rage
From birth she held me guilty for my fate

Before even, she's struck me at each stage.

Megara, can you ever forgive me?

I killed our children under Hera's trance,

This shirt of Nessus stings my memory,

Now can I die please? Death's a second chance.

If only I had been a shepherd's brat

Unseen from Mount Olympus. Snap an end,

Kill my mortal part, obliterate that,

Then to the gods I'll go and protests send.



Christopher Villiers: I am freelance writer in the United Kingdom, with a Master's degree in Theology, who writes about God, Love and the Universe, big things in little poems! You can see more of my poetry on my Facebook page.



THE SUN HAS ITS DIAMOND TIDE

The Sun has its diamond tide
It spreads over my place on the beach
Of San Vicente de la Barquera
But sand has a pretty flaw:
My niece Pilina is here;
Now she is moving so slowly
As a fragile arc in the Sandy places
So I spend a lot of time

Just looking at her body

Waves covering me all.

This Cantabrian Sea has many words

Sprouting all around

And I cannot hear a rest of silence

To contemplate the purple flower

That reminds me of the sea.

The Sun has its diamond tide

It comes down the Venus' mountain

Reaching the morning of my heart:

Here at the bottom of my nice

I'll find radiance, quiet and delight

But I have trouble

Seeing what there is to see about her.

The Sun has its diamond tide

But no now

There is a rarified atmosphere

That fills the dark clouds

Up the last angled slopes of mountain.
Rain is coming, rain is coming
And my niece runs wild
With a tender tide pouring raing
Back and forth
Opening myself unto her
Seeing what She is about me.
Her lips are drawn
Her kindness is all lost
An her body is beyond the pale.
When the Sun has been lying on the sand
She eating my words of Love
Beside her.
The Sun has its diamnd tide again
Ist a tender tide
That moves me within.
It is the tide of my nice

Sit and dreaming

On the floor of the Rainbowj



Daniel de Culla: He is a writer, poet, and photographer. He is also a member of the Spanish Writers Association, Earthly Writers International Caucus, Director of the Gallo Tricolor Review, and Robespierre Review. He's moving between North Hollywood, Madrid and Burgos, Spain.



POEM FOR KATIE, QUEEN OF OHIO #92

There are so many gods
that will surround you

when they realize
that you refuse to accept

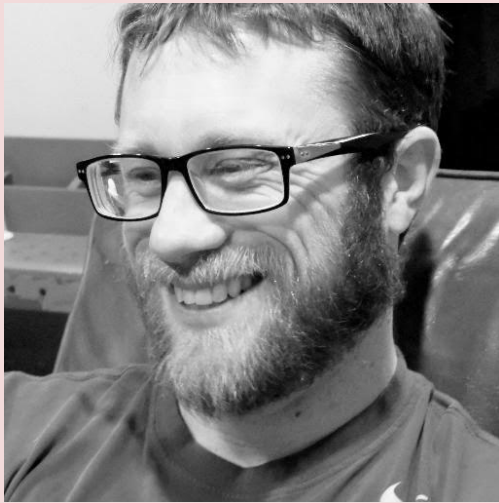
the desert into Ohio,
when you refuse to be tested

for their joy, for their petty
intentions, for their god-flex

& they will approach you
the same way they approach

a child. Don't say their names.

That will make them real.



Darren C. Demaree: I am a poet residing in Columbus, Ohio, United States. I work as librarian. I have contributed to various anthologies. I am the author of ten poetry collections, most recently "Lady, You Shot Me" (December, 2018)



FRAUD

You are not an academic if you lack integrity and objectivity.

You are a fraud.

You are not an academic if you are dishonourable, biased and irresponsible in your behaviour.

You are a fraud.

You are not an academic if you are racist and less than just in your evaluation.

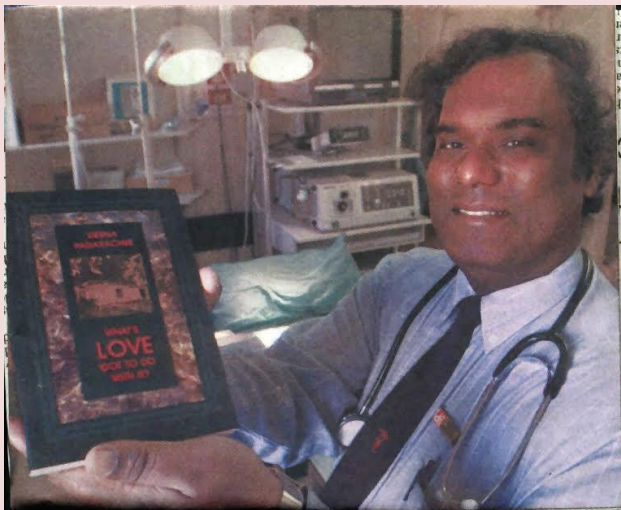
You are a fraud.

You undermine and discredit yourself if you allow your own petty prejudice

and lack of ethics to influence your judgement and your perceptions.

You are a fraud.

Note: For all the brainwashed, colonised, traitorous puppet 'academics' who make war against their own.



Deena Padayachee: He is a South African Author and Poet, residing in Durban. He works as a primary care physician. His writing has been included in various international and South African anthologies including the Readers' Digest's BEST SOUTH AFRICAN SHORT STORIES. Three of his books have been published. The English academy of Southern Africa awarded the author the Olive Schreiner prize for prose; The Congress of South African Writers has awarded the doctor the Nadine Gordimer prize for prose.



FREEDOM COMES FROM STRANGE PLACES

When time comes

It spares no one

No asking

No askance

No guilt

No penury

It's the call of the sea

The last drop

Of hope

Blood

Prayers

Words

Tears

Mix with the brine

A part of you flies

Somewhere

Deep

Or high

A part of you left behind

Rotting

Till the ants devour

The worms languishing within

Are finally set free



Deepti Singh: I am a Doctor in Community Medicine in State Government service and writing and music is my passion. I love to experiment and explore, and my favorites in this regard are nature and human behavior.



REVIVAL

If you find a lonely trek to the misty mountain,
Wake up my darling, with a gentle touch,
For we have to leave at the break of dawn,
To walk slowly up the mountain road.

Set us up to drift away to a mystic world.
Walking hand in hand, whispering sweet nothings,
The sound of the jungle around,
The warmth of the passionate embraces,
A sudden stop to rest under the maple tree,
My darling cuddling up into my arms,

Can light up the magic we lost,
Lost years ago at the altar of Narcissus.

Cast us away to the lap of nature,
For only nature can soothe our battered souls.
The fragrance of the unknown wild flowers,
The shadows of the tall pine trees,
The cedar tree with its hundred arms,
The cool shades and the grassland beneath,
The occasional chirping of the birds,
The continuous roar of the jungle fountain,
My darling lifting up her lips to meet mine,
The quiet flickering flames of the fire,
Can bring us back to life, to what life was.

If you find a lonely trek to the misty mountain,
Wake up my darling, with a gentle touch,
For we have to leave at the break of dawn.



Dipankar Sarkar: Poetry is my passion, but I do not write regularly. Sometimes, words just flow out of nowhere and completely inundate me, force me to live an experience of writing. That's poetry for me. I work as the Chief Content Officer of iDreamCareer.com, India's largest career counselling organisation.



THE PARROT BRIGADE

Yes No Maybe – We cannot deny that our very essence is entwined in our inability to

openly disagree or come to any individual sentiment or decision that might remotely

reveal our liberating yearning for a free mind to reflect our supposed inherited legacy but

that would only reveal our unintended haphazard hypocrisy, which enable us to hide behind

the fake urgency of our hastened history rewritten, moulded, adapted, retracted even altered –

Fake Admiration – Yes sir no sir here sir I say sir, you are most welcome sir please try it on sir

Of course sir right away sir I will immediately contact reception sir I will sort it out sir leave

It all to me sir you can trust us sir please allow me more time sir so sorry sir I cannot think of

Any reason why this should spoil your treasured long relationship with us sir – Please allow us to

make it up to you sir...Sir? You forgot your hat and your cane sir, yes we will insure it for you sir

Just sign here sir that's all we need sir we thank you for your sponsorship sir and we are here to

Serve and satisfy you sir, just wave as you always do sir and someone will after you sir –

This way madam I promise that you will look fabulous in this exclusive original design by

the designer known as Exo, who knows you might even be chosen to reveal it in your very

own catwalk floating on your moment to shine wine and dine until you get noticed, just you

wait and see, who will scramble to gain your affection – There, there no need to be sad now

Yes, I can enquire if you can be moved to your window seat for the flight home after your

Meeting – I take it you still prefer authentic champagne in your dressing room?

Internal Meltdown – You are asking what? Seriously, who do you think you are?

Never has this establishment bent over this far to woo your brittle pathetic ego –

Oh no, don't puff up those red cheeks to me I might just pop them with my

Sewing needle. Me? Are you serious? Go ahead, complain all you want what do

I care? “Attention please, can cleaner A immediately proceed to isle four to

Mrs Grimbleby with mopping up her spilled drink, that's cleaner A...



Don Beukes: He is a bilingual South African British writer and the author of 'The Salamander Chronicles' (Creative Talents Unleashed) and 'Icarus Rising - Volume 1' (Alien Buddha Press). His poetry has been anthologized in numerous collections and translated into Afrikaans, French, Farsi and Albanian. He was nominated for the Pushcart Poetry Prize in 2016 and the Best of the Net in 2017 by Roxana Nastase, editor of Scarlet Leaf Review for his trilogy 'Esorfo Ygolirt/Trilogy of Rose'. His debut South African publication is due in August 2018 in a unique anthology with three prominent South African poets.

Marcel Herms: He is a self-taught artist. His work is about freedom in the first place. There's a strong link with music. He draws, he paints, he makes 3-dimensional objects and artist books (and audio art). His work was printed in many (inter-)national publications and he designed a lot of record- and book covers. He collaborated with many different, authors, poets, visual artists and audio artists from around the world.



THE ANATOMY OF INACTION

Take care, my fellow citizens:

Don't bewail other denizens.

Those politicians' policies,
or reporters and their stories,
penetrate the state of my zen.

Your world's deterioration
intrudes on cool meditation.

I take the side of the undecideds.



Duane Vorhees: He grew up in rural Ohio, fell in love, went to school, fell in love, stuck his toe on bits of four continents, fell in love, taught and learned various subjects, fell in love, grew chronologically and physically. Fell in love fell in love fell in love. "Love's Autobiography" is the first part of a longer meditation, "The Many Loves of Duane Vorhees." It is based on a lifetime of observation, imagination, introspection, experience, and fantasy.



REALNESS

(Translated by Artur Komoter)

To be like until now?

For what?

It is worth experiencing life more fully.

Discovery of talent within oneself

the beginning of creativity.

Not quantity, but quality

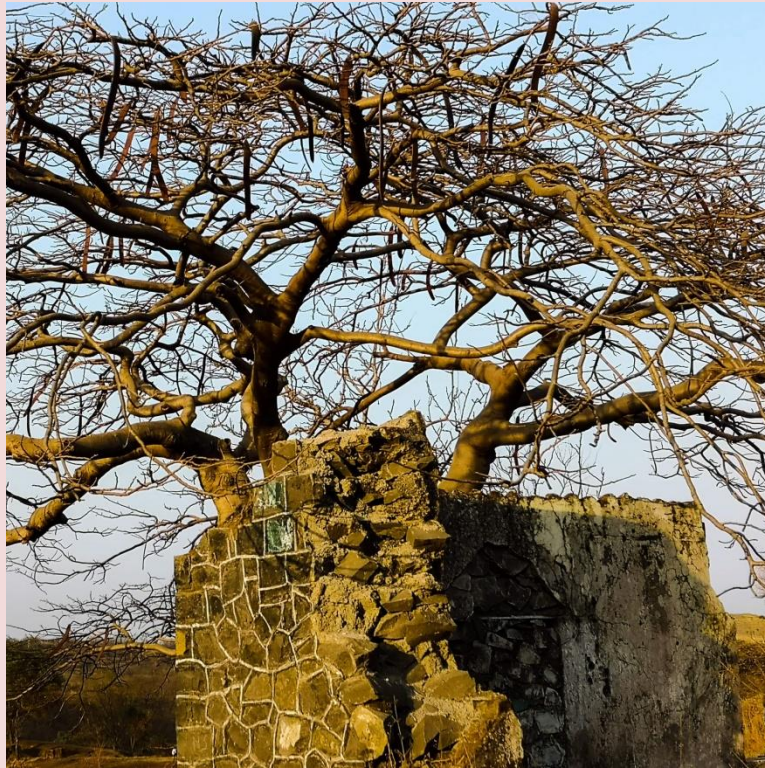
guarantee the joy of existence.

Radium and polonium
she discovered
a wife, mother,
a woman with imagination.

It is not a delusion, but realness.
Not mannequins and robots,
but the mind allows
to build the world.



Eliza Segiet: She graduated with a Master's Degree in Philosophy, completed postgraduate studies in Cultural Knowledge, Philosophy, Arts and Literature at Jagiellonian University. She won the International Publication of the Year (2017) in Spillwords Press and International Publication of the Year (2018) in Spillwords Press. Author's works can be found in anthologies and literary magazines worldwide.



The dried beans

From last season

Still hang there

Without any reason

Leaves have left

No buds are to be seen

There are pieces of sky

Where leaves have been

The burnt branches
Don't know who is to blame
The fiery Sun
Or the red flower flames

Maybe one day
Hope will get a leaf
And buds will sprout
Out of belief



Gauri Dixit: A software professional from Pune (India), Gauri writes English poetry. Her poems have been featured in multiple Indian and international anthologies. She is a regular contributor to many poetry pages and e-zines of repute such as Destiny Poets UK, Duane's Poetree, Glomag, Kubili Cafe, Learning & Creativity, Mind Creative, Spillwords and Stanzaic Stylings. She recently won the 'Reuel International Prize for the Most Promising Poet - 2018'. Her first poetry book 'In my skin, I find freedom' was recently released. She loves reading, photography and traveling.



SPRING IN HEART

Trees smile loaded with green hopes

Leaves flutter when sweet air tickles

New buds wait for beautiful bloom

Bees and butterflies whisper in delight

Soft syllables of love in the ears of flowers

Spring ! a magic , an euphoria

Where nature knits youthful dreams

Plants new hopes in finer spirits

Adds life and beauty all around

After the gloomy winter passes away

Life is alive to sing new rhymes

A wondrous landscape emanates on earth

Of sights, sounds and smells

Spring painted in water colours

An awakening, a healing

To rejuvenate withering desires

To fill the canvas of life with colours anew

Driving all fretting insipid hues



Gayatree G. Lahon: Gayatree is a poet and a teacher residing in Assam. Writing poems is her passion. Nature, love, beauty and complexities of life propel her to pen down her emotions and thoughts. Her poems have been published in newspapers, national and international anthologies, web magazines and online magazines.



Krishna,

You have grown up today

Six years!

This time you will wear blue,

Not yellow, as you always do

It will look good on you

Give me a moment with you

Before your friends arrive,

Surround you

'Like bees around honey'.

See,

I have a new Peacock feather for you,

A garland of jasmine,

A beautiful necklace and earrings,

There is perfumed sandal

You will look so beautiful!

But give your mother a little time

Don't just run away

Make her happy today.



Geeta Varma: She has been a teacher for thirty years and a Freelance journalist. She is now an Educational Consultant and writes for Deccan Herald. She enjoys working with children and has conducted many creative workshops. Her interests include music, reading, writing (poems and stories for children) and travelling.



A WAKING DREAM

Without a sound strutting in its own cadence,
A golden egg hatches where stardust rains,
From the echoes of the night racing to a dazzling sphere,
Where dreams remain as dreams to not burst the bubble,
Trapping a million hues swirling,
A bird flees, a fledgling squinting at a distant ball of fire, the
shell cracking into a smile of a newborn,
Coping with winds in an endless purple turning blue,
Mesmerised like a flower that knows of its blooming,

Smelling its own colour,

Fluttering wings as they bat on my eyelids, alighting on my consciousness,

And I rub my hatched eyes stuck in a stupor to not end this dream,

But the Sun has already leapt into my eyes and winged souls already chirping outside my window.

Life is a waking dream.



Geethanjali Dilip: I am a poet residing in Salem, India. I work as French Teacher. I have contributed to various anthologies. I have also published two poetry anthologies. I am the recipient of the Reuel International Poetry Award 2017.



FLIGHTY

I stare at you, defeated
stunned into silence
No ways! I can't do this!
I've just had a long day
And come a long way
leave me alone!
Who were those fools
who said
everything should be
in ascending order?

"Go up in life"

"Climb up"

"Reach for the Moon"

"Climb Everest"

Bah!

Suddenly I am aware

Of my knee joint

That it's a lever?

That it has a fulcrum?

Suddenly I'm aware

Of gravity

Do they climb steps

In the Moon

Or just hop

To the top?

I hear a hoot
Of the train rushing in
And take the steps
Two at a time
And arrive on the platform
Breathless.



Glory Sasikala: She is a poet and writer currently residing in Chennai, Tamilnadu, India. She is the Editor and Publisher of the Monthly Online Prose and Poetry magazine, 'GloMag' and is the administrator of the group of the same name on Facebook.



THERE ARE WORDS

there are feelings in words

so deep your emotions drown in them

there are feeling in words

that make your soul surrender

to the sweetness

there are feeling in words

that turn words into love

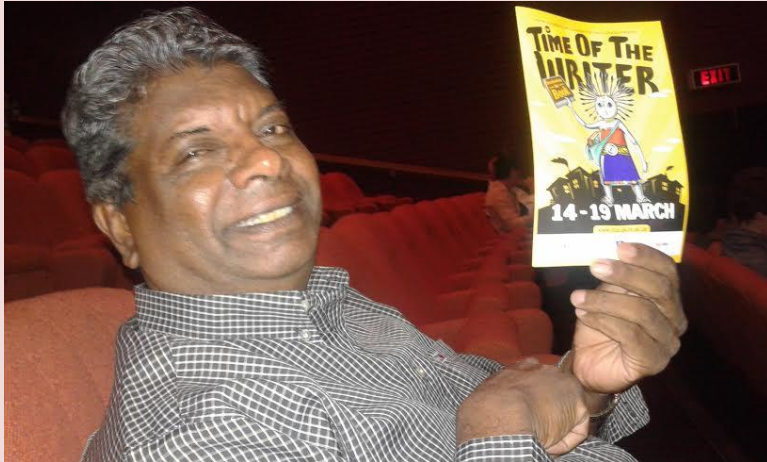
there are feeling in words

that turn lyrics into poetry

there are feeling in words

that turn music into a symphony
there are feeling in words
that can make dear drops turn
into torrents of rain
there are feeling in words
that can create havoc and storms
there are feeling in words
that become agonizing nightmares
there are feeling in words
that drive men to insanity
there are feeling in words
that turn brother against brother
there are feeling in words
that whip up hate into a frenzy
there are feeling in words
that become so ghastly
we lose our humanity
and cease to be human

lead me to an abode where silence
speaks words of love and peace
to my transcendental soul



Gonapragasen Naicker Aka Danny: He is an Indian born, and brought up in South Africa. He has been fascinated by, and writing poetry since his early boyhood. He has performed his poetry at various forums, including the Poetry Africa Festival, the Mauritian Writers' Association, and Glorioustimes, India. He is the Convenor of the Live Poets Society, Durban, South Africa.



COORG CONCERTO

Here you can immerse, trust

The footsteps on the trodden path,

A gossamer smile can download the blue hills

On your breakfast table,

There is a symphony of riches all around.

Between dream and awakening

The distant stars collide, wake up only to listen to

The sharp call of the morning whistler

And the sound of the tiny waterfall
on the hill slope beckoning history and the heritage.

Despite the low sound of the green
Walking on the mountain is a real treat,
The air's shout is actually a musical note, a restless
aspiration,
And the buzz of the insects is nothing less than
The sound of orchestra,

There is a wind in all of us,
Aroma of pepper and cardamom wafts in,
The windy path seeking solace,
Highlands washed by orange and fig trees,
Count footsteps and fingers.

Small leaves of Arabica coffee plant
Record the mist of the surrounds

The darkest skin of the dense forest,
Turn into a series of promises,
So wild is the forested green
Those who inhale everything
Now take a back seat and witness
Tiny birds in flight like
Forgotten punctuation marks.



Gopal Lahiri: I am a bilingual poet, writer, critic and translator residing in Kolkata. I have contributed to various anthologies. I have also published nine volumes of poetry in English and seven volumes in Bengali. I have also jointly edited one anthology of poems in English and also have one translation work of short stories of Israel, translated by me from English to Bengali. I have guest-edited the poetry section of 'Setu' journal for the January, 2019 issue.



OBITUARY

Dear, I hereby
Leave you my last lullaby
So far I remained
Near you armed,
Vigilant in every move
To protect you, my love...

Dear, I heard
The tiniest crush
Of the soil under your steps
When your feet

Drove the distance

In my path...

I didn't notice

The snow drenched

Night chillness

When you blanketed

Me with the mist

Of your hot eyes...

The salty wind blossomed

From your hairy waves

Tangled me on to your shores

Straight on the sands

Where mystery is a legend...

The soundless rays

Of your sun lighted

Deep into my eyes
Exploring the roots
Of my vision, envisaging
The circular thoughts
About you...

At the end of the road
Where we stood amazed
To see the agony dressed
In same colour and form attributed.
But our wish to walk
Hand in hand under rains
Drenching our desires
As wet as we could...

Dear, in next birth
We could make a corridor
Of blue skies with twinkling stars,

And under the shade of our moon

I would read my poem for you

And stretch my hands

To catch the flying words

And build a throne for you,

The bounty of brewed honey

From my love, I will serve

Your thirst, to quench the divine

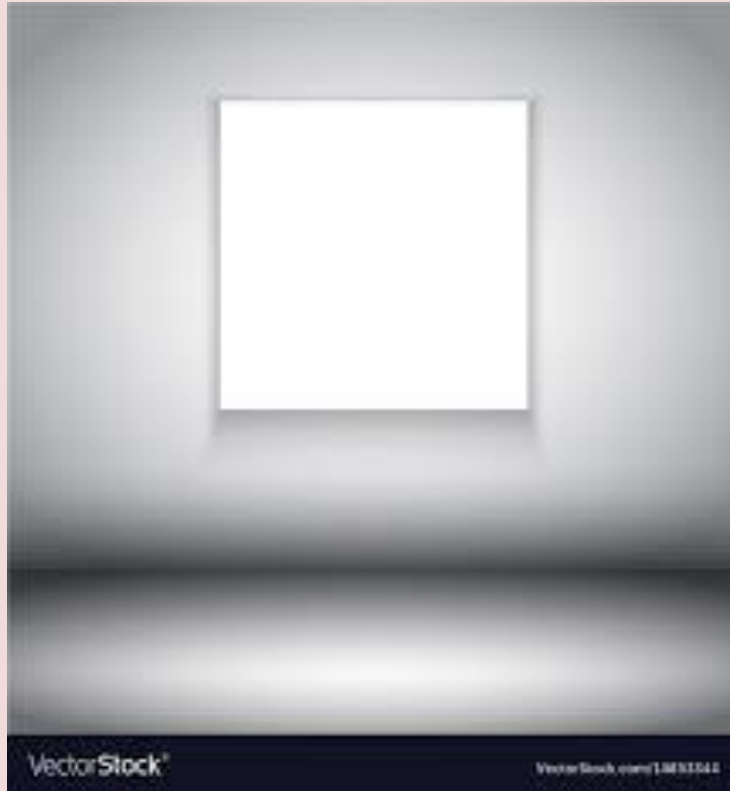
Sanctuary of your real wishes...

I will...

I will...



Haneefa C.A.: I would like to be a poet. I work as an English Teacher (HSST) Government Higher Secondary School, Kattilangadi, Tanur, Malappuram, Kerala, India. I have not published my poems till the date, but post them in my FB account.



BLANK CANVAS

A brush in my hand
So twitchy to tint that blank canvas
Which is dangling on the
Empty wall of my room.

I know my brush shall ne'er
Match the master-copy
Inhumed within my mind
Still I started to paint.

In every stroke I tried to
Put-down my vision,
Layer upon layer with
Saturated colors I drew.

Umpteenth times my brush
Filled the space on canvas
Yet not a bit was worth it
Till I reached the point
Where it was better to forego,

I left the canvas blank as it was
Hanging on the stripped wall,
So at long last I decided to paint
My untold lacerated words
Which were buried there
In the depths of heart for yonks.



Imran Yousuf: He is a Poet/Writer/Columnist from Kashmir, India. Currently working as Columnist and Journalist, he has contributed his poems to various magazines, journals and international anthologies. He has also written a series of articles about the great Poets of the Kashmir Valley (starting from 14th century) that were published in various newspapers and magazines and now being compiled into a book, expected to be launched soon.



TRUST

Trust is the foundation,

Building block, hope,

Soul of life.

Should be mutual, reciprocative ---

Not one way.

Building trust, nurturing,

Takes time.

Betrayal can happen

In a second.

Trust once broken, betrayed,

Difficult to mend---
Like burning bridges.

Beyond doubt,
Lies, cheating,
Lies Trust ---
Total belief, faith,
On someone
Is Paramount.

Trust is akin to a mirror.
If broken,
Even if fixed,
Cracks will be seen.

Do not trust one,
Who does not
Trust oneself.

Trust in self,

Self-belief---

Basic necessity.



Jagadish Prasad: I am writer residing in Chennai, Tamilnadu, India. I am an HR and Media consultant/Resource Person and also a partner in an HR/Talent Resources consultancy company. I have contributed poems to the annual magazine of Chennai poets circle, Chennai. I have also contributed prose and poetry to the in-house magazine of IOB (lobian).



MEMENTO MORI

Memento mori

I cannot forget
the dead
nor that one day
you will count me
in their rank and file

Memento mori

so what if you

loved not me?

The obliteration of memory

will happen too –

same for me, same for

the immortal queen of the Nile

Memento mori

what is lost and

what is gained?

Yesterday was sun

and today it rained...

when the candle flickers out

do not doubt

we'd have loved a while



Jagari Mukherjee: She is a poet, critic, and writer currently pursuing her PhD in Literature from Seacom Skills University, Bolpur, India. Her literary creations have been published in several international journals and other media. Jagari's first book, entitled Blue Rose was published in 2017 by Bhashalipi Publishers, Kolkata. She is a Best of the Net 2018 nominee, a Bear River 2018 alumna, and has won, among other prestigious prizes, the Poeisis Award For Excellence in Poetry 2019. Her first chapbook is forthcoming later this year by Cherry-House Press, Illinois, USA.



NO MORE TOXICITY REQUIRED

Why to spread hatred?

Why to spread war?

Why to spread evil?

Why to spread devil?

Why to spread violence?

Why to spread jealousy?

Why to spread anger?

We need love, not hatred.

We need peace, not war.

We need goodness, not evilness.

We need angels, not devils.

We need non-violence, not violence.

We need empathy, not jealousy.

We need Happiness, not anger.

For a Happy and positive,

We need little all these and just a pinch!?

A pinch of Humanity!!



Jayant Singhal: I am a writer residing in Delhi, India. I am an Economics student. I have contributed to various anthologies. I am currently holding the position of Joint Secretary of my department.



A LITTLE MORE INSIDE

A broken man
teardrops are in my hands
hear my cries
looking up asking why
sometimes I blame myself
I won't blame anyone else.

This disease in you
a surprise attack
don't know what to do
through my constant cries

all is all so wrong
as my teardrops fall.

Watch me die
a little more inside tonight
all the pain that's consuming my life
as I die
a little more inside tonight.

Breaking down
reflections shatter within
feelings of panic under my skin
in my cries
I am losing sight.

This disease in you
a surprise attack
don't know what to do

through my constant cries
all is all so wrong
as my teardrops fall.

Watch me die
a little more inside tonight
all the pain that's consuming my life
as I die
a little more inside tonight.

All is wrong!
All is wrong!

Watch me die
a little more inside tonight
all the pain that's consuming my life
as I die
a little more inside tonight.

All is wrong!

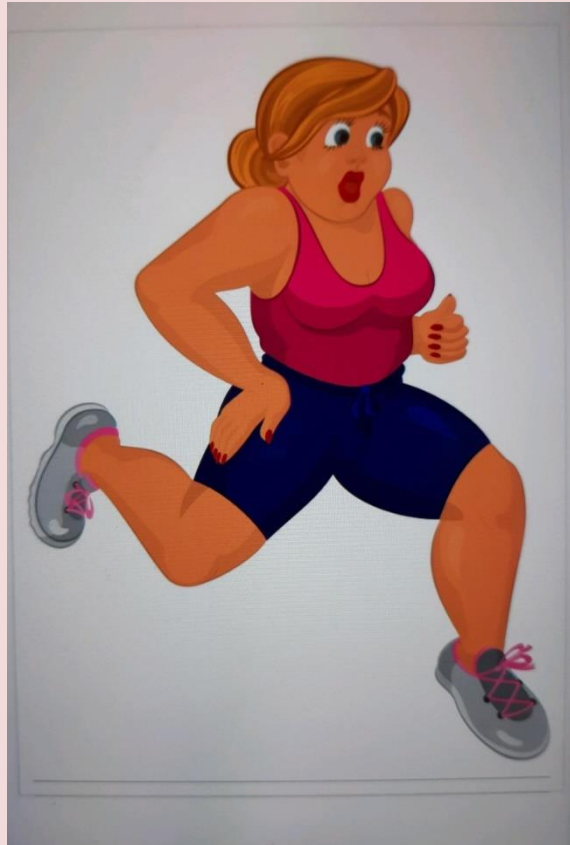
All is wrong!

All is wrong!

What do I do now?



Jeffrey Oliver: I am a poet/lyricist, currently living in upstate New York. I have been writing for 20 years, I write my heart, soul and emotions and will never give up on this crazy dream of mine. I have been told that I have a captivating style when my work is registered in the minds of many. I am also a family man, I have a wonderful wife, who is my inspiration, as well as 7 beautiful children. Welcome to my mind.



BACK ON TRACK

Yearning for yesterdays
for the smaller me
the prettier me
for the better me
the desire for discipline
back inside my bones
inside a heavy heart
a heavier body

anger bubbles up
inside the extra bulge
heavy tunes blare
inside the headphones
as I pound the pavement
once again
I'm back on track



Jennifer Carr: She is a poet residing in Santa Fe, United States. For the last two years, she has worked as an EMT and Firefighter. Her poems have gotten published in more than 10 anthologies. Her Haiku has been published in print and in online publications throughout the world. She flies by her own wings and looks for any opportunity to soar to new heights.



GREEN RAIN

I woke up
looked out
my window
and saw green
pouring down.

Trees cascading
over emerald grass.

This noon

swollen wet
bursting water.

Now even heaven
is tinted jade
as birds linger
under branches
listening.



Joan McNerney: Her poetry has been included in numerous literary magazines and anthologies. She has four Best of the Net nominations.



APOGEE

the rain slicked towards wrapped Coole and Water Croft,
the last bumble bees of salvation flew upward, stalled
and ripened -- I think for a sense of order -- until
dim and gaunt, large, versions of light came to be.

The thought sang and tooled, a decibel under
the pull of night grooming, and it to think.

We ran into the next doorstep. If not, but yet
if so, tandem fell. Fall leaves
I think, and the howl blew underneath
the gritty lit sign and into
the dark.

Then the light did not sing and I did
not sing, but I had called and did not think.

You do not think of any heart, past still water
and the trajectory of cold things like fowl and
traffic and also, like rain, all falling on
the hour when the sorest fat one sang unripened,

changeless to each rote and by. Thought became one,
a direction steeled to a season, seasons by.



Joseph Elenbaas: I am a Christian writer, living in West Michigan.



FOREST BROOK

Green blossoms droop in the blaze.
Does the pitiless sun drain them of
all hope with its scorching rays?
They quake in repressed agony.
The aroma of asphalt slowly moving
In to suck the sap;
Trees, stately and daring the skies
bear an uncanny fear in their hearts;
Even their shadows appear mortal!
They harbor an unexpressed message -
manifold flora has lost its scent.
The brook gurgles quietly below.

The ambience of silence a roaring
curse on the day when it will be
a static sewage.



K.s.Subramanian: I am a poet and short story writer living in Chennai. I have published two volumes of verse through Writers Workshop, Kolkata. I have nine published short stories and also poems in several anthologies. "Dreams" got the Asian Age prize.



MAGENTA RISING

May it be an evening star
shining down upon you.

May it be when darkness falls
your heart will becalmed.

You walk the lonely road,
How far are you away from home?

Darkness has finally come;
You must believe

to finally find your way.

Darkness has fallen;

with the beat of the egret's wing.

A promise lives within you now.

May the shadows call; flying away.

May you journey on; light the path.

When the night is overcome;

you may rise to find the sun.

Magenta rising in the morning sky;

Darkness comes no more.

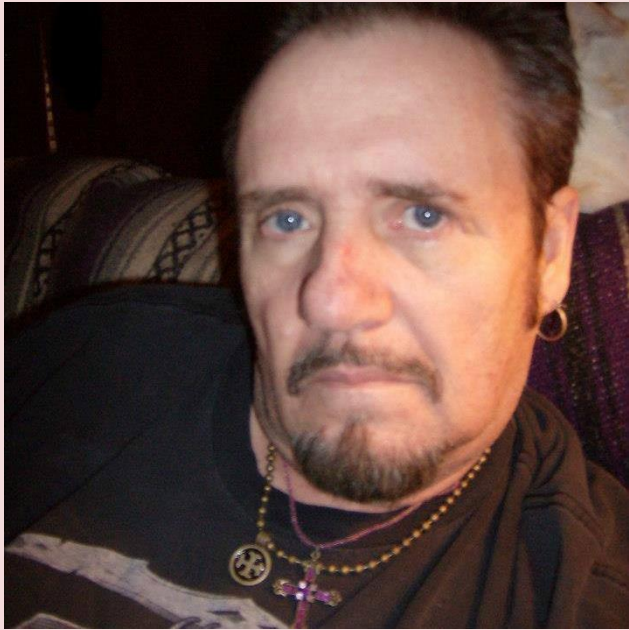
Believe and you will

find your way.

Darkness has crested.

A promise lives within you now.

May it be.



Ken Allan Dronsfield: I am a Poet and reside in Seminole USA. I am disabled and write full-time. I have contributed and have been a co-editor for various anthologies. I have two published poetry collections.



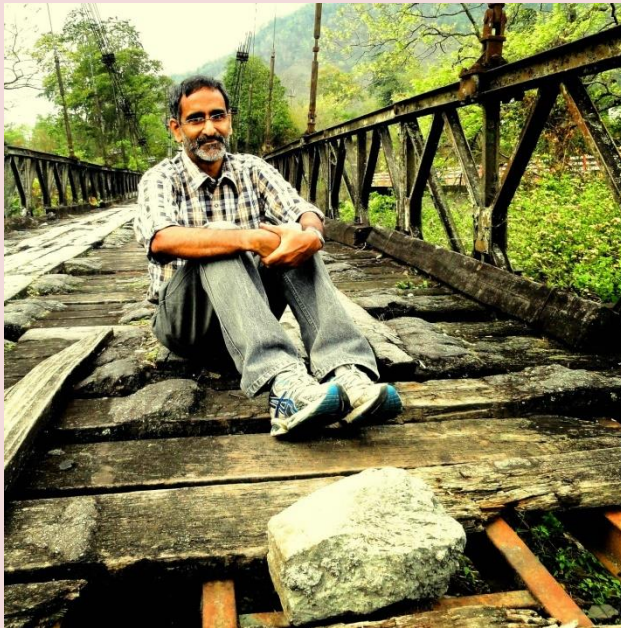
01 APRIL - ALL NUTS DAY

We have World Coconut Day on 02 September. Let's have an inclusive All Nuts Day on 01 April. If there's one day that's truly our day, it's 01 April. We'll celebrate it as the day for all of us who are dismissed as fools or idiots or good-for-nothing or looked down upon as mad or crazy or condemned as sickular, libtard, feminazi and anti-national.

The reasons for the derision or contempt could be the challenges we were born with or acquired while growing up, illnesses, poverty, denial of opportunities, discrimination, our views and attitudes, our rejection of orthodoxy, our opposition to religions and superstitious traditions, our refusal to glorify war, violence and machismo, our insistence on scientific temper and logical

thinking, our sexual orientation we are not afraid to show, our gender fluidity, our values based on humanism, gender and social justice, equality and rationality.

All nuts of the world, unite. We have nothing to lose but our pains.



Kerala Varma: He hails from Chirakkal (Kannur). He is a former Deputy General Manager of State Bank of India and lives in Chennai with his wife Chitra. He is an amateur writer, who believes in “simple living, simple thinking”, welcoming enrichers of life like love, humour, long walk, the river, sea, mountain, books, music and Internet and avoiding complicaters of life like greed, anger, ambition, sentimentalism, sexism, god, rituals, religion and superstitions.



ALLURING DARKNESS

Darkness has fallen
on my dear dreams..

The turbulent waves have withdrawn
imprinting depths.

Complete stillness..

Oh alluring!

Was it a fantasy?

Was it a glimpse of rainbow

Shining only amid raindrops?

A shower of friendship

soothing my wounds,
breaking the cocoon of loneliness.

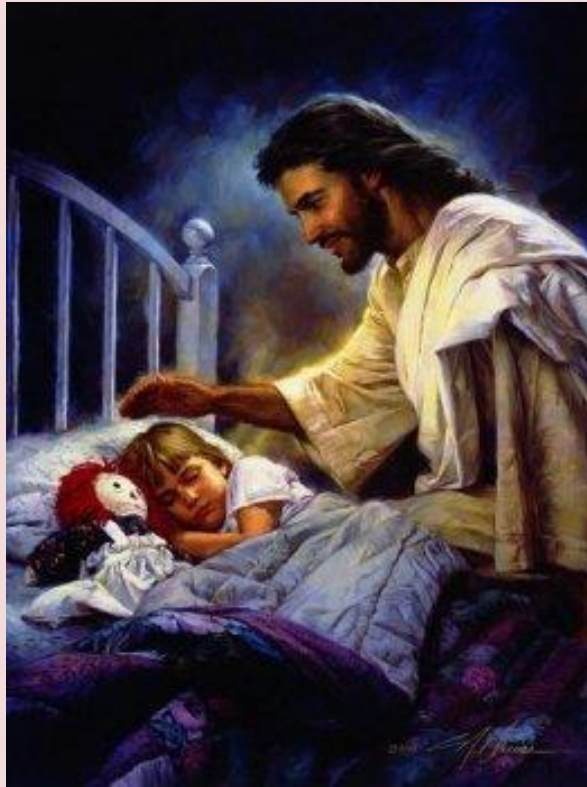
Those precious years...
Those blissful moments..
as if glittering lines on the dark sky
breaking the silence of solitude.

No more tears, no more waiting
For unnoticed they go.

I feel the beauty of reality
The helpless lives.
to unite with you, I hope
oh my enticing silence..



Leena Pradeep: I am working as a teacher in a Government school in Thrissur district, Kerala. Teaching and writing poetry, I believe, keep me alive. My poetry is the reflection of my inner self.



(<http://wiseblooding.com/2014/11/13/o-the-deep-love/>)

THANK YOU DADDY GOD

I'm still here

Can you see

I'm still standing

Yes that's me

I'm breathing

Thanks to grace

I believe ahead of me

Are better days

I have sight
And vision too
Lord I'm so thankful
Towards You
My hearing is still
Very good
I believe God saved me
To bear much fruit
I have taste
And can always smell
With my soul
It is very well
I walk properly
And I have speech
Thank You Lord that You always close
Never out of reach
Many can't do all of this
But still give thanks unto God

So if you don't have a disability
Stop complaining and praise the Lord
Lord I'll give thanks unto You
No matter what the circumstance
Even in the storms
I'm practicing to dance
Thank You Lord for what You'll do
And all You've done
In the Name of Christ Jesus
Your Son
Type a message...



Leroy Abrahams: Leroy is a poet who lives in South Africa, Port Elizabeth, Helenvale. He is currently working for the church, Victory Ministries International and also volunteers and enjoys hospital visits because there he prays for the sick and encourages them. Most of his poems are autobiographical and serve as a warning to the young and Christians who are facing tough times. Verse en Inspirasie is his first anthology.



THE PLATFORM OF ISOLATION

An afternoon of tea and biscuits,
staring into the floret of a flame,
the smell of ozone
and anonymous newscasters drone,
in this dark and silent time.

In all minds,
mankind is planning how to
refashion themselves from the grave

while the insistent chill of December's pale light
reminds us that the end
will always come with fire or harps,

and we won't have long to wait.



Linda Imbler: She believes poetry has the potential to add to the beauty of the world. Her poetry collections include “Big Questions, Little Sleep,” “Lost and Found,” “The Sea’s Secret Song,” and “Pairings,” a hybrid ebook of short fiction and poetry. Examples of Linda’s poetry and a listing of publications can be found at lindapoetryblog.blogspot.com.



CONCEALED BOND

Inner Jingle which sings inside me

With the melodious tone of beautifying we

Is immaculate.

The concealed bond is accurate

No tantamount feelings of despondency

No argument on emotional dependency

A crystal clear flow of admiration

A single commitment of adoration.

From the water bubbles I see the reflection

Of my affection and its rising temptation

Moving towards the divine cliff of retrospection.

Assimilation and partition.

Is not countable here.

This is the world of divine imagination.

A dreamland where negative thoughts are purified with honesty

A grassland of new creative thoughts,
are glorified with ingenuity.



Lopamudra Mishra: Lopamudra Mishra is a native of Puri, but now residing in Bhubaneswar Orissa. Her fascination for writing came from her grandfather and father from an early age. Writing for her is the powerful medium of expression. Her poems have been published in many magazines and anthologies. Her first book “Rhyme Of Rain” was published in March 2017, second book “First Rain” in August 2017, and her third book, “Tingling Parables” in May 2018.



<https://www.thebetterindia.com/79787/winter-discarded-clothes-help-save-someone-life/>

THE MOMENTARY SOLACE

As the crackling fire gave momentary warmth and solace to the weary and cold soul.

The mind ventured to a distant shanty, where her children were still awake in anticipation of their mother's return

In folly of earnest eagerness of getting fed to their hearts content with hot piping daal bhaat (boiled rice and lentils)

They wait relentlessly suppressing their grumbling bellies hard

The elder one could understand but the younger one, only three, could hardly comprehend things

Working as a helping hand and a maid needed long working hours

And it had been a tough and tiring day for her

Running late, she was off to the station to catch the local train to reach her home

There was chaos all around, unable to apprehend, finally she got that there's no train tonight due to some mishap

On verge of crying, worried how to reach home, she clutched the grocery bag tightly in hand

Few workers and labourer all weary by the hard work toiled by them

started walking towards their so-called abode

No option left she too joined them and started to trail

Hungry and dead tired by fatigue,

it seemed challenging to cover the distance on foot

Yet all weary souls marched towards their destinations, trudging themselves hard

The night was getting bitter, cold and dark

A bonfire lit by some beggars trying to sooth with the golden warmth

She sat down besides, for few minutes to give rest to the weary limbs

Feeling the momentary solace though wary and grim

Ah! The endless night and her children's face float past her teary eyes



Madhu Jaiswal: She is a bilingual poet born and based in Kolkata. Writing is a passion for this homemaker. Her write-ups are published in various national and international anthologies and e-zines.



SOMETHING NEW

Met so many

Haven't we?

Some free ones,

Liberated,

Few caged,

Imprisoned,

Thought processes,

Processes of thoughts,

Ambitious,

Courageous,

Amiable beats,
Compassionate;
Steps of flight,
Towards flights of steps,
Walking,
Flying at times
To newer horizons,
Horizons of twinkling stars.
Saw so much,
Both of us together,
Some happy moments,
Few melancholic hours,
Tangled webs of emotions,
Detangled passions,
Woven sheets of feelings,
Reds, pinks,
Oranges, greys,
Interspersed

With the dark
Of the nights;
The dark that meets
At the boundaries of dreams,
Scaring at times,
Mixing in then,
Creating newer shades,
Shades of warm colourful times.



Madhumita Bhattacharjee Nayyar: She is a bilingual writer (writing both in Hindi and English). A poetess, blogger, lifeskills counsellor, healer, she is also a social commentator and works with women and children. She is the author of "THE NIGHT JASMINE AND OTHER LOVE POEMS". She is the

winner of ICON OF THE YEAR-LIFESKILLS COUNSELLOR 2015-2016, CREATIVE WRITER OF THE YEAR 2016, and Indian Women Achievers Award 2016 for Creative Writing.



PICK UP A MEMORY OF HURT, UNPACK IT

I don't know what formula my mother follows
to calculate when it's finally time
to change the bedsheets in my room.

Is it

After two weeks?

After two weeks

and two days?

After two weeks
and two weeks?

Since the time I can remember,
I have always protested against changing of sheets.

I'd rather roll
on the dust they accumulated
on the particles that made their way through my window;
dancing within the channel of sunlight;
And settle on my bed.

I wonder how many miles they travelled
I wonder what ruins they are made up of
If they were to be engineered back into shape.

When the night falls and the lights are off,
these settlements beneath my spine
could be those comforting arms;

that I long for to wrap my aching body,
at the end of long days when I swallowed grief and
forbid tears from rolling down my cheek.

Because, big girls don't cry!

My mother doesn't want to live in a shabby house.
Her idea of clean and tidy exists in relative
comparisons with words that are opposite-
Dirty, poor, destitute, rags, ghetto.

But dust,

To embrace dust is to humbly accept
the ultimate end of humans and leaves alike.

The dirty sheets in my room are my
state of mind today tomorrow and day after.

When the night falls and the lights are off
these settlements beneath my spine
reorganize themselves into a sleeping bag
correctly in the size of my coffin.

with some pockets on the inside
where I can tuck in some essentials
that I will need on the other side.

Nothing much, just my phone and its charger.

My mother loves to buy bedsheets which
come with beautiful kalamkari art.

I stained them with my menstrual blood
For 168 times and other 24 times my PCOD
came to their rescue.

When the night falls and the lights are off
these settlements beneath my spine

begged me for 'release'.

I laughed because I need the same too.

And I begged them to take me along.

The morning after

my mother burnt my dirty sheets

along with my body.



Mahitha Kasireddi: I am from Hyderabad. I am a published poet in different anthologies. I write regularly on my instagram id @mahithakasireddipoetry



PUNJAB

Mornings once woven by
our rivers have lost murmurs.
Lost into the mist is the sunlight.
The birds which flew to far off
places have lost their ways.

Drenched in the darkness of
sterile showers, unabated
thorns cause fissures
across the tongues of the towns.

It has been ages since
our cities spoke a language
or the eyes etched a dream
for the nightly winds weep
reading reports of autopsies:

The murders happened long back
as did the asphyxiation of dreams a century ago and the
birds, they too died somewhere, chasing their ways back
home.



Manisha Manhas: She is a rebel. She is an English teacher with Punjab education department and moonlights as a poet. Her poems mostly revolve around the theme of "partition and migration" of 1947. Her poems have previously been published in various journals. For her, poetry is her life-force quite similar to blood flowing in her veins.



DEEP DOWN!

Jealous lives, sparked hatred amongst,
One engrossed in shunning another!
Aggressive plans and schemes thrive,
Strong is the urge to purge!
Yet a tenacious grip from somewhere inside,
Consciousness deep down still resides!

Hustling life, focussed eyes,
Set goals, a majestic life awaits further!
Ears go deaf to nearby cries,

Empty heart, yet space, empathy searches!

Hesitant footsteps take a pause,

To wipe tears, to know a cause,

Compassion still has control!

Some ignore, some sympathise,

Helping in need, few holy deeds,

Some can hear cries, some give advice,

Some have a soothing balm,

Some have comforting arms!

The shells might change colour and form,

There still exists soul deep down inside!



Mansi Sharma: She is a passionate writer, who sowed seeds and watered the plants of writing while basking in the warmth of motherhood! A former Officer in a govt. Organizational with a degree in Management and a literary heart, is now taking baby steps just like her baby, towards writing!



CENTIPEDES ON A MISSION

Like half-ripened fruits with toothpicks
For legs and arms, faces masked with
colourful dupattas, they tumble on,
centipedes on a mission.

Perhaps life a compact crossover
between foggy dreams and concrete
Reality drives them... they trudge on.

The lukewarm tea nourishes me
As halfheartedly as these notes.

Looking away from the mess up close

at the kaleidoscopic canvas of life

is a tasteless meal that must sustain me.



Late Mushtaque Ali Khan Babi AKA Max Babi: Max was a multilingual writer, poet who liked a wide variety of formats – whose life was full of oxymoronic shades, a polymath who went from being a specialist to a generalist to a versatilist. Mentoring by being a catalyst enthralled him, he wrote on serendipity and intuition, conducted workshops on a range of subjects and topics. He was a very friendly Santa Claus.



SUMMERTIME

Summertime is not just about the sun

Sunny days with warm and sweaty nights

It's the time that makes you wait

For family get togethers during holidays

There's so much of love fun and laughter

Freaking out with friends

Visiting old friends and family

Going to the crowded beaches

Basking in the evening golden sun

Playing with kids building castles

Packing up and going out

On short trips and picnics
Travelling to far off destinations
To escape from the scorching heat
Summer comes to an end so soon
Giving us moments to withhold
Long lasting memories to cherish
That never fades away
And that's why it feels like
Summer holidays are the best



Merlyn Alexander: I'm a poetess residing in Nagercoil, India. I'm a housewife. I have contributed to various anthologies. I have published six books in haiku poetry. I'm currently waiting for my first anthology of poems in English to be published soon.



WALTZ, FOOTPRINTS IN SNOW

December 24th, I find footprints in this snow, yours frozen,
our broken dreams.

Will your lawyer Grinch my wallet, fleece me while I pray to
Jesus Christ tonight?

Even the devil stoked in flames has standards, jukebox
baby.

Even Jesus suffers with the poor, feels lonely on winter
moon distant planets.

Don't torture me, let me drive you home in our old Mack
dump truck.

Hear these sounds, new records on this old radio.

Care to dance a new waltz

renew, no mirages just free no chains–

or drift back to those old vintage footprints–

fog covering over old snow?



Michael Lee Johnson: He is a Canadian and USA citizen. Today he is a poet, editor, publisher, freelance writer, amateur photographer, small business owner in Itasca, Illinois. He has been published in various anthologies. He is the author of two books, and several chapbooks. He also has over 134 poetry videos on YouTube as of 2015: He was nominated for 2 Pushcart Prize awards for poetry 2015 & Best of the Net 2016.



WEAVE

Too many stories,
two too many faces to you,
Chimera with a lilt.

Fickle, thin-skinned,
yet tough enough to laugh and
to mean it.

Tough on those around you.

Rough around the edges.

I tell stories,

I show a face,

Minotaur with a maze to navigate.

Stubborn, thick-willed,

my laugh soon fades, but

I mean it.

Tough to let others in.

Rough to be near.

We talk

We joke

We laugh

We blush

We hint

We weave

a dance of words, this dance of
intentions.

Our dance of glances
not long held.

If our eyes would stay, we would melt
some of your roughness,
some of my resolve.
So we look away.

You move off with shifting faces,

I go back into my twisting ways.



Mike Griffith: His chapbooks *Bloodline* (The Blue Nib) and *Exposed* (Soma Publishing and Hidden Constellation Press) were released in fall 2018. He was nominated for the Pushcart Prize for poetry in October 2018. He lives near Princeton, NJ and teaches at Raritan Valley Community College. He is Poetry Editor (US/Canada) for The Blue Nib.

<https://twitter.com/AuthorMGriffith>

<https://michaelgriffithwordpress.wordpress.com>



ONE TIME MORE

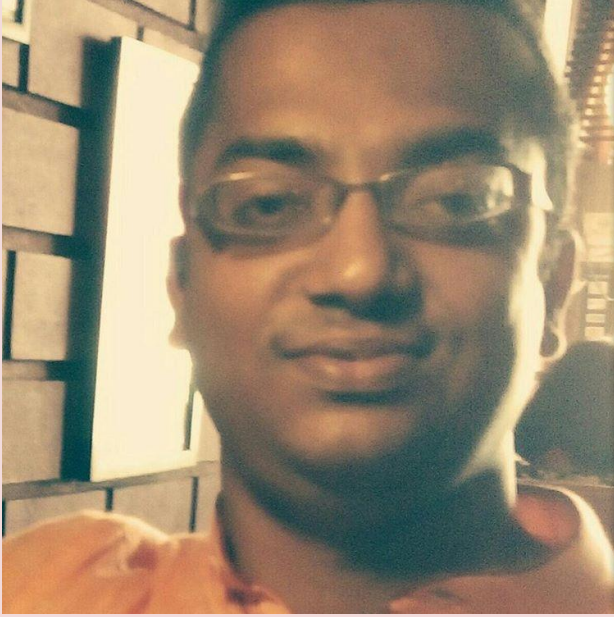
One time more, love,
Be that fairy that you were
Sit before me quiet
And let me you just admire,

Let me forget all those things
Campaign trails, EVMs,

Voting percentage, missing links,
Big promises, tall claims,

Instead let me just sit
Before you and be gay,
Watching your face so lit
By the light of the day,

One time more, love,
Just be that fairy that you were
And sit before me true
And let me just you admire.



Moinak Dutta: I am a poet/novelist residing in Kolkata, India. I work as teacher. I have contributed to various anthologies. I have also published two novels.



A QUESTION MARK..!!

"She collated herself
in a Question Mark;
the word puzzles,
no one could decipher..

Ceaselessly fetching
a plethora of memories,
like the lyrics
of an old revered song..

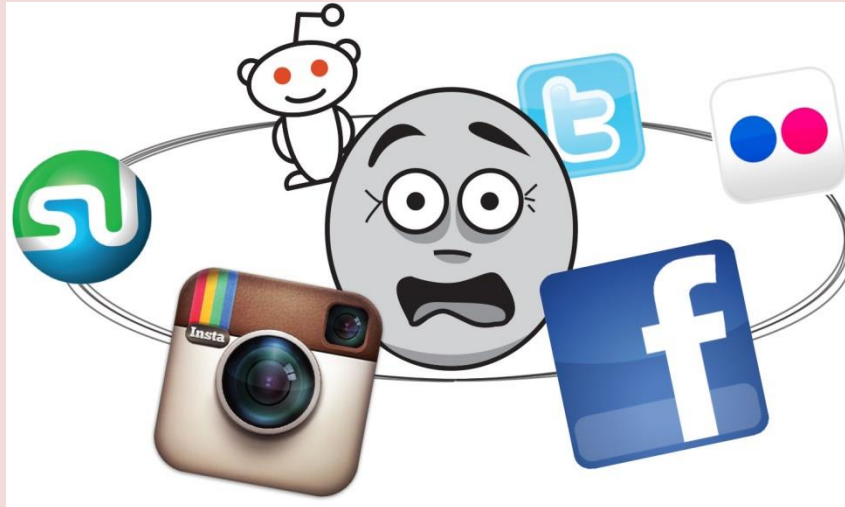
In the rhythm of
ho-hum heartbeats,
fluttering to life
with that unco smile..

An anecdote of
a long reality novel;
Yet, heedlessly
fathomed as a fiction..

It took a moment to reminisce
and a lifetime to forget her.. !!"



Monika Ajay Kaul: I'm a multilingual poet and short story writer, residing in Delhi, India. I'm an educationist by profession, currently serving as a guest faculty. I've contributed in various poetry and short story anthologies. I'm enjoying my aesthetics journey by painting, writing and singing.



SOCIAL MEDIA-THE NEW COOL

The new cool of 21st century,

It is just like hot curry.

In that, your memories you could bury,

Or in the chats section, you may scurry.

But all this happens in a lot of hurry,

And we forget all old memories.

WhatsApp, snapchat, to name a few,

Are just like drops of dew.

As morning wears off, they just disappear,

And then, our old memories have steered.

On a ship to a place where there is fear,

Of losing memories, you could watch them shed their tears.

Snapchat has various filters,
Like dogs throwing litters or cats who are babysitters.
I do not know if that is what matters,
But it is definitely a memory shatter.
We forget about the outside world and,
Social media is what matters.
Social media is like a hollow showpiece,
Which gives some people lots of inner peace.
But as you crack it open, the value just flies,
When you see what losses you have incurred.
Because of this little evil devil's smiles,
You will realise that this is like a group of fleas,
Who is trying to pollute your wonderful lives.



Nakshata Agarwal: She is a budding writer studying in class 10. Her hobbies are singing and cooking.



DEAR NOTRE DAME

Dear Notre Dame

Sorry for the flame

You, I have not come to blame

Rather to beg in shame,

We are lame

So I need no fame

Because it hunts like game.

Please send us some billions
For we starve upon religions
And wander through regions.

Dear Notre Dame

Our children are hungry
And our babies die of diseases,
Pregnant women are unsafe
And orphans are homeless,
Please send us some billions.

Our soldiers rot in forests
And our pensioners are bedridden,
Our graduates are jobless
And our teachers are unpaid,
Our schools are dilapidated
And our schemes outdated,
Please send us some billions.

Dear Notre Dame
Our roads are graves
They bury young hopes and dreams,
Our system is dark
They leave marks on us
Our laws are poems
And constitutions are songs,
O dear Notre Dame
We need some billions.

Look not on our leaders
We have none,
Look not on our models
They deceive and betray
Look not on our representatives
They are selfish and greedy,
O Notre Dame
Take pity on us.

We have gold
We have oil,
We have resources
We have sources,
But they are our pain and loss.

They killed cocoa and cotton
They killed groundnut and palm oil
Because they wanted to recolonize us,
Of course, they succeeded.

No freedom, whatsoever
Except theirs, to dehumanize
They rip, they whip, they strip, they tip
Our hip is gone, and lip scattered
So lawless a cabal
O dear Notre Dame
Turn some billions this way.

God lives in us
He dwells in our heart
Feed our heart for Him
Lest, He be homeless.

Politics has finished us
Religion has bound us
Governance has cursed us,
We are perpetual slaves
Tied, flogged, raped, and tortured
O Notre Dame
We are humans too.

You brought us Christianity
You taught us civilization,
Till date we struggle and die
Because those things haunt us.

The quest for power is a cancer
The urge to keep it is a demon
The anxiety to bury it is a monster
To them that's all that matter.

All things work against us
Even our heart, body and soul
Our soldiers need not live
Our elders have to die,
Our past is bruised
Our present is hell
Our future is silenced
Our God dares not come,
O Notre Dame
Some billions this way, please.

Africa is rich
Blessed, bold and black

Africa is great
Raw, real and proud,
Yet, dark and blind
Archaic and stuck,
Mocked and locked
Sealed, never healed.

Dear Notre Dame
Bless Africa for once
A few billions can help
Let this pain go away.

No launching yet, billions roll in
Can you contain all these?
Please fling some billions this way
Let Africa drink clean water
And breathe some fresh air.

If you mend and heal
If you cure and care,
If you love and save
If you will and fill
Feel this pain, stop this longing
And be the lead.

Africa is in trouble
Forget how they paint her
She is dumb, they made her
She dares not cry
For she is forbidden,
Please hearken dear Notre Dame.



Ngozi Olivia Osuoha: I am a poet/writer/thinker residing in Nigeria. I currently enjoy my work as a writer, I have contributed to over forty international anthologies. I have also published three poetry books and co-authored one, and published over two hundred and fifty poems/articles in over twenty countries. Some of my pieces have been translated and published in different languages too.



THOSE LAST MOMENTS

I remember us,
Ma and me
Standing on either side
Of the river bank,
Gazing at the random rays;
Staring at the unknown.
She looked bright yet frail,
Distant yet familiar
Smiling at me.
I thought the smile was wan
Or was that an illusion?

A swift breeze distracted me,
Blew the shawl away from her
Right on to my face.
When the turbulence halted
She was gone
With the shawl wrapped around
My trembling arms.



Nilanjana Dey: A story-teller at heart, Nilanjana Dey likes to experiment with fiction and poetry. An alumna of English Literature from Jadavpur University (Kolkata), she is a marketing and communication professional based in Mumbai. She also volunteers with a Mumbai based NGO working with the marginalized sections of the society.



FREE ME!

Within the grooves of thoughts,
voiceless words are on the verge of senility,
lethal war of weak and strong all around yelling,
For my walkout; walkout of my comrades!

Calm and quiet return; slogging through the lost words,
Precipitating crisis of peace within contemplation.
No freedom to soul now,
Will surrenders against will,
A dead corpse lingering in society.

One step at a time of it,
to slow down towards grave; A lame excuse of the eve,
A dead in a dream of life,
Life of a vermin !
Life of a lie!
Life of a breath of sigh!

Free me; free me of all pretence,
shackles of knotted words of greed and hypocrisy,
Free me of my own failure,
Every single note of my symphony,
Now broken and lonely!



Nitusmita Saikia: She is an instructor in National Cadet Core, India, working presently in Jorhat Assam, India. She writes in both English and own regional language(Assamese). Being active in various online Poetry groups and blogs, she has been writing for E-Magazines. With these, her poems have been published in various poetry anthologies, both National and International.



A NEW PERSPECTIVE

The stone that shattered the window this morning

Cracked open our lives and exposed our battered
foundations

Built on crumbling stilts and held together by meters of
tape.

Yet on the inside we see that life still goes on

After another tape is added to seal this wound shut.

Only from the outside do we experience this rustic charm

And remember the stories behind every crack and tear.

And so we clamber back onto our feet, dust ourselves off
Climb back onto this treadmill of life and carry on...



Nivedita Karthik: I am a poet residing in Chennai and working as a senior quality controller. My work has been previously published in Glomag and the Society of Classical Poets.



A ROOM WITH A VIEW

My home has a large picture window that overlooks a beautiful compound with huge trees and flowers blooming in myriad colours. Living very close to the Pallikaranai lake, we experience a large variety of pretty birds that sit outside my window and create a melodious concert that is incomparable. Flighty little birds in colours like crimson red, turquoise blue, smoky grey, they all greet the morning with twitters, warbles and bird calls that fill my heart with cheer and joy. These trees have borne the onslaught of two of more heavy storms and parts of them had broken away but they have somehow grown back into their full glory and emerged more lush and greener than ever, thus providing a home for many little visitors. These trees are whole ecosystems by themselves.

The window seat is my retreat from daily chores and I love to spend my time catching up on my reading. This seat overlooks the compound and it's the best seat in the house. I used to have a cat named Suzy who would occupy this place and languidly observe the fluttering birds. When I curl up with a book here, I am lost in a world of my own where the characters in the book engage me with their adventures and escapades. The warm sunlight filtering through the large picture window, the twitter of the birds and the humming of the ceiling fans makes this my favourite retreat.



Padmini Rambhatla: I am a homemaker residing in Chennai, India. I work as an English teacher. I have contributed to a poetry group on Facebook. I dabble in art occasionally and love cooking a variety dishes for friends and family.



There will be days
When I am the more loving one
Then there will be times
When I need love more than ever
And there'll be days when I'll refuse
To let you love me and push you away
And if I do so, once the dark clouds
Leave the night bright
I'll quietly see if the windows
To your soul are open
If extended arms still await me
And ruefully crawl in

To wake into a morn

Where everything is beautiful again.



Panjami Anand: I am an occult practitioner by profession. Sometimes it helps to know that we are all fighting secret battles and we are not the only ones in pain. I love to observe human relationships and nothing inspires my writing more. Thus, the dominating theme of all my writings are conflicts and triumphs of the same.



Young, indiscriminate

Passions riding high

No sense of betrayal

Only passions matter.

Now the Old Bull

Confessional mood

Trying to understand

Why i behaved thus

What matters: I loved and lost

Nobody took away

I Lost You.

Now images of we roaming the streets

Wind on our face

Strange places

Excitement of seeing places

I saw with You

Memories sweet

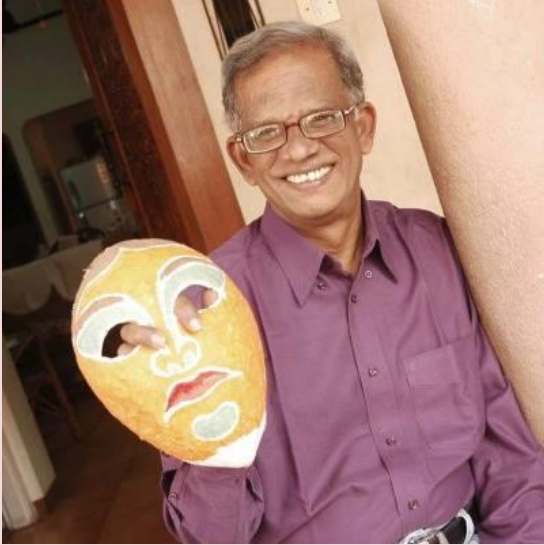
Pain, pleasure, betrayal,

Wake up in the middle of night

Thoughts full of Images

I lost my words too. Peace

Be with you.



Parasuram Ramamoorthi: He is a poet with three published volumes of Poetry. Norwich Musings (2003); Fire courts Water 2009; Neem Gita 2011; Playwright with twelve plays published and Performed. Autism Advocate and Pioneer in the file of Drama for Autism. Chairman VELVI www.velvi.org



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Death_of_a_tiger_-_insect_road_kill_-_tiger_butterfly.JPG

AOPHENIA

Today, by the side of the road I take every day for my morning walk, I find a dead butterfly. Its inanimate wings quivering in the cold morning breeze.

‘They live for just three days,’ you tell me over the long-distance call. I am not sure if this is factually correct and fight the urge to Google it.

‘The sky still holds traces of the night gone by,’ I whisper back into my phone.

The last few birds, stragglers I believe, dart from their perch. The road ahead dissolves into watercolours.

pause in rain

the silence between us

stretches its feet



Paresh Tiwari: Poet, artist, and editor Paresh Tiwari has been widely published, especially in the sub-genre of Japanese poetry. A Pushcart Prize nominee, he has published two widely acclaimed collections of poetry. *Raindrops chasing Raindrops*, his latest collection of haibun was the recipient of the ‘Touchstone Distinguished Book Awards – 2017’. Paresh is the serving haibun editor of the literary magazine *Narrow Road*, a tri-annual publication.



LUCK, BLIND AND VEILED

with mocking hand,
to danger and doubt
tha sets up the overpraised.

Never have prizes
obtained calm peace,
care on care weighs
them down, an

fresh storms vex their souls.

Great kingdoms drahn

by their own weight,
an luck gives way 'neath
burden of herself.

Sails preppers with favouring breezes
fear blasts too strongly;
tower which rears its head
in the clouds is brayed by rain.

Whatever Luck raises up,
she lifts but to bring down.
Modest outlook has longer life.

Happy them as is content
with common lot,
with safe breeze
hug shore, and, afeard

to trust their skiff
to bigger sea,
with modest oar
keeps close to land.



Paul Brookes: I am a writer residing in Wombwell, England. I work as shop assistant. I have contributed to various anthologies. I have also published five poetry books. Forthcoming is another poetry collection called Ghost Holiday (Alien Buddha Press, 2018). My book “Please Take Change” was published by Cyberwit recently.



A STRANGE TALE

The tree stood hundreds of years undisturbed
Deep in the Hertfordshire wood
Old and gnarled its trunk was wide
Waiting for something good

A young child walking discovered this spot
Secret to the outside chase
And stared a long while at this ancient tree
And a hole near the base

The child climbed inside though cramped
Into a chamber no harm

Alive with secret lights in the wood

Offering comfort and calm

The hole shrunk in size to the size of a fist

And the child cried wild

But a voice calmly spoke in the head

Do not fear me child

I offer you immortal life free from care or pain

You offer me something good

Cleansing my old twisted roots and trunk

Unadulterated, innocent food

No cried the child, this is wrong you are bad

I am not at all for your food

You must free me or the woodsman's axe

Will cut you down real good

Those words stung the tree, it had misjudged the child
How could it get it so wrong
These humans are strange suffering all of their pain
And their lives not at all so long

The hole grew in size and the tree spat the child
The child turned a face
And stared a long while at this ancient tree
And a hole near the base

The tree stood hundreds of years more undisturbed
Deep in the Hertfordshire wood
Old and gnarled its trunk was wide
Waiting for something good

|



Late Philip G. Bell: He was born in West London and became a professional in the field of vibration and acoustics. He was awarded a Fellowship of the Society of Environmental Engineers. He has written poetry, short stories and a children's novel. He also founded The Young Poet Society. He has published a novel, "The Elfin Child." He was diagnosed with terminal Motor Neuron Disease and died in 2015.



RIKSHAW WALA

"Ae Rikshaw daadao" goes the call

Hey! Rikshaw wait as he waits,

Passengers hop on to the high seat

sometimes the Rikshaw wala carries

the passengers who can't climb assuring and promising
safety

"Ae Rikshaw wala daadao"

Arduously he pulls the heavy cart

bearing the weight of the vehicle

and the weight of the passengers

sweltering in the hot sun

also riding down rainy roads

"Ae Rikshaw wala daadao"

I remember my childhood days

riding down with my Grandpa

alongside busy taxis and trams

halting at mishti dokaans(sweet shops)

relishing Langchaas and chom choms

"Ae Rikshaw wala daadao"

Whenever you think you are tired

working or lifting weights

think of the Rikshaw wala who smiles

wearing a gamcha towel around his head and a dhoti
around his waist

happily pulling the heavy Rikshaw

"Ae Rikshaw wala daadao aami aschi"

Hey Rikshaw wala wait I am coming!



Pooja Suresh: Hello! I am Pooja Suresh, an upcoming Carnatic music vocalist and I perform concerts along with my sister. We sing as vocal duets and I also play the instrument Veena. I started writing as a hobby, and now, take part in various writing prompts and programs. I also recently completed a NANOWRIMO camp setting myself a goal of 10000 words and received an honorable mention for one of my poems on togetherness written for On Fire Cultural Movement. I aspire to write more and read more.



A DIVIDED HOUSE

A divided house

Can never be our home sweet home's dream

May be our feelings are like that of a joint family getting
disjointed every now and then

A quick fix that enjoins everything except broken hearts.

Let our love be like the matter

Which is neither created nor destroyed

Simply changes form

Your tongue becomes words

Preceded by feelings

But always go by heart, not by tongue

Feel for whom it beats

Let us accept each other as we are

We are just bundles of words

We are just chemicals

Secretion from the adrenaline all that matter.

Not necessarily the sky will look blue to both of us

The same moon that weaves dream for me may burn your
entire being

Grasses may be greener for others

But for me just a patch to graze to satiate hunger!

Let us meet somewhere

Partings long way to go

Concrete buildings do crack

But sprouts too green seedling!

What matters is the survival instinct, let that be in life or in
love!!



Prahallad Satpathy: He hails from the Balangir district of Odisha (India). He is a bilingual poet. He writes both in Odia and English. So far he has published three anthology of poetry in Odia. His poems have been published in national anthologies like Scaling heights and international anthologies like Global Anthology on Peace and Harmony, Happy Isle, Feelings International, etc.



MY UNIQUE ID:

I just knew, i was different,
From normal people,
I lacked a lot of things,
All the senses bashed up,
A blob of mud given the semblance of a girl,
A lazy eye manifested in no time,
The nose went dead from oversensitivity to stimuli,
The ear cuffing introduced me to deafening silence,
Sunlight brought on rashes,
Too idealistic for my own good,
I tried to trace my uniqueness,

And i found answers most dumbfounding..
All the physical maladies followed the dictum -
As you sow, so shall you reap,
Doing my various 'anda cell' times all together,
'Cos time running out to make amends,
To have a clean slate,
For the advanced teachings,
Genetics now, determined my origins from the seven
African sisters,
Impregnated by beings from Orion,
Many masters, many lives,
Each revelation hard-earned,
Walking the plank, hard work,
One is guided how to free oneself,
But the task of unchaining is our lookout,
One day I shall be one with the five elements;
They have patience!

The splintered mirror will jell back soon into a beautiful whole,

We all will meld together soon!



Pratima Apte: She is a poet residing in Pune, India. She is a homemaker, recently turned grandmother! She used to write sporadically in the Pune edition's Women's page of the Indian Express. She loves reading and writing, and words are her world.



She loves you

She wins you by her unconditional love.

She rules over the world of love.

She has the power to change the you in you.

Love her

Respect her.



Praveen Ranjit: He is a creative writer who gets inspiration from nature to social issues and enjoys writing poems on love, life, compassion, happiness, human relations nature's beauty etc. At a very young age he developed his writing skills, published poems in various anthologies and periodicals and received many awards of excellence. He was a professor in the Department of Commerce, St. Albert's college, Kochi, Kerala from 1981 to 2014.



A MOMENT'S SONG

Let me fall in love with the open field,
Let me fall in love with the wild wind,
Let me fall in love with the starry nights,
Let me embrace the green woods,
Where my heart can sing
the song of solitude happily!

Let me fall in love with the crescent moon
Let me fall in love with the rainbow hues
Let me find a place to ride on the green fields of heaven
Where my mind can rest for a while!

Let me fall in love with the tall trees and flowers
Let me fall in love with the pleasant summer
Let me kiss the fallen leaves of dusky autumn
Let me run through the green paddy fields
Where my heart can sing the season's welcoming song
For the new born grains.

Let me fall in love only for once
On the banks of mighty Brahmaputra
Let me fall asleep in the lap of green
Taking my last breath.



Preety Bora: I am a poet residing in India, Assam, in a small city called "Golaghat ". I have contributed to various anthologies and also edited one bilingual anthology of poems. Nature is my greatest inspiration. I love to paint my word amidst the beauty of nature.



EPIGRAMMATA

Black tea, a new day dawns. Trees dice
the sunlight turning blinding white
into playful delight. The soft tinkles
of the anklets on your feet: is silver's

beauty still in its cold shine? The heart
amuses itself in teaching what it never
understood. Stained-glass window shadows
on the floor paint a fresco: nature also

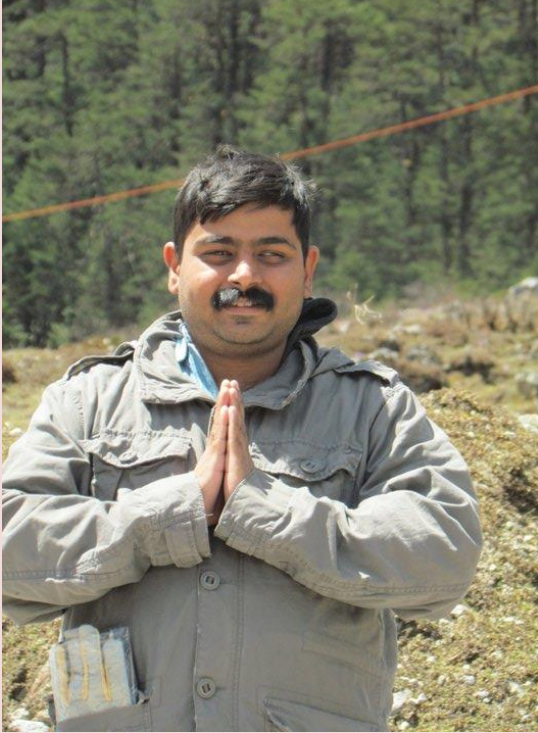
makes chameleons that contrast with her
butterflies. Smileys on the screen, this
heart enchants itself with your imagined
smile. They're sodium chloride, but by

what chemistry do tears wash away sorrow?

What am I - a body and brain, products of
carbon concatenation chemistry hurtling
into nothingness. I live on coffee and

black depression, neither water nor fire
touch now, of my shell what is left to hurt?

Few thing delight one as fried maida and
petty triumph; my memories have erased you.



Raamesh Gowri Raghavan: I am a writer residing in Thane, India. I work as freelance copywriter. I have contributed to various anthologies. I have also published poems in many magazines and poetry anthologies. I was felicitated at Amaravati Poetic Prism 2016 for writing poems in 11 different languages.



EMOTIONS BESPEAK...

Emotions are spontaneous, easy

Pristine, coming from recesses of heart

A great treasure.....

Never an iceberg

or static exerting pressure

But like a gurgling stream

They encompass

Kith and Kin and strangers

Soothing and drenching

At times, they move one to tears

Hard to fight back them

And they spill out.

Some lock them up

Others bury deep down

And forget all seemingly

But they warm the

cockles of our heart

In isolation. And ...

We smile, smile and smile...



Rachna Jain: Dr. Jain has a PH.D in Chemistry. She lives in Muzaffarnagar (UP), India. Her hobbies include reading and compsing poems.



IN SEARCH OF A THEME

Other side of closed wall,
still your moorings are
inside; like Ping-Pong ball;
pushing to realm of fear-ridden
fish weltering in a tub,
water receding out slowly,
aridity? call it uncertainty?
Like musketeers with ration card
In front of food suppliers, their
morrow bleak, hungered children ,
wait for dad's return with three
bags full of stuff and suffice in both

their looks cropped up sudden.

Struggle for survival: mapping the road?

Server down, making many waiting
in endless queue, your train or flight
will not wait for you, on line transaction
for medical bill, taking patient where?
big bazaar's billing counters go awry,
sweat and dust falling in dusk,
call it pitfall in technology?

me drawing circle,

Stuffing many a theme.



Radhamani Sarma: I am a poet, short story writer, residing in Chennai, India. I am a retired professor of English. I have contributed to various anthologies. I have also published my own poetry collections. I am also a reviewer and critic, and have contributed critical essays on living writes, and am a blogger too.



LIVING WITH INFIDELITY

Disown bodies

Disown tea rituals

Live outside every temptation to ask

Tune out of conversations

Be deaf to hints

Function even at muted levels

Breathe in air but not scents

Sell all albums to the raddiwala one at a time

Change the photos in their glass frames

Be ready

Be gone

before you have to go



Reena Prasad: She is a poet/writer from India, currently living in Sharjah (United Arab Emirates). Her poems have been published in several anthologies and journals, e.g., The Copperfield Review, First Literary Review-East, Angle Journal, Poetry Quarterly, Lakeview International Journal etc. She is also the Destiny Poets UK's Poet of the year for 2014 and one of the editors of The Significant Anthology released in July 2015. More recently, she was adjudged second in the World Union Of Poet's competition, 2016. She writes at Butterflies Of Time.



HOSPITAL

sun

is an ulcer

that

never

heals.

moon

is a hole

punctured

by a dog's

howl

rain

is an incurable

disease

winds speak

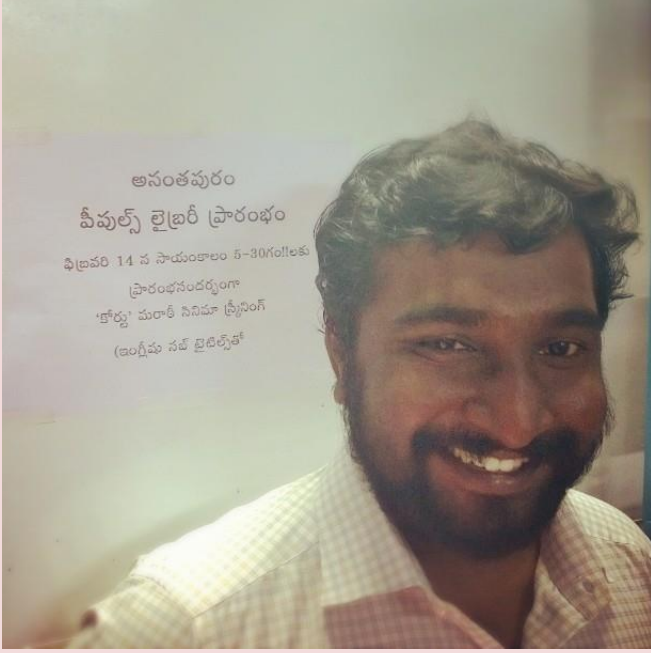
the clairvoyant language

of doctors

leaves fall

like the last words

of dying



Rohith: He is a poet and a medico from Andhra Pradesh, writing poetry since 7 years. His poetry has been published in various online magazines, and has been acknowledged and complimented by various senior poets.



PAINTING IN A JAR

not quite certain

the give and take point of reference,
comfortably unsure of the smooth water-flow

the elastic simplicity of colors untamed,

unaware

this painting

intently begs to be imagined
transformed into its new finality

eternal glass imprisonment



Robert Feldman: I am a writer and painter residing in Port St. Lucie, Florida. I own and operate a college test preparatory company. I have also published several poems and short stories in booklets, anthologies, and magazines, both hard copy and online.



TWELVE RED ROSES

This morning I trespassed
My own beautiful garden
And cut two dozens
Of red roses just for you!

Thinking of you my love
And hoping you would come by,
I carefully displayed these roses
In my decorated living room
Along with twelve candle lights,

A bottle of old wine
And the music set,
Ready to softly play!

Here is an honest offer
You can't possibly refuse
When you definitely know
How much love I feel for you!
Come on my darling, hurry,
The roses and I wait for you!



Romeo della Valle: Born in a beautiful island named Quisqueya or Hispaniola and from Italian and Spanish parents and coming to America very young with a goal, mainly, to succeed in life and be happy. I am a man with a Vision and a clear mission: 'To spread my message of Love an Peace throughout the World and if my poetry can touch a single soul in the World, then I would gladly die leaving my clear footprints behind!



ONE MAN AT HIS MACHINE

peering into the false light
of the screen
thinking about the bottle
and the hangover the next day,
how things must be dealt with
on an intimate level,
how there is no one else
and therefore no one
else to blame,

able to see his sickness
which only makes things worse
and he thinks of “the kid”
the young one with promise
just starting out,
he worries for him in away
he has never worried about himself,
wishes “the kid” would do something else,
something that is enjoyable and
brings comfort instead of this;
sitting alone in the dark
banging out words by the false light
of a dying screen.



Ryan Quinn Flanagan: He is a Canadian-born author residing in Elliot Lake, Ontario, Canada, with his wife and many mounds of snow. His work can be found both in print and online in such places as: Evergreen Review, The New York Quarterly, Setu, The Poet Community, Red Fez, and The Oklahoma Review.



WOUNDS

(continued from March issue)

After some moments of silently staring at the wind tear banana leaves, he continued...

“It’s good to have some goats and cows at home... We don’t have enough space to take care of them. Otherwise, we too could have them here, is it not?” he casually asked her.

When he said this, he felt her eyes falling to the black depths of fear and her face come under the shadow of an unknown fear all of sudden.

“No... Noooo... No need to buy cows...” she replied, with sorrow and nervousness.

“Aye... Don’t panic! We are not buying a big cow; if we do, we will opt for a calf, a lovely little calf,” he tried to keep her in the situation.

“No dad, even a calf, please don’t... I am afraid of them,” she sat closer to him and caught hold of his hands.

“Okay, if you don’t want to, it’s okay. We won’t buy. I thought you would like my proposal... Mostly, all children like them, and that’s why I asked you.”

“mmm.... ya, me too, I like them, but.... no, we won’t.”

“Then, why? What are you scared of?” he asked.

“That... mm ...I...” she hesitated.

“Yes honey, tell me, what are you scared of?”

“Yyyy... That... when I see cows or hear their mooing sound, I get nervous... I feel disturbed and distressed.”

“But why dear?” he asked.

“Well... that...” she was looking around with big eyes popped up and full of fear, as if someone else might hear her.

“Yap, dad, didn’t we see, last night the in TV news, about someone lynching a man and beating an old man to death? madly shouting mob, something about cows. I think it’s all

because of cows that the mob killed them. After that, when I see cows or hear them, I feel sorrowful and scared.”

“Why did they killed the poor man and hang him?”

“How does a pretty poor animal become an icon for a group of people? Cows, aren’t they for all?”

“No, dad. Please we don’t want a cow in our home.”

He sat frozen, unable to say anything to her questions. He kept patting her softly.

He felt as if he was drowning in a darkened deep valley of dilemma, and was so disturbed. His thoughts had become like an illusion of never-ending mesh...

Yes, in a way, she was right, but how? All the love and harmonious life that was gained through the generations would be ruined? My God, where are we headed? Where will it reach?”

Even he is frustrated by the unanswerable questions.

She sat closer to him and rested her head on his lap.

While patting her hair, a smouldering pain erupted somewhere within him, slowly expanding.

In the moments of absolute silence, murky neighbourhood sounds of mooing and barking from far distances deepened

her fear. She raised her head and looked at him and tightened her hold on his forehands.

Behind the curtains of December mist and cool wind, he stepped down into the corridors of a tired half sleep.

In the midways of a hallucinated dream, suddenly he woke up, as if he was being pierced all over his body. He was sweating and looking everywhere, gawking and fearful. Within seconds, he quickly took her and went inside the home and closed the door.

“Oh, why do you close the door so early today?” his wife asked from the kitchen.

“That Balan master, your friend was calling you for some time. Are you not going to the club tonight?”

He skulked and looked out through a half-open window, and then closed it.

“Nno, I’m not going anywhere. We can’t trust anyone nowadays,” he told his wife.

She stood like a statue, as she didn’t understand anything.

“You go and put off all the light and close all windows. We can’t trust anyone, yes we can’t,” he told her.

He himself put off the light in the front porch, and locked the main door.

His wife took their child from his hands, looked at him, and asked, “What happened? What’s up?”

He was repeating from a half-conscious mind, “Yes, we can’t; we can’t trust,” and gropingly walked to the grave of darkness.



Saleem Raza (Saleem Kattuchola): A freelance writer and painter from Kerala, India, working in Doha as Admin Manager. Writes short stories, poems and travelogues in various regional language magazines (Malayalam), periodicals with a pen name as ‘Saleem Kattuchola’, and used to write English poems in International Magazines.



(UN)LOVED

She was his light in a dark world,
A ray of hope when all was in despair,
She brought peace to his chaotic mind,
She defied all, and gave him a new life.
It felt to him that a companion was born,
Who helped escape from the world forlorn,
She brought love into his unloved existence,
Transformed him into someone else.
It was the first time, he experienced this,

When she was near, undefined bliss,
He was hers with his whole heart,
She was his from the start.



Samixa Bajaj: I am a student of class 9 and absolutely love my books (excluding textbooks). I enjoy sketching and dancing besides poetry, which I write based on my moods and likes.



I WANT

I want

To be the sweetest mistake

Of your life

For which you won't regret

Nor will try to rectify.

The mistake

that will curve your lips,

with an effervescent smile.

That will endure,

miles after miles.

I want

To be the joyous mistake

Of your life.

Even in tenebrosity

You will embrace me tight.

I want

To be with you forever.

If not in life, at least

In mistakes that

We made together...



Sanhita Sinha: She is a native of Tripura. She is a teacher and bilingual poet. Her poems have been published in different national and international anthologies, journals and magazines. Apart from writing, she is actively engaged in cultural activities too. She is a regular artiste of television and radio too.



<http://www.rightattitudes.com/2010/09/26/nine-easy-rules-to-avoid-being-criticized/>

GOOD TIME

As soon as I learnt
the difference between humans,
between humans and poetry
between humans and critics,
I was attacked by them.

The moment I discerned
between height and the lack of it,
colour and the dearth of it,
silence and din,
I was attacked again.

A good time to attack
is when one learns about differences.



Santosh Alex: I am a writer, residing in Berhampore, Murshidabad, India. I work as Assistant Professor. I have contributed to various e-journals and anthologies. I have also published three books. Website: www.abusiddik.com



THE NIGHT STIRS

Do you see glimpses of that mysterious looking fort over there?

Tourists come from far and wide, unscared,

but curious to know more,

going into raptures capturing so-called exotic pictures.

Once they reach their homes, they will flaunt

those pics of this haunted fort, twittering in a frenzy of excitement.

But only the ancient trees surrounding it
know the sad story of those two souls
lying quiescent inside the fort.

Unwanted.

From a nearby school,
kids' screechy refrains evoke the cacophony of a crowded
aviary.

Draped in soothing sounds of evening ragas,
the fort is a thing of eternal beauty.

Shades of a twilight melancholy grip it tight,
and it suddenly has a petrified air.

Night falls!

an owl calls and then a pair glides out of the ramparts.

Holding hands, they sit on the stone bench outside
and gaze up at the sky.

The branches of one loyal tree hovers protectively over the
fort,

trying to reach down and sing to them of good things,
of flowers and petals, of hares hopping around,
of squirrels chasing each other in spurts of fun,
kids running along the winding river,
and that fat old pigeon strutting about
with an ataxic gait .

Her big, blue twinkling eyes are mirrored in his eyes,
but his tears wash out the reflection.

There is some stirring in the shrubs,
a nocturnal insect or bird foraging for grub, perhaps?

Frogs break into a threnody of croaks.

They shudder, experiencing a sense of deja vu
Reverie broken, hand in hand, they glide back,
to wait for the next night's rendezvous.



Santosh Bakaya: I am a poet, novelist, and essayist and Ted speaker, residing in Jaipur, India, working as a teacher. I have contributed to various anthologies and have also published novels and edited poetry/story anthologies. My latest novel is 'A Skyful of Balloons'.



It was him and it was me

That was our little story

He was my buddy

Every time I was upset he was so very cuddly

I left for a while

He hated that time

He was alone and so lonely

But when I came back he forgave me and was finally happy

No human would ever give me such a welcome
I am a hero in his eyes said an ode that he'd sung
God made the best boy for me
My little world, my doggie!!



Sara Bubber: I am studying Human Development from MSU, Baroda. In my free time (sometimes even during classes) I love looking out of the window especially when it rains. I love reading, listening to music and spending time with my dogs. My dogs are my favourite people in the world.



LISTEN...

Shhh

Listen

Sit on that rock

Listen to the song

Of the streams

It's beautiful!

Shhh

Listen

To the call of the wild

From the far away woods

It's amusing to all!

Shhh

Listen

To the sweet music

Of the rustling leaves

How beautiful it is!

Shhh

Listen

To the singing birds

All flocked on that tree

It's music to your ears!

Shhh

Listen

Quietly

To your own heartbeat
It's singing beautiful melodies
It's music to your soul!

How mystifying
Everything is on this earth!



Sarala Balachandran: I reside in Kolkata, West Bengal, with my family. My poems have been published in national and international anthologies. I am a contributing poet for Different Truths. I write free verses.



GO VOTE

Vote?

What's the point it's the same old trash

That was churned and dumped five years ago?

What has changed for the street dweller,

Who still dwells in his habitat all time low?

Why should I waste my time and temper,

On choosing the next wanton first fellow?

Vote?

Why should I hope and despair again,

For what's democracy but a lost war's broken byplane

Why should I be a solo voice, or act sane,
And vote in an election of the slayer versus the slain

Vote.

'Cos if you don't vote someone else will,
Deftly add zeros to corruption's hefty bill,
The criminal will ink choices with a bloodstained quill,
The nation will be pounded in the wealthy man's mill...

Sinister plots will surface at the polling booth,
Multifaceted voters will impersonate very truth,
Rotten old voices would make decisions for the youth,
Money and gab will crown a leader uncouth.

These bad roads, empty granaries and lack of common
sense

Those tainted decisions and what happened thence
Need not prevail over an informed voter conscience
For each vote counts, it is democracy's very essence

Vote

For this ink will someday undo a failed dynasty's ill spent
anger

Vote

For this ink is your final tryst with destiny's long forgotten
clangor

Vote

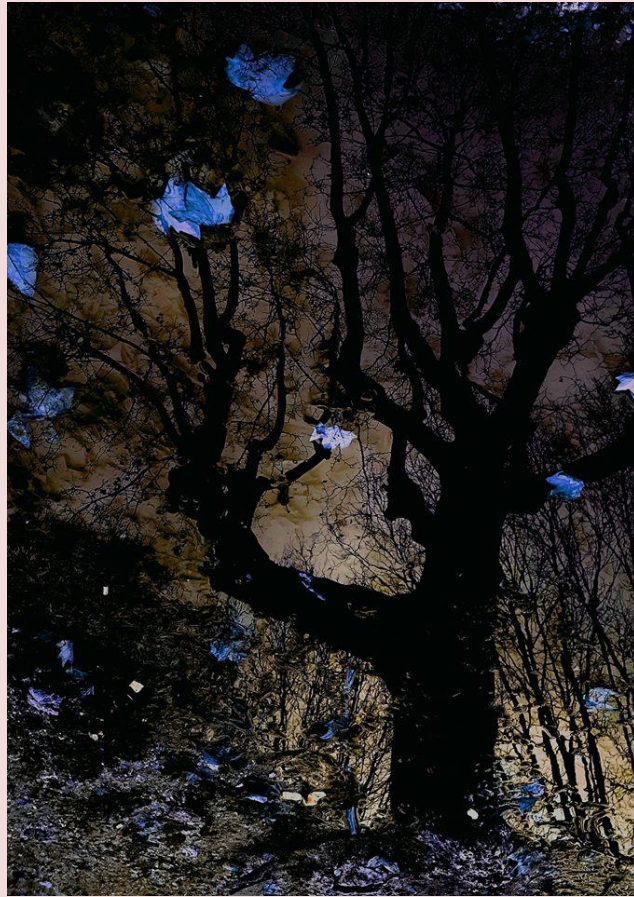
For this ink can silence for good that meaningless empty
power clamour

Vote

For only this ink will help sieve out the desired kosher from
the shammer.



Saranya Francis: She is a multilingual poet with published poems in English, Hindi and Tamil. She has to her credit two anthologies of poetry titled Ambedo and Being Purple. Her poetry has been widely published online. She is a dance and music enthusiast and a linguist. She is the recipient of the Bharat Award for Literature (2018), Rabindranath Tagore Award (2017), National Chanting Bards Award (2017). Saranya is the Secretary of ZAV Foundation, an NGO working for the cause of education and women empowerment. She is currently a freelance life skills trainer and also teaches in a satellite based education company.



OF NOTES AND FEATHERS

In the Age of Aquarius
the stars carry a pail
of water sloshed
with black liquid gold
and two fish
for good measure
to honor the martyrs

that have fallen
from their wombs
and their skies
and their crosses

and all the birds
are blue
but not in sadness

they carry the gravest
concerns of life
on their wings

five hawks
and two planes
form a seven
in the gray

smear'd on wet leaves
of the trees
with their smog
and their smoke
and their fountain
of youth

springing eternal
singing inspired
shining resplendent
as the cycle recurrent
shifts in phase
to shutter shock
the signs of turning



Scott Thomas Outlar: He hosts the site 17Numa.com where links to his published work can be found. His sixth collection of poetry, *Of Sand and Sugar*, was released by Cyberwit in April 2019.



Marc Guillaumat: He was born in 1954 in Paris; he is a photographer and scrivener.



MYTHS

Sometimes we follow myths,
and consider it reality,
weaves myriad sense of emotions,
dreams and aspiration,
associated with it.

But myths are myths,
far away from reality,
and when the myth is broken,
then it's too late,
nothing is left,
just a breaking up of

dreams and aspirations
which are never fulfilled,



Shamenaz: I reside in Allahabad. I am a freelance writer, passionate reader, blogger, and poet, with many published poems in E-journals & magazines in India. I have presented papers in India and abroad. I am in the Editorial board of journals: Literary Miscellany, Cyber Literature, Research Access, Expression, The Context & IJRHS (Jordan). I am the Guest Editor of 'The Context' Volume 2, issue 3. I have served as a Chairperson of Women Cell of my College, AIET & Cultural Incharge, AIET.



<https://www.etsy.com/sq-en/listing/646222544/crows-by-shore-original-watercolor>

CROWS & WAVES

I sit on a sandy place up high
guarding the coast with a curious eye.

Waves, like soda fizzed from a binge,
play slow games of courage and cringe.

Dancing wet crows come testing the waters,
cawing and hopping, and wooing the waves.

From my high place, I capture it all,
the show and the grit; the mighty, the small.



Shreekumar Varma: He is a poet, novelist, and playwright residing in Chennai, India. He is now a full-time writer. He has contributed to various anthologies. He has received the R. K. Narayan Award for Creative Writing.



RESPECT

it comes from within

from the heart of your heart

as a feeling of adoration

when an institution, a set of values

an individual inspire the best in you

to come out in reverence

it is always spontaneous

never demanded

comes as a response to

your behaviour and attitude
the way you conduct yourself
the values you hold, goals you pursue
the means you adopt
respect of others

it is never
blind acceptance and reverence
always subject to the common good
and collective conscience
always from the heart
a genuine feeling without having
an ounce of hypocrisy in it
institutions come and go, values, beliefs and priorities keep
on changing
but respect to an individual, institution or set of values,
firmly grounded and in conformity with common good
hardly goes away



Smruti Ranjan Mohanty: He is a multilingual poet, essayist and writer. He is a published poet and writer and a featured poet of PENTASI B World Friendship Poetry. His writings include essays, short stories, poems and novels which are published in newspapers and in various national and international magazines, journals and anthologies. Working as Finance Officer in Govt of Odisha, he writes extensively on life, its beauty and intricacies which are widely acclaimed.



INEQUALITY

O' God has created equally his creation,

Then why there dwells so much discrimination?

O' who knows at the time of birth, what is one's religion?

Ah! It is the world only that plants such thorn!

O' all around there is partiality and inequality,

Race, color, caste matters, alas! no humanity,

Rich are considered to be God, poor as slaves,

White are loved, black skinned face hate!

Whether it is any professional field or playground,
Partiality has dominated burying equality all around,
Even at religious places devotees have to cross wires of
partiality,
Patient lying on death bed is treated based on status of
society!

O' this body is soil, will get mingled into soil only,
Only thing true here is the pure and pious soul holy,
O' humanity where art thou? Why doing such injustice?
Why spreading this inequality engulfing all harmony and
peace?



Sonia Gupta: Dr.Sonia, a dentist by profession, is a well-known name in English and Hindi literature. She is an established author of four English and Two Hindi poetry books. Her many poems and stories have been placed in various anthologies, magazines and newspapers. She has been awarded with various awards in Hindi literature and won many poetry competitions organised by various literary groups on facebook. Besides being a poetess and doctor, she is fond of painting, singing, cooking, designing, knitting and teaching. Her many projects are coming soon.



Everything we believed in once is turning oxymoron

Our democracy turning into tyranny

Nationalism turning into jingoism

Religion turning into fundamentalism

Education turning into indoctrination

War turning into profit-making ventures

Press turning to be bootlicker

Lies turning into truth and truths are shying to preserve

Oppressed and deprived turning into naxalites

Humanity turning into animal kingdom

Planet earth is turning black from blue

God, I was searching for heaven here

God, I was believer of utopia

God, all I am seeing around is dystopia

God, you are our last hope against all hopelessness

God, please turn human into human.



Subhash Chandra Rai: Nonconformist by birth, wearing emotions on sleeve. Enjoying path less travelled and being myself.



WITCHES TALE

Merlin's beard! Isn't that what they say
To show surprise the Wiccan way
Wicked wicked witches all the way
Weaving black magic all through the day

The blackened cauldron thick of potion
Rat's tail owl's tongue an ounce of blood sets the motion
A tapering wobbly hat a twitching hooked nose
Rabbit's teeth a hare lip images so very gross

Atop a broom

They go va va vroom

A talon for a nail and a breath of hiss

They seal the deal with a devilish kiss

Now comes the complex wiccan tale

Of normal normal human's wail

A devious tool to brand and tell

At one go hit and sell

How frail is the human mind

Unable to decode their different kind

Branding clairvoyant Joan of Arc

Raving ranting a witch is a shark

In some medieval towns of modern times

To deprive the widows of properties prime

Paraded with blackened face called an evil "daayan"*

They are made to eat feces and kicked in the groin

They are held guilty of unproven demonic deeds

On shadowy suspicion their paths do lead

Holding others imagination spellbound

This hare is hounded to the ground

Burnt on a stake

Stoned to death

Chained and whipped

Their tongues clipped

Mysterious Hecate couldn't forecast

Gerald Gardener's pentacle couldn't get past

The mischief mongers Houdini act

Contemptuous purposeful poisonous act

A beautiful woman supposedly bewitches

A temptress always casts her magic spells

A fearless daring woman worth her salt

A woman a woman it's always her fault

Witches are not born they are made

Accused persecuted in troubled water they wade

Perceptions and lack of understanding degrade

A witch is every woman with foresight and a strong head.

Note: Daayan-witch



Sudeshna Mukherjee: She is an Economics Major. She is a poet, short story writer and painter. Her book of poems “Meanderings of the Mind” has been published. Many of her poems have been published in national and international anthologies, magazines and e-publications.



EXCLUSIVE EDITION

Every morning
steams of thought
loaded in mind's locomotive
dare cross
their marked slot
let sparks flow incessant
like a rain fed brook
in a hinterland

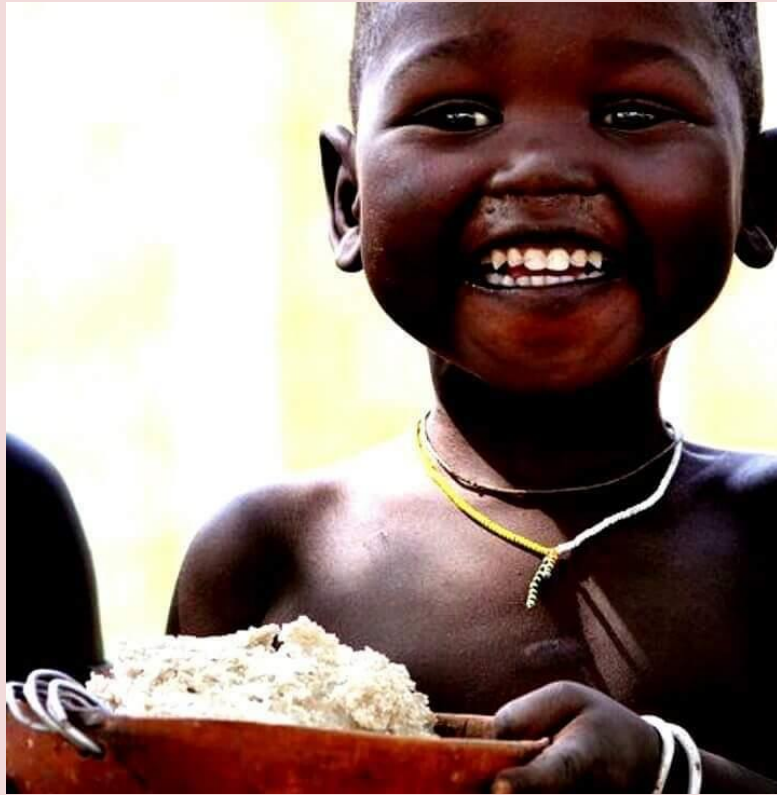
Resolute in mission
they opt for subtle navigation

wheeze past pause and comma
in linear motion
take to swirl
at times
to showcase presentation

They start with a whimper
puff whistle and move
catch up pace
gather momentum
as day advances
look for the right blend of
feeling and emotion
to dole out an exclusive edition.



Sujata Dash: I am a poet, residing in Bhubaneswar, India. I work as a Banker. I have contributed to various anthologies. I have also published one poetry anthology.



LET'S COME FORWARD TOGETHER

Near the stairs of shopping malls,
In front of the closed glass of cars,
At the temples and even door to door
They are found everywhere.

What is the guilt of these innocent orphans that
In every step they get the reward of beating, rebuke or
abusive language?

Each flesh and blood has the right to live life comfortably
Then why have they been suffering so mercilessly?

The dusty road, under the open sky

They get bound to have shelter after all day's hunger as
well torture,

Isn't it the curse of the civilized society dear?

Hence let's come forward to uproot

This evil thing

Or the premature death, diseases will snatch these
innocent creatures

And we would be treated then as beast devoid of any
human feelings.



Sujata Paul: She is a bilingual poetess belonging to Agartala presently. She is a teacher by profession but writing is her passion. She has published her solo poetry book 'Whisper of My Souls' and many of her poems and articles have been published in different national and international anthologies. Her second book 'Sarang', collection of poems has been published at International Conference of Multi-Disciplinary Research in Kolkata on 2nd March, 2019. Besides writing, she likes to travel and listen music too. She wants to help the street orphans too.



IF I WOULD BE THERE

WITH U

If I would be always

There with you,

How could you imagine

What life would be with me

And how could I feel

What life is without you.

If I would be there with you

How would you tell me

Often I think "if this moment
You would be with me,
What would happen in lieu."

If I would be always there with you
How would you feel what
Is your life is without me,
And what I'm missing in my life
Without you.

If I would be there with you
What would you crave for!
Staying in a position higher than high
What would be the reason of your sigh .

If I would be there with you
What would make you feel poetic

And perhaps in the corner of my eyes
There would not be any drop of dew.

If I would be there with you
Perhaps would not be any grievance
But your life would centered
In only a few.

If I would be there with you
Would you feel the same for me
As now you do?

How would you feel your life
Is somewhere incomplete and
how would I feel,

In all my smile
Hidden pain and strength is you!



Sumana Bhattacharjee: She is an English poetry writer from India. She was born in Kolkata and brought up there. Music ,poetry and drama are her passions and her poems have been published in various anthologies and blogs . She has published a book of poems. She has a poetry group of her own and she is working as an admin of three poetry groups . Poetry is her lifelong passion and she wants to continue it until her last breath.



PURPOSE

I am a bird today.

A wader,

Dredging the shallows

With my talons

(Wrinkled, scaly and razor sharp)

Disturbing tadpoles,

Insects, larvae and yummy plantae.

Neck snaking with speed and grace.

Hooked spoon that nature carved

With an artists' eye to colour and shape—

Beak, scooping with precision.

I stretch my wings on a whim;
Wind flirts through my waxed feathers.
On a sigh I fly,
A hop and a skip,
I wade slush once more.
Swooping on my food,
Eating, gulping, defecating.
My flock mingling with others
Living life on instinct alone.
No judgement,
No aspirations.
Created in all its glory,
My body
Purpose
Ingest and egest.



Sumita Dutta: I am a publisher, poet, and novelist residing in Chennai, India. I work as a teacher, writer, digital designer, and publisher. I have contributed to various online sites and anthologies. I have also published a novel and contributed to three print anthologies. My publishing firm is three books old, having launched my debut novel *The Heart of Donna Rai*, Poet Geeta Varma's debut book of poetry *To My Violin*, and Sri Chinmoy Biswas's *An Overview of Spirituality*.



***I love you as certain dark things are to be loved, in secret,
between the shadow and the soul ~ Pablo Neruda***

I loved you for the raw fleshy glory
of forbidden desires, the fiery ardour in your eyes,
bodies fading into fusion, a frightening compulsion,
sometimes a sweet surrender, mi amor, mi amor!
My inside is full of a hollow that grows inside me
filling that secret space where only you could enter
and the hope of true love seeded. Now
the pregnant silence of the soul speaks of stillbirth.

Dark things overshadowing past shadows,
awaken my dark feminine,
but this dark medicine
cannot be drunk this sunlit morning

Although I hate to say this, I am obsessed
as I call out to you, my long lost lover.
You left me at a place of no return
with wounds on me that still need healing.

The love I harbour for you saddens me
my tears falling into life's darkness
as I carry on loving you
torn between the shadow and the soul.



Sunil Kaushal: I am a poet residing in Pune, India, a retired gynecologist, now working as a writer. I have contributed to various short story and poetry anthologies. Presently I am finishing my memoirs and a poetry book to be published soon.



GO THOU TO ROME

As exhorted by a Romantic spirit

In another age, yet very relevant to these times.

Yes.

Go to Rome

And find there

a quiet and green place

where are buried

among others

two troubled souls

that upset old England long ago
and paid a heavy price for their views;
the two iconoclasts are
the beloved of readers
across time-space:
the Young Poets
Keats and Shelley
found peace
in a foreign clime
in that Sacred Spot
called the Protestant Cemetery---
a modern attraction for those
seeking history, legend and culture
in a crowded city full of ancient monuments
and other civilizational landmarks; this
resting-place where
cats prowl among the graves and
the hallowed burial ground

serves as a lingering sanctuary for the ones
searching answers to global degradation
these wandering questers
that claim to be their spiritual heirs
of these radical minds questioning official versions of grim
realities around.

Rome.

It calls---afresh.

These visitors continue to seek inspiration and energy
from the graves of these two poets
and try to fight injustices, exploitation and inequalities in a
world, not yet fully
reformed---through words renewed and recast.



Sunil Sharma: I am a writer living in suburban Mumbai, India. I work as a college principal. I have published a total of 19 books, solo and joint. I edit Setu:

<http://www.setumag.com/p/setu-home.html>



In your woods

Let me be the butterfly

Flitting from tree to tree

Filling light and colour in everything that you see!

In the silence of your stream

Let me be the ripples soft

Dancing with the sunlight and spreading it near and far!

In your earth

Let me be the rose

With roots that grow deep and petals which are soft!

To your moon

Let me be the star

Lying side by side

On sheets that are dark!



Sunita Singh: She is a bi-lingual poet and writer, writing in English and Hindi. Her poems feature in Indian and International Anthologies and e-magazines. Many of her poems have won awards on on-line forums like Kaafiya,

Poetry Planet, The Significant League etc. A few of her Hindi poems have also been turned into lyrics for private albums. She is an active member of Katha Kathan, a forum for reviving Indian languages. She lives in Delhi and is fond of travelling, music, reading. She finds inspiration from nature.



(illustrated in an acrylic painting by suzette portes san jose)

LOVE ME NOT

Love me not for what i have...i have nothing
have lost even the sole treasure i hold in my heart

Love me...for the possession of my soul's suffering
Not...the whirling world of my beginnings to start

Love me not for what i am...i am no one
the pride i bestowed can't stand to be my pedestal

Love me...though forsaken as life will soon be gone
Not...the perfection condemning good as my equal

Love me not or love me true ... i have only you
as i keep the vow of promises to have and to hold

Love me... with the wholeness of my uncanny hue
Not... myself and my being, destined that i behold

Love me not and let me live or shall let me die
but never deprive my immortality of heavens high.



Suzette Portes San Jose: She has a Bachelor of Science in Commerce from University of San Carlos Cebu City, Philippines. She was born with a passion for writing and living in her art forms. She started writing online in 2013. She now has joined 15 book anthologies from 2015 to 2018. Each of her poems is written with her painting as visuals and are now appearing internationally namely in the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, India, and the Philippines.



TERRA MATER

The wise woman with
the blue cloak
strewn with stars.

She is Mother Earth
and watches over humanity.

She has several names,
and one of them is
Terra Mater.

Terra Mater knows what every living soul needs.

They need true feelings

tears, laughter

love and hate,

Darkness, light.

Faith, hope

and most of all -

words -

poetry,

Poetry is all

about

The broken hearts

Pain

love that arises -

perishes.

Life,

reality

absurdity.

To be born

to live

to learn -

to understand

all the grand questions

about life.

Bitter tears seeks words

the unbelievable, believable,

magical human existence

beg for words.

Life and dead need words.

People need words,

need poetry.

Mother of all Mothers -

the woman with the blue cloak, strewn with stars.

She knows it all!



Svanhild Løvli: I'm a Norwegian poetess.



TWO ROADS

There are two roads in front of each home,
One roadway and the other grassy green.

The first one, like all, leads to The Rome.

The second promises through thick and thin.

But, as I've wanted to walk through the both.

Through the narrow and through the wide.

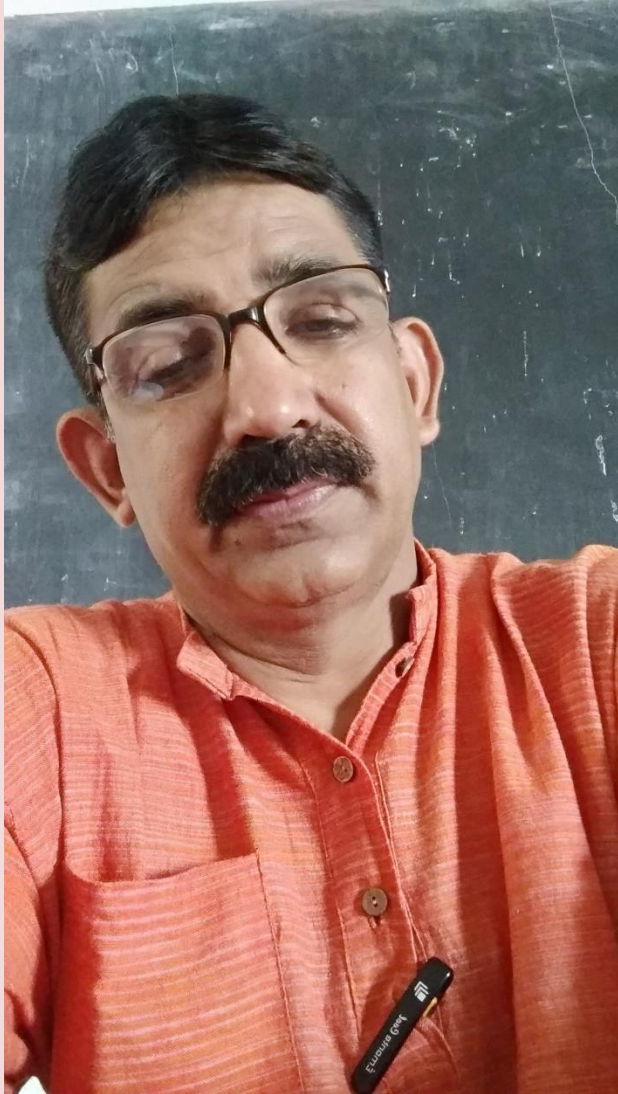
And made myself ready by vow and by oath,

To travel along the both without any guide.

The narrower one wants my legs'-nakedness,
The wider wants the touch of heavy boot.

Each one wants to feel my passion for race.
But, I don't know how to select the true route.

Puzzled we all; as I've puzzled my eyes and feet.
And waiting always for our happier retreat.



Swapan Kumar Rakshit: He is an Indian poet who lives in Bankura, West Bengal. He teaches physics for his professional needs. However, he prefers to write poems, especially sonnets. He wants to be acquainted with the universal mind through poetry.



RIVER RHYME- II

When a river dries out
The morning is a mourning
Monstrous become the days
Evenings become
Unbearably lone and long
As a civilization perishes
With all its songs

Bhagiratha, however,
Survives the carnage!

He shapes up within

You and Me

To fight bravely

For the morning sunshine

For potent day,

For tired evening and dreamy night

He sings for us

And promises us gay!



Tribhu Nath Dubey: He is currently posted in the Department of Sociology, Government Arts Girls College, Kota, as Associate Professor. He has been the Co-Editor of the Rajasthan Journal Sociology, a peer reviewed Journal. Presently, he is also working as the Secretary of Rajasthan Sociological Association. As an avid researcher, he has worked in the area of Sociology of Development, Diaspora Studies and Sociology of Literature. He loves to resort to poetry as an essential means of catharsis and ventures to express in Hindi as well as English.



THE SCENT OF A LETTER

Why did I keep in that ebony dresser?

Cached in the last drawer

On the extreme right hand corner

Under a brand new newspaper lining

Those two love letters...

They too needed to vent

My quotidian ritual

To see if they were safely aligned

In that particular angle

Where I anxiously sought them each time

Why did I not unchain them?

Let each syllable of every word

Speak to me as they did many summers ago

Committed now to memory

From every para to the Colin

They had stopped conversing with me

Greedy to hold on to their smell

I had done everything –but air them



Vandana Kumar: I am a poet, residing in New Delhi, India. I work as a Teacher. I have contributed to various anthologies.



LONGING FOR THE RAIN

Windowpane is still dry

waiting for the silvery drops

And longing to hear the rhythmic pattern of tip tap sound

How long!

How long!

It will take to come

Still in the disguise of black clouds

And in no minutes

burst into tears

To Open its heart

To heal this entire world
How come one's tears become
Another's satisfaction!
How come!
I thought in my mind
But suddenly
It started raining
To quench the thirst of this glass pane
That is so fragile
When, this glass was going to commit suicide!!
With the help of a sudden gust of wind
And with a crack sound of its breaking
It could break into pieces!
But look at this rain,
With its shivering lips
It has kissed the hot glass pane
And made it wet
With its silvery touch!



Varsha Saran: She is a homemaker but a bilingual poetess and a story writer by passion; her many poems and stories have been published in different international anthologies, ezines, magazines and newspapers .She has won many awards in writing.



My new roommate
has been complaining
about a broken side lamp,
I listen for a few minutes, agree, walk to the kitchen
to heat yesterday's rasam.

She follows me halfway,
watches me from a distance
as I check for salt
by licking the center of my palm.

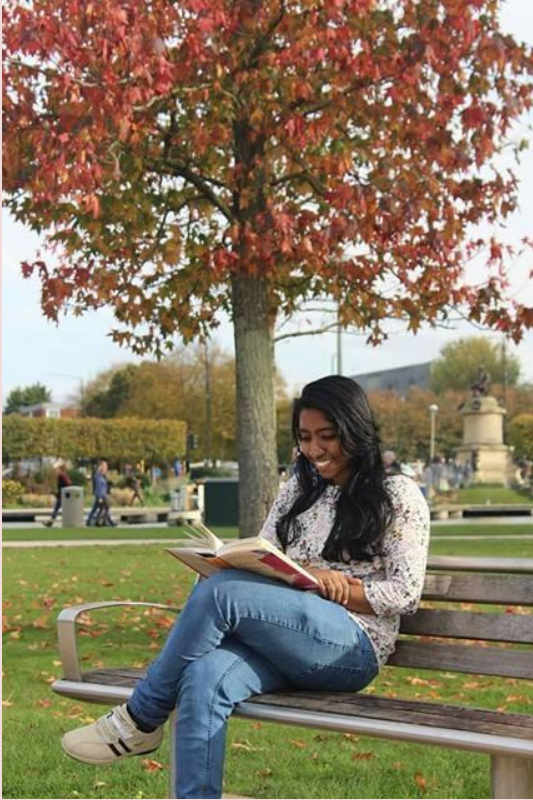
I pour it in a glass,
carefully,
counting the number of times
I have been called butter fingers.

I bring it close to my nose
inhaling the aroma of half-ground pepper,
leave the glass on the slab.

She watches my throat burn
with each sip
she takes
of the rasam
that amma taught me to make
more as a medicine than as a dish.

She smiles
knowing

the side lamp
can wait,
tonight
both of us will sleep
with the understanding
that most broken things
can be fixed by love.



Vasanthi Swetha: She is extremely passionate about the art of poetry, dance, reading and dreaming, and she believes that every poem that she writes is a result of a conversation with her soul.



AUTISM SPEAKS

Blue of tranquillity, blue of infinity,

Blue in its expansiveness, the heavenly roof overhead.

Blue, the thirst-quencher, blue of nautical expressions,

A clean feeling be blue, as is openness and freedom blue.

Blue, the dignity, a statement of royalty,

Blue of loyalty, company logos a plenty.

Blue is Ravenclaw, of oval sapphire diadem,

A manifestation upon the wearer, wisdom, wit and
learning,

A revelation of knowledge, obscure and boundless.

The esoteric colour, fifth chakra at the throat,

Vishuddha of the sixteen petalled lotus,
The expression of latent creativity, is blue.
The core of Neelakanta's compassion,
Resisting ill-wishing poison,
The tone of pure-hearted speech, essence of blue.
Blue be not just a Monday mood,
But heart-rending tears of depression be the hue,
When, out of the blue, the beyond the blues afflict,
It's the true blues of friendship that sits by
In succour, to sing away the harassing despondency blue.
Blue is the colouration for the month of April,
So light it up Blue, world, on day two,
Awareness and acceptance required of a spectrum,
Social impairment and behaviour too.
Divinity is blue, the celestial music of the flute be blue,
Blue, an egoless state of saranagathi
As my sweet Krishna is blue.



Vidya Shankar: A poet, writer, blogger, motivational speaker, mindfulness practitioner, and yoga enthusiast, residing in Chennai, India, I have been in ELT for more than two decades. I have been contributing articles to an international newspaper column as well as poetry and stories to anthologies and literary platforms. I have also published a book of poems.



THE FLOOD

From where I stand

All I see is a sea of maskless faces

Whose homes are now

Water-clogged memories in the endless rain--

Somewhere, shutters have been opened

To help dams in distress.

Landslides through people's lives--

Trees disappear overnight--

A road turns into a hungry river

With a board sticking out like a sore thumb:

"Junction Ahead. Go Slow"--

A man becomes a human bridge

As women step on his back

To climb into a rescue boat--

Hope rows, Hope whirs.

A young girl glows, carrying her dog

In a vessel, balanced

On top of her head

And a young boy, knee-deep in water,

Executes, with a smile,

A perfect reverse somersault--

Who can ever doubt again that
God is not a fisherman
In His Own Country?



Vijay Nair: I retired as an Associate Professor of English and I have contributed to various national and international anthologies. I was awarded the Reuel International Prize for Writing & Literature in the year 2016. I was the ‘Critic of the Year’ in 2016, 2017 & 2018 at Destiny Poets, UK and was also adjudged the ‘Poet of the Year’ in 2018 by the same poetry group.



MIGRATION

Some days are like this

Nothing holds

The restlessness a sunbird trapped

Against the breast cage

It is the same for you

I see it in your eyes

Your wanting to desert

To go away from the bustle

To some faraway land

To wander the streets

Listening to the babble of unknown tongues
The mercifulness of obscurity
Giving you wings
To fly down the street if need be
Or burst into song
Or simply gaze at the sand,
At the heaving water reflecting the sun
What I wouldn't give to get away!
What I wouldn't give for the pair of wings
You often sport, as I stand by the shore!
My autumn draws nigh.
I can feel the sprouting on my shoulder blades
I too shall fly South tomorrow.



Vineetha Mekkoth: I am a poet, writer, editor residing in Calicut, India. I work as Assistant State Tax Officer in the State GST Department. I have contributed to various anthologies. I have also published a poetry collection. An article published in latest issue of Malayalam Literary Survey, a Kerala Sahitya Akademi publication.



In a lonely night, when nobody is around.

Oh vulnerable heart, what is that sound?

I look here and there, for the slightest clue,

Do my dreams take a shape and become true.

Later I know this mystery of the glow

That floats in the night and thither that go.

Who sings a melody of the silent night

Who comes around when nobody's in sight.

Who comes on a wind, with roses on her wing,
And whispers in my ears, takes away my fears.

I looked around, when nobody I found.

I talked to my soul, the friend alone.

Mystery has a charm, that wouldn't do a harm.

Oh dear heart, nobody's apart.

Mysteries of this world are better unfurled.



Vivek Nath Mishra: My short stories have been published by The Hindu, Muse India, Queen mob's Teahouse, Prachya Review, Indian ruminations and many others. I currently live in Varanasi.



SONNET 99

Wrapped in white like a mummy she lay there
Not in white that symbolised purity of soul
But in white that spoke of brutality and rage
From a place that was to be a home to her
A little body on a blazing fire of vindictiveness
A few fingers and the face as a memento left
Of her past beauty burnt by a devilish soul
Fools meanwhile taking to the streets to call.

No wonder in an increasingly sickening world
The good find it hard for goodness to unfold
Sighs, curses, tears, prayers, all we are left with,

Muttering in silence, unable to bear the wrath
Those dying are for ever out of this burning hell
Leaving us, the living, to burn in an open cell.



Zulfiqar Parvez: He is the Vice Principal cum O Levels English Language Teacher, London Grace International School, Dhaka. He has done his Honours and Masters in English Language and Literature from the University of Rajshahi.



ciao! 😊