

GloMag

GLOMAG

*Monthly Online Poetry and Prose
Magazine*

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Edited and Published by Glory Sasikala

KATLIE MOKHOABANE



TITLE OF COVER PIC

Passing Love To The Next Generation

ARTIST PROFILE

I have been drawing from my room for 9 years because I was rejected by many galleries, and very few people liked my work. I have never exhibited before or been given a chance for that matter. Now it's time to prove myself.

ART PERSPECTIVE

Usually my drawings portray sadness. It's how I feel whenever I see suffering in the world.

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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DEATHS

I call my ricewallah Odiya friend
And ask for the same rickshaw puller
Who carries rice to my home
And he confirms my puller's death.

I go to a panchayat member for his stamp
A crowd surrounds the harrowing man
His brother-in-law has died, falling
From a roof and his widowed sister

Beating breast and tearing the sky into pieces.

Our maid comes in wee hour

And says her cousin has died in hospital,

Uncared delivery results in deaths of mother and child.

Four deaths in a day, I count only the numbers

And sure one is burnt, others buried,

I take my meal as usual and go to bed at exact hour.



Abu Siddik: 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 six books. Website: www.abusiddik.com



STUMBLING BLOCK

If you had been the love
of my life, in which, I
Like Mujnun desperate
for LAILA, walked unshod
in hot deserts, persisting
until convince of walking.

He (MUJNUN) who could
best brook pain yet not
Cringe when hurt or damaged,

then he got his way,
For I must envision only to
bear my rue on my back to
reach my love, a dream girl
of life, a puzzle of life.

With the heaviest impedi-
-ment unfurling at the end
of the society always squee-
-zing and infringing the twosome
beneath the feet.

The way I take you
in the verses of my
poem.

If people taste it
as sweet as honey.

Then you deem,

Our love will be lucrative



Adnan Shafi: I am a poet, writer, columnist, translator, Ghazal writer, motivational speaker, blogger, and reviewer from Tral Kashmir (J and K). I have contributed my poems to various reputed magazines, journals. I have also published my poetry book 'Tears fall in my heart'. Recently, I have been awarded Gujarat Sahitya academic .Furthermore, I am the co-author of many international anthologies.



LOVE FROM THE PAST TENSE

Love from the past tense
is knocking on my door,
throwing stones on my
locked windows for years.

Before, I was a skinny man,
with a moustache building a
miserable silent poet within me,
with eyes were easily cry for hours.

I wanted and wondered what
if I was a painter and not a broken
heart man, will I drew my character's
happy with masks I used to hide my grief.

Who would have loved me before, and
wipe the mud off my flesh from the
times I buried myself, below the sun
that burned my own scented dreams

Today, I am the saddest poem that can't
be read or write on, the mute feels my
wounds and understand my drinking habits
We together smoke and create smoky verses

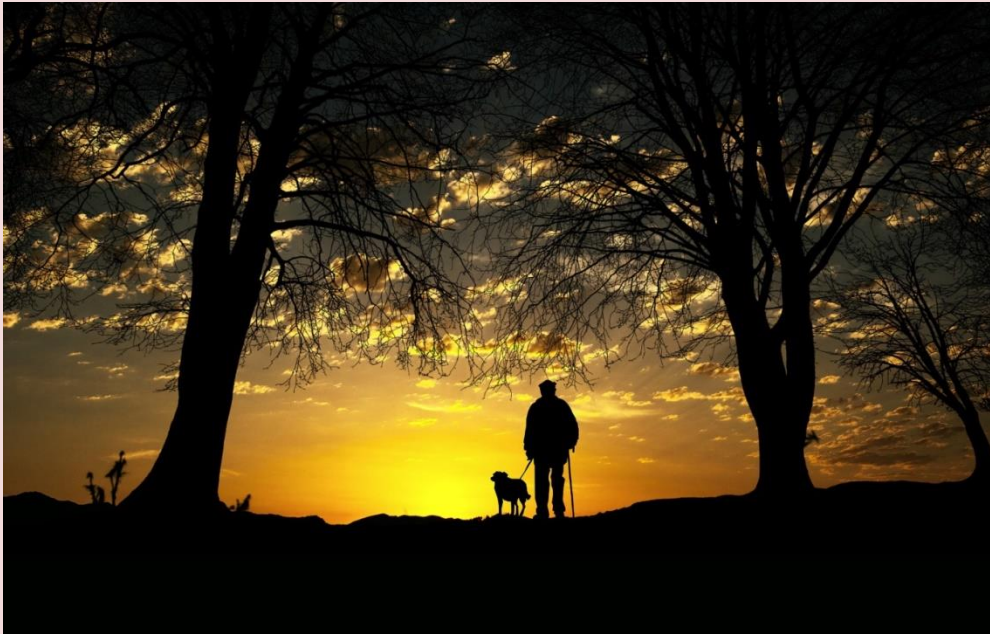
Love still hurt when I miss colourful lips
Love still cuts when my imaginations colour

my grey hair and force the clouds to wear
spring mood to bloom my emotions in autumn.

She got married, and I am swallowing her
pictures to die with her colours inside of my
damage heart, mind, and spirit as I hope that
I will farewell life without thinking about
-love from the past tense.



Ahmad Al-Khatat: He was born in Baghdad, Iraq. His work has appeared in print and online journals globally and he has poems translated into several languages. He has been nominated for Best of the Net 2018. He is the author of *The Bleeding Heart Poet*, *Love On The War's Frontline*, *Gas Chamber*, *Wounds from Iraq*, *Roofs of Dreams*, *The Grey Revolution*, and *Noemi & Lips of Sweetness*. He lives in Montreal, Canada.



WALKING THE DOG

Things aren't what they seem,
yet they are.

«—«—«—»—»—»

My arrow & me
wherever I go
everyone knows
she goes.

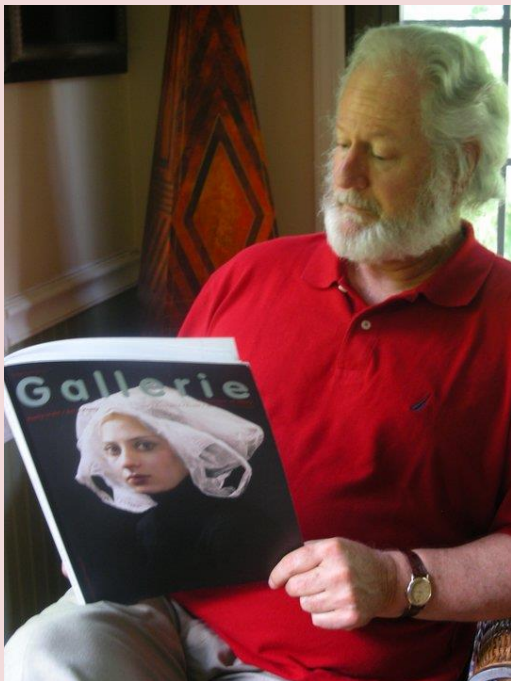
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Things are triangles
balanced on ice skates

that morph into eyelashes
in crowdaddy restaurants
along the Bayou.

(Hardly worth mentioning)

Then again, things aren't what they
seem, yet they are.



Alan Britt: He has been nominated for the 2021 International Janus Pannonius Prize awarded by the Hungarian Centre of PEN International for excellence in poetry from any part of the world. Previous nominated recipients include Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Charles Bernstein

and Yves Bonnefoy. Alan was interviewed at The Library of Congress for The Poet and the Poem. He has published 18 books of poetry and served as Art Agent for the late great Ultra Violet while often reading poetry at her Chelsea, New York studio. A graduate of the Writing Seminars at Johns Hopkins University he currently teaches English/Creative Writing at Towson University.



WHAT FOR?

Time spilled out of the leaky hourglass

Centuries, like sand dunes, flooded across memories.

People forgot about powerful empires.

Ancient gods, with cruel hearts and a thirst for blood,
disappeared into the darkness of history

Little is left to modern times

—only the ruins of buildings and several artifacts.

Ruined stone tablets whisper

about bloody wars and past triumphs,

about the conquests of powerful rulers and the rulers themselves.

Tears, suffering, wars,

futile sacrifices, death, and pain—what are they all for?

I pour quartz particles between my fingers

—they fall to the ground with a soft humming sound.

Gusts of wind spread golden dust.

I realize that I am a witness to passing away.

A symbolic gesture connects the past with the present.



Alicja Maria Kuberska: I am a poet, novelist, writer, journalist, editor residing in Poland, in Inowrocław. I work as a financial auditor. I have contributed to various anthologies. I have also published one novel and a few poetry volumes, both in English and Polish. My books were translated into many languages.



<https://www.mouthshut.com/>

DEMONETISATION

Stepping out of Flury's,
a warm winter night,
a lady stops a little
pondering if she might
give to this bony boy
what he's begging for-
a few of her coins;
the hunger-beating toy!

"Modi's taken my money,
can I pay you by my card?"

To her own witty quip
she is found laughing hard!

He watches her thin out.
Is there hurt in his glare?
I feel a sudden chill
in the laughter-ridden air!



Amanita Sen: Amanita has 2 collections of poems: ‘Candle In My Dream’ and ‘What I Don’t Tell You’. Her works have been published in numerous journals in India and abroad. She is a mental-health professional and lives in Kolkata.



WAY TO THE TEMPLE

When night prowls in forest of dreams
its silken skins unveiling a thrill – and your skins
tremor like a lone lost leaf hanging from sky –
Come then to the hideout where beloved dwells.

He might be a little broken from warding off
your assailants – but his love will dissipate
all doubts from your fingertips. Then only then
caress night's peeling skins because

stars will start to awaken whose glittering eyes
keep you captive aglow inside heart of hearts;
memory dwells of dank cave walls smattered
with designs – That one you lost in the crumbling

hold it in your heart – hold it in your heart
gift it to beloved to gift it to you – weep together
under the blanket of panther skins as night
purrs into infinity – there is no end to loving.

For is it not love that loves through all that is.
Your feet know way to the temple is the same
as it was up the mountain hump where birds
speak in twilight tongues of music of spheres.

Then remain embraced as One always in delight.



Ambika Talwar: I am a poet/author residing in Los Angeles, USA. I work as English professor. I am published in various anthologies. I have also published a collection of poems and a poetic-spiritual travelogue. My creative expression lends dimension to my work as a spiritual-intuitive energy practitioner.



TRUTH

All the colourful, glittering lies

fade one day

Only the naked, white truth

lasts forever

What is genuine is faked

Fake isn't faked ever

There are people fake with their love fake

That ensures still the genuine are there

Imitated gold is but ashes

Once set on fire
Gold is always gold
Fire makes it far purer.



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.



IF WINTER COMES

Fog blurs the horizon

Where days and night hibernate

A sedate world seethes under cold gaze

Grey winter sundown

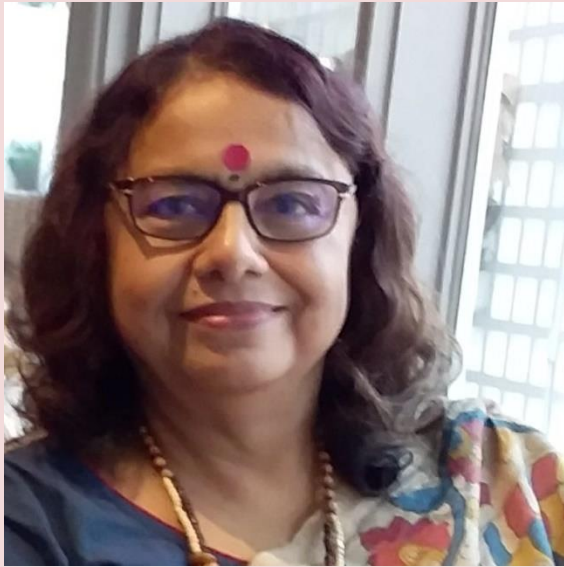
Knocks each door,

North wind howls through writhing winter

Count of dimming lights

Flickering in cupped palms

Trace the contours of unending chill
The frost bite intensifies-
But Hope, Pandora's drug
Pursues a persistent dream,
Of sunshine solemnizing harmony
In the valley of the shadow of death
Sparrows chirp a ditty, flowers proliferate
Bees hum in unison, life rebounds
For if winter comes
Beauteous Spring will follow at heels.



Amita Ray: I am former associate professor in English and Vice Principal of a college, residing in Kolkata. An academic of varied interests, I am a published translator, short story writer and poet. I have translated into English and published two books. My short stories have been published in The Sunday Statesman, Cafe Dissensus, Setu and other web magazines. My poems have also been published in anthologies and on line magazines.



ON A DAY LIKE THIS

Speeding down the highway

On a day like this

The rain pelting as ghosts of

Afteryears forced its way against

Closed nebulae of adamant years

I had closed my eyes long back

Even when you tried to awaken me

A long slumber of iridescent memories

Loving you has always been the kiss

Wrapped on a breath in a sky

That splashed its rainbow

Suddenly

On a day like this.



Amitabh Mitra: He is an Indian-born South African physician, poet and artist. He is one of the most widely published poets globally.



MERRY X-MAS

There's pudding in the steamer

And roast ready to carve

There's gravy in a creamer

And no one's going to starve

There's Daddy dressed as Santa

Red suit White beard and all

There's much laughter and banter

And Holly in the hall

Our thanks rise in a chorus
For blessings great and small
So here's to a Merry Christmas
And may God bless us all



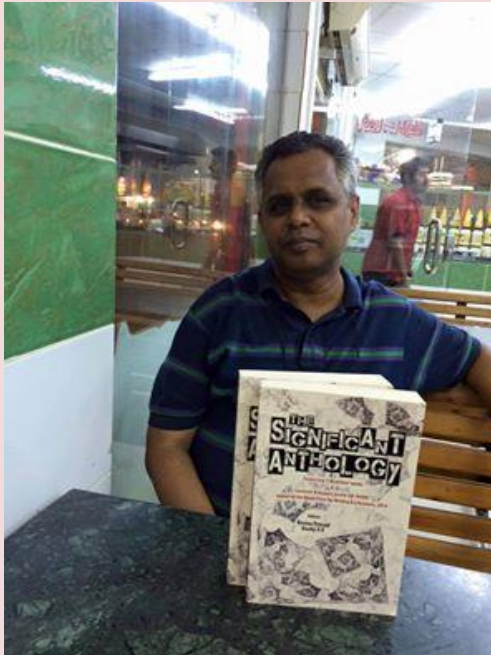
Amita Sarjit Ahluwalia: I am a retired bureaucrat but at heart a poet and a teacher. I write, mostly poetry, in English, Urdu, Hindi and Punjabi. I've never published anything except on Facebook or occasionally some newspaper or magazine here and there. I was awarded the NISSIM International Poetry Award (First Prize) 2019 for Excellence in Writing and my contribution to Indian English Poetry.



MESSAGE FOR RULERS AND THEIR SUPPORTERS

When the worms come to eat you
When the fire comes to burn you
do not forget
whoever you are
however much you stand proud and tall
today
you too will die
tomorrow
be nothing but dust that flies in the wind
blown away into the sky's boundless expanse

and ashes that melt into mere grains of sand
that at the doorstep to their homes
people shake off from their soles
or only dirty some river temporarily



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*.



I'LL NOT DO ANYTHING TODAY

Morning smiled at me, misty

I smiled back &

whispered:

I'll not do anything today.

I'll not go to the market

& look at green vegetables,

fresh fruits, flowers

I'll not go to the bank

to submit any mortgage;

to the riverside to play with

fishes and swinging leaves of the tree.

I'll not go to any coffee shop with friends

& discuss politics, new books, new plans.

Don't ask me to cook my favorite dish,

to play my favorite tunes

Give me a place to sit by the window

Give me a glass of water,

my favorite pen

I'll compose poems today

I'll only compose poems today

& swim like a fish, like a whale

in my river, in the deep

ocean of poetry



Aneek Chatterjee: I am a poet and academic from Kolkata, India. I have contributed to literary magazines and poetry anthologies across the globe. I have published 13 books including two full length poetry collections and a novel. My poem has been archived at Yale University. I hold a PhD in International Relations; and I have been teaching in leading Indian and foreign universities.



<https://in.pinterest.com/pin/323414816986861265/>

MORNING WITH MY LOVE

The sound of bangles
When the village girls
Sweep the floor in the
Morn is so sweet to hear;
Under the azure sky
The stream moves on
Through grassy plains
Humming songs of love
With its water shining clear;

The long tresses of
The village girl swings
Across her back as she
Goes to the village well;
With birds, bees, worms,
Butterflies coming out
To play and fly, the cool
Wind in their harmonious
Presence slowly begins to swell.

She comes out to
Walk in the lawn and
With blooming flowers
She plays, sings and smiles
The clear sky spills
Soft light upon her and

Wind takes along essence
Of her youth miles and miles.



Anil Kumar Panda (alias Tikku): 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.



I have worn many colours in the year gone by. It is time to free me of them all tonight.

Let me freeze my memories for a while and in the silence, delve into my own nothingness. I shall lay myself down on its immense chest and sink into a deep slumber. The world would continue to swirl around me like it is meant to, its waves rising and falling, crashing softly against me but my sleep would have taken me beyond their call. Beyond all.

Wrapped in silence, the moment would stretch to eternity, deep into infinity, losing count of itself, having shed its sense of itself. In that single moment, a new me would be

born. In my eyes would dance a thousand gentle suns. The heart, throbbing with the warmth of a new awakening, would begin to dream of rainbow lutes and rain-song, for spring would be waiting in the wings, tapping her foot in her eagerness to swing into my life soon.

So help me bid my past adieu. Prepare me for new beginnings tonight. Bathe me white.



Anju Kishore: Anju Kishore's poems have been featured in numerous journals and anthologies. They have won prizes in poetry competitions as well. Her book of poems inspired by the civil war in Syria, '*...and I Stop to Listen*' earned her a glowing review in Kendriya Sahitya Akademi's English

journal, Indian Literature. She has been part of the editorial teams of four anthologies with India Poetry Circle and Kavya-Adisakrit Publishing.



SNOW DAY

Taste now
the different colors
of the sun,
filtered through
brisk winter air.

Delicious dreams
float overhead
just out of reach,

while crystalline hope
clings to trees.

A world of white
sparkling blindness
encasing all,
on a bed of fresh
bleached sheets.

Growing younger
with anticipation,
the child emerges
and takes flight,
on the first snow day.

****Published by Otherwise Engaged Literature and Arts Journal, May 2019***



Ann Christine Tabaka: I am a poet and writer residing in Delaware, USA. I am a retired organic chemist and a retired personal trainer. I have 10 poetry books and have been published in numerous magazines and journals worldwide. I was nominated for the 2017 Pushcart Prize in Poetry. I was the winner of Spillwords Press 2020 Publication of the Year (Poetic), and I have won poetry awards from individual publications.

****(a complete list of publications is available upon request)***



Teach us O Teacher,
To be better teachers,
For there is nothing better
That we can do,

To make the world a better place,
To have our children pick up that pace,
As they learn to learn,
From each other, the Universe and from me and you



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.

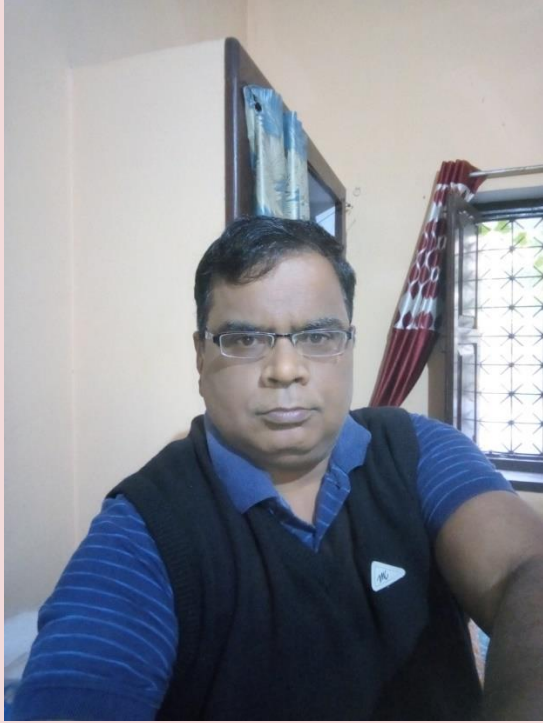


REALITY IS ENRICHED BY FANTASY

Amazing how we are able
to cook up
and revel in scenarios
that are far sharper
and more piquant
than reality ever is,
We give wings
to our imagination
in our fantasies
to create delightful scenarios,

Fantasy fulfils a deep need
and remains a coping mechanism,
Even our children know
the world
and concepts of right and wrong,
of good and bad
through the fantastic story
and allegorical tales
we create for them,
Through Pretend games
and flight of fantasy
they rehearse with emotions
so vivid and numerous,
Newton turned apple fall signs
into so secure science,
Archimedes became buoyant
through his water fantasy,
Einstein propounded fantasy

relatively more meaningful
than any talent or positivity,
Lovers fantasize themselves
to make their future world,
If fantasy isn't there
enriching our incoming reality
We would have been left
Just with
our limited and banal existences
and unseen consequences.



Ashish K Pathak: Ashish Kumar Pathak is a middle school teacher in Munger district, of Bihar province in India.



STAIN OF THE RAIN...

In your eyes me a fugitive rebel
The summer's gone, silence in the air
Tomorrow it's going to rain
Teardrops from the sky

We met as strangers
We looked into each other's eyes
We have shared song of the rain
Melodious rhythm

We raise our arms to the sky
The wild fragrance of rain
Passions swirled in our loneliness
We become stranger again
In our palm only the stain of rain...



Asoke Kumar Mitra: He studied at Hindu school and St. Xavier's College, Kolkata, and 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 various languages. 'Savage Wind' is his first poetry book, a bilingual edition, translated into Spanish by Mexican poet Josep Juarez. 'Song Of Pebbles' is his second bilingual poetry book, which is translated into French. Poetry, photography, paintings are his passions.



WITH A FLAP THE WEE BIRDS HAVE FLOWN

Well it's taken me an age to see it -

That you kids aren't kids any more.

As I guess you'll know,

Your Dad's too slow

To see History repeats as before.

As the wise old-timers must have known,

Little gets big real quick

And with a flap the wee birds have flown

Be healthy, live long,

Be strong, be gentle,

And gentle, and strong
Go build me some grandkids,
Go sing them this song,
Tell 'em little gets big real quick
And with a flap the wee birds have flown

I'm spinning this yarn from the sunlight
That surfs the Sunny Coast waves,
Where we built a big castle
And I was your vassal,
Though I called you rascalion knaves.
So now, go build your own castles
That from little to big build quick,
Not slow how your Daddy behaves

Be healthy, live long,
Be strong, be gentle,
And gentle, and strong

Go build me some grandkids,
Go sing them this song,
Tell 'em little gets big real quick
And with a flap the wee birds have flown



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.



MOONLIT NIGHT

lying outside

under the moonlit night

stars boasting bright

the milky way

and sunshine's ray

cuddle together

for us to stay

in sync

what do you think?

will we make it?
through the rain
the pain
all the haters
going insane
the colors of the rainbow
binding us together
forever
though others may say:
never!

what we have
so special -
like glue
binding us
every day anew
lying outside
under the moonlit night

our love, now

and forever bright



Bevan Boggenpoel: Boggenpoel completed a Baccalaureate in Education at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. He launched his debut Anthology 1 December 2016. The book was well received by the public and he sold 200 copies locally. He is also an author at a South African website known as Litnet (Literature Network in South Africa). His poetry is written in a South African context that covers different issues in daily life. In his writings he strives to tell a story or teach a lesson that will inspire and motivate. He is currently a teacher at Bethelsdorp Road Primary in the northern areas of Port Elizabeth.



POETRY WRITES, POETRY READS, POETRY LIVES

Inspired by poem of Daniel Brick'—'Du Fu Visits Anne Yun'

Your visit to Anne Yun

So special

Your distant daughter

Du Fu,

You are the warrior

Your valour

keeps guard

Against the evil forces

That corrupts the land

You leave to your descendants
A legacy
A garden of lush green
Where flowers bloom
And pure sunlight falls
Your youngest daughter
Whom you have never seen
Finds the magic
Of your words
Poetry written in breeze
Poetry holds her
Your legacy flows like river
A river that never dies
Clouds collect water from river
They go floating far
and far to unknown lands
And poetry writes for them who read
Poetry lives for poetry

And daughter remembers

Du Fu



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.



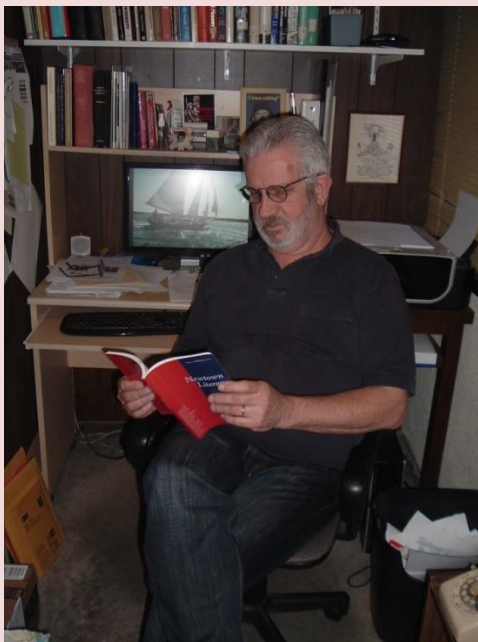
TRASH

Out of early morning he comes
like a vendor peddling wares;
aluminum cans rattle
in the steel shopping cart
as he rattles along.

Scouring dumpsters
for twelve-ounce ore,
his time is spent
traveling streets
pitted with old

flip tops and discarded
cigarette butts:
fossils in asphalt.

Living with garbage,
the end result of civilization,
he collects society's castoffs
only to return them,
begin the cycle again.



Bill Cushing: Bill Cushing lived in various states, the Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico before moving to California where he now lives with his wife and their son. Returning to

college after serving in the Navy and working on ships, he was called the "blue collar poet" by peers at the University of Central Florida. He earned an MFA from Goddard College. Published in numerous journals and anthologies, both online and in print, Bill is a multiple Pushcart Prizenominee. He facilitates a writing group (9 Bridges) and his book *A Former Life* was honored by the Kops-Featherling International Book Award committee; his chapbook (*Music Speaks*) was honored at the 2019 San Gabriel Valley Poetry Festival.



LOVE FOR GRAY TIMES

Running your fingers through my tresses,
Tresses that have grayed with time,
You search for stars, while
My eyes anxiously follow your penetrating gaze,
To spot any disappointment that may be mine.

Burying your face in them, you whisper,
'The stars though camouflaged with time,
Still retain their dazzling shine,

And I am ready to live through thousand hells
to keep them in the world of mine.'

A warm drop, just then,
Touches and streams down my nape,
And I knew those lips
hadn't faked a single line.



Bilquis Fatima: She is an innate lover of nature and speaker for social issues, has allowed her feelings to be expressed as short writes and speeches from her college time. Although being a post-graduate in Chemistry, she has also mastered the skills of poetry appreciation and writing. Her

poems reflecting the situations that are prevalent in the society, have been appreciated in some groups of poets and writers lately.



O DEAR DECEMBER

December is here,

With all the funs and fests,

Holidaying, picnicking, gift giving, feasting

Caroling, choral singing

All the cheers and chimes,

Bidding adieu to the old and bringing in the new

The foggy morning streets, marigold gardens,
The glistening dewy grasses,
Wake up to play with the cool winter sunshine

The yellow leaves flutter and fall down
Giving way to the spirits of newness,
For new leaves in the spring and new days of the New Year

O dear December!

With your innate newness, drive away the perilous
pandemic,

Put forth peace,

With the Christmas flavors,

To celebrate love

To celebrate life

In a new zest and, new spirit



Bishnu Charan Parida: Bishnu Charan Parida is a bilingual poet from Jajpur Road of Odisha. Although professionally an engineer, he loves poetry. His poems are mainly on life, love, philosophy and nature. His poems have been published in many anthologies and magazines of national and international repute. He has been awarded in the state level Kalinga Nagar book festival, Odisha in 2015, honored in the 11th Guntur International Poetry Festival, honored as a World Featured Poet 2019 of Pentasi-B, China. He also received the 8th R.N.Tagore award from X-press Publications, Kerala.



SHOULD I STAY OR SHOULD I GO?

The dazzling star from the sky
is blinking at me from above,
asking to come up between them,
I am still not ready, I answer so.

I saw my father in a night dream,
waving at me from blooming orchard
asking to go along with him, but,
I am still not ready, not ready to go.

My mother wearing a moonlight dress
walking the alley of the old lindens trees
smiled at me her radiant face, saying,
I know, you are not ready to go.

So, keep your pen in a steady hand
and write more poems my beloved,
make people' life happier thou,
we all be waiting for you up above.

And do not hurry to join us there
we are so happy looking at you
how happy people reading your poems
are sending blessings from them to you.

Do, what you do, what whispers your heart
make people happy in your own unique way,

do not show tears when you full of pain cry,
and keep saying, I am still not ready to go.



Bozena Helena Mazur-Nowak: She was born in Opole, Poland. In 2004 in search of work migrated to Great Britain, where she lives. She published seven volumes of poetry; four in Polish and three in English. She released a novel and a few short story collections. Her work may be found in numerous worldwide anthologies and magazines. Winner of many poetry competitions. Proud holder of many diplomas, awards, and distinctions. Her poetry was translated into English, French, Spanish, Swedish, Russian, Arabic, Telugu, Bengali, Norwegian, Albanian, Swahili, Philippine, Serbian.



Pic by Mike Hurry, Inverness, Scotland, taken in Orkney

POETS CAN'T DANCE

lost in thoughts

consumed by it all

words that rhyme

take all of your time

nothing sacred

egos are fuelled

by these words you steal

the likes you get

makes it all seem real

smiley faces

all the thumbs up

life enhanced

life is so pure

when poets can dance

a day goes by

visions are blank

with another clean sheet

panic creeps in

with nothing to repeat

is it the block?

lost what you had

gone by chance

life is so sad

when poets can't dance



Brian Mackenzie: I was born in Inverness in 1949 and have lived there until 1969. Since then I lived in Lond and Saudi Arabia. I have worked most of my life in the Airline Industry which enabled me to travel the world quite easily and cheaply. I am now retired and have lived in Spain for the last ten years. I only started writing since I retired in 2009 and it is only in the last few years I started writing songs and poems and I suppose have become quite prolific. I self-published 6 books and 1 book by a publisher, the second soon to be released.



MEMORIES

(a roseate sonnet)

Memories are like roses.

Some are pleasant as petals,
colorfully, beautifully, bloom
as they in vivid, vibrant shades.

While some prick as thorns,
achingly, poignantly, wait
as they to dry and heal
through time's blades.

Memories, therefore, are double-edged
and to carve or char is but a choice.

Roses, nevertheless, boast of beauty
of memories too
so shall it be
eternal ones engraved in heart.



Brindha Vinodh: She is a postgraduate in Econometrics but a writer within. Her poems have appeared in several magazines, e-zines, journals and OPAs, and she has contributed to several anthologies. She currently resides in USA with her family.



CELEBRATION!

(1)

The beach splashed with morning hues
Serene and sequestered like a rain-bow
Standing in complete awe I see
A silver wave comes towards me
In a jiffy I am inundated
And stay no more
What I was a moment before.

(2)

Buried under the seas I lie

Delicious coolness I feel seep in

Every pore lay parched for long

Ecstasy spills all over

Soul flutters as if in breeze

Strange to say

Thirst – age-long is quenched.

(3)

A song sans words out of bliss issues

Thrilling the whole being

With ecstatic realization

Of Immortality latent within

Utterly spaces out

Deep down I go and go

Here begins the **Celebration!**



B.S.Tyagi: He comes from India. He writes in both Hindi and English. He has several books- fiction and non-fiction to his credit. His poems have been included in several anthologies. He writes short stories which regularly appear in national and international literary magazines. His write-ups and poems have appeared in national and international magazines. Besides, he has translated four books of poems. He shies away from public celebrations and prizes. Inner bliss he is showered upon through creativity is the greatest prize.



WINDOW

As the morning
erases the stars

Ghost landscapes
bleak, stands sentinel

The blind glass
infra-thin emulsions

Opens discontinuous perceptions
and discreet sensations

Of your life
puzzled-reflected-analyzed.

From the outside
like a poem

Drowning itself in
forgotten past inspirations.

Disorder of lunacy?
Or anxious normalcy?

As time lapses



Carl Scharwath: He has appeared globally with 150+ journals selecting his poetry, short stories, interviews, essays, plays or art photography (His photography was featured on the cover of 6 journals.) Two poetry books 'Journey To Become Forgotten' (Kind of a Hurricane Press).and 'Abandoned' (ScarsTv) have been published. His first photography book was recently published by Praxis. Carl is the art editor for Minute Magazine, a competitive runner and 2nd degree black- belt in Taekwondo.



Enough is enough

now

please remove the black ribbon

from eyes of Statue of Justice

we have kept her blind for too long

it is time she sees the reality

please

please



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.



2020

The frost is thick upon the grass,
Crunching beneath my feet.
I think of what has come to pass
It's all quite bittersweet.

An empty chair on Christmas day
Where once the living sat
The many people passed away
A death-curve not yet flat.

So lonely under house-arrest

Our world shrunk to a cage,

Anxiety our greedy guest

Sorrow our ample wage.

We still find strength to help neighbours

And time to reflect well

There's been blessing in our labours

Many tales we'll have to tell.



Christopher Villiers: I am a poet residing in Braunton, England. I work as a writer. I have contributed to various anthologies and have also published three volumes of poetry.



ABANDONED SHIP

Once I lived with the roll of the sea
Out where the vagabond winds blew free
That tiny speck on the ocean was me
and that's where I hoped I would always be

The waves caressed me on moonlit nights
sometimes pounded in fearsome fights
The crew prayed my timbers would somehow hold tight
and anxiously awaited the morning's light

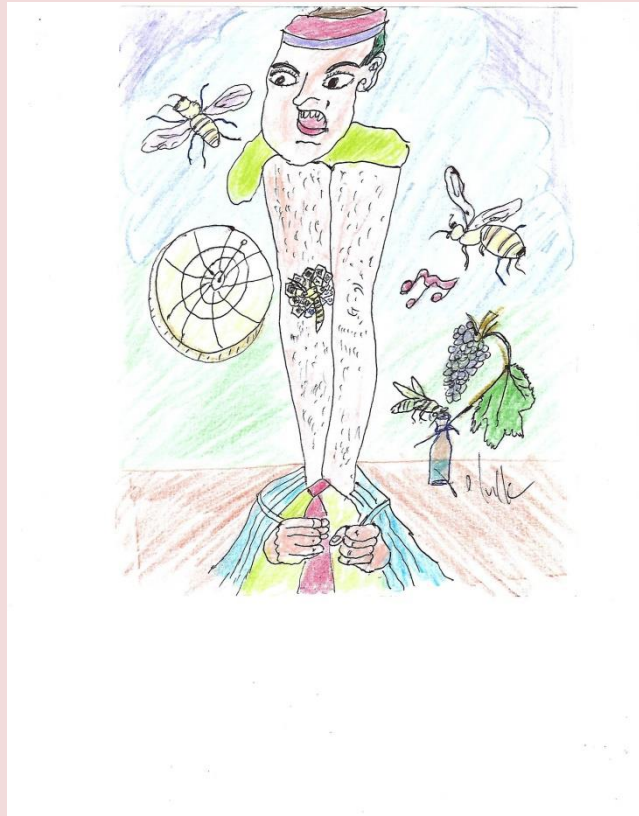
The years did pass, and my engines grew old
I spent months tied up at the docks in the cold
My paint chipped away, and belowdecks grew mold
At last, my aging carcass was sold

But a freak norther blew me aground
A salvage team said I'd never be sound
Now only rats and seagulls come around
and nest in the rusty old wreck they have found

But once, long ago, I was one with the sea
Every mood of the Atlantic did i see
The bravest of souls trusted in me
I'm the hardy ship in their memories
and that's where I'll sail for eternity



Dale Adams: I am a poet and musician residing in Oklahoma, USA. I work in an auto dealership. I have been writing poems and composing songs since 2011. I have my own SoundCloud channel where my songs can be heard. I have converted the work of other poets into songs, and my poems have appeared in two anthologies.



WASP'S NEST

Damn! I was tired of picking grapes and I lay on my stomach, on my back on some towels, falling asleep next to a vine on Rita's pergola.

Of the wasps that did not sting by getting into empty beer bottles half filled with water and sugar, and hanging from the branches, a couple of them came and made a nest just behind my left knee that was more shrunken.

They didn't bite me or even noticed. And what my wife told a friend who came to help me pick grapes:

-If he falls asleep, move him away from the vine, not the old thing, that some pigeons screwed up on him.

Waking up, I grabbed a bunch of grapes to get up. And I almost fell, making the friend laugh, who had spent my time asleep sweeping and collecting the fallen leaves.

As I am not in the habit of showering, I did not notice the wasp's nest that was behind my knee, until one day when I felt a painful itch, telling my wife that it was very itchy, answering me:

-Hold on, it's not a thing.

Instinctively, I brought my hand to curl with my fingers and what was my surprise that I removed from behind my knee a small hive with a real dead wasp inside.



Daniel de Culla: I am a Daniel de Culla, poet, writer, etc., residing in Burgos, Spain. I am retired. I have also published poetry, anthologies more than seventy.



DEEPAVALI

As always, the Deepavali celebration had brought the closet fascists out from under their swastikas...

Powerless people who are usually silenced by the ogres like to make a noise now and again...

But how the cantankerous cacophony can be associated with a Fawkes (who was not beheaded) or a new year or rugby victories or religious celebrations we don't understand?

Anyway, the Animals are holding a rally to protest against the fireworks noise.

The dogs are complaining that the human noise is interfering with their barking and playing havoc with their hearing.

It is not true that Gary Govindsamy has been invited to be the keynote speaker.

That illustrious invitation has been reserved for his aloof pomposity, the grand Duke of Mount Edgecombe, the illustrious imperial Major General Aker Wiley Duner of Whitelaw incorporated.

Don't worry, all the seditious spy agencies have been alerted.

Oh Bassie Pullan will be there with his spy camera, large agent 007,8 is looking forward to the chow, and the wily chief cia spy, oh denizen poopoo-payther is coordinating the snooping in his serpentine position as the chief sneak.

Liasioning with MI5 and other local reality agencies is already in Top Gear.

The grizzled Askari Association is grinning.

This is like the Apartheid Times they are saying, with relish.

☐

Now for some skewering!

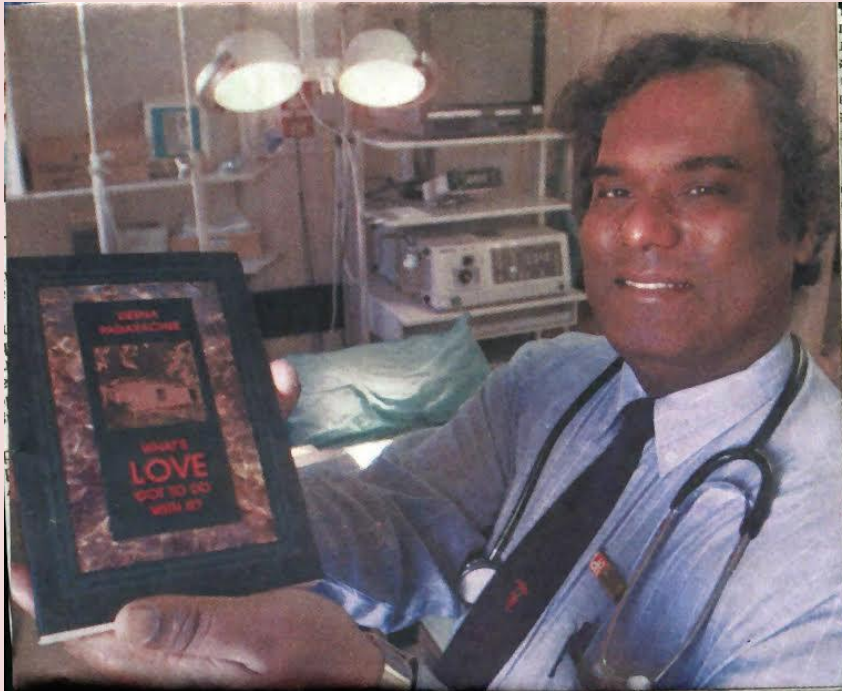
Please note, Kitu Naitoo, Ani-ban Singh and Tugie Nitarsen have not been invited to the Rally, so you should feel comfortable. ☹

Sty-bel has promised not to publish this account so feel free to be as hypocritical as you wish to be.

Our Big Ass-ociation has ensured that cartoons of the Rally will not be published.

Light at the rally has been banned as a mark of our disrespect for Deepavali.

However, saba will be there, taking notes, and dear peppy will ensure that no one will take the mickey.



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.



For the dullness to break

A yellow tulip in a garden of red roses

A black stallion in a horde of white mares

Breaks the cacophony of the ordinary.

A drive on an asphalt covered highway

A walk on a gravelled village road

Tells me a lot about which way the wind blows.

Taking an elevator to the top of the Eiffel Tower

Doesn't change the wind's direction.

A long arduous journey to the top of Mount Kilimanjaro

Breaks the monotony of the conventional.

I wait in the cave, alone
For the right one to arrive
With the fire of the extraordinary
A yellow tulip from a garden of red roses
A black stallion from a horde of white mares
Someone walked along the gravelled village road
Someone climbed atop the Mount Kilimanjaro
Just someone to change the wind's direction.



Dipankar Sarkar: Poetry is the only soulmate I have. I find solace in poetry when my heart bleeds. Poetry comes to me completely unannounced, without a notice. I wake up sometimes, out of an altered reality or out of a daydream, and voila, words just start flowing out of nowhere and completely inundate me, forcing me to live an experience of writing. I am not a regular poet, but poetry is the only soulmate I have, who understands the real me.



THE GIRL IN THE STONE

Her face remained hidden for a while within the porous cavities of the stone I found at

the back of the garden, initially masked by ancient moss and clay deposits

hiding her bronze complexion for thousands of years but never her obvious tears and

startled expression as she was proudly mounted on a log to watch over Monte

Arabi although not yet revealed to me. It happened one
orange blossom fiery sunset
golden evening staring at her blindly when for one split
second a sunbeam gently kissed
her bronze cheek revealing her ancient forgotten mystique
as her eyes locked in stone
stared helplessly at me – Her gaze mesmerising
immediately gripping my senses
exploding questions rippling through me wave after
intoxicating wave as her battered
right eye spoke of unimaginable pain and her bruised cheek
a badge of her bravery and
untold keen sense of survival – As the evening light moved
over her, I made another
startling discovery as her eternal protector in the form of a
wolf proudly revealed himself

above her head - Who was she when was she why now and how? What was her young

life like? Did she have to start a fire at night in a deep cave surrounded by dominant

males after another exhausting hunt on the plains of Monte Arabi or did she warm up

milk for them gathered from the resident mouflon still roaming this ancient land? Did she

gather wild rosemary and thyme to flavour the evening meal as expected by her male

dominated family? Did she dream of a future nurturing her own family? Did she whisper

to the giant pine trees of her secret longings? Did she dream of flying away on eagle

wings from her ancient mountain kingdom longing for her own imagined freedom? Only

recently I was yet again stunned into silence and awe when
two more faces in profile
revealed themselves just before the golden liquid sun
disappeared behind towering pine
trees. Both revelations were locked on another side of the
stone and depending on the
available light falling on one side, I swear I could see her
father and mother alternatively
depending on the light and dark shadows falling on their
tired faces – It was like looking
through a sliver of time allowing me to peer momentarily
into their ancient world. She
still stares at me every day and night – Questioning me
evaluating me, this girl in the
stone still searching for a future home, which makes me
wonder if she was the last of

her kind hoping I would be so kind as to utter a welcoming word but sadly she is unable to respond – Waking up once again in her ancient land of majestic Monte Arabi...



Don Beukes: He is a South African and British writer. He is the author of 'The Salamander Chronicles' (CTU) and 'Icarus Rising-Volume 1' (ABP), an ekphrastic collection. He taught English and Geography in both South Africa and the UK. His poetry has been anthologized in numerous collections and translated into Afrikaans, Persian, French and Albanian. He

was nominated by Roxana Nastase, editor of Scarlet Leaf Review for the 'Best of the Net' in 2017 as well as the Pushcart Poetry Prize (USA) in 2016. He was published in his first SA Anthology 'In Pursuit of Poetic Perfection' in 2018 (Libbo Publishers) and his second 'Cape Sounds' in 2019 (Gavin Joachims Publishing). He is also an amateur photographer and his debut Photographic publication appeared in Spirit Fire Review in June 2019. His new book, 'Sic Transit Gloria Mundi'/Thus Passes the Glory of this World' is due to be published by Concrete Mist Press.

Jonel Scholtz: She obtained a Baccalaureus Scientiae degree in Chemistry and Biochemistry from the University of Johannesburg in South Africa, in 1994. She started painting in 1988, while in high school, with Louise Goudemond, an American born artist, specializing in figurative work and oil portraits. In 2018 she was awarded an artist residency at Tamarin Art Centre in Mauritius. She went there for one month and expanded her artistic horizons and is now included as one of the exhibiting artists at the Tamarin Art Gallery curated by Leanda Brass, a well-known UK sculptor.



EXACTLY!

Eggs white, eggs brown

The yolk is the same

Exactly the same

Albumen's the same

Exactly the same

White ones. brown ones

Their soul is the same.

I guess im a littel dense --Durl allays sez so, anyway -- but i just reealized that pomes dont have to rime. Sometimes they can just be like peeple talkin. But if they sound eggsactly like peeple talkin i guess they arent pomes anymore, theyre just proze and maybe not too interestin.

And i guess a pome, wether it rimes or not, has to mean more than it sez or it aint a very good pome. And of course even if it dont mean more than it sez it still mite not be a good pome. I guess thats for the reeders to decide. But i thot id try to rite a good pome that dont rime and i hope has a big meanin even tho it looks like a simpel thing.



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.



OH DEAR! OUR FRIENDSHIP

Oh Dear! Our friendship I adore
Deeper than the deep ocean galore
It is higher than the highest sky
Let alone conditional.

No poet on the earth has edited
sweeter lyrics than ours.

It has a natural beauty of love.

No ornaments of love it needs.

Neither Kalidas nor Shakespeare
Has sung about it in epics.
It has the truth of epic of epics
Literature of literatures and aesthetics

Neither you nor I can understand it
as it is quite beyond human imagination.
No science has invented any measuring devices
to measure our friendship that entices.

It is beyond the full Moon night
Beyond the spring and autumn
It is the Savior in our dead distress
It is the light in our deep darkness

The world can never show another like it
The money of the world can never buy it

And it is not sold in any world market
No gold no pearl can exchange amulet

As a winter landscape in mountain
Offers us divine peace to acumen
Saw the day and sometimes night
I feel blessed and lucky to share it



Dusmanta Choudhury: He is a poet residing in Jeypore, in the district of Koraput, Odisha, India. He is a Lecturer in English in Dr.B.R.Ambedkar Jr. College, Lamtaput in Koraput district in the Department of Higher Education Government of Odisha. He has contributed to various anthologies. He has recently got the Honour of Pentasi B World Featured

Poet 2020 Honour. He is also a member of the Pentasi B world Friendship Poetry, The Tunisian Asian Poetry, The Poetry Society, The World Nation's Writers Union, The Love, The Global Literary Society, The Namaste ink an Author's Manifesto, etc. He has also published many Odia and English poems.



SILENCE OF SPACE

Translated by Artur Komoter

Sun-filled

silence of space

completes the longing

for youth.

Days that were,

are within it.

In the maze of memories,

she found the mistakes she had made.

She always expected

some ending,

a beginning, that something, someone...

Now

she is enjoying the moment

when she can answer

with impunity:

no!

It no longer requires courage.

She has grown up to such words.

Yes

she said for years,

now everything has changed.



Eliza Segiet: She graduated with a Master's degree in Philosophy and completed postgraduate studies in Cultural Knowledge, Philosophy, Arts and Literature at Jagiellonian University. Author's poem 'Questions and Sea of Mists' won the title of the International Publication of the Year 2017 and 2018 in Spillwords Press. Nominated for the Pushcart Prize 2019 (USA, November 2019), Nominee for Naji Naaman Literary Prize 2020). Nominated for the iWoman Global Awards 2020. Author's works can be found in anthologies and literary magazines worldwide.



FLOWERS

Her parley with the heaven's child

Parted the dawn's weeping eyes.

It marked the sound that woke her

By the song of mourning's displeasure,

Demanding, she transforms the flowers,

They have passed; the water, moved,

Replaced each dawn.



Ferris E Jones: He writes poetry and screenplays from his residence in Puyallup, Washington. His work has been published in Se La Vie Writers Journal, Write on Magazine, Outlaw Poetry, Degenerate Literature 17, Tuck Magazine, The Literary Hatchet, Warriors with Wings and other literary periodicals. He is the recipient of two Grants from the Nevada Arts Council and published several collections of poetry, including To Burning Man, Oh the Path that Followed and As the Toad Sleeps. You can learn more about Ferris E. Jones by visiting www.inquisitionpoetry.com where each month he features the work of other poets.



Love is the grief sitting on a swing

Hoping to lose itself in the spring

Love is an empty pot waiting to be filled with the rain

Notwithstanding the pain

Love is the selenophile dreaming of the moon

On a hot summer afternoon

Love is wilderness in disguise

The refined vows, the cultivated smile, all lies!

Love is a complex jigsaw

However hard one tries, the game might just end up in a draw



Gauri Dixit: When not busy working in her office, she is busy being a traveller, climbing mountains, walking on untrodden paths, capturing the voice of a solitary flower blossoming from a rock or the bird sitting on a hanging branch, sometimes the setting sun or the sea in her camera

as well as in the words she weaves. Her poems speak in a voice which is unique, cold and direct. That she has been a part of many anthologies as well as a Reuel Prize awardee and had commendable mention at Destiny's Poet is incidental. In her first book, 'In My Skin, I Find Freedom', there are poems on varied subjects, yet there is a common thread of a skeptical questioning mind of a free woman.



LET ME FADE AWAY

O wind,

When you soar to reach the azure

Make me fly too

The emptiness that weighs me down

The breathes that I inhale

Yearn to rise upwards above the shoreline

Above the terrestrial boundary

Playing with the fluttering leaves

Leaning on the green basket of the verdant trees

Just as you belong to the ethereal realm

Let me just fade away like an unheard whisper....

Echoed and lost in the horizon



Gayatree G. Lahon: Gayatree is a poet and a teacher from Assam. For her, poetry is a passion where she finds peace and solace amidst the complexities of life. Being an aesthete, she discovers beauty in every object of life and nature and her ink pours those elements in a subtle way. Her poems have been published in many national and international anthologies and web magazines.



Little children like
noisy birds filling the nest
take off in a flash



A snake in the lawn
White kitten's dangerous prey
dreams of a morning meal



Silent dark wet trees

Wild greening branches sway

Rain of falling fruit



Campfire in progress

Rising flames burn the rocks

Smiling faces smoke



Away in the mountains
They soar in silent circles
Birds in dizzy heights



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.



TAKE MY LITTLE FINGER

Put the glee back in my jaded eyes,
A pearl that dropped from a moonlight sky,
Ring the silver bells in my laughter that rang,
As I watched blue bells, cockle shells and freely sang,

Put tears of malice-free prattle in my irises,
Carrying rainbows and soft prisms of innocent promises.

Tell me that fairy tales matter, as do giants, goblins, pixies
and elves,

Remind me that feathers don't lose their colour between
pages in the book shelves,

Show me butterflies that carry virtual forests racing with
birds,

Bards that flit away without copyrights as they leave
notations of musical words,

Prod me to cackle away in ripples of laughter uninhibited,
Amused at my own silliness without feeling judged or
insulted,

Whisper in my ears that I can break I to a jaunty skip as I
walk,

For out there I hear the rustle of tress and foliage talk,
Embrace me like the gusts would the hills,
Sending frissons through my being in shudders and thrills,

Tell me I could be a child looking for surprises,
Although years have washed away giggles with life's crises,
And that fear is not just a way but a bridge to cross,
Dangling in the annals of my tormented mind from where I
might fall and toss,

Point out to the million stars that twinkle,
For in the corner of my eyes I wonder what they are in my
recent wrinkle,
And that this universe is an endless school where I sit
watching,
Where a plethora of gurus guide me even now as I'm
listening.

Put that glee back on my eyes little child,
For I'm incorrigible, difficult and wild,
But deep in my heart is an ocean of love,
That makes me softer, gentler and as innocent as a
fledgling dove.



Geethanjali Dilip: Geethanjali takes her name seriously and evolves as a handful of songs. A French teacher by profession she contributes to several ezines and blogs. She is a recipient of The Reuel International award for Poetry 2017 and also the meritorious award for commendable mention in Great Indian Poetry Contest 2018. Residing at Salem, India, Geeth believes that poetry connects and moves the world.



WHAT'S THERE TO BE POSITIVE ABOUT?

Think Positive they keep saying
and I try

Just when I'm thinking positive

Why did you die?

Why did they kill you?

Just when I'm thinking positive

Why were you raped?

Just when I'm thinking positive

Why was justice reserved for some
and came too late for others?

Just when I'm thinking positive

Why did you lose your loved one?

Just when I'm thinking positive

Why did you call just to insult me?

Just when I'm thinking positive

Why did you celebrate when I lost and you won?

Just when I'm thinking positive

Why are there sooooo many children and women hurting so bad?

Just when I'm thinking positive

Why were there laborers walking home while I protected myself from Covid and stayed inside with food on my table and a roof over my head?

Just when I'm thinking positive

Why did you hear me out just to do just the opposite of what I asked?

Just when I'm thinking positive

why did the seals in Antartica die?

And

Just when I'm thinking positive

Why are there so many painful programs on Netflix?

And yet, I must think positive

meditate, ruminate, and shut out all the crap that's
happening

because my thoughts can 'affect' my body

So lead me like the proverbial lamb

to the slaughter house of Positive Thinking.



Glory Sasikala: She is a writer, poet and publisher from Chennai, Tamilnadu, India. She is the Editor and Publisher of GloMag, the international monthly online poetry and prose magazine, and is administrator of the group of the same name on Facebook. She is the creator of 'The Chennai Ladies' series of E-books on Amazon.com. She has currently published her third novel, 'My Life My Script'.



IF I COULD I SURELY WOULD

all the light we cannot see

all the voices we cannot hear

all the silence we cannot feel

there must be some way

to bring the brightness of the light back into this world

there must be some way

to bring the voices from the deep void

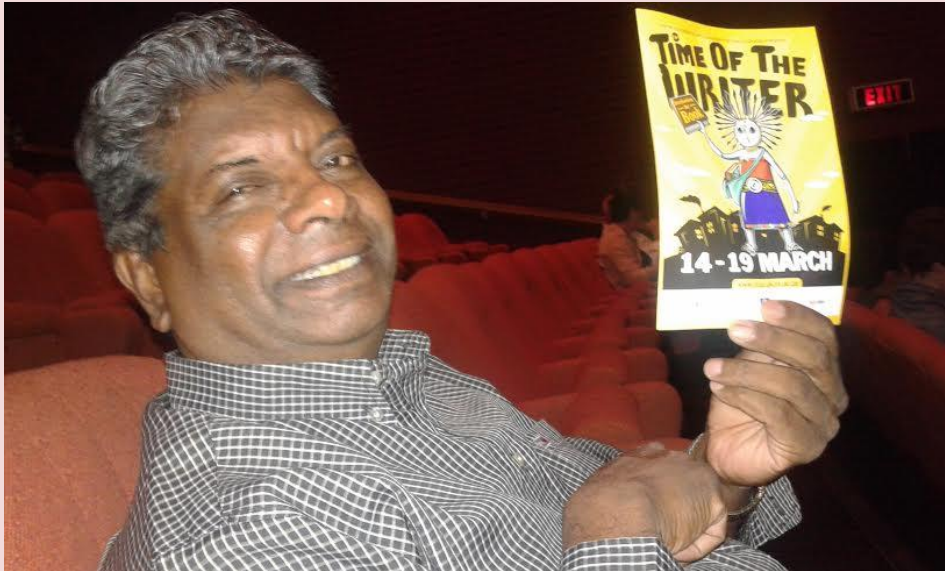
there must be some way for the liberation of the soul

that makes love that unique binding spell blossom and
grow

if i had a magic wand and the power to change your world
i would reach the sky and pick the stars
to give you light to dispelled the darkest moments of your
life
i want to conquer the phantoms
that stole your voice and your laughter
and bring it back to you as a gift from me to you
i want to restore the pride where once
you could go to find your piece of mind
and forget the woes that made your heart cry

but alas i am just human
with no powers unlike the god's that rule this universe
i am just as vulnerable as you
but if we share our dreams in a lovers pact
together we can bring back the light
the words of love to our voices
the music to our laughter
the gift of peace to our world

but if you lock yourself up in the dungeon of your mind
where the light is afraid to enter
if you stifle the voices
that once sang sweet ballads
if you build a wall to keep the world out
and make silence your prison
then you have forsaken life
and the very air that you breathe.



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.



LIGHTBOX

I look up from my stories to starry night
searchlight blows kisses over metal road
car horn interrupts the smell of absence.

There it is like yesterday, fairy decorations
swallow insects, the sky is bland and formulaic
evening closes its petals.

Lipsticked garment shops shines between
the alleys and bye-lane.

Memories are sniffed at the street corner
that become a recollection.

Happiness is spawned from off glass wine
and spliff, burnt out and melt down within.

What I think is my dream is no longer is
wake up again and find that nobody cares me,

Kolkata completes the sentence for me - my anxiety.



Gopal Lahiri: I am a bilingual poet, writer, critic and translator residing in Kolkata. I have contributed to various anthologies and have also published nine volumes of poetry in English and eight volumes in Bengali. In addition, I have also jointly edited two anthologies of poems in English and also have one translation work of short stories of Israel, translated by me from English to Bengali. I have also edited a book on selected songs of Tagore translated in English. I have recently edited a collection of poems titled 'Jallianwala Bagh-Poetic Attributes'.



HOMELESS SOUL

Original: Assamese : Guna Moran

Translation: Bibekananda Choudhury

It wants to run away

Somehow I managed to hold back

It had not been long since I turned homesick

It had been only that day

I left the Bedouin life leave

Enjoying after suffering from hunger

Home is the arch enemy of Bedouin



Guna Moran: He is an Assamese poet and critic. His poems are being translated into Italian and France language and have been published in various national and international magazines, journals, websites, newspapers such as The Tuck magazine, Spillword, The Merak magazine, The Setu magazine, Story Mirror, The Poem Hunter, The Sentinal, The Hills Times, Best Poetry and so on.



GHAZAL

Do you love yourself more than you love me? Do I make sense?

I have died to myself and I live for thee. Do I make sense?

Yes I have forgotten everything but from knowing you,

I have become a book worm. Come and see - do I make sense?

Timelessly I have been roaming in this temporary world,

For a dot of honey I wander like a bee. Do I make sense?

I'm a prisoner of my own words. How would I cut the chains?

On the door is there any lock without key? Do I make sense?

Should I fear the death which is going to come any time?

Huh! My head is now hanging on the knee. Do I make sense?

Imran come out of the clouds and see the effulgent moon,

In the silence, under the tongue runs a sea. Do I make sense?



Imran Yousuf: Imran Yousuf is a Poet/Writer/Columnist/Translator from Kashmir, India. Currently working as Columnist and Journalist, he has contributed his poems to various reputed magazines, journals and international anthologies. He has co-authored more than 10 anthologies and has also written a series of articles, about the great Sufi Poets of the Kashmir Valley (starting from 14th century), which were published across various newspapers and magazines and now being compiled into a book (to be launched soon). He is presently engaged in interviewing the current generation of great poets from the Kashmir valley. The articles will also be compiled and given the shape of a book soon.



TRANSITION

In nature,

Everything keeps changing, evolving—

Through different stages.

From one stage to the other

Transition takes place.

Human lives are no exception—
From childhood to old age—
Transition happens.

Individuals, family, society,
Nations, The world keep
Evolving all the time—
Through Transitions.

Handling Transitions is very
Important, critical for
Better, successful, positive life.

Transitions may be
Smooth or difficult.
How one handles is important.

One has to overcome

Challenges and obstacles.

Anticipation and preparedness

Prepares us.

Get ready to move

Out of comfort zone.

Awareness, acceptance, understanding

Of situation, makes Transition smooth.

One has to adapt to new things,

Environment and eco-systems

For successful Transition.



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 (Iobian).



Life is a journey
Where you meet people
From diverse backgrounds
With distinct set of stories
You can't judge a book by its cover
Variety exists underneath
And first impression maybe wrong
In most of the cases
You realise the differences
That exist
That would prevail
That have been there

Only after a direct interaction
But in the midst of all such nuances
Lies the true beauty of life
When you learn
Alongside the process
How to network
How to communicate
And most importantly,
How to manage!!



Jayant Singhal: I am a writer residing in Delhi, India. I am an Economics graduate. I have contributed to various anthologies in the past.



BLIZZARD

O wonderful emergency!

Silver needles spin for hours
weaving tapestries to drape
rooftops sidewalks streets.

Millions of icicles delicately
arranged on lamp posts

along metal railings

around cornices.

White magic prayed for by children.

A spell shutting down school

making way for snow fights.

Perfect opportunity to burrow

longer in bed. Be late for work.

Appearing unbusinesslike

in rough clothes.

Snow crystals cover all

stains and blemishes.

Each windowpane

becomes a

miniature museum

of fine line etchings.

We are snapped awake by frost.

Our woolen gloves full of lace.



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



EMPTINESS

draw near the stillness

the gift of darkness

growing, increasing

not thick and heavy

expanding, stretching

giving birth, giving space

to what the magician called "emptiness"

fertilizing these holy mounds

bleeding out into the fields

la sangria est rouge

le roi est mort

to whom do we owe these memories

here lies your valor and patriotism

your land that now devours what remains

to corpses our discussions turn

standing tall in distant silence

floating in eternal rivers

faces frozen

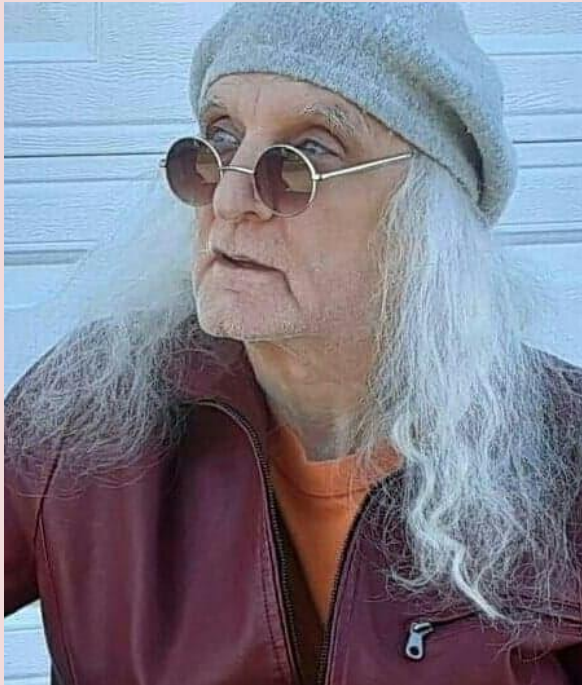
unreasonable

unrecognizable

unnatural

emptiness

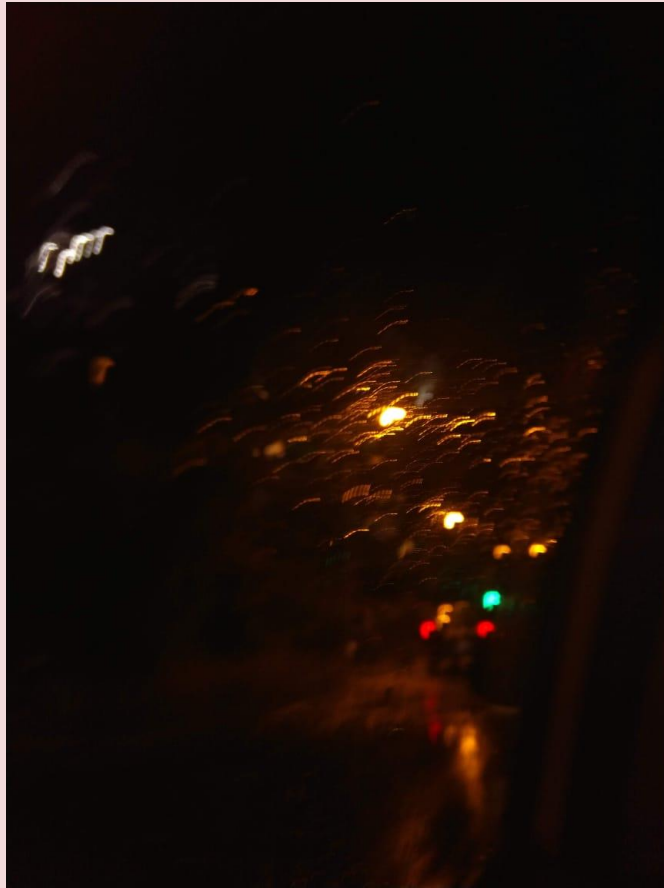
here, a song no child has ever sung



Joe Kidd: He is a multi-award-winning songwriter, speech writer, music/film critic, and ordained minister, inducted into Michigan Rock & Roll Hall of Fame 2017, recipient of Michigan Governor's and US House of Representatives certificates for work promoting Peace, Social Justice, Cultural Diversity. He lives in Detroit Michigan USA with partner, author/vocalist Sheila Burke. He has a CD titled *Everybody Has A Purpose* 2015, a book of poetry titled *The Invisible Waterhole* 2020. His works appear in benefit recordings, Music For Japan, and Songs For Standing Rock, many poetry journals. He was on tour throughout North America and Western Europe.

<https://www.amazon.com/Joe-Kidd/e/B089QYDXSM>

<https://joekiddandsheilaburke.com/>



COLOUR OF MY EYES

Colour of my eyes
keeps on changing
from hazel to unstable dew,
every time I look up
at the changing hue
of the indifferent city view.

Solace sprouts
when strummed silently
amongst the busy crowd;
at the hesitant crossings and lanes
in the breathing shadows
at window panes.

The range of hues
from hazel to brown dews;
sandy to cloudy
in harmony with the sky
bleed seamless, as solitudes fly
to the far reaching sea scape.

No escape from the sky
to hide the tearless cry
of my bohemian eye.

Treasured shades of sightless vision
scatter with the falling petals
of the fading spring passion.



Kakoli Ghosh: She is a poet/short story writer from Durgapur, West Bengal, India. She wears many hats—a freelance writer, painter, beauty advisor and jewellery designer and has a keen interest in music and art in general. Apart from contributing to various anthologies, she has also published a poetry book.



DECEMBER POO

In purple and violet-pink shades

Came December at Periamet*

On the heads of flower- vendors

In round bamboo trays

Early in the chilly mornings

Often, the first knock on the door..

I used to run to be the first to answer it...

My mother, hugging her sweater close

Would follow to see who it was...

I knew, already...it was the Poo Akka;
Freshly combed hair with some
Of the flowers in her neat knot of hair
The color of yellow saffron
In stark contrast with the
crimson dot at her hair parting..
And the red red color of her lips,
Dyed by the betel leaves she always chewed..
One day she let me in on her secret
It was to keep hunger at bay..
And to make sure not to think
Of the empty stomach she carried
Along with those cheerful flowers..
The haggling began as only with women buyers and sellers..
And I? Was busy scheming..
How to let Poo Akka have breakfast at our house
At least on somedays..
I began with Friday, as a gesture of charity...

Then my mother made it every day
She tried to repay us in generous measure of flowers..
I said it was against school rules,
So she gave me her smiles instead,
Which I treasure, even today
Like the marghazi flowers
That I loved so much!

Note: December Poo: Barleria Cristata, the pink and purple flowers known by this name in Tamilnadu.



Kamar Sultana Sheik: She is a poet, writing mostly on themes of spirituality, mysticism, and nature with a focus in Sufi Poetry. Her professional career spanning 18 years has been in various organizations and Institutions including the IT sector. She is a self-styled life coach and has currently taken a break to focus on her writing full-time. Sultana has contributed to various anthologies and won several prizes in poetry contests. A green enthusiast, blogger and content-writer, Sultana calls herself a wordsmith.



WHILE THE WIND HOWLS

Flames reflected within the cat's eye
a glass of spirits awaits a parched soul
wool socks are warming my chilled feet
the old dog listens while the wind howls.
My teapot whistles in a shrieking pitch
inside our little cabin on a snowy night
as the loneliness wreaks of rumination
harsh stares come from my napping cat.
The pen flows smooth on a poets night;
imagination tickles the swirling mind,
as images of acute emotional darkness

seek the shadowed voice from within.

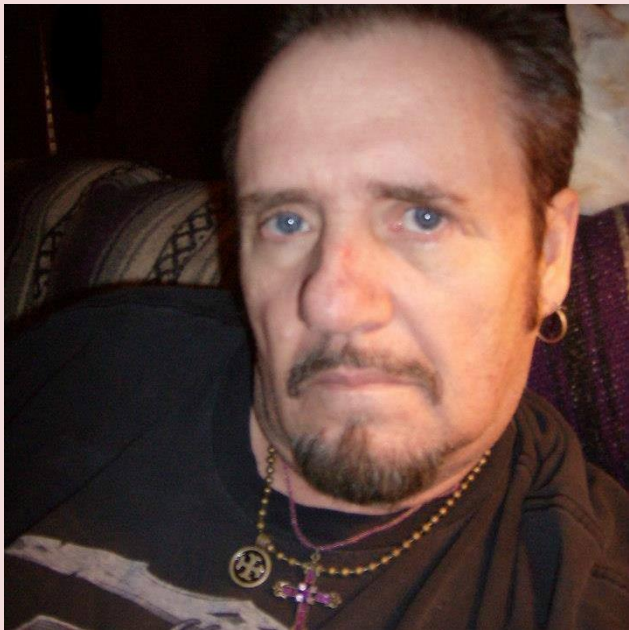
The storm rages as we huddle by the fire.

The cat now naps but, with an eye open;

a field mouse creeps on the windowsill.

My metal snow shovel falls with a clamor

and everyone jumps as the storm howls.



Ken Allan Dronsfield: Ken Allan Dronsfield is a disabled veteran and prize winning poet from New Hampshire, now residing in Oklahoma. A proud member of the Poetry Society of New Hampshire, he has five poetry collections to date; 'The Cellaring', 'A Taint of Pity', 'Zephyr's Whisper', 'The Cellaring, Second Edition' and 'Sonnets and Scribbles'. Ken's been nominated three times for the Pushcart Prize

and six times for Best of the Net. He was First Prize Winner for the 2018 and 2019, Realistic Poetry International Nature Poetry Contests. He has recently begun producing Creative Content on his YouTube channel and has had wonderful success sharing his poetry. Ken loves writing, thunderstorms, and spending time with his cats Willa and Yumpy.



Translation of song: Subhanallah haseen chehra

Movie: Kashmir Ki Kali

S H Bihari - O P Nayyar - Rafi

Oh my God!

This beautiful face

This dazzling demeanour

May you be safe from evil eyes

When I look at you

My heart says

I should pay you the highest compliment

That slender waist, those radiant eyes
Those tresses as abundant as a cloud
This is the picture the world worships
To be chosen by you would be heavenly

I don't know who will be the lucky guy
Whom your face, as bright as the moon,
Will favour with a bewitching smile
Whose house you will enliven with your presence
Can I also try my luck?

The world looks at you with hope
Be it a matter of the heart
Or a gathering of poets
If you're there
They want to sing your ballad



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.



SO BE IT!

It's the end of the year!

Like an old memory repeating dreams,
the Swansong has begun...

crested the pink trimmed clouds.

Luminiferous.

Sparkling the last few days of revelry!

Joyous festivities and

reunions with dear ones, friends and family!
Surreal sequences, like a warm patchwork shawl,
sweeping momentarily over reality....

In a quiet moment of reverie,
the ego lays down its prickly shield,
the war zones cease.

Dialogues with the real self
are spoken, but mostly unheeded and unheard.

In the stillness and silence,
often echoes a sad tune.

A very private communion with conscience,
a secret look in the mirror of truth,
a subtle knock on the door of reason.

May the unholy storms subside....

May caring, love,
hope and peace arrive...!

Walk forward then, with head held high...

to a victorious New Year!



Ketaki Mazumdar: I am a poet, a dreamer and an author. I reside in Mumbai, India, but grew up in Kolkata. After an amazing thirty-six years of being an educationist, receiving a National Award from the then President, Dr. Abdul Kalam, I now indulge in my passion for writing poetry and authoring children's books. I have contributed my poems to many poetry sites and authored a boutique book of hundred poems, for private circulation. I continue to learn, be awed by nature's beauty and mystery, human relationships and the spirituality of life and death.



A SMALL WORLD

Being alone is a facet of existence.

Glued to the rim of his small world

every one measures heart's tick

to the beeps of the brain;

His immediate ends is his orbit,

has no wish to peep beyond for

the world's tribulations not his forte;

The spider never breaches the net,

Is alone, content to hibernate;

An altruistic mind shares joy and suffering,

ever alive to the hum and clatter,
at home with the ends of the string.
He too has to wrestle with the inside,
alone within the rim of his world.
When celestial bodies are rimmed,
celebrate their lonely tryst
why not rejoice being alone?



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.



LOVE IN LIFE

What is love without a kiss?

Where is springtime without any bliss?

What is a river with its water frozen?

Where is that sunshine which is not golden?

How is that tree without any fruits?

How is a soldier without any boots?

What is an actor without a role?

How is a human being without a soul?

Where are the temples, mosques, churches or shrines
Which teach the Religion of Man without drawing lines?
Which is that bond where hands don't clutch?
What is that marriage which nulls loving match?

The myriad hued facets of Love still shine

 Within a blooming droplet of wine

 Though the absence of all that is bright and kind

 Makes life a void in the yearning mind,

 But still love's bud in the flowering womb,

 The seasons, the cycles despite the
tomb

 The maze unwraps and
darkness goes

 While the sun shines high
and cascade flows

life taps death

The whispering breeze when

wealth.

Tells us finally of Love's free



Laksmisree Banerjee: Prof. Dr. Laksmisree Banerjee is an established Poet, Writer, Literary Critic and Educationist. She is a Senior Fulbright Scholar & Professor (USA), Commonwealth Scholar (UK), National Scholar & Gold Medalist of Calcutta University, India, UGC Post-Doctoral Research Awardee and Founder Vice Chancellor of Kolhan University, India. She has five published Books of Poetry and several Research Books and One Hundred Twenty Academic Publications primarily on diverse areas of Poetry, Culture and Literature. Dr. Banerjee is also a Gold Medalist in Indian Classical Music and an established Radio, Stage & TV Vocalist of India, having performed globally.



WHERE WISE MEN FEAR TO TREAD

Why would I play mind games with wise men?

More importantly, why not?

We should believe

it's possible to fill what's empty,

because can achieving nothing make a person happy?

I know one adage to increasing life's reason:

Life holds drama that decreases in size

the older one becomes.

There must be some glory in our custom
of only imagining a paradise,
for even atheists make their own gods.

In the long run,
the significance of a civilization
depends on how we live.

What is our current era telling us?



Linda Imbler: Linda Imbler is the author of five paperback poetry collections and three e-book collections (Soma Publishing). This writer lives in Wichita, Kansas with her husband, Mike the Luthier, several quite intelligent saltwater fish, and an ever-growing family of gorgeous guitars. Learn more at lindaspotryblog.blogspot.com.



COLOURS

In due course of time

I forgot the colour blue

I fail to remember the fragrance of daisy

The song of brook

Dance of rivulet,

Smile of swirling steam.

I wove colourful designs in fancy

My needle was busy in creating different shapes

Expressing the feelings in an elegant way

But when lonely hours punch

I wish to run among meadows
to merge with the green shadows
I love the echoes that rebounds and returns
Quickly with equal magnitude
The emitting smoke that come from ashes
Reminds me of patterns of seven colours
Which I have lost in dark
but search them in bright.



Lopamudra Mishra: She resides in Bhubaneswar Orissa. She completed her graduation in English Hons from Sailabala Women’s college, Cuttack and post-graduation in English from Ravenshaw University, Cuttack. 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 works include her very own published books: “Rhyme Of Rain”, “First Rain” ,”Tingling Parables”, and “Rivulet Of Emotions”.



MY LAST BREATH

Here I am on my knees, bowing with reverence & piety

Offering to you my heart and my soul

I give it all to you

My Love

Our shy smiles, our hearty laughter

The secret delights we share in solitude

Absolute harmony! Absolute Bliss!

Let's be together and create a few more

Precious moments, fluttering our hearts

Tender loving, divine joy
Your hot sensuous kisses igniting passions
Soaring us higher & higher
Sublime levels unknown
Let me tell you my darling
One more time, adding to my million times
Of declaring my love for you sweetheart
I loved you since our eyes first met

Ah! My heart had skipped a beat!
Ah! I lost a few breaths
Ah! A magical moment
A tear escaped my eyes piercing my being
Causing delightful pains, soul tears, I tell you
Lover's tears, the priceless ones Angels collect

I have always loved you darling

I will always love you to the Moon & back

I will surely have your name I promise you

My dear, on my last breath!



Lubna Ahmed: She is a Certified Master NLP (Neurological Linguistic Programming) Practitioner; NLP Workshop Facilitator and Soft Skills trainer; and Certified Advanced Life Coach. She conducts SuperKoolKids Art Therapy workshops. She resides in Delhi with her family. She has managed to carve a niche for herself in the literary world by her ever so simple 'Love poems'. 'Princess Lubna' is her pen name, her writers' identity.

Her love poems are spiritual and have a Mystical Aura. She has written many poems for National and International Anthologies. She is an avid traveller.



FRIENDS

People who

Love and care like none

Whenever life seems doomed and grey

Don't let you tackle

the adversaries alone

Uplifting your mind

Holding your heart

Pranks and jokes

Advices and support

Anyhow they try

Making you feel alive
Life seems better
With these glorious ones
Life rolls back on the tracks
And once again
We are fit to go!



Madhu Jaiswal: She is a poet, writer, editor and a social worker based in Kolkata, India. She has got published in various national and international anthologies and is regularly featured in popular literary magazines and e-

zines. As an executive editor of The Impish Lass Publishing House Mumbai, she has 5 anthologies to her credit. Madhu is a friendly, optimistic and compassionate person who believes in humanity and volunteers for the upliftment of the underprivileged and destitute. According to her, hope, belief, and perseverance are the powerful mantras that have the ability to pave our path towards success no matter what. Her writings often revolve around these keywords. She can be contacted at madhuj2203@gmail.com.



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MY COFFEE

My coffee is not sweet

Not loaded with sweetness like yours

It is bitter

With that added stress on the 'R'

Like you do

A fragrant

Flavoursome bitterness

Just like that first sin of us

I see it brew

In that caraffe of clear water

Racing around

Warming up

Colouring the pure water

In brown

A deep dark coffee brown

My brows frown

As I concentrate

On the bubbles

And the froth

Making love

Then breaking down

Tired

And then it is time for me

To add that pinch of salt

Balancing the sweetness

The sweetness of your coffee

And the sweetness in you

To drown
Drown in the bitterness
Of the brown brew
Soaking in the first sin
Together with you



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.



Sing because you are magical

And get to kiss the sunshine each day

Laugh because you are a dreamer and get to cry dreams
each night

Dance because your dainty feet crush through the globes of
dewdrops

Making potpourri of a life glistening with the first sneeze of
moon till the last yawn of the sun

And the stars, they too smile in your plate, popping their
fragrance out through the nights via mogra buds

As they dispel their secrets

Breathe because you are yet alive to relish these delicacies.



Manisha Manhas: Manisha is a Poet residing in Pathankot. She has been published in many national and international journals. Writing poetry is a cathartic experience for her.



WHITE LOTUS

O miss Merry

Your presence fills the ambiance

With enticing aromatic fragrance

Spell surround, when you wear

Your favourite mysterious smile on lips

Simple yet elegant

Fairly noticeable amongst the crowd

Quiet, yet innumerable messages scatter

Dressed in ordinary manner

Yet carry royal grace

Your persona is loveliest treat for eyes
Why disappear in the wink of eyes, babe
No trace, once you leave
Who are you my dear!
Cinderella, fairy or forbidden rare!
Magical treatment
Are you a dissatisfied soul?
Appear just for moments
Leave enchanting impact
Whosoever are you, my dear
Gratitude to you
O noble, pure soul!
Imparting happiness, killing bitterness
A white lotus glorifying the mud....

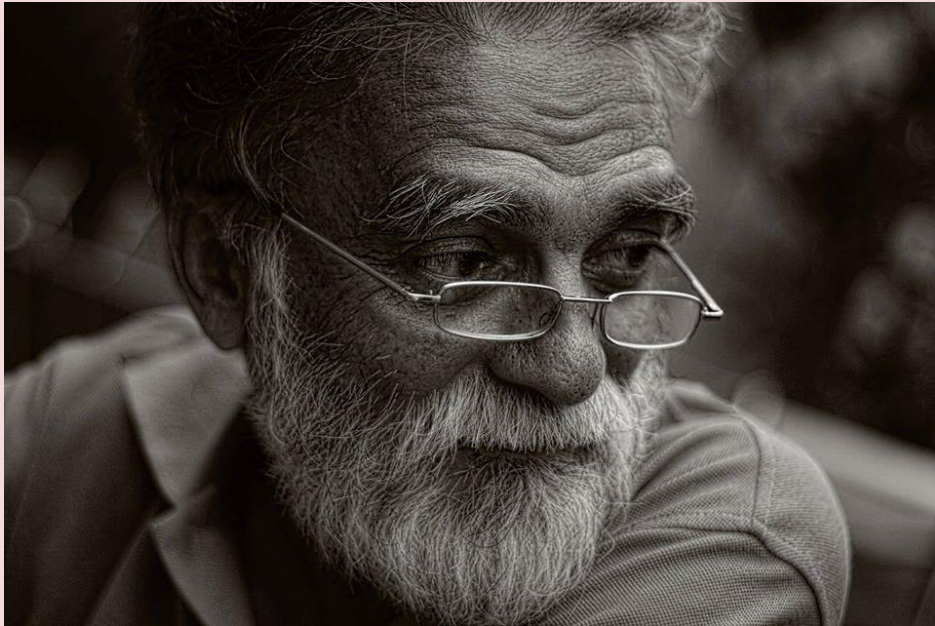


Manjula Asthana Mahanti: I am a poet, novelist, writer, and translator, residing in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. I work as editor with aabs publication. I have contributed to various national & international anthologies, e-magazines, OPA, etc. I have also published (novel 1, poetry collections 2, gazal sangrah 1, Abhishap Damini Ka novel, (translation) translated many poems. I have received, Shabd Sadhak & Kavi PantSmruti Sahitya Samman, Bharat Ratna Atal Behari Bajpai Award.



CRICKETS

Students at dinner
noisier than
lovelorn crickets.



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 versatelist. 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.



NOT SO 'SCINTILLATING' LIFE

Beyond this chaotic beauty

we call 'life'

filling the wounds all over

still,

scorning the strife.

Combating with the soul

seeing the trust

bursting into pieces

torn, wrecking havoc
all over our heart.

Blinded by phony
of bruises and bony.

Still,
seeking contentment
in the other door, hoping
one day
it will lay open.

The light is surely dim
some situations are grim
still, you cry in vain
entangled with the arraign.

Then,
watch the morning dew
give sadness adieu
You have it in you
Just remain firm and accrue!



Mehak Gupta Grover: She is the author of three books - THE HUMANE QUEST (volume-1, 2, & 3), published by Authorspress, New Delhi. She has been bestowed with '100 Inspiring Authors of India' award in Kolkata. She has also been honored with the 'Women of Influence 2019' award presented on women's day in New Delhi. Along with her books, her work has been published in various anthologies

and she is recipient of various other prizes in poetry competitions as well.

(mehakgrover@amartex.com)



MY LOVE FOR YOU WILL REMAIN THE SAME

One day you will

Still see the same me

As you saw on day one

I ain't sure about somethings

But you'll be mine baby forever

My love for you'll never change

You're free to be friends

Or lovers with every other

Woman you meet with

Give them all the love

You gave me unconditionally
When you say I'm suspicious
It breaks my heart to pieces
Pray that my image should be
Erased from your mind completely
I still feel so good to be with you
Carrying you in my heart
Wherever I go



Merlyn Alexander: I'm a poetess residing in Nagercoil, India. I'm a housewife. My passion includes writing, cooking, and painting. I have contributed to many anthologies. I have published six books in Haiku Poetry. I'm currently waiting for my first anthology of English poems to be published soon.



GROUP THERAPY

Wind chimes.

It's going to rain tonight, thunder.

I'm going to lead the group tonight talking

about Rational Emotive Therapy,

belief challenges thought change,

Dr. Albert Ellis.

I'm a hero in my self-worship,

self-infused patient of my pain,

thoughtful, probabilistic atheism

with a slant toward Jesus in private.

Rules roll gently creeping

through my body with arthritis

a hint of mental pain.

Sitting in my 2001 Chevy S-10 truck,

writing this poem, late as usual.

It's going to rain, thunder heavy tonight.



Michael Lee Johnson: He lived ten years in Canada during the Vietnam era and is a dual citizen of the United States and Canada. Today he is a poet, freelance writer, amateur photographer, and small business owner in Itasca, DuPage County, Illinois. Mr. Johnson is published in more than 1098 new publications, and his poems have appeared in 40 countries, he edits, publishes ten poetry sites. Michael Lee

Johnson has been nominated for 2 Pushcart Prize awards poetry 2015/1 Best of the Net 2016/2 Best of the Net 2017, 2 Best of the Net 2018. Two hundred seventeen poetry videos are now on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/poetrymanusa/videos>



THE MORNING AT THE VILLE

The morning at the ville

Like a picture still

Oft I think I see

Where just after Autumn

Came the winter with glee,

The arterial road running through

The village always had a view

To find milkmen cycling to

The nearby town and men who

Took to the road, waited like statues
Beside the road, beneath the tree,

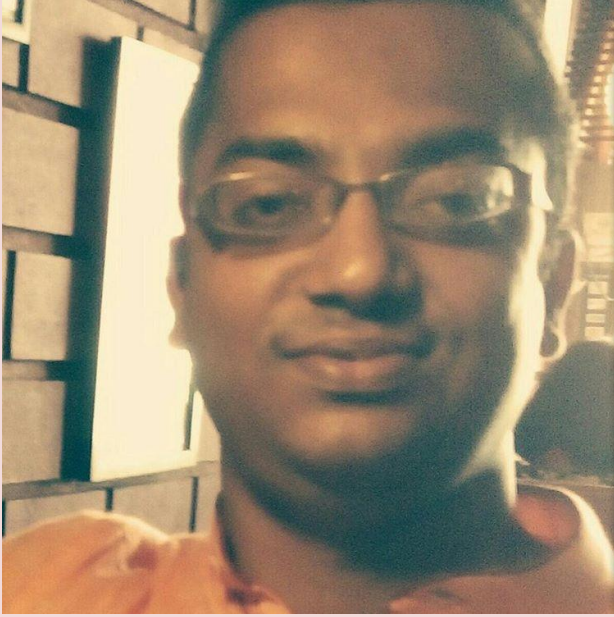
The morning at the ville

Like a painting still

Oft I think I see

Waking up after an Autumn

To the winter's glee.



Moinak Dutta: I am a poet and novelist, residing at Kolkata. I work as a teacher. I have contributed to various national and international anthologies. I have got two published fictions to my credit. My third fiction will be published soon. I have worked as editor of several anthologies.



I was a “Nobody”,
Lost in “Nowhere”!
I cried, I wept
I fell in distress
There was no way out
From that dark, gloomy place.

Time passed.
I felt my heart beating inside.
I knew that I wasn't dead.
So, I tried to live!

I began to make "Nowhere"
My home, my favourite place to be!
I carved it beautifully,
Painted it with warm colours,
Invited "Sunshine" and "Moonlight"
And even "Rain" and "Snow"!
I sang, I danced and suddenly I knew
That I was again "Me"!
I thanked God for giving me the chance
To find my sky and just be!



Nazia Islam: I am a teacher, currently residing in Dhaka, Bangladesh. As an Early Childhood Educator by profession, my dream is to make a difference in the world by shaping the minds of the future generation. I write out of passion and sometimes, out of whim. I love nature, books and simplicity, and the sound of rain.



BLINDNESS

Caged and ignorant
Hungry and thirsty,
Impatience lures me.

Bread, just a meal
Bound, and stock
Perpetually behind bars.

Blindness and inexperience
Darkness and inexperience

Deafness and indiscipline

Lameness and insensitivity

Dumbness and illiteracy.

Feed not your stomach

Weed off your dwarfism

Sprout your seed

Pray your creed

And grow your breed.



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.



THE GIFT OF VALENTINE

14th of February 2016

The heaven hangs low, the day is perfect with intermittent breeze and I find his card stuck on the fridge. He remembered after all! One could open the two sides of the card like a book, drawing apart the heart on each side tied by a golden string while doing so. “Happy Valentine’s, I would like a divorce,” he had written in his usual leftward slant. I freeze in inability although it’s not hard to believe. I weep instantly and spend myself away. Reflection storms in, a rebellious soldier; my anguish switches into elation. I am unshackled from being put down every day and trodden upon; free from being a wife to being a human!

But,

As I open and spread my arms to welcome freedom, opening the door, he walks in. I stagger back, “But the divorce?”

“Why?! It was a joke! You surely didn’t take it seriously,” he says and tries slipping a diamond ring on my resistant finger.

“I did! I want it,” I state emphatically.

Letting go the means, waking up, I walk out.

21st Dec 2020

Miracles do happen and the Earth turns vibrant with life. Does it not seem to you? Look at me, I have found and reached the zenith of myself; they call me wayward and headstrong. Today, I have obtained my doctorate, a respectable married woman’s relinquished dream has been fulfilled by a wanton divorcee. I braved to take that gift setting up signals across for women who deny themselves self-respect to be called the respectable women, and they endure.



Nikhat Mahmood: She is an English Lecturer, a short story writer and an occasional poet, she has translated from Urdu to English and also transliterated in Hindi, a book of poems 'Zard Patton ki Shawl' written by a prominent Pakistani poet, several of her stories have been published in various anthologies and magazines. She is currently working on her debut book of short stories, Scent of the Bitter Almonds and a novel, Revived Oaths. She lives in Karachi with her husband and two children.



STREAKED WITH VERMILION

The remembrance of early days chirps,

At times,

As if the chanting verses of love

Before her darling takes leave,

Now remains just dust and

Its aroma in quest of drops of rain.

Revolving round the vermilion forehead,

from pole to pole;

Mornings becoming days, days towards nights,

Since the breath when her palm was shaded
in newly bloomed henna.

Dreams are mourning under her pillow,
As the Promises folded in a silk kerchief!
Now unfolded!

A few vermilion drops of dew die every day,
As it passes her old rose tree by.

Corn sweet days were ripe in her patch,
Choir of dear ones there in the twilight,
And darkness in and out,
Like a lamp hanging out of the clouds,
In her long summer night.

Tried not to let fall into eventual decay
Her home! She termed it that way,
Being well-wisher; got abandoned to the care of none,

Holding all bonds still,
Beneath the burden of vermilion roof.

No name left, for she was the bride,
Money making machine or warming up apparatus,
Sometimes for her man,
Sometimes for in-laws,
Venality in extreme, for she is a woman.



Nitusmita Saikia: By profession, an instructor in National Cadet Core, India, Nitusmita Saikia is a keen worshiper of literature. She is working presently in Jorhat Assam, India. A young budding poetess, Nitusmita Saikia, has been adored by the World society of poetry. 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 like Tuck Magazine (USA), FM-Online (USA) poetry magazine, and blog Sparking.biz. With these, her poems have been published in various poetry anthologies National and International.



CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

I have a list here of names in a book,
and each year I thumb through the pages and take a good
look;

I realize now that these names are a part
of the life blood that flows through my heart

Every year as Christmas rolls on around, I find out anew
that the best gift given to me is the chance to meet people
like you

Christmas is more than a special day in December that comes once a year

Its magic is something all through the year we remember

Here's hoping the spirit of Christmas endures

Moving straight from my heart to yours.



Nivedita Karthik: I am a poet residing in Gurgaon. I am a professional Bharatanatyam dancer, and my poems have been published in Glomag, the Society of Classical Poets, Visual Verse, Bamboo Hut, Eskimopie and The Epoch Times. Random thoughts that sprout in my mind can be found as ramblings on my blog <https://www.justrandomwithnk.com>



THE WILLOW TREE

A gentle breeze brings the aroma of the willow leaves to
my troubled senses

Therapeutic fragrance, soothing the cobwebs of my mind

I am sitting under a lush willow tree, its spiky golden green
leaves look like tears

But that is deceptive: even though the name is weeping
willow.

Its many branches as they droop soulfully to the receptive
embrace of the earth.

The leaves whisper many secrets of strength, courage,
patience

Tender, yielding but strong branches tell me stories of
endurance and secret power

The willow yields as I lean on its trunk and feel its rough bark scrape my cheek.

I test its supple strength and the willow tree silently engages in the duel

An epiphany, swift as a current, takes me by surprise.

The willow tree never breaks, its bends', bends...and bends

Till it goes up naturally, in its own time.

Determined, tenacious and sublime in its wisdom that whatever bends is not weak.

How I long to be like a willow tree, not weeping, but celebrating myself.



Padmini Rambhatla: I am a poet, teacher and homemaker residing in Chennai, India. I work as a high school English teacher. I have contributed to Glomag and my children's school magazine. I have not published anything so far but in the near future, I will. I also enjoy painting in different mediums, watching movies and listening to music.



A DISTANT CRY

Wind opened its umbrella wide
Went mad
And came rushing
with a drizzle
Caught delicate jasmine
With flowers - white and wet -
By her narrow waist,
Dragged her from behind
From the grip of soft December plant,
Towards tamarind tree aside

Hard stemmed, having shed leaves
stood naked;
And the Jasmine lost
All flower buds, in the melee.

Weeping clouds later
Made a slow retreat, and
After a while, the wind
Went for a slow meander
Revelation twittered, too late,
And Jasmine stood grieved,
Anger dissolved in tears
Dripping down her cheeks.

Torment of a lonely distant cry
Alone I could hear
The echo of life,
And of sad poetry.



Pankajam: Pankajam, retired from BHEL as DM/Finance is a bilingual poet and novelist settled at Chennai, India. In addition to several poems, book reviews and articles published in national and international journals, she has twenty two books to her credit, including thirteen books of poems, a translated poetry collection in French and three fictions in English. Three books on literary criticism viz., *Femininity Poetic Endeavours*, *History of Contemporary Indian English Poetry-An Appraisal* and *Socio-Cultural Transition in Modern Indian English Writing & Translation* discuss her works in detail. She has won many awards for poems and short stories including Rock Pebbles National Literary Award 2019.



ONE WHO GAVE HER ALL TO INDIA

The wonderful lady of the West came to India to serve.

The respect she got is what she deserved.

Tagore called her Lokmata*.

And Shri Aurobindo, Agnisikha*.

Sister Nivedita came to India on Vivekananda's request.

She gave her heart and soul to India as her bequest.

Her magic had touched all aspects of Indian life.

Had enriched India, helped Her to thrive.

She inspired Abanindranath Tagore to revive the Indianness of Indian Art.

Supported Jagadish Bose in his scientific research.

Her encouragement brought Subramania Bharati's vision to light.

Sparked his zeal for Women's right and casteism to fight.

In the 1899 plague in Kolkata city,

Nivedita initiated relief work and cleaned the vicinity.

She wanted girls to be educated and empowered.

For her hard work she was with love showered.

Door- to- door she went to enlist girls for her school.

As education of women then was not at all cool.

She waded through muddy waters in the flood,

To help the victims of the 1905 Bengal floods.

Indianness in everything she did.

Everything swadeshi whether tea, coffee or a bead.

The wonderful Elizabeth Margaret Noble who gave to India her all.

Dedicated her life to India at Vivekananda's clarion call.

****Lokmata-- Mother of the people***

****Agnishikha-- Flame***



Paramita Mukherjee Mullick: I am a scientist by education, educationist by profession and poet by passion. I have six published books. My poems have been widely published in India and abroad. Some poems have been translated into 36 languages. I am blessed to have received numerous international and national awards. I am the Founder President of the Intercultural Poetry and Performance Library Mumbai Chapter. I live in Mumbai, India.



Be where excitement is

try be part of it

bridge, golf, cricket, swim in the river

nothing to lose

gain immense joy.

Birds do it

animals excel in it

fighters do it.

protesters drown themselves in excitement

be where life is.



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



THE DEAD

Surrounded by the dead
a mam takes up her bawling bairn
cradle rocks it in her arms
until the child is quiet.

She lays it back in the buggy,
pushes all out the cemetery gate.



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 POET'S HEART

Boompity Boom, Boompity Boom

My heart is beating fast

Boompity Boom, Boompity Boom

I hope it's going to last

Boompity Boom, Boompity Boom

The words are passing through

Boompity Boom, Boompity Boom

Thixotropic but much like glue

Boompity Boom, Boompity Boom

They're stacking up inside

Boompity Boom, Boompity Boom

The exit's not so wide

Boompity Boom, Boompity Bloop

I feel a kind of pain

Boompity Bloop, Boompity Gloop

The words have shot to my brain

Boompity Bleep, Boompity Blip

The words are in my mind

Boompity Blop, Boompity Burp

To you their way will find



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.



Swallow it.

Feel it trickling down within,

Causing that chill in your bones

And pricking pain on your veins

Allow it

To pass through you

Let it flow

For once

For once...

Then,

See it surrender and coil before you

Like a tamed animal,

Yes.

The wild pain

With venom diluted

And teeth blunt,

A beast with drained resolve

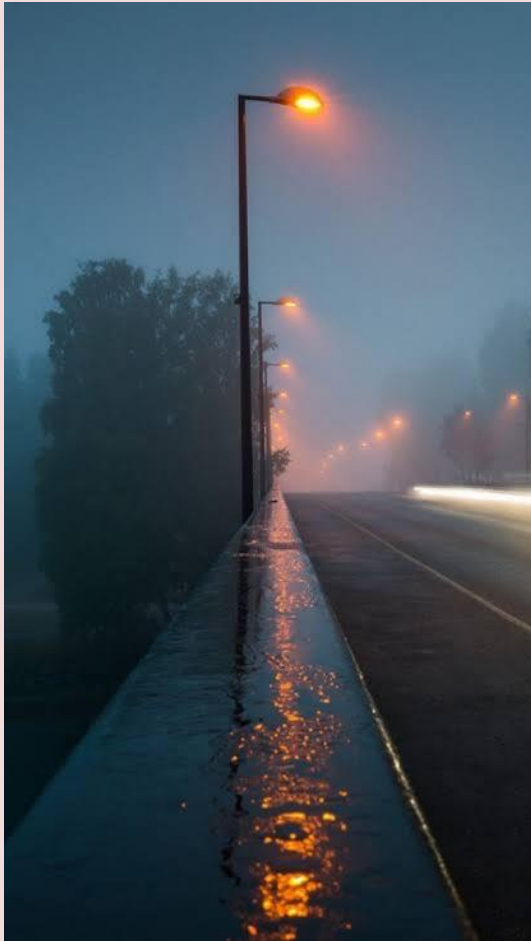
And throat parched dry,

Waiting for salvation

At your feet.



Prabha Prakash: I am a poet residing in Kochi, Kerala. I am a Chartered Accountant and work as Senior Auditor at EY. My first poetry anthology "Lost Monsoon" has been published by Writers Workshop Kolkata. I have been selected for the Reuel International Poetry Prize 2019.



WHEN I WAS WITH YOU

When I was with you

Every day was a festival to celebrate

my fears were entombed

and insecurities were caged

Reminiscing those cold winters

dark frosted window panes

your love ended all enmities
and helped me meditate

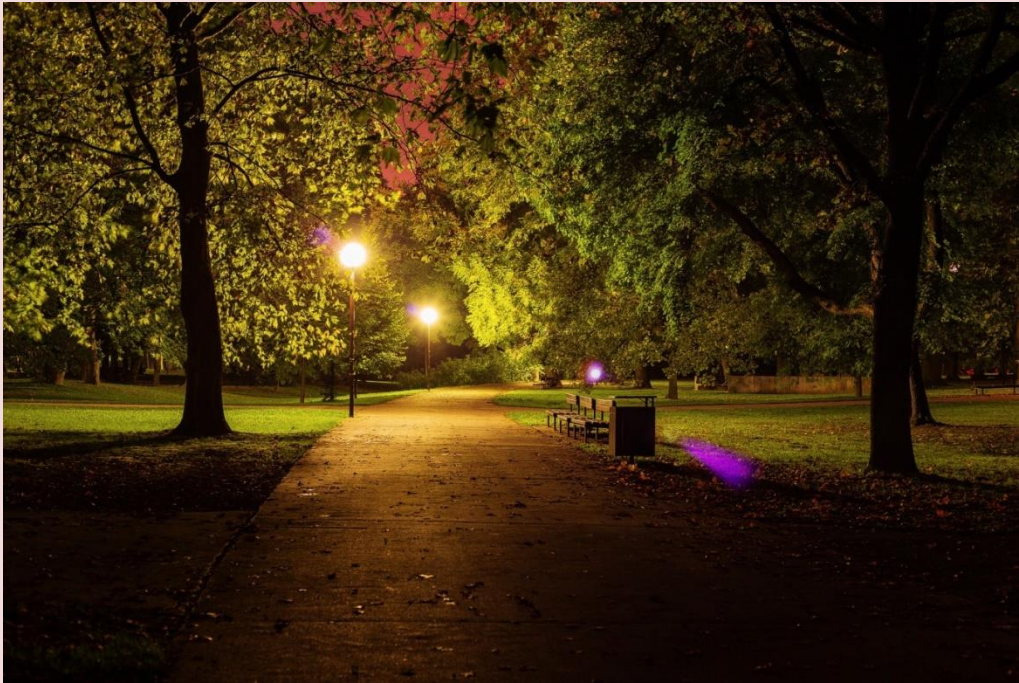
On those quiet and damp streets
I choose to amble again
all alone by myself
with pleasant memories of pleasure & pain

Oh, when I was with you
I had zest, mirth and grace
now the fancy passes by
and nothing will remain

Miles around the wonder grew
I am quite myself again.



Pragyaa Sharma: I am a poet residing in Muzaffarnagar ,India. I'm an engineering student. I have contributed to monthly online poetry/prose magazine.



LET ME ROAM AWHILE

Now that the city is asleep

I will go out of my home to see

How flowers sleep, leaves make room for another
sprouting leaf.

I will walk throughout the night

just to count the numbers of trees,

I know trees are not alike

Some are straight, others are curvy.

Trees do walk at night,

Stars twinkle

The sky sees dream!

Have you ever seen mannequins talking to one another
over a cup of coffee at night?

Dews becoming friendlier with blades of grasses.

Stars knocking at heart's doors

The sky asking each trespasser its address.

The night is a never-ending cycle, so also life!

The night always gives way to morning.

So also the morning gives way to night.

Let me roam awhile

So what if roads are dead

Ponds are all dead

Light posts are standstills

Birds are asleep?



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.



QUESTIONS

Seven colours of the rainbow,

Seven notes of music,

Five senses physical,

Lots more metaphysical,

Pure, pristine is supposed to be white,

All evil is black, is that really right?

What say of in-between grey,

What colour character,

What shade love?

What is considered neutral?

Knowledge is limitless,

Experience multi-dimensional,

Can you look back to what you were? Do you know what you are?

Can you foresee what you will be?

To unravel the answers will require a day and eternity!



Pratima Apte: She is a poet residing in Pune, India. She is a homemaker and a 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.



Love the divine

Lives within

Search him never

Anywhere else

Wake up with him

Walk and talk

Dance with him

In the tune of love

Meet him always

Whom you meet

Serve them always

With care and love



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.



DECEMBER, A WINDOW TO JOY

Dewy eyes stress the curtain of mist

Enlightening the heart,

A lure to touch and feat

The first ray of light.

So pleasant and bright, my eyesight

Vividness soothes the soul's nest

Though I can hear the wind's soft whistling

Through the winter's coldest night.

The half-baked moon on my palm

Mystic night rests in stillness

Light glimmers tearing the darkness.

An wise owl sits on the old branches

Vanity and charm cannot stop her sight.

My quench subsides now

Heartbeat increases fast

A gold bracelet with a diamond in the centre

Fulfils my utmost desire.

Dreams anchor, life becomes vibrant

Our two hearts melted in love,

sails on the stars

celebrating the new phase of life.



Preety Bora: Hailing from a beautiful state 'Assam' (India), the poetess, Mrs Preety Bora started writing from her college days. She lives in a city called Golaghat with her family. Nature inspires her to write poetry. She writes in both languages: in English and in Assamese (her mother tongue). Her poems have been published in various anthologies and magazines in India and in foreign countries.



CAN A POEM LIE?

Can a poem lie?

Can it be what the eyes do not see

the ears do not hear,

or the mouth dare not speak?

In its shapes and its conceits and its enjamb-

ments can a poem shape-shift?

If a poem can lie, how many lies?

Can it promise hope where there is none

and despair when there is none?

Can a poem cheat?

Lead young men to their deaths

by war for the fantasies of nationhood

or the fatal possessiveness of

a lover's charms?

Or young women into the charms

Of men with with smiles and

Biker jackets and promises

And middle class mediocrity?

Can a poem cry — in a corner

Lined with rejection slips

And sweat stains and coffee spills

And the blood of a poet draining

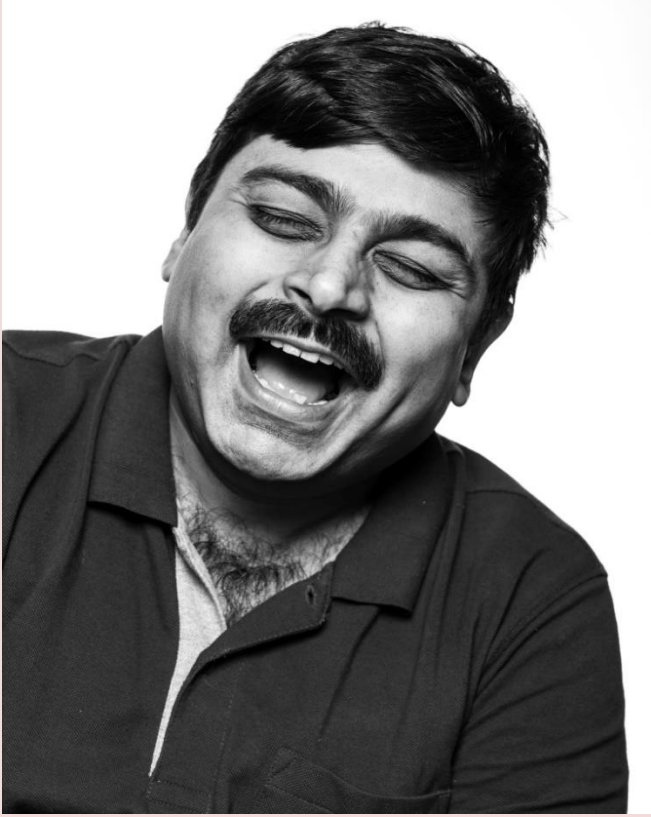
From his wrists into its fabric?

Can a poem laugh — or must it

In its double entendre bear the

Weight of sorrows and simply hint
That the lines are not what they are?

Can I write a poem and turn the sheet
Into a paper plane that I can set
Free to float among the pollen and the
Dust-bunnies — free of semantics
And metaphor and analysis to land
At last into a gutter, dying unread.



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.



GLORY DECEMBER

New Year Eve,

End of December, New Year's Eve,

Crackers blow, majestic in front and back

of houses and multi storied apartments,

Convivial mirth ringing aloud.

Joining hands with church peal.

Augury of undoing all that

is abominably mad, painfully sad,

into a lawn of greenery and opulent.

All faces hiding how much of sorrow
Yet, tapping the stick of optimism
bold on the streets of angst and tension
writ large for years not obliterated;

bright in the morn early and near
all faces wishing with cakes and drinks
joy and smile welcoming all passers-by
crackers sound and bound beyond walls.

Hope beckons every household
Like babe's smile when lullaby on air
betokens with an aura of positive move.
December goes but with a nod

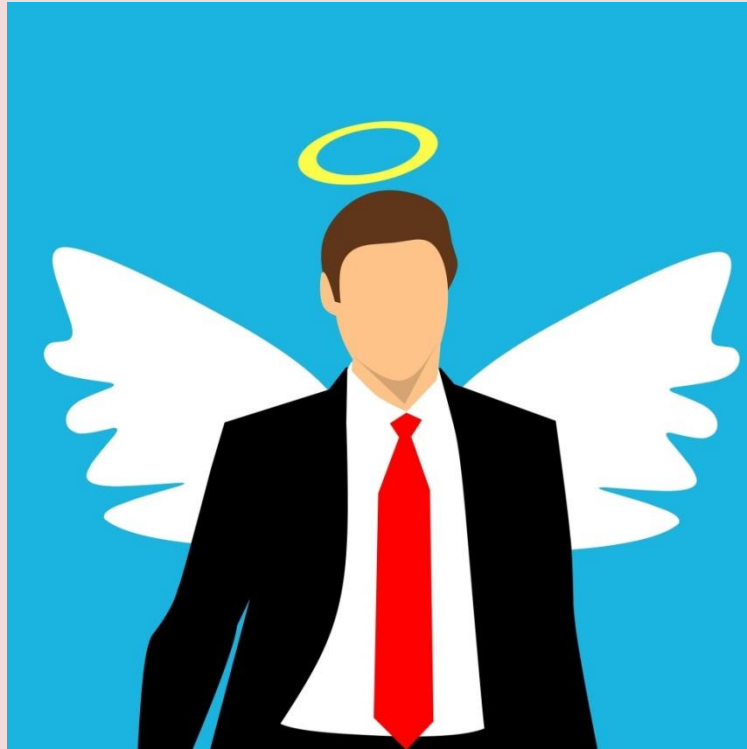
Weep no more, for in the rustle
Of wind and sweep, there is pot of luck.



Radhamani Sarma: She is as student of Ethiraj college, Chennai. She specialized in the plays of W.H. Auden for her doctoral thesis from the University of Madras. She obtained PGDTE from CIEFL from Hyderabad. She served in Pachaiyappa's college and is a retired professor of English with 31 years of teaching experience. She has published four books of poems and one book of short stories. She is widely published in various anthologies and is a reviewer and critic.

pearlrade.blogspot.in

pearlrade.wordpress.com



I'M AN HONOURABLE MAN

For all practical purpose I am an honourable man.

No, really, I am, and it's a plain statement.

Not that I can prove it on paper, but it's true.

Not that there is an objective test like the one for IQ.

There is no case against me in any court of law (yet),

So, I assert that I am an honourable man.

So what if I stalk my facebook friends' walls sometimes

To see whether I find a mention in their posts.

So what if I go to read their blog posts sometimes and search

For a line, even a phrase in a poem, or a sentence in prose pieces

That mentions me, even if in irony.

Does it make me any less honourable? Does it?

Even if it did, I'd still go looking there,

And I'd still find nothing there.

Do my friends come and check my pages and posts?

Even if they did, they'd find nothing about them there.

I write only about myself, not about them.

For I am an honourable man.



Rajnish Mishra: He is a poet, writer, translator and blogger born and brought up in Varanasi, India. He is the editor of PPP E-zine, a poetry e-zine. He has a blog on poetry, poetics and aesthetic pleasure:
<https://poetrypoeticspleasure.wordpress.com>.



I HAVE PUT THE SKY

I have put the sky on my head,

I'm an unskilled worker or labourer

Working in a brick kiln, producing bricks

For the construction of concrete jungles

In the urban cities burdened by their

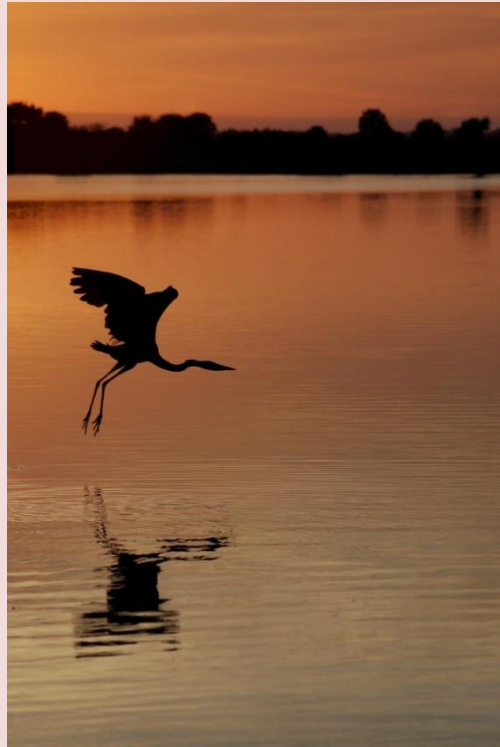
Own mega structures putting up a ghastly scenario;

I work ruthlessly irrespective of weather
And sleep effortlessly throughout the year;
I take dried bread along with salt and chilly combine,
Before going to sleep in the makeshift shanties;
I don't know about dreams, either in the day
Or nights as I'm absorbed totally in my chores;

More than often, my family works with me,
In the same work conditions and earn
The extra money to supplement my income;
Still life is tough and hard to sustain,
But I have to tread on difficult terrain;
Often I wish the white clouds could brush my cheeks
And enrich my soul with soothing feelings,
Yet I'm a labourer, my voice is so weak,
I'm a man though emaciated and meek.



Rakesh Chandra: Mr Rakesh Chandra is a retired civil servant. He is currently pursuing his PhD in Law from Lucknow University. He has two published collections of poems, titled 'Moon is Black' and 'Circle Of Life'. He also has one collection of Hindi poems. His English poems have found place in different poetry journals and newspapers' literary supplements. He also has authored two books on Law.



GHAZAL-12

The sun like waning age melts into the horizon, thoughts
come!

A canvas of fading legacy, loss of crimson, thoughts come!

Dreams like the blue herons in flight with streaming legs in
the air,

I see a marshy land in my imagination,

thoughts come!

The ripples and the strong waves of time-- well, who can
compute them?

The silent sky and the billowing clouds of passion, thoughts
come!

Phantoms of a million moments descend the alley of heart,
They hold my hand like bosom friends, can't say the reason,
thoughts come!

You make my soul blossom but remain hidden like the pale
stars

In the noonday skies, Ranjana; with a big question,
thoughts come!



Ranjana Sharan Sinha: She is a poet, author and professor and is a prominent voice in Indian Poetry in English. She is the recipient of a number of awards for her literary achievements along with a commendation from the former President of India, A.P.J. Abdul Kalam for her poem 'Mother Nature'. She has authored and published 8 books in different genres. Her poems are part of the syllabus prescribed for M.A. English, Purnea University, Purnia. She is one of the members of the Editorial Board, Our Poetry Archive. Lives in Nagpur with her spouse who is a doctor (Ophthalmologist).



SANGUINE

I would not have the cloud any colour but white
Or the Rose any colour but rose
Or the hills that simmer all summer in splendid light
Braving the sun in a stately pose.

How the white cloud stirs a restive mind
And the Rose diffuses a sweet fragrance

Luminance of those hills spur you to unwind
Casting a deep, positive spell in every trance.

Yes, everything that colours our Cosmos radiates
Has a distinct emblem, has its own miniscule face
Exudes its own hope, revels in its own trait
To rejoice that this great world is a grand old Place!

When you take this liberty to exult in such divine grace
When you sync with season's silent but splendid hue
When your time comes to quit this life's ephemeral race
Remember to shelter them, remember what you owe!

For, this Rose and this cloud and those dreamy hills
And this Great earth that your feet treads upon
They plead to let them be, with all their stills and frills
Let people to come stumble upon them, after you are
gone!



Ravi Ranganathan: Ravi Ranganathan is a writer, critic and a poet from Chennai. He is also a retired banker. He has to his credit three books of poems entitled 'Lyrics of Life' and 'Blade of green grass' and 'Of Cloudless Climes'. He revels in writing his thought-provoking short poems called 'Myku'. He writes regularly for several anthologies. His awards include recognition in 'Poiesis award for excellence' of Poiesisonline, Sahitya Gaurav award by Literati Cosmos Society, Mathura and 'Master of creative Impulse' award by Philosophyque Poetica. He contributes poems for the half-yearly Poetry book Metverse Muse. He writes regularly for the annual anthologies of Guntur Poetry festival and Amaravati Poetic Prism. He is a regular contributor for Glomag and weekly contributor for the webzine 'Literary Vibes'.



NOCTUARY

At four in the morning
a fellow on his beat
sees a movement in a window
and stops to peep
Beyond the trickling dew on the glass
a leaf of the golden pothos trembles
Through the air vent, the night
slips in frozen fingers

In the spotlight of the sentry's torch

is a seamless whirl of thought

A memory here, a hurt there

a crinkled smile, a fallen tear-

It is a flurricane with a wintery plain

beyond the frost on the pane

He stays watching as the shape of the day

pushes the straying thoughts into a form

for a body is easier to wrestle with

than the wetness of dew, the regret of the night

and the rebellion of sleepless feathers



Reena Prasad: Reena R's poems have been published in The Copperfield Review, First Literary Review-East, Angle Journal, Poetry Quarterly, York Literary Review, Lakeview International Journal, Glomag, Duane's Poe Tree, Mad Swirl, 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. She was adjudged second in the 'World Union Of Poet's' poetry competition, 2016 and won an award for poetry in 2016 As 'You Like It International Poetry Contest', commemorating the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare. She won the Reuel International Prize for poetry, 2018.



BROWN NIHILISMUS

moldy moth eaten papers

crumble along yellow edges

promising concepts deliberated by the Assemblage House,
where the People convene,

repudiate, and charge Him

to bring down the curtain upon the judges

gradually, spotlights warm the worms

cohabiting underneath window sills,

where we were compelled to watch the brown army team
teargas, then parachute

down from the helicopter smoke, billowing

as legs and breath remain rooted

melting into rock,

history's lesson will be disregarded

and war chests will dissolve,

empty with hollow rhythms

slamming against one another-

the truth will hit hard against them all

here and now, something outlaw

begs to be orated, for

imploring stares no longer can be ignored

it is best to ride out this wave now

before another overhanging plastic curtain

forever strangles our generational wagon,

before deeper corrupted judges decide
some other destiny for us all



Robert Feldman: Inspired by members of my hometown Paterson's (New Jersey) literary tradition, most notably Allen Ginsberg and William Carlos Williams, I continue to write/publish/present my work (most recently "Hineni", 2018; "Sunflowers, Sutras, Wheatfields and other ArtPoems", 2019), make fire paintings, and play tabla. The body of my writing and paintings can be accessed at <https://sites.google.com/site/robertfeldman23/>.



DECEMBER JUST ARRIVED

December has just arrived

Early this morning and

Fall has gone to sleep

Until next year as Winter

Slowly makes its way in!

The leaves are disappearing

The Winter is really near

And I can tell right away

By the cool breeze in

The air!

The city is getting ready

For those special Holidays

That will fill our hearts

With joy to see colorful

Lights shining bright

Letting us know that

Christmas and New Year's

Is almost here bringing

Everyone good cheer!



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!



THE MUSIC ALWAYS PLAYS DOWNSTAIRS

you can't hear it

tucked up away in the

East Tower

soundproofing

with resort

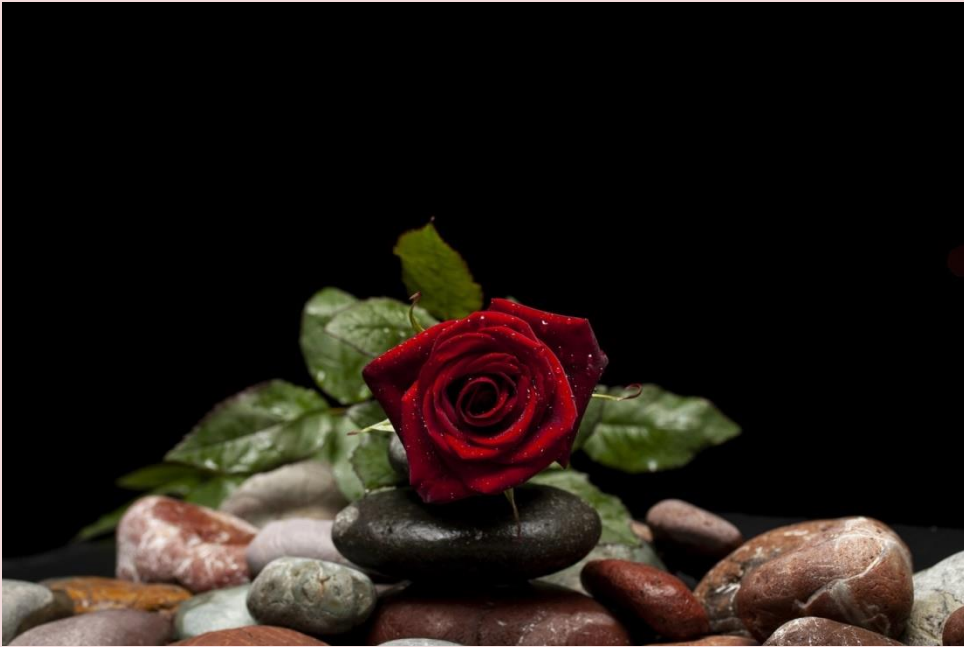
fees

throbbing feet
hung over the end
of the bed

in the middle of
the desert.



Ryan Quinn Flanagan: Ryan is a Canadian-born author residing in Elliot Lake, Ontario, Canada with his wife and many bears that rifle through his garbage. His work can be found both in print and online in such places as: *Evergreen Review*, *The New York Quarterly*, *GloMag*, *The Poet Community*, *Red Fez*, and *The Oklahoma Review*.



IN LIEU OF LOVE

What shall I return in lieu of your love?

Shall I offer you a rose

Or a bunch of roses?

Oh, that's quite cliché

And meant for youngsters

For remembrance of

Their first day of falling love.

What shall I return in lieu of your love?

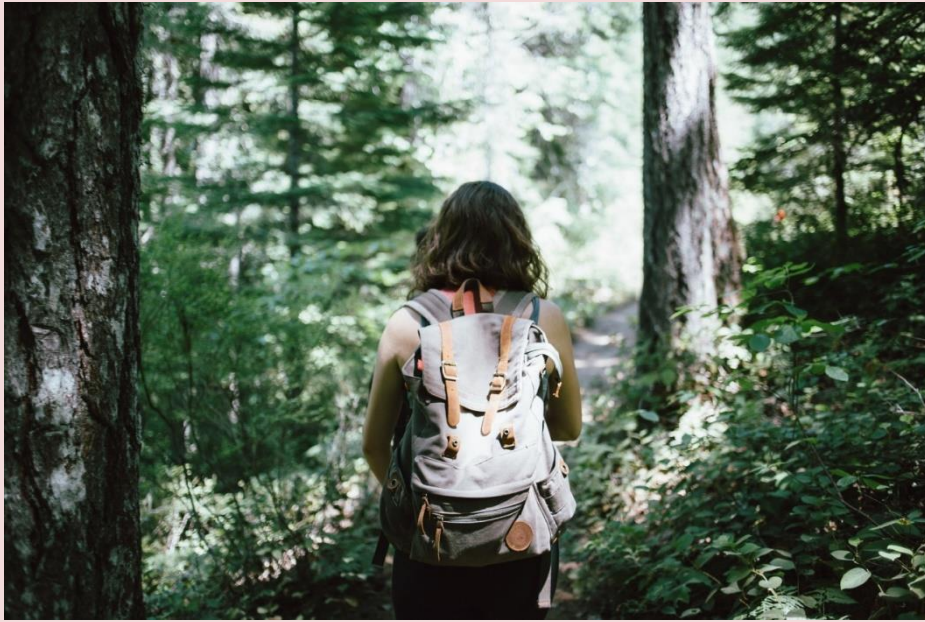
Shall I offer you streams

As if in the paradise
That flow milk and honey
Oh, that's quite exaggerated
Since I'm not a supercilious,
You would be looking at me
As if I'm mocking on you

What shall return in lieu of your love?
Shall I offer you my life
As some real lovers do?
Oh, now you might be thinking
What kind of life do I have to offer
After all it was a failure
As my love to you... As if a barter system



Saleem Raza (Saleem Kattuchola): He is a freelance writer and painter from Kerala, India, working in Doha as an Admin Manager. He 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 and articles in International magazines and newspapers.



WANDERLUST AND A KNAPSACK

A little walk down a little road,
A little bus at the bus stop,
A little train station to go to,
And a little train on which to hop.

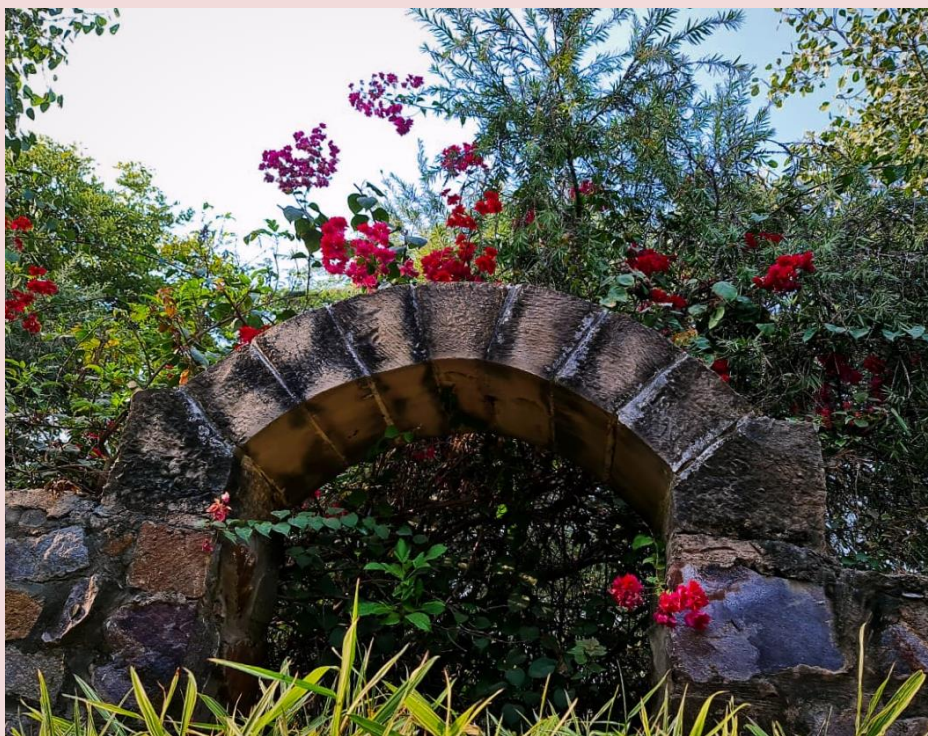
A little dream of a little girl,
A little fun to be had,
To explore this world a little bit
To make memories; crazy and mad.

A little sightseeing to be done,
A merry little trip to take,
A little desire to fulfil
And a little experience to gain.

A little suitcase by my side,
A little backpack already strapped,
A little train station to go to,
And a little train to catch.



Samixa Bajaj: I am a fifteen-year-old poetess residing in Guwahati, India. I am a student of Class 10. I am a regular contributor to GloMag and also have had my work published in the annual school magazine. I hope to be able to pen even better verses in days to come.



NO, IT DOESN'T BLEED

The cut is still as deep as the day the invisible knife sliced right through

Only, now it doesn't bleed - the pain, a numbing anaesthetic

I live with the pain that's yellowed and aged with the passing years,

An intoxicant that curves a curious half smile on my face...

It's only in those moments of solitary confinement that
The scintillating glow of the moon shines briefly over the
cut
Fresh as ever, I feel it was just yesterday that they martyred
me
A bright sunny day, Fall leaves carpeting the grounds
And erected a mural in my name, singing songs of glory that
drowned my voice in the symphony
And an epitaph that's drawn a divide between me and the
world out there...
As I sit weaving crochets of memories into fine ink on
parchment
Ink that will never seep through the cracks in that old, worn
out mural, no matter what...

Sometimes I wonder how they missed my half smile
And instead crafted a face that barely resembles mine
Then I am jostled by the reality check - the half smile was a
gift of the cut that's never healed
The cut over which the mural was sculpted, the epitaph
engraved...

The half smile came later...

But that's the only thing that's stayed with me for all these years,

Except for the cut that's never healed...

They decorate the mural with fresh blossoms every now and then

And I watch from behind those glass walls - from another world

The pain is as fresh as ever

But then, I have long since stopped inking stories about it in fraying parchment

For, the cut now sings to the winds, the stories that had stayed with me

Perhaps it seeks a liberation that I wasn't ever granted

But no, it doesn't bleed, not since a long time...



Samrudhi Dash (Inara): I am a poet, novelist, editor and motivational speaker, currently residing in New Delhi, India. I write under the pseudonym "Inara". Along with contributions to over two dozen anthologies, international e-zines and magazines, I have published till date five solo poetry anthologies and three novels and conceptualised and edited four anthologies of different genres. I have recently published my third novel "Letters from A Stranger - A Life Changing Map", a blend of a medical thriller with epistolary and philosophical underpinnings which is now available as an e-book on Amazon Kindle and figured in the Amazon Bestseller List at Rank 10.



WINTER

Winter comes like my granny,

With all her grayness, but,

Warm and cosy like her.

Different stories hidden in her each wrinkle,

An evergreen smile shining on her lips.

And a heart stealing fragrance of pies from her kitchen.

Ah! Those gone days of childhood, as sweet as her winter
pies,

softly steamed,

carefully caramelized,
Dipped in condensed milk!
Now, when I try to make pies,
Rice powder, milk, jaggery,
All dance in that brass cauldron,
Happily singing my granny's tale.
The cardamom and bay leaf spread my dida's smell.
Ah! the aroma, that perfectly makes
My winter days.

****Dida : Granny (mom's mother)***



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



Tiny little snowflakes

On the nose

Is all it takes

As far as small joys of life goes!

Catching a raindrop

On the tongue

Is the beautiful crop

With the small joys of life is celebrated and sung!

Jumping into a wet puddle

And singing out loud

Hey diddle diddle

Is a small little joy & with joy we shout!

Millions of things to give a smile for

Smile to puppies, smile to strangers

And see how people adore

And be the ultimate small joy ranger



Sara Bubber: I am Sara Bubber, holding a postgraduate degree in Human Development and Family Studies. Human beings and my love of stories came together and made me a storyteller! My poetry and storytelling also came together and made me a poetic storyteller! I write the story of my life through a spiritual journey and love spending my time in meditation and hosting webinars in my spiritual organisation too!



WHEN EVERYTHING IS STILL...

As the midnight approaches and everything is still, not a lil noise, i keep thinking of you, your curvaceous figure and almond shaped eyes so passionate with your short hair giving your face a beautiful glow

Your beautiful bosom heaving as you sing to yourself those melodies with your anklets jingling with a faraway look!

I toss and turn in bed unable to sleep with only you in my mind!

We met only once but that one time meeting you carved yourself in my heart which cannot be erased!

I know you are my love in this life and no one can enchant me how much ever they try!

You are alive in my dream you are in me caressing my
tender heart making me feel lonely always!

I hear your voice all the time when midnight is approaching
and everything is still and my soul sings melancholic songs
which makes me sad and unwanted!

I am coming over to meet you soon to pour my heart out
but scared of your parents' objection!

I will pick up courage one day soon and will meet you for
sure as I don't want to go insane at my age because of my
love for you !



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.



OF TREES AND THE FOREST

Don't chase
falling leaves
into screaming traffic

What are you, a child
(of God or the world)

?

There are surer suns
and shining signs
to rest on your head
as crumbs and crowns

and if a frog had wings
it wouldn't land on its ass
every time it jumped

All the wisdom from our fathers
still drinking from plastic bottles
while we're walking in the rain



Scott Thomas Outlar: He lives and writes in the suburbs outside of Atlanta, Georgia, USA. His work has been nominated for the Pushcart Prize and Best of the Net. Selections of his poetry have been translated into Afrikaans, Albanian, Bengali, Dutch, French, Italian, Kurdish, Malayalam, Persian, Serbian, and Spanish. His sixth book, *Of Sand and Sugar*, was released in 2019 through Cyberwit Press. He hosts a podcast, *Songs of Selah*, that airs weekly on 17Numa Radio and features interviews with contemporary poets, artists, musicians, and health advocates. More about Outlar's work can be found at 17Numa.com.



FLOWERS OF SPRING

Beautiful blooms rising peripherally

Shining on the beam of intense magnitude

In the deep recesses of solitude

Blossoming into a plethora of beauteousness

Is there peace, is there joy

Seeing blooms prosper

Happiness which increases the love for life

Life springing forth

From leaves of many colours

Beauteousness of multihued flowers

Leaves blossoming into a wide array

Indicating the outset of spring and survival

Beauteousness merging into joyousness

Harbinger of destiny and life

Sublimating into a rosy dawn

Can we see hope for survival

Feelings withholding reality

Belatedly reining in hopes of

Transience and insouciance



Shobha Warriar: I am a poet residing in Chennai. I am a housewife. I have contributed to a few anthologies. I have also published poems and also one collection of a few poems written by me.



STORIES OF MY LIFE

The sun god drives an array of white horses
through magnificent sky highways.

In a milder reflection, I canter
through uncertain stages of life and straw people,
stung by news fallouts and quirky phone callers,
warmed by my friends and the loves of my life,
my arms stretching out to grab and possess,
my skin screaming out for fire and fulfilment,
I'm driven astray by an array of such horses.

But I brighten the rays of innumerable stories
of anger and love and desire and stealth.

My splendid stories have heightened the world,
stories that thunder through magnificent highways.

My life is merely a milder reflection.



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

www.shreevarma.com

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shreekumar_Varma



A LOOK AT LIFE-140

The higher you go

The lonelier you feel

The more sophisticated you become

The more you miss life

Calculations, permutations and combinations

Dreams, desires and ambitions unlimited

Take you miles away from life and reality

You miss the fresh morning sun

The cool breeze coming across

And the romantic moon weaving dreams of love

You miss the first rain
The smell of moist earth
The smile on your child's lips
The dreamy eyes of your better half
The love and concern of your parents

Your status
Creates a golden cage
Where you stay alone
Talk to yourself
It never allows you to come out
And live your normal life
Standing on the top of the world
You cry in vain
Find none to share your feelings
You celebrate your success all alone
With no one to cheer
No one with you except your inflated ego

Be aware of yourself

You are your biggest enemy

It is you, no one else

Who deprive you of life and its beauty

Your quest for nothing creates a big void

And land you in a no man's land

Where you find nothing

But a ladder that never ends



Smruti Ranjan Mohanty: He is from Padmapur, Jagatsingpur, Odisha. He works as Finance Officer in Govt of Odisha. He is a multilingual poet, essayist and writer whose write ups are published in newspapers, magazines, journals and anthologies. His collection of poems and prose are published in his blogs under the heading A LOOK AT LIFE, SOMETHING I LOOK AT, A LOOK, THE RIVULET, THINK ONCE MORE, THE JOURNEY, AU THARE, AU EKA GAPA, SROTASWINI, JATRA, THE JOURNEY etc.

Website-smrutweb.wordpress.com

smrutitanuja.blogspot.com



MY THIRD EYE

The colorful swirl
of her ancient soul
hypnotizes
my mind's eye

her naked eyes
the eyes of a goddess
the goddess of love

my beautiful songbird
has songs and poems
painted on her lips
as sweet as and as juicy as
honeydew melon

her songs and poems
the pounding of my heart
the rushing of my blood

her shadow a visual echo
an erotic dance
gyrating
into and out of
itself

arousing me

the geometry of her body

lights my fire

curves my desire

my third eye

a yellow butterfly

feeling her

without touching her

kick off your sandals

throw your sari to the wind

break the chain around your neck

slide the ring from your finger

become free before me

my wild peacock

born inside

a void of vultures

our sacred dream

no longer

a fading mirage

hymn of creation

black hair

red bindi

sad eyes

white smile

brown skin so warm

bracelets and anklets
of holy geometrical design
jingle and jangle

intricately applied mehndi
henna on her hands and feet
not our marriage
the unfairness of love

yet
we lie in a field of red roses
connecting like the clouds above
our shapes
our shadows
reshaping eternal

Kama Sutra

until my songbird flies away

I beat my back bloody

for you

I jump over holy fires

for you

until you return

to me

our secret is safe



Stefan Bohdan: He lives in Orlando, Florida USA. He is retired from the architectural/engineering/construction world. He now spends his time writing poems and novels. His English poems have been published in multiple books, anthologies, journals, Ezines and translated into Persian (Farsi), Arabic, Urdu, Nepali, Hindi, Bengali, Estonian, French, Spanish, old Japanese, Dutch, Afrikaans, Turkish, Italian, Malayalam, Assamese, Tamil, Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian and Hebrew. He is internationally published.

<http://www.amazon.com/author/stefanbohdan>

StefanBohdan@yahoo.com

<https://www.facebook.com/StefanBohdan.Poet>



PINK LADY

In the bird world a pink lady is called a flamingo.

She is married to joe.



ORB SPEAR

The orb spear with its candle dripping blow.

Walking against the glowing moon rocks.

The heavens are doing a conference talk.

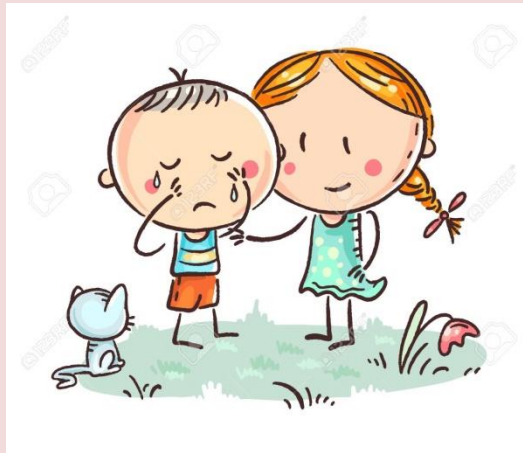
To the people down below in the square.

They get ready to disappear in the air.

Our planet is a burn out of the sun.

Looking to be a chosen one.

To live in a galaxy far away.



BLUE GLIMMER

I wear my blue glimmer.

My eyes come into the room dimmer.

Till I catch your eye.

Then I start to cry.

You have recaptured my heart.

When it was broken apart.

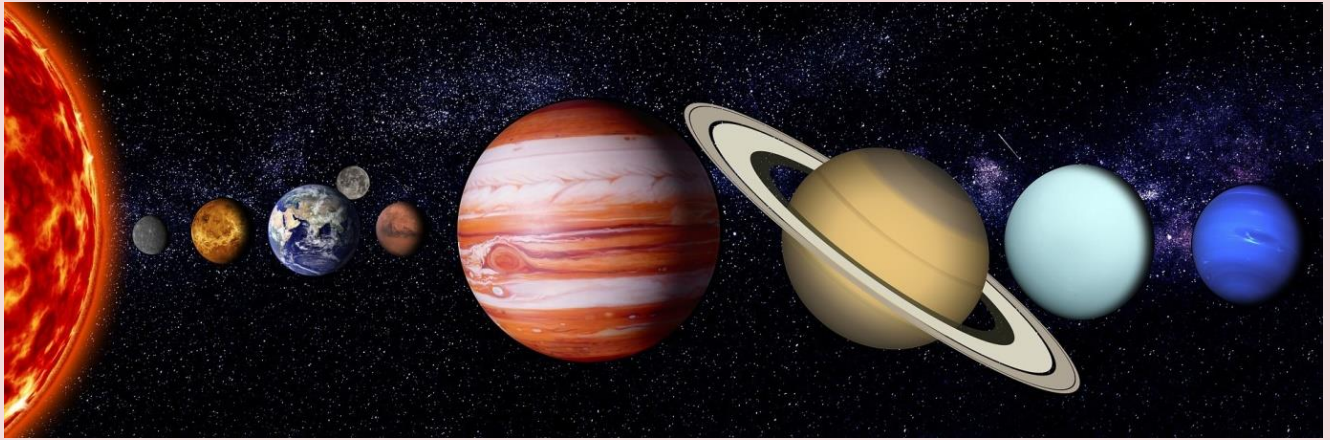


Laugh till it's going to hurt.

I just saw my grandma in a mini skirt.



Stephen Goetz: He is a retired government worker in the United States. He has experienced writing successes in his life. His writing is not for fame. It's only for enjoyment to share.



CELESTIAL SHENANIGANS

Celestial bodies were holding a meeting

After the rolling bonhomie cum rotating greetings

Revolutionary spinnings, all greats and lesser were found
grinning

Bonding over individual paths careening, madly spinning

Mercurial Mercury became angry

On being accused of non-specific perjury

Venus, the ravenous, heated its atmosphere intravenously

Temperatures soared posphene floated dangerously

Earth was eerily silent of words dearth

Bearing the load and providing seven billion hearth

Mars, the farce, became red in embarrassment, terse

Of warriors race curt unable to love disburse

Jupiter the giant gave out a loud gaseous belch

Repeated burp by the terp couldn't land the good looks of
Raquel Welch

Saturn, the taciturn, spun silently in gaseous contemplation

To misbehave or to tow the line giving in to the vapourous
temptation

Uranus, suffering from sinus, rolled on its side

Spinning clockwise a foxtrot it cheekily takes us on s ride

Neptune, the far flung loon, in blue croon

Landed in a thick soup singing a solo tune

Each sang a celestial nebulous song

Dancing in tandem to the silent boom of Time's gong.



Sudeshna Mukherjee: Sudeshna Mukherjee's poems deal with varied human nature. A keen observer, she chronicles the happenings around her and writes with a tinge of humour. 'Meanderings of the Mind' and 'Mélange' are her published collections of poems. She loves 'words' and loves to play with them.



BETWEEN US

When I turn the tattered pages of
this unique saga of love
search for the fading letters
in the crevices of memory's treasure trove
I find you all those between us
dear mom!
standing tall and strong

hugging and cuddling me
making me feel like a princess of yore

My truncated memories
their blotchy and mossy facades
still have space and place
for the story behind the modest neck piece
which was all you could buy
with your piggy bank savings
to embellish my accessories

Gifted during betrothal ceremony
It remains closest to my heart
the subtle intricacies of the design
is both sublime and one of a kind
It lures many...
but I am not ready to share
my prized possession with any

Wish those warm strides of yesteryear
leave an imprint of living on time's dark door
to shave weeds of maladies
from my meandering whiles
and catch on with more worthwhile memories.



Sujata Dash: Sujata Dash is a retired banker. She is passionate about poetry and music. Nature remains her first love and she is enamoured by its beauty and subtleties. She is a regular contributor to anthologies published both nationwide and worldwide. Till now, she has one published anthology of poems, 'More Than Mere' to her credit.



That night dreamt a dream

That the orb has turned normal like earlier,

No dismay, no mask is there.

Undeterred are the formal institutions

Playing grounds have become the heavenly abode of kids.

The deserted parks regained its glory

Festivals are enjoyed by the mass with great pomp being free.

The green fields are ploughed by the peasants
The loved ones got the chance again to meet one another.

But the dream broke all on a sudden
And I realised that the situation has remained the same.

Covid has something more to make us learn
To live with care and consciousness we must maintain.



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 to music too. She wants to help the street orphans too.



SHADES OF LIFE

The life's colourful changing shades

Often shake my heart and mind

And each and every colour whisper

"May your shadow never grow less"!

Sometime I see myself in crimson red

The reddish flowers and dawn's s charming rays!

Love charm passion what not red embrace!

Pink is the lovable blushy shade
Full of lust and alluring grace!
Indeed entire lady -world is impressed!

Green is a verdant natural shade
But to green wings of nature
Never can be spread!

But the green eyes of jealousy & vengeance
Is never a pleasant shade!

Black is the another dark shade
Often reminds us sin and rage!

But it enhance the White's grace
Darker time we await for the brighter days
And it's the shade of colour and for it I have a real craze!



Sumana Bhattacharjee: She is a bilingual poetry writer from India. She born and brought up in city Kolkata in a family of teachers. She has keen interest in music, poetry and drama and she loves every form of fine arts. She has done master degree in English Literature and Hons in Bengali literature. She is a published poet and her poems have been published more than twenty national and international anthologies, magazines and blogs. She is the founder of an online poetry group and a member of World Union Of poets. She is very passionate about poetry and she thinks poetry is the best way to express your thought.



BARE BIER

Did you
renounce flowers
or did they?

Your childhood
bloomed
poverty chiselled

Woodrose
Your youth

You gathered

bouquets—

Adulation

Love

Wealth

Then repudiated

Anger fattened fingers

Ripped fragrant blossoms

Your rapier tongue

Slashed, beheaded

Thundering voice

Bellowed

Scattering

clinging petals

Leaving your

Bier bare



Sumita Dutta Shoam: I am a poet and author residing in Chennai, India. I work as an editor, designer and publisher. I have contributed to various online and print anthologies. I have also published a novel. My publishing house, Adisakrit, has published a number of both fiction and nonfiction books.



SLOW AND STEADY

I'm like a pot of healthy soup
Happy to simmer and sizzle
On the slow fire of benign love,
Don't ever pressure-cook my nerves
Desperately blowing whistles or horns
For I love to simmer and sizzle
On the flame of enduring passion
To scatter my aroma around;
Please keep away your angry vapours.

I'm like the rambling town bus
Happy to saunter around the streets and corners,
I like to carry everyone who beckons
For I am happy and content despite my bursting tyres,
Don't ever push me into your tracks
Or overload me with your cargo

The blaring horns and the red signs
Frighten my cool engine
My break becomes deranged for sure.

If you want to ascend the tower
Hire a rope trolley or a helicopter
I would prefer to climb the climax
On the steps of the stair, slow and steady
Or stand steady on the zooming escalator.



Sumitra Mishra: Major Dr. Mrs. Sumitra Mishra is a Professor of English who retired as the Principal, Government Women's College, Sambalpur, Odisha. She has also worked as an Associate N.C.C. Officer in the Girls' Wing. She is a life member of the Odisha Lekhika Sansad and the Sub-editor of a magazine titled "Smruti Santwona".

Her poems and short stories in both English and Odia are widely published in literary magazines and e-zines. To her credit she has twelve published books; four collections of poetry in English. She lives in Bhubaneswar with her family.



ONCE UPON A TIME

Poem in Hindi:Sapna Champaneria

Once upon a time there was a girl
who went to school, went to college
happily roamed on roads in blazing sunlight
drenched in the rains
made sandcastles,
wandered on cool nights.

One who smoked the woes of the world away
puffing on roadside cigarette butts.

A girl who betted with friends
and polished off eight rotis in one go
a kho-kho and hockey player
a muscular athletic built girl,
is sick these days.

She lives sheltered in a home since years
away from sunlight, shade, cold
far removed from dripping rains
under somebody's protection.

It's said she has a constant headache these days
Yes the same girl, whose feet
would not stop dancing to the beat of a drum
gets startled at the sound of the telephone bell.

Who instead of entering the temple
sat on the temple steps among the shoes
lying outside the temple,
worships her ancestors these days.

In these years she's become
a wife, a mother,
a sick rich lady.

These days she only grows bonsais
in the flower pots of her house.

****Rotis- flat Indian bread***

****Kho-Kho- An Indian sport***



Sunil Kaushal: I am a poet-writer residing in Pune, India. I am a retired gynecologist now working as a writer having contributed to more than 25 National and International anthologies. I have published my memoirs recently. Besides several other awards over the years, I was awarded the Literoma Women Achiever's Award, 2019. I have received the the Nissim award for 'exquisite prose' from TSL in 2020.



LOGIC

Realities cannot be hidden
or papered over
for
very long.

These things have a habit of catching up,
and then, masks slip
sans any warning, real faces
revealed suddenly in work-places, elsewhere

under the same roof;

pretenders get caught by

Time

for telling lies blatant;

Those

who were fond of mocking

others for the trifles of a marching

Fate

get

mocked by

the same

karmic law

as determined by

causality

and its consequences

cannot be escaped,

Hush up, please!

The adjourned court starts
and the delayed-trial is on

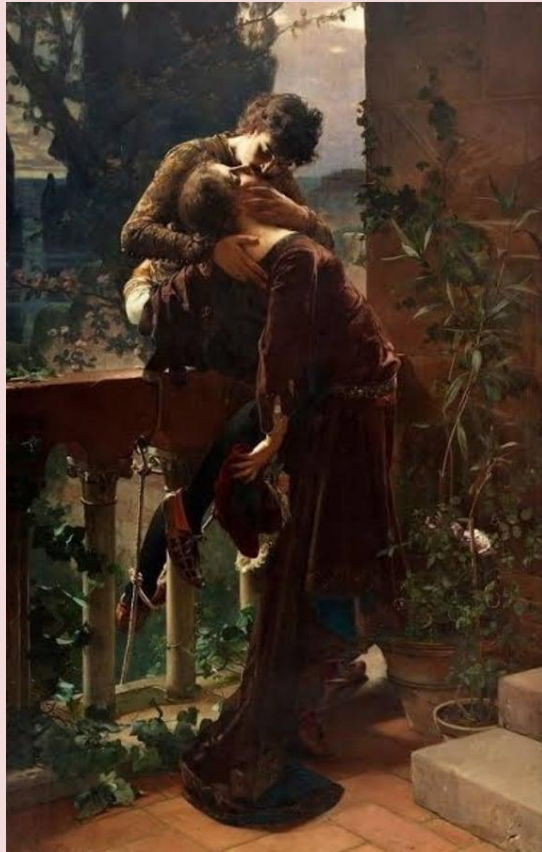
in this sun-lit room.



Sunil Sharma: Sunil Sharma, a writer-freelance-academic from Mumbai, India, has published 22 books, solo and joint. He edits Setu:

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

<http://www.dr.sunilsharma.blogspot.in/>



ROMEO AND JULIET

He was a Romeo

But she was no Juliet

Tall and lanky with the heart of a poet

Serenading her with songs of love

She was charmed but the world was harsh

"Romeo go back", she would say

But every night

He would sing to her

Waiting just for a glimpse of her
To speak a few words
Which seemed to brighten his universe.
"Romeo go back, the world is harsh"
Yet Romeo continued to stay

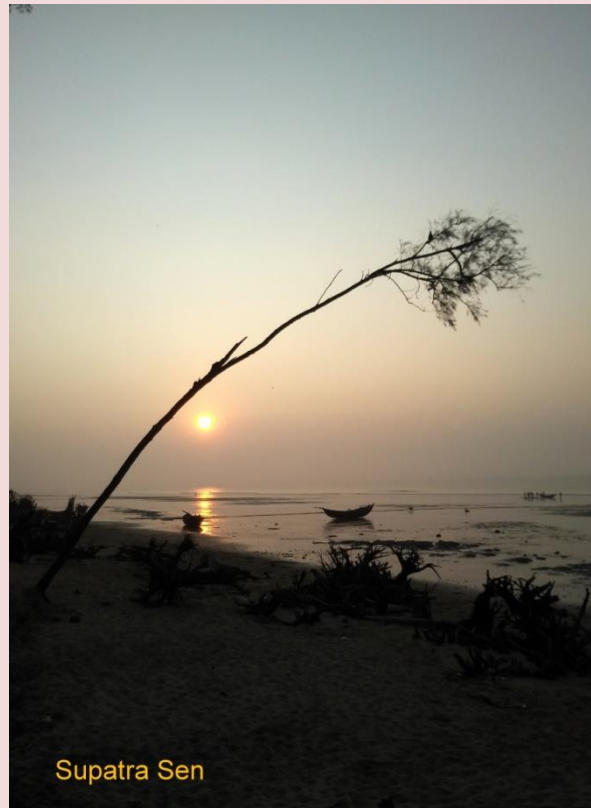
One night,
When it had been a hard day for her,
He heard her crying by the windowsill
And could not hold himself.
He climbed up to the window and saw
Juliet sobbing
She turned away from him
But this time he did not listen to her
His arms were filled with love
As he hugged her
Covering her face with kisses
He claimed her.

She gave in to his tender love
And now both of them together sing
Songs of love and joy!



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.



SOLILOQUY

The car screeched to a halt

The sun-kissed beach lay empty

The blue deep beyond

She looked at the dancing waves

Unshaken unmoved

Where lies the turbulent ocean

The roar, the tempestuous swirl

The mighty strike against the still shore

This looks like a placid lake
Incapable of fire or fury
Powerless and spineless
This is not where I wished to come.

Ahh, that was some forty years ago
In the rains...
All have subdued since
Suppressed, restrained
Perhaps this ocean too
Like my daughter...



Supatra Sen: Dr. Supatra Sen, Associate Professor is a veteran academician, teaching and researching in the fields of Botany and Environment. Her international books, papers and reviews are chiefly in her professional field. Of late her poetries have been published in Setu, Muse India, Inkspire, Indus Woman Writing, Literary Yard, Indian Periodical, Ode to a Poetess, Bombay Duck, Story Mirror and others. She is also the founder and Chief Editor of an ISSN peer-reviewed multi-disciplinary academic journal 'Harvest' since 2016.



Water color painting by Suzette Portes San Jose

DON'T SAY GOODBYE

(Septon Couplet 2-9)

it is never easy to say goodbye with hand to hold and love
to last

wanting forever will always be beaconing all memories of
the past

share moments in every breath with all that lingers in the
heart

keeping the promise of love that ends only for another start

we have the joys and sorrows, it is life to exist to begin and
to end

in every passing day, the bits of thought our heart could
mend

gives a spark in our eyes and in our lips were the sweetest
smile

knowing that we treasure something worth it all to go on a
mile

this wonderful feeling be the strength and light to lead us
through

among the clouds, among the skies and among the ocean
so blue

don't say goodbye but live in hellos of each mornings
greeting

from the sweet kisses from the warmth of the bright sun
shinning

each lonely day be gone by the wind blown away and
wouldn't stay

and the cold air remains whispering in our ears " always be
happy"

no words can express knowing you're there always having
eyes on me

the way i look at you even beyond the beauty from the
deep blue sea

don't say goodbye for our love will surely last in time of
forevermore

along with all sweet memories in every footstep on this
sandy shore



Suzette Portes San Jose: She was born and raised in Cebu City, Philippines. She was born with a passion for writing and living in her art forms. She now has joined 23 book anthologies internationally. She is also a recipient of multiple awards for her ART works and Literary works. She also founded her own Poetry Group of artists and poets writing Ekphrastic Poetry. She is also a founder of Artist Kids charity project all for free. She is also a Publisher and is now publishing her own book along with other book anthologies of her group.



YOUR MARVELLOUS FULLNESS

You are too much proud of your marvelous fullness,
Though, for the perfection it needs my merciless touch.
It might be suitable for decorating a roadside showcase.
But, it will be thrown away like the falsies of an old eunuch.

I've neither thought to deflower you, nor tried to defile—
Though, I know that you are bubbling with a confusing
mindset—

As, you have been trained by your contemporaries to smile
And to behave like a moribund fish entangled inside a
fishing net.

Your fullness will be deflated by continuous piercing of
time,

And will be abolished forever without keeping a trail or
trace.

But, I'll protect it if you take part in an ethical crime

Or be ready to tolerate my lewd glance on your
voluptuousness.

I'll reproduce your permanence on walls of my own
Khajuraho,

And save your fullness from the hands of your fake
maestro.



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.



A NEW BEGINNING

The year has passed by in such a way,
Where each day seemed like a Sunday.

Neither school nor an exam day,
No uniforms and no bags anyway.

Computer classes and online tests,
Follow a slew of plentiful notes.

Missing the fun, desiring the friends,
Longing for the campus, A Beautiful Land!

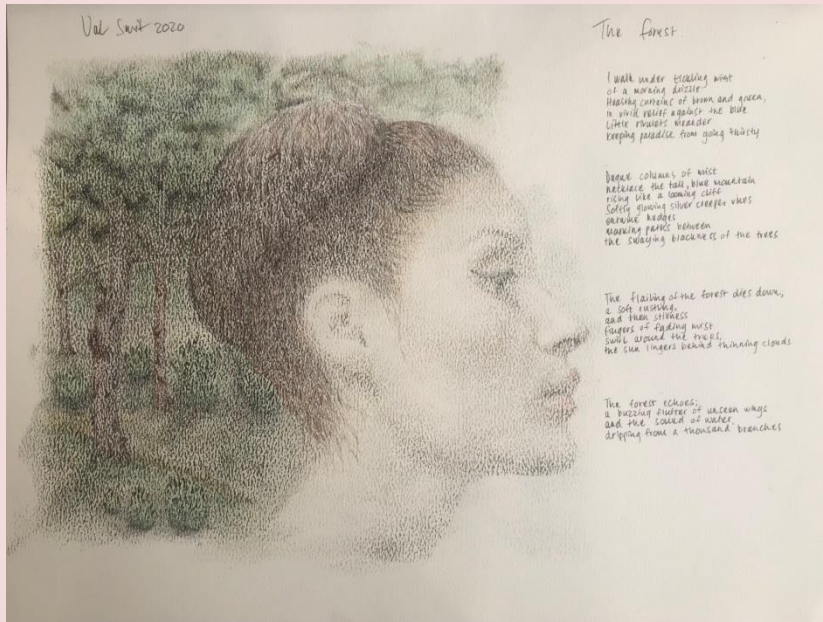
The year is gone, those moments are lost,
Months have passed by, in a flash of thought!

The coming New Year, I pray,
We'll welcome a new everyday.

A new beginning in every way
Where each day is not a Sunday!



Uma Agarwal Bajaj: I am a Company Secretary by qualification and a Homemaker by choice. Born and brought up in Kolkata, I now reside in the land of Kamakhya, Guwahati, Assam. I have contributed to a couple of anthologies and recently my poem was adjudged as second best in a poem competition on Earth Day.



THE FOREST

I walk under tickling mist
of a morning drizzle
Healthy curtains of brown and green,
in vivid relief against the blue
Little rivulets meander
keeping paradise from going thirsty

Vague columns of mist
necklace the tall, blue mountain
rising like a looming cliff

Softly glowing silver creeper vines
entwine hedges
marking paths between
the swaying blackness of the trees

The flailing of the forest dies down;
a soft rustling,
and then stillness

Fingers of fading mist
swirl around the trees,
the sun lingers behind thinning clouds

The forest echoes;
a buzzing flutter of unseen wings
and the sound of water,
dripping from a thousand branches



Val Smit: Val Smit is a South African artist and poet based in Cape Town. She writes ekphrastic poetry per artwork created and uses various media in portraying images that she feels fitting to deliver the message of the words she pens down. She focuses on the inner turmoil experienced by our disconnectedness from nature and each other. Her work has been published in various online journals including GloMag India, The Chachalaca Review, The West Review, The Raconteur Review, Literary Garland and Valiant Scribe.



EPHEMERAL WINDS

In life's see-saw

The sages you saw

In hues, not just one or two

And your hedonistic ways

Clearly got a thumbs down

Virtuous living eases suffering

In life of beyond

All your life you wanted to live

Through clichés galore

Who has seen tomorrow?

Life is here and in the now

You rush to take a train

Wondering if it is too late

To walk barefoot on grass

Without fear of ants

All your life

You looked down at their ilk

Such disdain

They were so diminutive,

After all

You stretch out your palms

Encircle a flame

Hoping it would not dim

Or mistake you for moth

You begin your life

Some day in youth

Opening windows for summer breezes

And in sagging age

Closing doors

To cold draught



Vandana Kumar: I am a poet residing in New Delhi, India. I work as French teacher and translator. I have contributed to various anthologies. Few of my poems were recently published in 'Spillwords' and 'North of Oxford'.



O Time!

You are like slippery sand particles

Slipping day by day

Slipping each and every second

From the tight fist of human desires!

Your silvery beauty

Gives us unlimited burns

And suddenly cools down!

In the moony moonlight

How long you are stable!

Your stability is the question mark!

Because circumstances change

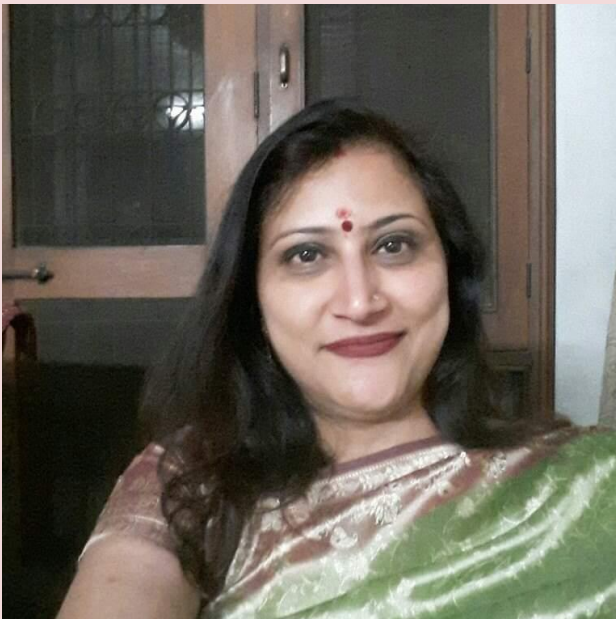
Swiftly!

Like the picture reel of camera

Only divine can Forward

Rewind

And Pause it!!!



Varsha Saran: I am a homemaker living in Meerut, Uttar Pradesh, India. I did my post-graduation from Ch Charan Sing University Meerut. I am a bilingual poetess and story writer by passion. My many poems and stories have been published in different international anthologies, e-zines, magazines, and newspapers. I have won many awards in writing.



JOB ADVERTISEMENT, A POEM, OR BOTH?

Details: Full time.

Sometimes part time.

16 hours a day.

24 on sleepless nights.

Absolutely welcome to cry without cupping the face.

Absolutely welcome to laugh without cupping the mouth.

All breakdowns and energy fluctuations considered human.

Self hugs mandatory.

Incoherent sentences will not be penalised, communication is not the key here, it is instead the keyhole,

where you insert you some kindness and patience.

Passing the mic can be learnt on the job, but necessary.

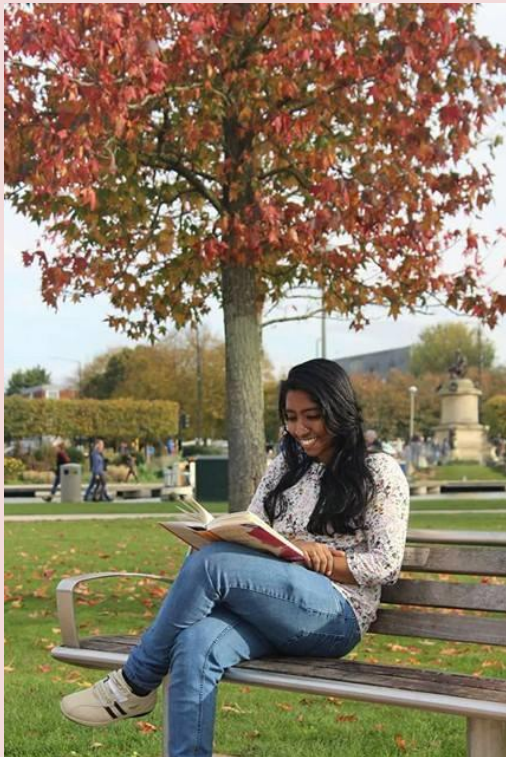
Can prefer texts over calls.

There are no perfect candidates.

Benefits: Will be able to look at the mirror and smile a little longer.

Will be able to hold on to that last bite of hope.

Designation: Self



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.



UNDER THE SHOWER (A TRIOLET)

Arose I from the unneeded reverie,
The lines of water having pricked my waiting skin.
What cleansing when the mind is in melancholy?
Arose I from the unneeded reverie
To alert the mind drawn away by treachery—
A reminder to be in the now herein,
Arose I from the unneeded reverie,
The lines of water having pricked my waiting skin.



Vidya Shankar: I am a widely published Indian poet, writer, English teacher, a “book” in the Human Library, and an editor with Kavya-Adisakrit (an imprint of Adisakrit Publishing House). The author of two poetry books, *The Flautist of Brindaranyam* (in collaboration with my photographer husband, Shankar Ramakrishnan), and *The Rise of Yogamaya*, I have received several literary awards and recognitions. I find meaning to my life through yoga and mandalas.



SOMETIMES YOU COME TO ME

Sometimes you come to me

Like the wind through the woods last night:

Your memory, warm and apple-flavoured

Like your once familiar breath - -

And as always,

Wearing someone else's sorrow

On your damp sleeve - -
Whispering in a strange language
That needs no translation

Or subtitles - -
Sometimes you come to me
Like the fragrance of pine trees

In the silence of winter photographs - -
I think of you
And, therefore, you are.



Vijay Nair: I retired as an Associate Professor of English and 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. Three of my poems have been included in the PG syllabus of BBMK University, Dhanbad.



LION MASKS

Sleep, restless, dreamful

I escape to landscapes

Devoid of your patient face, mother

My dreams do not have cannulas

No central lines thread through them

They're dark and I gallop

Trying to outrun the sun

I don't want to face the day

I don't want to see your silent suffering

I don't want to see your smile brimming with compassion
As you try to console your daughters
Cowards at heart wearing lion masks
Every waking moment we gulp in oceans
Our throats stumble on boulders
Unsaid words make movement through the concrete
quagmire
A little more difficult. We grapple mental sumos of
objectivity
Our hearts writhe through the reasons
That make us plank walk beside you
We free fall and hit the swamp a million times
Before we join you again
The concrete a thicker molass than before



Vineetha Mekkoth: She is a poet, writer, translator and editor from Calicut, Kerala. She works as Assistant State Tax Officer in the State GST Department. She has been translating for the Kerala Sahitya Academy since 2014 and has also contributed articles for the Malayalam Literary Survey, a quarterly brought out by the academy. She has published poems and short stories in various anthologies. She is co-editor of two anthologies. Her debut poetry collection 'Ashtavakra and Other Poems' was published in August 2017 which is available on Amazon.



BEAUTY VAINGLORIOUS

What is this beauty of?
If that has never been praised
Even by the one you love
With all your heart.

What is this beauty of?
If that has never led a poet
To write a hymn in honour of it
Let alone an epic.

What is this beauty of?
If that has never made an admirer
Go through a night of insomnia
A day full of your thought.

Fake! fake! all your beauty is
For that has a fear to cease
And not to let me be at ease.



Zulfiqar Parvez: He is the Head of Academic Affairs cum English Language Teacher at Tanzimul Ummah International Tahfiz School, Dhaka. He has done his Honours and Masters in English Language and Literature from the University of Rajshahi.



ciao! 😊