

GloMag

Monthly Online Poetry and Prose Magazine

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Edited and Published by Glory Sasikala

Priyasha Lobinha Cdo



Title of the Cover Pic: My Father Hidden In The Stars

(The pic is a part of a forthcoming book – a collection of prose/poems titled “Dear Blue”.)

Bio

I am a creature of the dark, like a firefly. People of light, who have never been brave enough to face it don't understand it and hence despise it. Does light not blind you as much as darkness does? The fireflies know better, they owe it to the night, it's what makes them so beautiful.

ABOUT GLOMAG

GloMag is the coming together of poets 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 poet'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 verses, expressions, and pictures. Your soul dances in ecstasy, participates in a cosmic experience, it sways and chants. Somewhere someone is telling you about duality, someone tells you about a forlorn house without music, someone shows you how to love, and someone raises questions about existence itself.

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

Glory Sasikala

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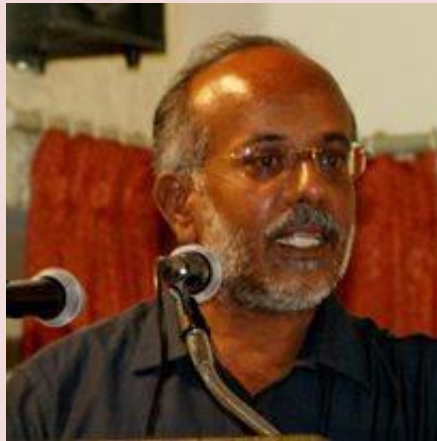
BACKGROUND MUSIC: Paul Mauriat “Don’t Cry For Me Argentina”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z3-uLiW6v3U>

PREFACE

Lakshminarayan Nariangadu

(Nominally male-female; project-based learner; when chips are down - assertive, normally defensive; preferred companion - loneliness, but incongruously gregarious. Filled with contradictions!)



“Reading is perhaps the only thing only human beings can do”

Benedict Gnaniah (comment on FB)

It is a matter of fact that independent inventions and discoveries have always happened, as recorded in history. Study of nature, its secrets, and an extension of the human enterprise led to new tools, engines and the consequent developments. With progress, the written word extended regions of influence and application and just kept on expanding multifold. The human psyche always tended to reach further, in geographical terms, by travel and/or

conquest. Meanwhile, the mind within, the driving force, had its own organic evolution, and its disparate dichotomy is always yearning to be occupied with a continuous flow of thoughts, concatenated or otherwise. Societies, science and industrialization, technology, innovations and social paradigm shifts forced invasion into personal space.

The much sought for privacy could be regained in the written/read word and the arts. Also, through literature and art, social transformations have been initiated,

"The pen is mightier than the sword"

Edward Bulwer-Lytton, 1839

The written works, especially those considered of superior or lasting artistic merit, are considered as literature. Yes! Poetry and prose, together they keep human civilizations going, on and on.

Communication nowadays is 'just' instantaneous. No more the prerogative of the elite. Anyone can contact anyone at the other 'corner' of the earth – around 12,700 kms away. And, immediately! Whatsapping conversations show 'seen' double blue ticks as soon as our message is sent, in live dialogues! Miracles have been wrought by physics and technology, really. So, in this cauldron of an immediate

information exchange between mixtures of incongruous cultures the values get muddled. Literature enabled the proper placement of value systems appropriate to different lands and their concomitant cultures. And, a translation, still had a fidelity to its 'space', while exposing one to something that is different. Nowadays, the immediacy muddles everything in the assimilation, and values get 'lost in translation'.

With the WWW, anyone can be a critic, anyone can write articles, anyone may write poems and you have access to any form of literature, classical and contemporary. In GLOMAG, GLORIOUSTIMES, a literary group in the WWW formed the kernel for this ambitious venture, which has been steadily going and growing as it did. Wonderfully, a year has been completed successfully with so much that has been added and more and more authors have joined in an exhibition of talent and creativity. The anniversary special issue has arrived!

“Art is an expression of life” was a statement I heard in a PhD viva voce for an English literature student. Expression is invested with a multidimensional license of subjectivity. The mind is paramount.

“When you can use your imagination. When you can feel as another does. When the outside explodes into your inside.”

Shreekumar Varma

This is what is attempted, with great endeavor, every month. To feed the soul of kindred spirits, and hopefully reaching out further and further through the worldwide web! Here, again, is another compilation of creativity to augment the cornucopia of literature!

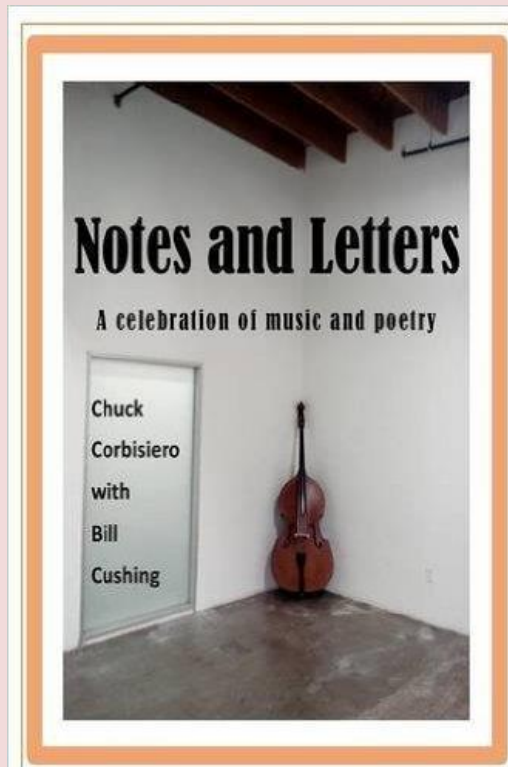
BOOK OF THE MONTH

NOTES AND LETTERS

(a celebration of music and poetry)

by

Bill Cushing and Chuck Corbisiero



AMAZON

<https://www.amazon.com/Notes-Letters-Bill-Cushing/dp/1365021521>

LULU

<http://www.lulu.com/shop/bill-cushing/notes-and-letters/paperback/product-22699819.html>

FACEBOOK

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/100185423723709/>



Notes and Letters is a book that is the direct result of a long and very winding 45-year path that Chuck Corbisiero and Bill Cushing took in coming together to collaborate on blending music with poetry.

They both grew up in Douglaston, a part of Queens Borough that borders the city line and Nassau County of Long Island. Bill moved there a bit after the age of two from Flushing. Chuck arrived at the age of five, but there was an eight-year difference between them.

As the “new kid on the block,” Chuck found himself “wandering around” when he came across Bill's parents’ house. Later, when Bill became part of a “garage band” so

prevalent in that era, the group would use the Corbisiero garage since it was enclosed and had a raised platform replicating a stage. Eventually, Bill left town, first for the Navy and later just as a matter of relocation.

And that seemed to be the end of their relationship until, at the end of 2015, they discovered (through Facebook, of course. .where most such discoveries are currently made) that both had ended up in Los Angeles.

They met at a reading that Bill gave at a Los Angeles café, and before parting that evening, Chuck suggested that they consider a collaborative effort of music and poetry. Thus, this book and their current stage activities were born.



Bill Cushing grew up in New York, attended school in Pennsylvania and Missouri but later found him-self in Virginia as well as Florida, Maryland, the Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico before moving to California. Returning to college at the age of 37, Bill was called the “blue collar poet” by his peers at

the University of Central Florida because of his experience as a marine electrician on oil tankers, naval vessels, and other commercial ships. He earned an MFA in creative writing from Goddard College in Vermont and now teaches at East Los Angeles and Mt. San Antonio colleges. He lives in Glendale with his wife and their son.

Chuck Corbisiero, a New Yorker now living in Los Angeles, is a guitarist who plays Jazz, Blues, Brazilian and various other musical genres. Chuck earned his B.F.A. in Musical Performance and Arranging at City University of New York - The City College while Gil Evans was Artist in Residence from 1982-1983. He teaches guitar and plays up-right bass violin as his second instrument. He sees Wes Montgomery as his primary musical influence and has played guitar for various major acts in Las Vegas, Reno, and Lake Tahoe. Most notably, he served as Eddy Arnold's guitarist for 10 years until 1992. Chuck also composed the score for "Of Men and Maids," a musical comedy.

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"THE DIVINE ARITHMETIC"

(Excerpts from "Adam and Eve")

Here I am Eve,
Your sole companion;
In mutual admiration,
A Tantric's tranquil of silence;
Love weaves to give in abundance,
The belief longs to live;
Soul mates never miss a chance to dance.

There stands two clean slates under a brook,
Mirroring each other's vacancy;
Cluelessly wonders thy Apple's face,
And God whispers in sonorous bass;

Knowledge treads at wise pace,
When situations deal circumstances with patience.

So will save the fruit this time,
Let tomorrow bear trillion Newtons to shine;
With a measure of gravity in each mind.
Timelessly in love trials,
Let thy Man explore thee;
If he errs to fall,
Time would unfold the feminine mystery;
The Sun and petal chemistry.

But then again,
Herein Eden like a evil free heaven;
Behold the serpent,
Hisses out a question;
If the fruit of knowledge is uneaten,
Divine arithmetic would fail;
For a creation suffers the decay,
Without any reason,

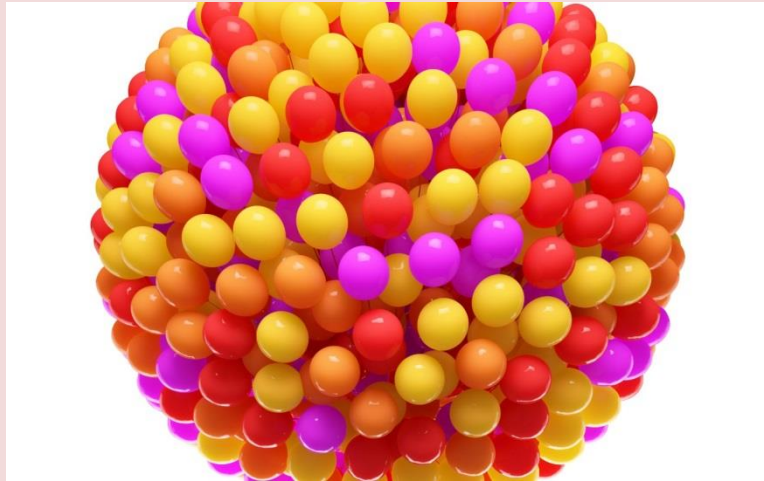
And ages later;

How would man puke out the fruit,

When he is unable to swallow the truth.



Aakash Sagar Chouhan: He is a Rourkela-based, Odia nomad, restlessly scribbling since 2003. An undergraduate, indeed a college drop-out; but now he is a contributing Author, a blogger, a prose writer, a Poet, an article contributor, Group's Admin of many Pages and Communities. He has been a proud contributor to a few anthologies by International and Indian Poets. Apart from pouring his thoughts and himself on virgin papers, during his leisure time, Aakash is an observer, a dreamer, a philosopher. He likes to strum his Guitar and sing. He also likes to play and brush colors on canvases.



BALLOONS

At a birthday party
they are tied, squeaked
and kiss-pricked
like a well-fed piece of meat
– a paradox

and yet they swell
(a soliloquy)
for the sky inflated with possibilities
yes and no, right and left,
forward and backward – the probability
of a moment, a life
in quest, the middle path

Reminiscence of a new moon,
regrets of moonless nights
are calloused in this cycle
of birth and death
where we drift
with the balloons.



Akila Gopalakrishnan: She juggles home, work and her six year old with poetry in the old and new city of Hyderabad. She dabbles in free verse and the Japanese genre of poems comprising of haiku and haibun. Some of her works have appeared in online journals of Triveni at Muse India, Haibun Today, Atlas Poetica and in Neesah, a quarterly magazine of Nivasini Publishers, Hyderabad. She is also a member of the Twin City Poetry Club, Hyderabad which recently launched its anthology titled *Lakdi ka pul* – the poetry bridge. A cup of tea laced with ginger and poetry is her perfect idea of a weekend morning.



LOST VERSE

There was a time when poetic thought flowed.

Words tumbled, falling over each other

Clamoring expression

A space on my page

Those words

Fought a bitter battle

To the very end

Sadly, not all won

Because

Some made sense

Enough

To stay

To be recorded

Written.

Forever they were

Strung together.

The others

Were discarded...

Sorrowful

They fled

Never to return again

In the same avatar.

Never to seen

Or to be read

To become

Poetry.



Ameeta Agnihotri: First of all, I love to write. Then I love to travel, and write about my travels, including about the food I

eat on my blog. Being a Food Critic, I have four food books to my name: The Times Food and Nightlife Guide. My restaurant reviews come out every Friday in the Chennai Times. Yes, life's good. My book is done. It was done five years ago. Am still trying to muster the courage to edit it.

Work: <http://timescity.com/chennai>

Blogs: <http://silentsensation.blogspot.com/>

<http://fascinatingtastes.blogspot.in/>



KOIEE HAI

Koiee hai, anyone there
resounds the old haveli
night after night
and again tonight.

the night outside is a
Maratha chieftain galloping on
marble sheen of a belligerent
moonlight.

The night is a hunter
of a sky unbroken
from lost seasons
whispers in a staccato
of promises after dark.

The night wont rest
tonight
as your mouth writes
the fury on a merging skin
of a fortress wall
in a surrendering
dawn.



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



EVEN AFTER MY DEATH

I may not be here
To jot down a poem on you
May not see your face
In the shining drop of a dew

I may not be here
To sing praise on your beauty
May not give a sigh
When in pain you need some pity

I may not be here
To put a flower in your hair
May not see your gait
When you come down the stair

I may not live long
To witness your beauty to grow
May not hold your hand
From a moment of joy you feel low

Your memory will stay
With me even after my death
My heart won't cease to
Flutter for you even after I lost my breath



Anil Kumar Panda: My name is Anil Kumar Panda. Tiku is my pen name. I was born in a small town, Brajrajnagar, in the state of Odisha, in India. I am currently residing here. I work as a mine surveyor in coal mines. I write short stories and poems whenever I get time.



LOVE

Love makes me a bathroom singer,
And a very good dancer in a lonely lift,
Makes the landscape look so much brighter
Love,
Is a wonderful gift.



Anurag Mathur: He is a trained bean counter, works for a financial services group and has spent almost 2 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.



THE SILENCE

My senses couldn't register anything--shock and fear had silenced and frozen everything around me. All I could hear was the dull resonance of an oncoming wave. The wave hit me and slashed my flesh, and then it came again, and again and again..., slashing me every time it struck me.

Something warm gushed out of me each time the wave hit me and started drenching me, soaking me like a flashflood rolling down a mountain slope.

I felt my knees become weak and then weaker until it could no longer support me, and yet they bent slowly in the hope that someone would come running and hold me, not allow me to fall down and get hurt. No one came, but my knees put me down gently. I lay sprawled on the floor, drained of all my energy. With darkness creeping into my eyes and my pain-numbed consciousness slowly drifting away, I felt relieved.

When I opened my eyes, it was still dark and I was completely drenched. Where was I? The waves were still resonating. Was I lying on the seashore? But how had I reached there?

A moment later, I started remembering everything. I was at the railway station, waiting to catch the train when he came, and then I heard the soft whooshing sounds of the waves that hit me, the machete slashing through the air. I waited for the wave to hit me again, but nothing happened.

My eyes could now sensing a faint glow of light, as though the sun was rising in the distant sky. I could also hear voices as well now and sense movement around me. I tried to speak, but my lips didn't part. I tried to raise my hand to fend off any oncoming blow but couldn't move them. What was happening? Where was I?

A hand touching and gripping my shoulder sent shivers down my entire body, but this touch felt different. It wasn't like the hand that wielded the machete. It was a touch that instilled in my soul a feeling of safety, hope and reassurance.

My eyes could see clearly now. The faint sunlight was in fact the glow of lights on the ceiling of the ambulance that was taking me to the hospital. I could still sense the same feeling of drenching warmth that I had felt with each slash, as blood was still oozing out of my wounds. The loss of blood as well as the effect of medicines had started numbing my body and overpowering my senses.

As I reluctantly drifted away into the anesthesia-induced darkness, I kept wondering if I would ever open my eyes again or would I depart on a journey into the unknown. I wanted to yell and let everyone know how much I love precious life, and now that I am so close to losing it, I needed everyone to pull me back and avoid being swallowed by the bottomless crater. I wanted to get up and throw open the ambulance doors to look at the vibrant world outside. I wanted to tell everyone that.....

She lost consciousness, and all that she wanted to say remained unsaid. The ambulance raced towards the hospital, but will she come back to tell us everything she wanted to?



Arun Sharma: Surprisingly, a fixed sequence of letters used to identify an every changing person like me and is spelled thus, Arun Sharma. I work as a copy editor with Exeter Premedia, Chennai. Arresting my capricious and insane imagination with the help of words to imprison them on paper is something that I am learning to do. Reading and thinking while gazing at sunset and the night sky is what I like to do. I believe the above, in a nutshell, sums up what I am at present.



PROCESSION OF RAIN

(Original Odia- Megha Malhar' by Padmaja Saran

Translated by Asim Ranjan Parhi)

My heart is drenched, in Shravani rain
underneath, filled in memory of Kadambi pain

lonely silhouette drops down

Illusive night dreams a moan

bangles slip from feet

flowers drip from magic meet

my heart is drenched in Shravani rain

underneath, the Kadambi pain

the secret love songs written in heart
words wet, and wet is the past
he, that doesn't return
to this night long mourn
love struck, my restive mood in pain
underneath, the Shravani rain.

**Shravani is derived from the month and season of Saawan*

***Kadambi is derived from the Kadambi tree.*



Asim Ranjan Parhi: He was Professor & Head, Dept. of English and Dean of Languages at Rajiv Gandhi University (Central), Arunachal Pradesh before joining the Dept of English, Utkal University. Specialising on ELT, he has a book,

Indian English Through Newspapers from Concept, New Delhi, and many research papers published in journals. He has been an Associate at the Indian institute of Advanced Study (IIAS, Shimla) to pursue his Postdoctoral research. Apart from academics, he writes poetry in Odia and English, simultaneously nourishing a deep interest in Odia and Hindi musical compositions.



AN APOLOGY FOR ENGLISH

They grumble “Why do you write in English? Why”

“Why not”-I try to think. Is not the language mine too?

“You distort the language, dishonor her” they go on.

I belong to this language. I am in love with her

If I love her, can I not take a bit liberty?

“Write in Queen’s English or King’s- stick to the standard”

Standard? I ask? What is standard? Or who defines it?

I use Creole, pidgin, I use English of India, I use our words.

You say it is not English! Well-if English is it not, at least

‘Inglish’ it must be-the language which sustains the nation.

The language which equalizes the autowala with a pilot.

You mumble “why you strike to seek the moon? Dwarf?
Write poesy! Know you not it needs intellectuality?”
“Scribble some prose first in Bengali first. Pass it out .then...”
I pig-headed go on writing – with limping pen, yoked verses.
And I am not ashamed. I am what I am. I do what I like.
I may not have your intellectuality, I may be a dwarf,
I may be a hypocrite, I may not deserve a poetic patch
But be sure I am honest, I have my own English.
My own poor property, my own petty passion,
Which spontaneously tries to find purgation.
Prose poem, Kolkata Chennai, Bengali English fury
Passion needs no language, expects no form-sorry.
So I am again here, writing another nonsense in my time
You my critic make sense and then find words and rhyme
And I albeit King or queen sing an unbidden hymn.
I will ravish English, my own beloved and it is no crime.



Avik Kumar Maiti: (email - itzakm@gmail.com) He is a poet and writer from Midnapore. He is a permanent ESL teacher at Belda Gangadhar Academy, West Bengal. He likes to travel, explore the locale with cultures, to drink life to the lees', passion in humanity and drenched in literature. He believes that God is there and one day everything will be fine again. He believes in the flame eternal that is within us, which may cause a miracle with just a sympathetic touch.



EXODUS

Back arching to reach the spot,
Reddened beyond the natural hue,
Eyes boring into me, twisting
every bit of the smile I used to don,
into a frown, frustration drowning
in the pools settling in the wrinkles,
dripping now and then through the bridge,
like dew drops from a leaf, voided
of every iota of its substance.
I cursed Phoebus's summer.

My hands in a confused frenzy,
Groped in semi-light for knives that
Bored deeper and deeper into nothing,
Yet that cut a good share of my existence.

And an ocean of light did fail
to mute a drop of the darkness that
closed doors did bring into my world.

Wounds no longer seared, and
knives blunted by a whiff of cold air,
as cold as the heat of Phoebus' summer.

Life, basking in my glory,
Running its fingers through times,
Here, there, everywhere, then nowhere!

Death, like Janus, haunting the
Other half of a life lived hence,
Cackling, mocking, watching the thread
slipping through my fingers,
to bead the necklace of life's pearls.

I too watched, amused, confused,
The exodus of the heart, the mind and the soul.

Like pins through a pincushion,
my conscience pricked into a mind,
through eyes lulled by a lullaby.
I awoke, with eyes boring into me,
Life surging through pools settling
on the crests that arched into life,
meandering through the bridge,
like dew-drops from a leaf,
flowing like a mountain river,
Even as Phoebus laughed in pity!!

- *My respects to Life*



Avishek Ramaswamy Aiyar: I was born and brought up in pristine Calcutta and lived the first 18 years of my life there before moving to Chennai for my undergraduate education. I eventually moved to the US, where I completed my doctoral studies in Chemical Engineering. I currently work as a Sr. Scientist at Illumina in San Diego, sunny California.



© Hunter Kittrell

STREET SORROWS

Street lights in a stationary parade

Cast forlorn shadows on the end of day's forage.

Bleak rays of light ignite evening's activity

Of moments arrested in routine captivity.

Imprisoned in chambers of regulated duty

Lie tombs of self-imposed monotony.

Toil through the grit of futile labour

Are mechanised beings in a capitalistic fever.

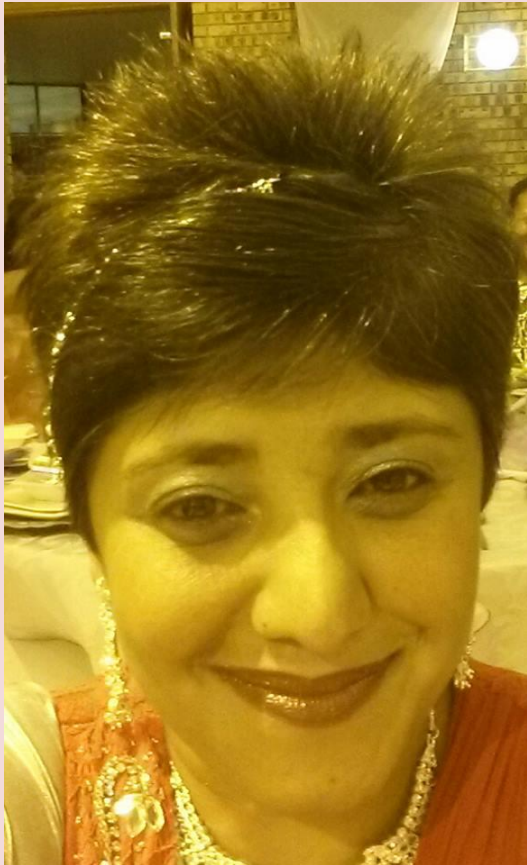
Urban squalor pierces their dreams of passion

Where suffocated spirits travel streets of congestion.

Electric embers flicker jeeringly at youths
Who kick footballs with their ridiculous designer shoes.
In neighbourhoods fortified by security fences
Mocked by the darkness of criminal elements.
Evil throttles protected caverns
Of domestic hubs equipped with alarm functions.
The threat of theft ripples through sleep
In restless fits of interrupted fantasies.

Existence stretches like a desolate dirge
In search of sanctuary on a therapist's birch.
For a panacea to emotional wounds
In chemicals of medicated cocktails and tranquiliser shoots.

Harken to vitality is met with a silent scream
Conscious of the glare of critical social screens.
Individuality is thus suppressed
In streets of sorrow where melancholy is dressed.



Bilkis Moola: She is an Educator who works as a Head of Department in Languages at a school in Vukuzakhe, a township located in Volksrust, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa. Her first published anthology, “Wounds and Wings: A Lyrical Salve Through Metaphor” was received throughout South Africa and launched her poetic persona. It evolved as an introspective quest for recovery from her personal narrative of an abusive relationship. She presently divides her time between professional responsibilities and post-graduate studies in Education. Her pen continues to sketch the flotsam in her mind from the passion in her heart on shreds of paper that bloom into poems.



UNCLEAR

Nuclear

but unclear

a mushroom that eats you

ground below

it began with sticks, swords

guns and booms

on the button now

you are just collateral damage

guinea pigs or worse

scorched will be the earth

maybe a tree may remain defy

maybe two monkeys, call them gorilla

whatever

as they scan the human foolishness-cum-tragedy

in true Darwin spirit

the male will tell the female

shall we start all over again.

Till then plan for MARS

One-way ticket



N.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. I am writing poems to be subsequently brought out into a collection.



ONE DAY I WILL FLY

One day I will fly.
And meet the stars
up in high places.

I will beat up poor education.
And bash the scull of inequality.
They will not reign over me.

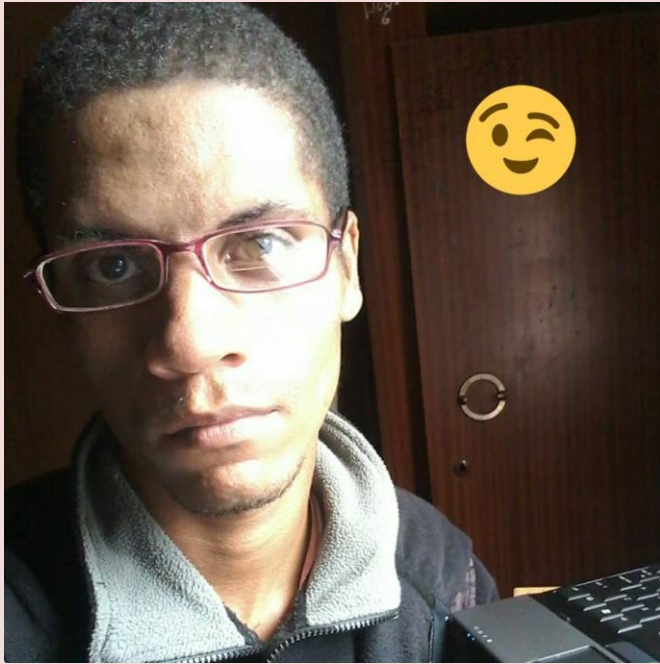
I will sing a farewell song
to my oppressors.
My children will laugh at them.

One day I will soar,
high above the fields.
No more bidding under my bed.
No more dark clouds over my head.

My wings, My wings,
they will be called education
and superiority.

I will fly with wings
of an African Eagle.

They will lift me up and carry me.
Be a solace for me and my offspring.



Chestlyn Draghoender: He is a South African writer, poet, and activist from a small town called Ravensmead in Cape Town. He was been writing poetry, stories, and personal essays since 2010. Chestlyn writes because it helps him to explore the world around him and share his experiences with his readers. He also has a passion for reading books, and likes to encourage others to read for fun. He believes that in order to be a good writer, one must also be an avid reader.



A YEAR AGO

A year ago I swore to you
My love and loyalty,
It lasted like the morning dew,
Our love's naivety.

A day ago I reminisced,
Of things I'd said in vain,
Then I remembered when we kissed,
Once more I felt the pain.

Have my treason's scars subsided
All over your pale back?
Has your hurt with time collided,
Does it make hatred slack?

I wonder at my treachery,
I hope you have moved on,
I shudder at stale lechery,
And grieve that you are gone.



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



I'M A MAGICIAN

I'm a Magician married with my bridesmaid

I'm a wizard losing mine's touch

I'm a Rajah looking after number one

I'm a seer uncovering cards

Now looking himself at the glassball.

Look at me asking to the Ball

“What is the future?”

And the Ball saying through myself:

“As a predictor, there's no future

Because as do You see

There's a set of fundamentalism

Toward which people will again and again

Make hates and wars.

Responses to the present and future situations

Arte ever the same:

The old Zodiac meditating to Death

Full of great encounters and great silences

As responses to all situations”.

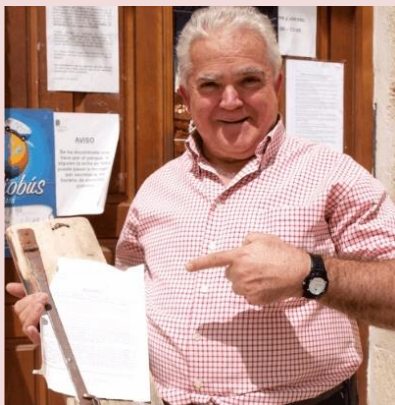
Meanwhile

The smile of constellations

Wet one’s face into existence

Where we are taken care of a paradox cat

Stirring by a thought, but of what?



Daniel de Culla (1955): He is a writer, poet, and photographer. He is also a member of the Spanish Writers Association, Earthly Writers International Caucus, Director of the Gallo Tricolor Review, and Robespierre Review. He’s moving between North Hollywood, Madrid and Burgos, Spain.



NEAR DEATH EXPERIENCE

My mind races like an avalanche
and in the brilliant glare
of blinding unearthly lights
I barely recognize familiar sights
on these snake like winding roads
I have journeyed through
many, many, times in my life
I find myself hurtling in flight
at a frightening supersonic speed
somersaulting through
what seems like an eternal
deep foreboding orifice
my very essence about to be devoured by a massive,
ravenous, rotating vortex; an all-engulfing void

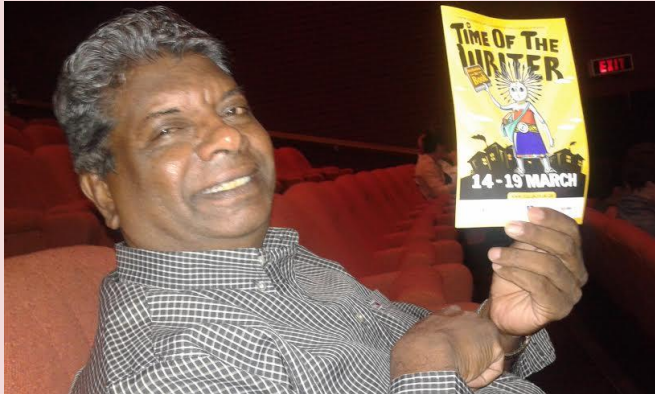
my alertness diminished
my agility out of balance
I am skidding, I am flying
out of my control
through a time warp
covered in thick grey mist
I scream, slow down, slow down
but no sound comes from my voice
my mind, my senses no longer
under my control
I feel suffocatingly hot
cold beads of sweat weep
from my forehead
like tears lamenting my death
I try to awake I try to stand
the ground disappears
from beneath my feet

I stumble, I stagger,

unable to stand upright,
I fall, I fall It seems
from high up a precipices
down, down, a deep chasm
I land on a cushion of ambivalence
that lulls my pain
into a false sense of sanctuary
I have only one thought
fighting in my head
to awake, to awake
to force open
my drowsy heavy eyelids

I feel awfully strange
with weird sensations
floundering inside my head
not, for a infinite minute second
does it occur to me that I may be dying
and the struggle is between
life, and death

two resistant forces pitted in a duel
with no holds barred over my mortal body



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.



WHY?

Zynah asked for a bit more halwa puri before she left for the school.

My little daughter, just learnt the first rhymes the other day,
She came home and hugged me, then recited what she learnt.

Oh God, why did they have to massacre my little princess,
Now lying in a pool of blood.

We were faithful, oh God,

I never went out without my hijab,

And offered my prayers five times a day.

It was a day just as usual.

All my little children, beautiful all with God's blessings,
Assembled in the prayer hall.

One by one we sang the national anthem and offered all the
prayers.

But as the little angels started moving out to their classes,
They stormed the school premises and fired on them.

What did the angels do wrong, oh God?

What sins did we commit?

We loved teaching them, as beautiful as blossoming flowers,
Each with so much zeal, so much to live.

Why didn't they kill me before leaving?

What strength do I need to bear with the pain?

It started raining since morning,

But the crowd did not move an inch.

There were no words to say, no emotion was enough.

Why did they have to do this, oh God!

We sat stunned like stones, the tears dried up long ago.

One by one the little coffins were laid side by side.

All one hundred and thirty two of them.

A butterfly, oblivious to the sombre mood and the gloomy sky,

Sat on Inaaya's forehead.

For a second, I thought she will move,

She always loved the butterflies and ran after them.

But my child didn't move, her face remained lifeless.

Oh God, why did you have to take her away from me,

What sin did she commit?

She didn't even learn to lie.

Could you see my little Aftab anywhere? And my Aaban?

No, they did not come back home yesterday from school,

They didn't do any mischief any more.

They Didn't fight over kebab and a piece of naan.

No one called me Ammi last night.

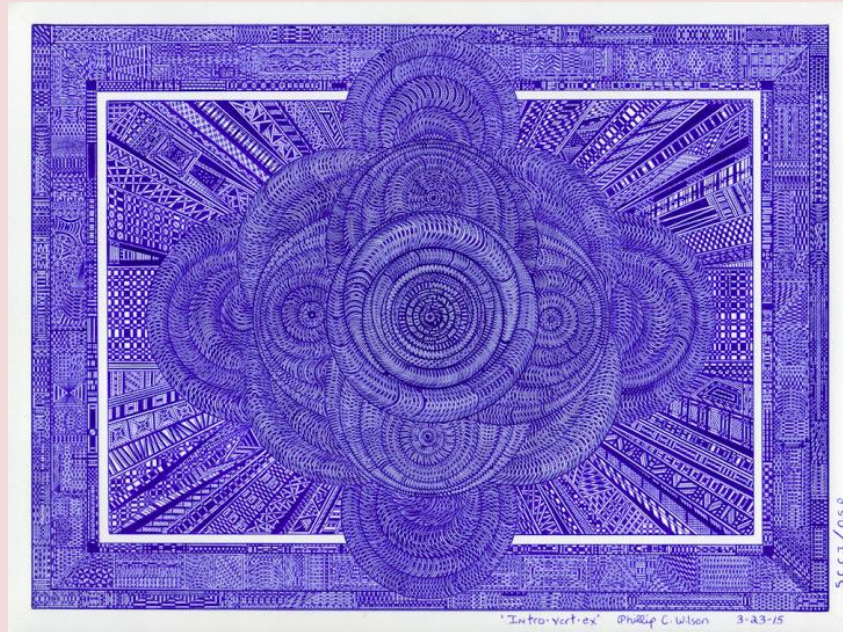
Did someone call my name?

Was it time to say good bye?

Oh God, was there no other way?



Dipankar Sarkar: He is on a continuous journey to discover himself and the mystery called life. He remains an eternal optimist with a never-ending zeal, in spite of the many battles that he has lost and few that he has won.



(Phillip Wilson is a remarkable pen artist, originally from Newark in Ohio, USA. In 2002, he found himself homeless with no support base and forced to make ends meet; he had to resort to drastic measures in order to survive. This included seeking shelter and food in vacant and abandoned, derelict properties; which consequently led to a period of imprisonment. With a self-taught style, he began to create unique art pieces with 15c commissary Bic pens. He was pleased with the intricate details he was able to include and also how he processed his thoughts and emotions in his 6 by 7 ft cell during the 100 average plus hours it took to create each unique piece. By doing this, he could express his emotions and utilise the time he had available to forge his skill. He hopes to inspire others to realise their own hidden potential and transform themselves into who they were meant to be. He has persevered through the most challenging set of circumstances against all odds and each piece of art he creates is testimony to his deep insight for survival and rebirth. His work can be viewed and purchased at www.pensational.com)

BASTILLE ~ THE PRISON DIARIES

The Arrival – Catapulted out of liberty's womb

I find myself in this cobalt blue mummified tomb

devoid, self-confidence destroyed wrapped up

in a twisted callous coil – Just another molecule
in life's barren, frozen fruitless soil.

Guilt Trip – Misplaced loyalties disintegrated
alliances regretted choking choices
gut-wrenching haunting deepening black hole
abyss delivered me to this – Fake institutional
freedom slow motion momentum broken phantom.

Surviving Solitude – Avoiding internal meltdown
whilst stumbling through the murky backstreets
of my mind, seeking a healing presence kind
amongst these emotions of blue – What to do?
A creative glance, a surprising collaborative chance.

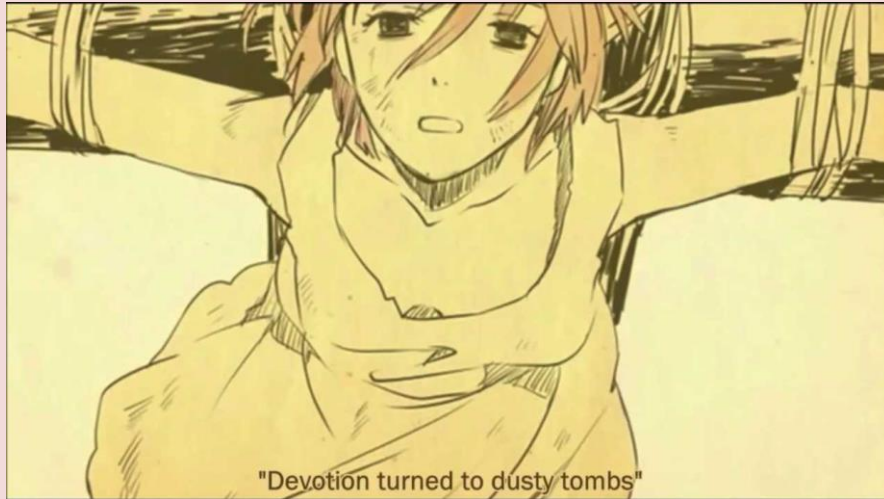
Architect Boulevard – A simple ink tool becomes
my universal rule, unexpected inspiration carves out
a future elevation - Hidden in the linear crevices
soul-ripping longing for loved ones passing, unreachable
informing my direction, healing society's rejection.

Time Warp – Years melted into an azure throbbing pulsation, forging a prophesised painstaking creation interconnecting a shared sensation, oiling a necessary new nation – Filling the void of established confidence destroyed, my own emerging urban matrix.

Intro-Vert-Ex – My forgotten vortex swirling thoughts healing renewed, emerging glistening chrysalis rebirth escaping this suffocating festering foam fortress -
Celestial evolution guides my global mission
my message no illusion, electric blue my vision...



Don Beukes: He is a retired teacher of English and Geography now writing poetry. Originally from Cape Town, South Africa, where he was born, raised and educated in the last two decades of Apartheid, he taught in both South Africa and the UK for twenty years and hold EU citizenship. As a person of 'mixed race' heritage, his poetry reflects the racial and cultural battles growing up in a racially divided society and indeed as a global citizen and hopes to adjust our moral compass. He also writes about the socio-political, life and death, womanhood, nature and religion.



WITCH HUNT

creamy skin quite unlike
those seen in rural heartlands,
high cheekbones, tapering nose, carriage
straight as though a model misplaced
tended cows, hens, lent a hand
in the miniscule patch of land her husband
tilled, good mother, dutiful wife
till one day bizarre deaths rocked
village, yield of cows' milk declined,
rustic villagers sought
answer from matted haired shaman
who divined from grains scattered
presence of evil spells

formed from within
the forlorn hinterland, turned
gaze towards the fair, green
eyed one, rural folk rose stone fisted
to drive out witch disguised as their own,
till she fell, bruised, bloody,
punished for being different



Fehmida Zakeer: She has been published in journals and anthologies such as Out of Print Magazine, Asian Cha, Rose and Thorn Journal, The Bangalore Review, The Four Quarters Magazine, Quarterly Literary Review Singapore, Everyday Fiction, Kritya, Pangea: An Anthology of Stories from Around the World, Ripples: Short Stories by Indian Women Writers, and elsewhere. She is based in Chennai.



SCENTED HAIKU

You are, a sexy old man, you are bald, and grey with glasses on a rope, with a striped shirt and pants high up, I'm a rotund old lady who bakes and gives out sweet treats and likes to solve mysteries, we live in a suburban town, we grow our vegetables, we are kindly, but always seem to talk so much, from morning till night, what do we even talk about? What to eat, what to sow, when to reap, what's on the news, what everything is about, your haircut, my haircut, your clothes, our medication; our nephews and nieces love us, but are also wary, we know all their secrets.

We like to take walks after dinner, but you walk after tea as well, sometimes your walks are too long, I die of worry, I complain, to our nephews, to our nieces, to the cat, to our old dog. Oh our dog, he hates walks now, he won't go with you. Kids are playing outside our house, I send them looking for you, He can't have gone far, he's a tall old man, slow steps, he's just wandering, forgetting there's a home, then

when you come home I'm cross, I make roti and cauliflower for dinner, you make the dough, we talk about electricity, the weather, you hold me, we watch TV, I'm snoring, you move me to bed, I put my legs on you, I have so much peace.



Gayatri Sekar: She likes words and all the things they can do. Favorite quote: "All these signs lead to science".



Something flew away
I know, tonight,
I can feel the emptiness,
The void
And the flapping of wings
Against the walls.
Now I wait,
As though eternally
I never understood
Why?!

Didn't I

In the downpour
Wait
For you to join me
Till it receded
And you never came.

Withering.
A soft fall
Like gentle rains
And feathers,
Unpetalled, strewn,
On the grand carpet,
Unbearing trees
They stand, dark skeletons,
Tall, bruised, staring
At the night skies
Dark, descending,
Waiting for release.



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. She is married to Shreekumar Varma (Writer and Novelist) and has two sons, Vinayak and Karthik and a daughter-in-law daughter Yamini. She lives in Neelankarai, Chennai.



SEED SAGA

From somewhere in a far flung wilderness,
Amidst the entwining vines, creepers and foliage mess,
A little bird carried me across rainbow splashed skies,
Oh how with fortitude and resilience she braves squalls and
elements defies,
In her little beak I'm held oh so gently,
And I feel the wind current fan me swiftly,
Over the countryside am I imported to new ground,
To be sown, nurtured, bloom, thrive, with a home newly
found!
And then I flower with a fragrance that is wondrous,
Even I am surprised at what I came to be in my evolution
dexterous!
I'm watered and nurtured, by the infinite sky and sea,

Protected, pruned, medicated, pumped with alien substance,
I cannot breathe free,
I become gigantic, yield more than I can bear,
In open markets and farmers' souks I get a curious stare,
Then I wonder who I really am, I look for that little bird,
It flaps its tiny wings to tell me something truly weird,
I believe somewhere in time I desired to be different,
And providence swished its magic wand to capitalize on my
trait inherent,
Now I will be buffed, displayed, exhibited, bought and sold,
Soon to die, perish, ferment before I'm meant to be old,
Maybe pickled, bottled, age in a fancy jar,
Or turn to candy wrapped in glitzy foil printed with a star,
I'm now battling with the past conditional tense so iffy,
Just a moment's desire that transformed my fate in a jiffy,
I have reaped what I had sown from my very mind,
The bird my friend did what it had to, to go back to my origin
I need its wings to find!



Geethanjali Dilip: A Chennaiite at heart, she is a graduate from Ethiraj College and a postgraduate in French from Bangalore University. She is passionate about poetry, travel, teaching travel, gardening, interior decoration, and enjoying a deep spiritual connection with everything. She's been teaching French, freelance, in Salem for the past 34 years in schools and colleges, and at her centre, Zone Francophone, in Salem. Her family includes her husband, Dilip Narsimhan, daughter, Manasa, son-in-law, Ajay, granddaughter, Aarushi, and her parents.



ANOTHER DICK

Turn again

Turn again

Turn again

Dick Whittington

From London

This time

Where the streets are paved

With gold

To India

And the Taj Mahal

Where Hammurabi leaped

The monkey-king

From the sub-Continent

To Sri Lanka

And Mumbai
Sweats on seven small islands
In a bay
Surrounded by slums
And cardboard city
Turn, turn again
Whittington
Turn North to Sweden
Where pine trees hush
The birds
And all is dark in winter
Time for murder
Along the border with Russia
Where pleasant lakes
Glisten
In the all-day sun
Of summer
Back to Africa
The townships of Soweto
And Mdantsane

Where life is a mere
Strangling wire from death
And rhinoceroses
Walk proudly
Into death
At the hands of poachers
Bearing brave horn proudly
For the Chinese market
You should have stayed
In London
Dick
Become a man
In the City
With a pink tie
And made money
Meanwhile the Cheshire Cat
Looks on
Grinning
Slyly



Geoffrey Jackson: He has been an intrepid TESOL instructor at 5 universities and 4 colleges, blown off course from England to Holland, Finland, Hungary, Oman, Saudi Arabia and, in the Roaring Forties, to Denmark. A self-described European cosmotrollop and Americanophile with New World dreams, Geoff is the Poetry Editor for Fullosia Press.



JULY PROMISES

there'll be the song
that makes you sigh
and sing along
this July

there'll be the dance
that'll make you try
along and prance
this July

there'll be the rhymes
that make you fly

through trying times

this July

there'll be the fun

oh my! oh my!

It's just begun

this July

Bouquets of flowers

And magpie's cries

Poetry showers

this July



Glory Sasikala: She is a poet and writer, currently residing in Chennai. She is the editor and publisher of GloMag.

<https://www.instamojo.com/Glory/>



BRIDE, HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN SOMETHING?

Bride, you seem all ready for your wedding tomorrow,
To share with your groom all your joys and your sorrows,
You will vow to walk with him through thick and thin;
But dear girl, have you forgotten something?

Shopping is over at last, and packing is done,
All parties hosted, all farewells bidden;
Discussions and deliberations with the boy completed;
Conditions explained, all signatures obtained;
But O bride, haven't you forgotten something?

No mincing of words, all terms cut and dried,
In threadbare clauses, all factors analysed:
Your salary, his salary; your pension, his pension;

Your savings, his earnings; your investments, his properties;
Your profits, his losses; your balances, his taxes;
Your assets, his loans; your debit cards, his credit cards;
Your expenses, his incomes; your holidays, his promotions;
But smart bride, you seem to have forgotten something?

All precautions built in; every situation foreseen:

Your affairs, his loyalty; your children, his children;
Your rights, liberties, pleasures and privileges,
Expectations, privacy, maternity and pregnancies,
Against his duties, restraints and responsibilities;
But beautiful bride, you surely have forgotten something?

Legalities and formalities sealed and made sure;
Documents in place, your future safe and secure;
But what's it that's wanting, something precious is missing,
That should radiate your eyes during the bridal kissing;
That should brighten your face more than the reddest rouge?
Ah! My poor bride, you just forgot TO BLUSH!



Gulnar Raheem Khan: She is a post graduate in English, former officer of the Indian Bank, mother of two, and now, grandmother of three. She was the student editor of her college magazine. She has contributed to the Letters column of the Hindu, and the Arab News, and has written poems and articles for her Bank house journal. She cherishes her letter to the Arab News which won her the first prize in Topic of the Week contest. gul.fazl@gmail.com



BUBBLING BED SHEET

Came a wink of air,
From the open panes of window,
Rummaging the whole sheet,
Spread in with so much care,
Crafting a new meadow,
On surface embroidered like wheat,
Appeared - a changed layer,
Contrasting with the side pillow,
Disturbing the milieu so neat,
Had pounced a hare,
With its footsteps so slow,
As if jumping a tiny feet,
Duh! Mum with all her glare,

Bursted annoyance-weighing a kilo,
The whole ambience now in heat,
Ultimately chiming in manner fair,
Coaxed the kids so low,
To put on shoes and fleet!



Jayant Singhal: A voracious reader and an enraptured author, Jayant Singhal, under the animated pseudonym of 'Saaransh'. He began nurturing the passion for expressing the enchanted aura of the world through his pen just a few months ago. Having a strong affinity for English language, he loves to feel the imbuing effect of it. He is currently writing a Facebook page, "Aroma - The Essence of Life". Dazzling through the twists and turns of this beautiful voyage, commonly known as 'Life', he is en route to the bewitching nature of happiness and peace.



INVITATION

Would you like to unwind
an afternoon at the lake?

Solar sparks spilling over us
in showers of golden sizzle.

Put on short shorts, skimpy tops,
stick our toes into oozy mud.

Breezes will shake treetops
while we listen to birdsongs.

Why not float on new grass
facing an Alice blue sky?

Read celestial comic strips
from mounds of clouds.

We can count sunbeams,
chase yellow butterflies.

Devour bowls of cherries
painting our lips crimson.

This noontime is perfumed
With zillions of wild flowers.

Let's go away all day...be
embraced by the goddess.



Joan McNerney: Her poetry has been included in numerous literary magazines such as Seven Circle Press, Dinner with the Muse, Moonlight Dreamers of Yellow Haze, Blueline, and Halcyon Days. Three Bright Hills Press Anthologies, several Poppy Road Review Journals, and numerous Kind of A Hurricane Press Publications has accepted her work. Her latest title is Having Lunch with the Sky and she has four e-books. She has been nominated three times for Best of the Net.



THE POWER IS GONE, MY DEAR!

Woke up and say: the power is gone, dear,
Can't pump water, but don't despair,
The fridge will not work, my dear,
For the food gone stale don't shed a tear.

My dear, it's dark because the lights are out,
Step carefully, and please don't shout
At the servant. She is not the reason,
It's the doing of the ministry in season.

The cell phone battery is way down,
You can't call a taxi to go shopping in town.
Except in emergency you can't call or chat,
Until it's recharged from the very start.

They say they will fix it in two days,
That would mean a week, anyways.
Can't chat with our abroad-living son,
Without power the internet won't function.

There's no water so we can't bathe,
Let's eat stale food and return to bed straight.
Tomorrow, dear, is another day of powerlessness,
The government doesn't care for its uselessness.

Can I fix anything? At least, the back-up?
No dear! There's no liquid in that damn set-up.
Unfortunately, no television soap operas or reality shows,
This here is reality; not a chimera the world follows.



John P. Matthew: Writer, poet, singer-songwriter, and blogger John P Matthew was born in the state of Kerala, India. His first success as a writer was Penguin’s world-wide short story contest “India Smiles” in which his short story “Flirting in Short Messages” was selected for publication in an anthology.

His poem “Call of the Cuckoo” has been published by Poetry Rivals. He is working on his first novel and writing a book-length travelogue about his native state of Kerala.



HAPPY

Kiss me again, odd fish.

let the immaculate know

I've collected their daisy

chain of white rings. My eyes

have bevelled the equality.

All are fitting crescents, an infinity

into my square pocket.

I am receiving all it intended

to send. My kiss is for all the

world, and I hug stripes into

one.

Orgasms of threshold have come

just once, and was over.

I told the truth and it was.

This eternity fit for once

into it's word.



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



WHISPERING PIGEONS

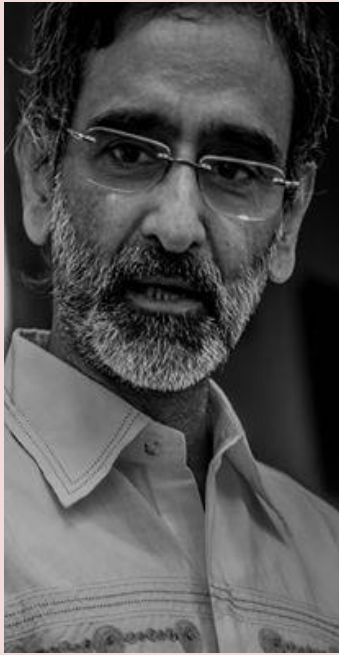
(a poem by Sajida, translated from Malayalam to English by Kerala Varma)

My whispering pigeons come home
to the windowsill of my dusk
The broken strings of my violin
lying idle in the attic of cold love
seek the warmth of plucking fingers
The sighs of leaves soaked in the night rain
fall silent as my day dreams lose their way
in the darkness of the night of despair
Peacocks come searching for lost feathers
in the dark abyss of my forlorn love
They never find those feathers
that lay hidden with their bright colours intact
The lengthening shadows of the ennui
of repeated days and nights dampen

the feeble efforts of wet sunbeams
to brighten the hope lying shattered on the way
My dreams seek out embers of angst
in the extinguished flames of love
Panting in the valley of disappearing daylight
night owls lift the spirits of uneasy darkness



Sajida: She is from Thrissur and lives in UAE. A fan of Urdu shayari and Sufi mysticism, she writes poetry and lyrical prose in Malayalam. Her published works include a Western Australian travelogue in Malayalam "The Colourful Swans of Swan River", poems and short stories in various anthologies.



Kerala Varma: He hails from Chirakkal (Kannur), Kerala, 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.



THE CRAFTSMEN'S CRY

a Kiran Zehra poem

Who stole ye tools O' craftsmen

Asked a voice from heaven

"The careless wind it sings a song

Dip in the ink and sing along

Wake up O' poet, print this down

The music in the wind may drown.

I beg thy pardon O' artist dear

Look at the stars fall without fear

Thy colours will seal its fall

The star will forever sparkle on thy wall.

Why do you stare at the ocean?

Pick up the clay O' humble mason

Mould a pot to fill Adam's ale
Let the water find its frail.
Tie those showy flowers together
O' flower girl twist your heather
The blossoms will die and wither
This hour will silently slither
Why O'ye dancers do you sit
Is not the music of life fit?
Why art thou not breathing?
Has love fallen for cheating?"
No came their answer
"This silence is our enhancer
We are but love's peasants,"
Their answers now echoed in the heavens
"On days of darkness we sit and sigh
Only to come back and clear the sky
You find'eth our silence cold
You say our spirit we sold
You blame us for losing our tool
Yet doubt not the goons that rule

You want'eth us to design merriment
Our art speak'eth of fine treatment
Yet you wait not for us to design
You read'eth the superficial signs
Pay an artist due respect
For without his work joy is wrecked
Pay heed to his objet d'art
But look deeply his soul and heart.



Kiran Zehra Komail: Put her in the mountains and she will bargain rhymes and rhythm from the tallest tree and the sward. Place her in the concrete jungle and she will sing you a song of love midst the streets and the walls. Show her a burning torch and she would tell you hope is approaching! Call Ms Kiran Zehra Komail, a whirlwind of ideas or a foodie

her zest for life is endless and so are her dreams! She could redefine the shades of red, yellow, black or white in words so vivid you'd almost wonder if the true shade of it was this. She works for Rotary News as the Sub Editor of the English and Hindi magazine. Travel, gourmet and people to her are intriguing. Her poems and sketches are her theorem – simple yet deep and humble.



"She secretly grew flowers,
Captured selected specks of star dust,
In the lanes and sidelines of her heart.
She knew how to go somewhere and come back.
She mastered the paths, mugged up the routes.

I think you found out,
And it worried you.

Star dust doesn't satiate hunger pangs,
Flowers are superficial beings.
Wandering is luxurious amusement for the rich.

She also treasured a harbour of passion,

For crescentic moon nights,
For gypsy birds on a voyage towards,
An unending northward destination.
She had an unapologetic, openly bold craving,
For saucy relationships that broke off easily,
Leaving no guilt, regret or pressure.

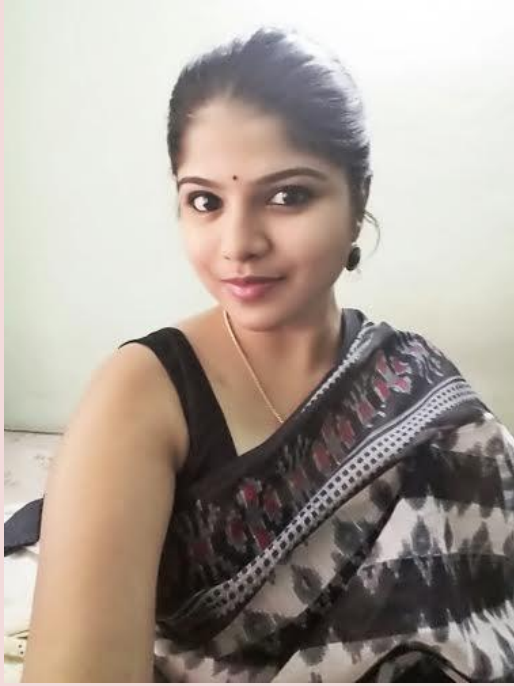
I think you found out,
And it worried you.

She needed to be injected, indoctrinated,
About giving and giving saintly,
Without claiming an ounce of self worth,
You sold her a flaskful of experiences,
In exchange of her dreamy wilderness,
She conspired a revolt against your notions,
She was close to throwing up,
She had a run away plan,
With no money in hand.

I think you found out,
And it worried you.

There was only one way,
Of treating the itching in her soles.
Crack the walls of her heart muscles,
Break the fibers of her veins,
Push,
Push,
Push the dagger, till the bottoms burst,
Greedyly nobble her out of breath,
Block the view through her cavities.

Her heart weighs extra pounds with the dagger,
It's a heavy job to carry it around.
She might not be able to pull it over any longer."



Mahitha Kasireddi: I am from Hyderabad. I'm an aspiring writer/poet. I have been a writer with online magazines Youth Ki Awaaz and Campus Diaries. I won the Campus Diaries 25 Under 25 National Contest in the category of writing. I write poetry/prose/flash fiction at <https://magykars.wordpress.com>



THE OTHER ME

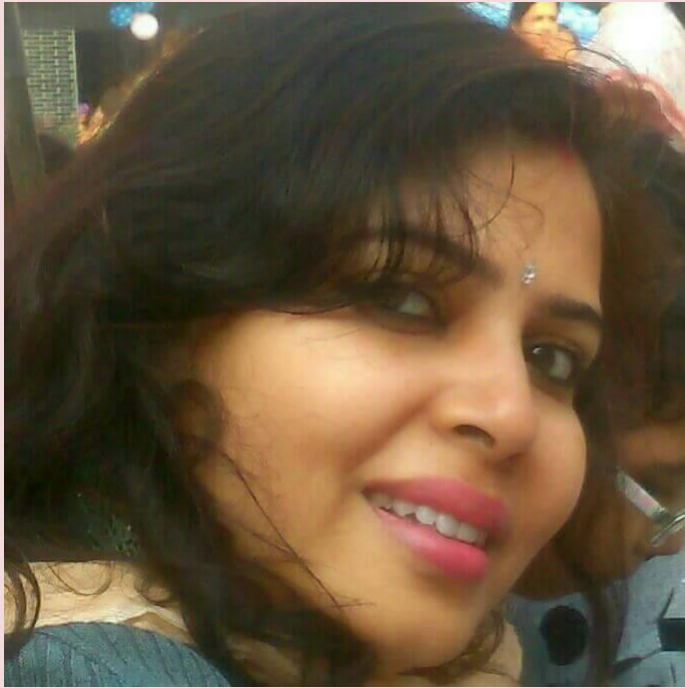
A windy night,
blurred feelings stirred to life.
Silhouetted bodies meet
for you, I spread myself -
while clothes I shed
my heart I lay bare,
you strangely stare
at this other me.

Bottomless depth
I dive to retrieve

pearls in oyster shells
desires heartfelt
vivid hued coral reefs
passionate yearnings.

Hurt and tears
of yonder years
lost in the labyrinth of daily grind,
that often struggle to resurface .
what you see is a fragmented me
the other dormant self
floats deep beneath
the layers of consciousness.

would you stand on the shore
and be content with what you see
or would you delve deep
to touch me in my entirety?



Mallika Bhaumik: The poet had been a student of literature and did her masters in English Literature from the University of Calcutta. She is passionate about writing and many of her poems and stories have been published in National and International anthologies, well known magazines. She is an event planner by profession and is fond of music, travelling and cooking. She lives with her husband and sons in Kolkata and is a proud Kolkatan.



THE CANOPY ABOVE

The white sheet in the canopy above
seems like a faded mattress
in sheds.

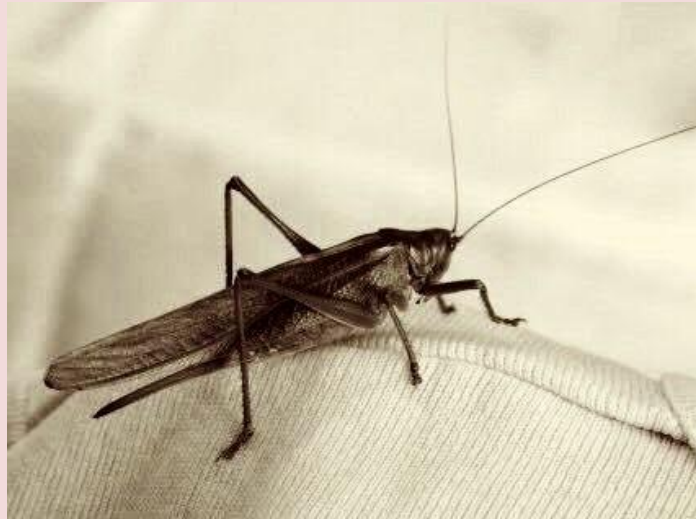
Hues of blues peep out
like small faces anxious
for absent parents.

Dark patches brood,
the wind unseen, wields its potent brush
wildly mixing smatterings of dreams
and nightmares.

My eyes like renegade soldiers,
feel all lost and unfocused.



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.



SECRET LOVER

A long lazy evening wanting to do nothing

Sitting in the long corridor loneliness encircling me

I was watching the painted summer sky

The dark clouds engulfing the colours

Slowly the moon appeared shyly with

her radiant smile

The silhouetted trees and the cool breeze caressing

I felt something touch my skin near the sleeve

I turned and saw a long slender green grasshopper

His long antennae and big eyes scared me

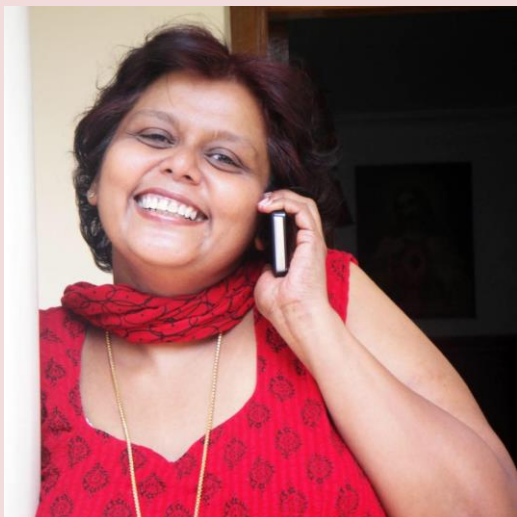
He was staring at me every time I looked at him

I heard a light flapping of his wings flutter

He came down crawling and landed on my right elbow

The trailing with his long belly on my skin tickled me
His touch delighted me as he crawled with his long legs
Face downward nudging my skin with his mouth
I had goosebumps all over my soft skin
Wiping his face with those fragile forearms
I ran my finger along his beautiful long body
He was quiet bending his head slightly
I kept my finger beneath his forearm he held it
In a few seconds he pulled away and moved backwards
He did not fly I was happy he let me touch him
I heard strong endless signals from among the bushes
He turned kneeling and crawling up towards my shoulder
I felt him nestling near the hair covering my ears
As he passed out of sight I had these wild guesses
May be climbed up to whisper good bye
Even before I could guess what it could be
He silently flew and vanished in the dark bushes
May be he spotted his right mate among the bushes
I murmured a prayer for the safety of my secret lover
Any day as I relax in the long corridor by night

I search for my secret lover of that summer night
The unexpected simple pleasures he gave me
The secret gentle touch and romancing
On that undisturbed silent summer night
Every time I hear a rusty happy song among the bushes
I turnaround to see if it's my secret lover
My secret love for my green secret lover
Still fresh in memory haunting green and ceasing never
As I sit down by the open window watching the moon
I started to pen down that delightful summer night
Did I hear someone whisper?
My Secret Bubbly Angel What Writest Thou?



Merlyn Alexander: I hail from Nagercoil, had my schooling and college there and did my post-graduation in Botany.

Surrounded by nature all around our district with tall coconut trees fringed sea shores, beginning of the Western Ghats, paddy fields and coconut grove, rubber plantations, with some red cliff valleys and scattered mountainous terrain, I feel blessed that nature has lots to offer for my poems. I'm an ardent lover of nature. Other than writing my hobbies include painting, craft, travelling music reading and cooking. I'm a blogger and I have a cookery blog. I would love to publish a cookery book someday. My collection of poems in a book. Gimme some time.

www.alexanderskitchenrecipes.blogspot.com



RAIN-SCENTED EARTH

When the skies grows dark, pregnant with the fulsome rain,
the dark and lowering canopy, threatening and so fierce,
hides in its bosom the secret that will revive the Earth again.
All that moisture held so close, precious to the one below,
Parched lips open up in thirst, waiting for a cloud to burst!
As the first drops touch the earth, as the silver stream's
released,
whirls and dances, dips in glee, every bird and every beast!
The greedy Earth drinks every drop, lifts her face in gratitude,
that shines so clean, so fair, as opposed to sky's dark mood.
Fill the dry and dusty crater, fill the forgotten river bed
Wash the dusty leaves of trees, drench the busy, busy bees.
Let the joy of life anew fill every corner of the Earth,
drawing out the essence, the fragrance from her very heart,

the scent of rain-drenched earth!



Minnie Tensingh: I think I have been writing from the age of 10, contributing to the school and college magazines. Several prizes for creative writing and poetry competitions have encouraged me to keep at it. Reading is my passion and often distracts me from writing. Currently I am on the verge of bringing out a story book targeting children in their pre and early teens to encourage reading among children.



WHEN I GO WALKING BY

(Loosely based on a painting by Mark Webster)

I go walking by

The lake and its side

Carried and so being borne

The beauty of a rainy morn,

There I find flowers drenched

Waving gently in the breeze

There I get that essence

Of country filled with love so dense,

There I think I get the feel

Of walking to that serene scene
Where birds and bees and little insects hum
Of a morning painted really awesome,

There by that lake I see
On leaves glittering balls
Of water catching nature's glee,

There by that lake on the ground
I think I have always love mine found,

In varied ways of Nature's course,
There I think I discovered a source
Of undying love and tranquil life,
There by that lake blue and white,
how into poetry I take a dive.



Moinak Dutta: WELCOME! JULEY! BON JOUR! CIAO!

Me? I am nothing...I'm not a conscious poet...I just scribble;

For scribbling is like singing spontaneously...It is like dancing loving the movements of body...So I live...So I wish to depart...



HAND-IN-HAND

A man was sitting sad.

I did not know him.

I only knew the masquerading sorrow.

I smiled at him.

He did not know my smiles.

Only knew the sharing.

I extended my hands.

We did not know each other's hands.

Only knew walking hand-in-hand.

I picked a handful of salt water.

I did not know his tears.

Only knew thirst quenched, hearts drenched.



Nandini Sahu: She is a major voice in Indian English poetry, is an Associate Professor of English in IGNOU, New Delhi, India; she is a creative writer, theorist and folklorist ; she is the author/editor of eleven books; has been widely published in India, U.S.A., U.K., Africa and Pakistan. Dr.Sahu is a double gold medalist in English literature, the award winner of All India Poetry Contest, Shiksha Rattan Purashkar and Poiesis Award of Honour, 2015. She is the Chief Editor and Founder Editor of two bi-annual refereed journals, Interdisciplinary Journal of Literature and Language(IJLL) and Panorama Literaria. Her areas of research interest cover New Literatures, Critical Theory, Folklore and Culture Studies, Children’s Literature, American Literature and ELT.



TWO POEMS

#1.

Halfway from home, the rain

Starts to pick up speed

When he was in the fourth grade classroom of a government school

Rainy afternoons were always the time

They'd vie among friends, to get a punishment

(Standing outside class, in the corridor)

When he was in college, rainy evenings were

Spent, in warm embraces

And shiny, wet lips

When he became a husband- and a father (of two) - rainy mornings became

Avoidance

Standing on the footpath, he sees

The raindrops pick up speed, and the world around him

Breaks into a helpless chaos

He can imagine, tomorrow, the kids will fight for punishment on the corridor again, and the lovers will

Seek refuge in each other's love

And he'll have to run to the market, with a torn slipper, and a watch

That was supposed to be waterproof- but didn't keep its promise

#2.

Grandma stands at the counter waiting for the employee to look up,

her slippers softly squeak, and her silver hair,

tied on a little knot atop her head, smells strongly of coconut oil

Yes, the bank employee finally sees her; he strains to get a better look

But she's frail, and short, and all he sees is

Her furrowed forehead

Grandma reaches up and slides her documents,

I want to open a new account, she

almost whispers, as if having a

Bank account is reason enough to be mugged

The employee passes her papers, with so much written,

it made her head spin

And the dotted lines at the end, to sign

He looked at her, gulped, and passed her

an ink-pad too- for thumb impressions- his voice sounds sympathetic

Grandma takes her pen out, and signs

5 neat dotted lines, fills with

5 neat signatures

And this pleases her so much, coming out of the bank,

she orders three jalebis and waits, even though

it was noon almost, and the

Jalebis were still swimming, in hot oil



Nilesh Mondal: He is 22 years old, is an undergrad in engineering by choice and poet by chance. His works have featured in Cafe Dissensus, In Plainspeak, Inklette, Textploit, etc. His first book of poems, 'Degrees of Separation' (Writers Workshop) is scheduled for a 2017 release.



SUNDOWN

As dusk quietly sneaks up on you
breathtaking in blush like a shy bride's face,
starlings stream from under the uneven wooden slabs of the
pier
as if commanded by the air marshal into gravity-defying
formations
signalling that the night is not too far behind.

Time struggles for infinitesimal minutes
as if stuck with firm adhesive

Then,
the fulcrum shifts in one fell
swoop

And...

night-blooming jasmines in full flower gently nod their heads—

specks of white in an otherwise sable surround.



Nivedita Karthik: She is a graduate in Integrated Immunology from the University of Oxford who likes reading books and travelling. She is an accomplished Bharatanatyam dancer and has given many performances. She loves any form of creative writing (especially poems) and writes them whenever she can.



SPIDER WEB

The spider webs of our house are
woven by sight, smells and sounds:

in our study room, the keyboard clicking,
a pencil placed between
the pages of Nikki Giovanni's 'Cotton Candy on a rainy day'

in our kitchen: turmeric and ginger-garlic smell
with traces of chuckles, whispers, and
whistles of the pressure cooker.

In our living room: the dissonance of the

changing frequencies of radio channels
and the synthetic laughter on reality shows.

in our bedroom: the soft snores and the
fight to sleep on the right side of the bed
from where we can glimpse the moon.

These spider webs are carefully packed in our suitcase,
as we move on to create a new set of spider webs.



Nivedita Narsapuram: She is an unschooled student of poetry and prose. She writes to make sense of the chaotic world around through her stories and poetry. Among her other interests, she loves exploring Wisconsin and soaking in the warmth of its people and its harsh winters. She blogs at: nnivedita.com.



'EVENING ROSE'

I'm essence

The gift of purpose

Ready for the better me to complete me.

I'm armed with strength

Waiting with dignity

Dressed in virtue

Never compromising standards,

After all- he'll be the ideal being-

Or so I thought...

It was a happy moment

In the glimpse of that expectation

With a charisma of acceptance

It was beautiful!!!

But soon enough; just that- a moment

'... I think it's best if we are apart...'

APART from the fact that you said we was different.

A part you played so assuredly.

Saying we was the best that happened to each other,

But now I know...

Like the others- I'm just another

Stranded-

Strangled with the deceit of reality

A promise notwithstanding

Broken nonetheless

Simply because...

So I look into the future

And see you see me in the past.

Yea,

I'm sorry...

...too!



Oluwatosin Olabode: He is a speaker, poet, blogger and writer. He is a Christian, an idealist and a 'future thinker'. He is a Nigerian. He goes by the stage name, Double_ST (SST), which stand for Strictly Simple from Tosin- given to him as a result of the simplicity of his message. Oluwatosin Olabode is the executive author of the book titled; “The Big One” (a coauthored anthology of 11 writers). He believes the world can be a better place, one positive message at a time, and that is why he writes.



(pic by Amrita Sher-gil)

HOPE STAR

Three women stood side by side,
with feelings that had no place to hide.

Looking lost and in despair
at the dark sky in the cool night air.

“Why”, cried the mother,
“Why me and for what reason?”
She grieved.

The others stood like rock,
still reeling from the shock.
They gazed at the moon,
so quiet and cool.

Impassive and distant,
it seemed like the only constant.

Day after day,
night after night.

They had waited for their little angel.

She did appear, like an answer
to a fervent prayer.

A delicate beauty,
but left too soon,
despite the mother's entreaty.

The middle sister, strong and patient
gazed at the moon
with dewdrops in her lovely eyes,
a silent question and sadness.

For it was she who held dreams in her eyes.

For the youngest sister who
she loved with great tenderness.

The eldest of them,

no stranger to loss of some measure.

Said to them with love and learned composure,

“She will come, my dears.

She will come to you.

In the right season

like a little homing pigeon.

“This is life sometimes,

a disjointed puzzle at times.”

“After we put all the pieces together,

we will see the big picture.”

“Do not fret, hope yet.

For the law of Nature says

that when one door closes,

another will open.

Till that day we will wait.”

As the three sisters,

bonded heart and soul

gazed at the night sky,

a twinkling little star came upon them;

and startled them like a sudden little cry.

“Oh mothers”, comforted the dulcet little voice,
heard by them over the city’s noise.

“I am here always,
and you will see me in time.

“I will come to you,
now it is not yet time,”
the little voice promised.

“Like day follows night, Mother,
I will follow your path.”

I will make my presence in your heart.”

‘Be happy, be patient.

Be a constant for the one by your side,
for he looks at you with his heart in his eyes.

I look at him and you, and know that love is Omniscient.”

The lovely little star shone her Divine light,
and the mothers looked on in delight.

For now they understood,

what is an age old truth,
that where there is Love,
there is always Hope.



Padmini Rambhatla: She is a homemaker and Creative writing teacher who enjoys her different roles as loving wife to an awesome and caring hubby, and as mom to her two sons, Rahul and Arjun .She loves the company of her students and strives to make them enjoy reading, writing and using their imagination to create wholesome and interesting stories. She enjoys watching movies in English, Tamil and Hindi. Padmini dabbles in art occasionally and loves cooking a variety dishes for friends and family.



MOONLIGHT'S SYMPHONY

Tonight, I pick the line
On your scarred other cheek
The smile in your sad eyes

To make you a symphony
Written in solitude
On a new moon night

I will etch it then
On the caverns of my soul
Among other scribblings

Far away from your awareness
Like all hearts

Married in secret

But may they find their way

To that murmur in your heart

Croon to you when you're low...



Panjami Anand: I am an occult practitioner by profession and I see every day it is hard to be honest in a brutal world that demands the best façade even at the cost of one's inner well-being. Sometimes it helps to know that we are all fighting secret battles and we are not the only ones in pain. I love to observe human relationships and nothing inspires my writing more. Thus the dominating theme of all my writings are conflicts and triumphs of the same. I thank each and every one who has encouraged me to better my expression. Gratitude for reading!



I bathed in the Mudangiyar
A small river in Rajapalayam
Such a rarity these days
Have lost the art of bathing
A quick shower or an extended shower
Nothing lasts more than 30 minutes
May be we all want “quickies” these days.

I love to bathe in the river or sea
Best of the sea baths have had
When my whole body soaks
My body floats
Water enters my Body and My Mind.
May be at Sun Rise or Sun Set
With Water in me I Salute The Fire.



Parasuram Ramamoorthi: 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



UNLOST

Someday you may find rain knocking on your window, asking shelter for the night. 'I am being hunted like a wild beast' it may say in a small wet voice dripping with the smell of desolation and musty fables.

I have known it my entire life - this rain that once was lemon scented and starlight crisp.

It takes refuge under the rocking chair, gathers by the legs of the master bed and pools by the window. Sometimes when you sleep, it rearranges a cloud over your eyes and leaves you dreaming long after the sun reaches its zenith.

Slowly, you find that the rain has taken over the house, whispering its magic to the walls and the roof. The study table will be the first one to give in. It weeps into the old

books, the bed sprouts new foliage from its bog-depths and the wooden window panes leave for the forest where they came from.

paper boat

a grizzled poem sails

beyond my grasp



Paresh Tiwari: An electrical engineer by profession, a creative writer, and illustrator by choice, Paresh Tiwari, grew up in the labyrinthine lanes of Lucknow. He took to Japanese literary short forms in the winter of 2012.

Since then his haiku, haibun, tanka, haiga, free-form poems and flash fiction pieces have been published in various journals, anthologies and books. His first collection of haiku and haibun 'An inch of sky' was published by 20 Notebooks Press and is available online.



A MICE STORY

This is the story of four little mice,
Who grew up in China on bean shoots and rice.
The mice were all best friends, from nursery through school,
And many times over liked playing the fool.

Whilst out on a mission to search for some food,
They disturbed a cat and said something rude.
The cat it gave chase, whilst the mice ran away,
A dog saw the cat and decided to play.

The cat caught a mouse and the dog caught the cat,

The three remaining mice said they didn't fancy that.
So they raced to the rescue of their tiny little friend,
And pulled really hard, just as his tail did end.

Out popped the mouse from the jaws of the cat,
And the mice all agreed, not to stay and chat.
The dog went woof, and the cat went meow,
The mice turned around and shouted out ciao!



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 two sons and a daughter and 3 grandsons. He has written a number of technical papers, which were published internationally, before turning attention to writing poetry, short stories and a children's novel. He also founded The Young Poet Society. He has published a novel, "The Elfin Child," which is available through Amazon, Barnes and Noble and at www.elfinchild.com



THE CITY KNOWS ALL MY HIDEOUTS

The city knows all my hideouts

The smile I wear

The colour of my pupil

The dream I use to see

The girl I love

The city is a summation of cacophony

And I am silence pure

Not adulterated

I am the lonely night's sky

I am the lean voice of a dying sea

I am a deep well sans water

I am a uprooted leaf dancing to the tune of wind

A small patch of sky was mine once

Where I floated like a cute kite

Freedom all that I love in life

I negotiate with the wind

At times I face tornado too

I face the dust

I face the force

Life is a challenge.

A small patch of land

was mine once

where I built a thatched roof

Now there is no roof

Now there is no land

Even there is no iota of wind

What to speak of tornado

Eerie silence prevail in the city!



Prahallad Satpathy: He hails from Balangir district of Odisha (India) is a bilingual poet. He writes both in Odia and English. So far he has published three anthologies of poetry in Odia to his credit. 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. By profession, Dr. Satpathy is a Reader in Economics, at present in Rajendra autonomous college, Balangir (Odisha). He has represented Odisha Sahitya Academy as honorary member for two consecutive terms.



BITS AND PIECES

Awoken, by the smell of the fading lamp,
She adjusts her robe,
Softly chokes, opens the window,
Looking out at the street, enrapt,
Celled into the parapet, she sat.

Whereas days bothered him, The time in the days, The days
in the weeks, The places where he was, The travel and
logistics, The mother, the father and the friends and the
people, The whole world around him and her. He wrote for
her.

She stretched out her arms,
In morning sobriety, she flexed,
She vexed over owning a body.
He turned and tussled,

Fought with his dreams and blankets,

Hustled and wrestled.

They wanted to breach

This.

They wanted to find the other and each.



Prasanna H: I have lived in Villivakkam, Chennai all my life. I live across the street from where I was born. I have had the company of some exceptional people all my life like my grandparents, parents, brother, relatives, school friends, college mates, office mates, home boys and girls and the Glotimers. When I am not hanging out, I read, watch movies, start things I won't complete, listen to music, be angry, frustrated, blissful, hyper and dancing.



IF YOU HAVE TO SIT THERE AND REWRITE AGAIN AND AGAIN..

Gosh! What a bore!

If you have to sit there and rewrite again and again,

The story, the screenplay,

For every episode in a daily soap,

It is no cakewalk!

The director's whims,

The actors' tantrums,

The sets ever changing,

The continuity chap a missing,

Unlimited hassles,

Too many cooks spoil the broth!

Characters dead, resurrected, nobody knows who is coming or going?

Date clashes?!

The main plot sidelined,

The sub plots get anew lease of life,

Back to square one!

Why?

The lead actors dropped?

Or the director replaced?

TRP guys want a new twist every two days?

I have been rewriting and rewriting the story of a boy, his marriage, second marriage, his children, their marriages, their kids..

The never-ending story, is being rewritten again and again ad infinitum..

Today I write, tomorrow someone else will continue..



Pratima Apte: I am an English Hons. Graduate of Delhi University. I am a homemaker, recently turned grandmother!

I used to write sporadically in the Pune edition's Women's page of the Indian Express. I love reading and writing, words are my world. My interests in reading are self-help books, spiritual and cookbooks and fiction. Books by Ayn Rand, Taylor Caldwell, Leon Uris, J Krishnamurthy, Dan Brown have been my favourites, as also layman's homeopathy, astrology and medical books.



I AM IN LOVE

We two

in wild love

Share selfishness

same likes & dislikes

Talk in own language

No one else hears

Possess each other

Body and soul

Make own world

so tight and enclosed

live in madness

in a holy asylum.



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.



I stood inside the tower
and watched you raise
the sea. You built walls
of it around yourself in
your desire to be free.

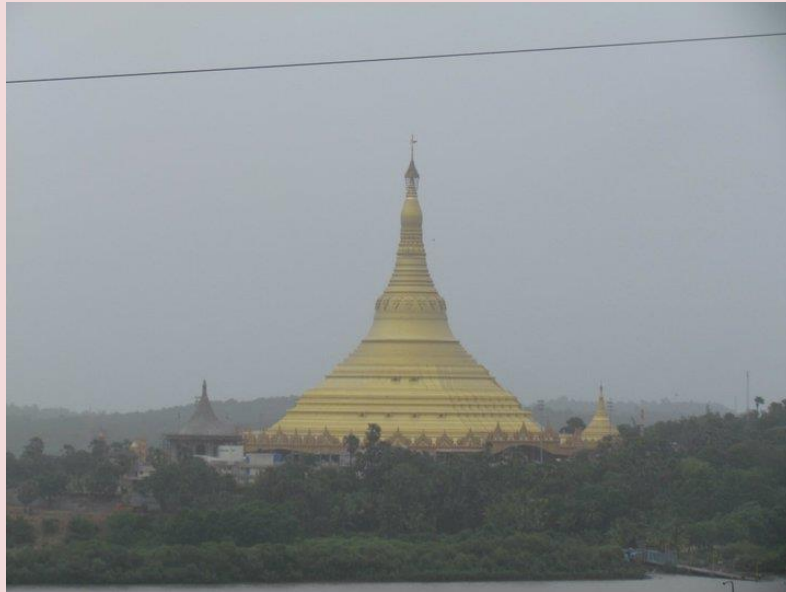
What could you hear then,
the silence or the crowd?
No call could ever reach you
No cry was ever so loud.

I have my own walls too
that no one could ever climb
I live there with the ghosts
lost and found in time.

I am the lonely tower
you are the raging sea
Your walls of fury rise
and fall and crash against me



Priyasha Lobinha Cdo: I am a creature of the dark, like a firefly. People of light, who have never been brave enough to face it don't understand it and hence despise it. Does light not blind you as much as darkness does? The fireflies know better, they owe it to the night, it's what makes them so beautiful.



(Vipassana pagoda in Mumbai)

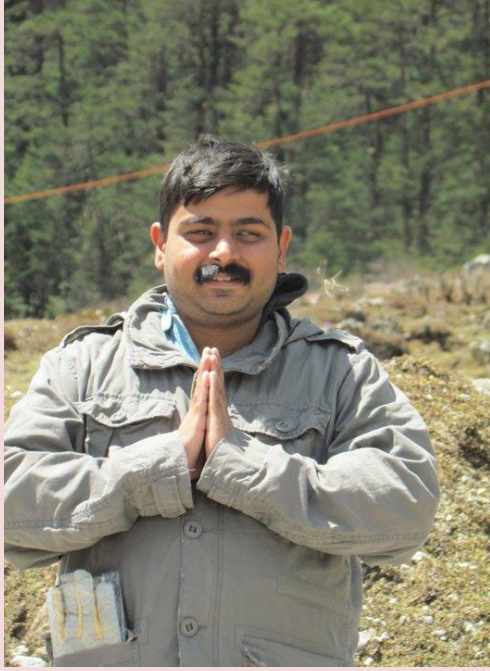
WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU DID SOMETHING FOR THE FIRST TIME?

Breathe in deeply. Get over your fear - you're nose deep in the water anyway. Push your feet against the wall and lunge: that's all there is to it. Paddle, and then the strokes, butterfly, breast, whatever you like. Open your eyes. Breathe out, gulp in air. You float, the perfect thrill of the swim.

the band strikes

gaudeamus igitur --

the last goodbyes



Raamesh Gowri Raghavan: He moonlights as an award-winning copywriter by day and daylights as an award-wanting poet by night, and sandwiches an archaeology course, running two literary clubs, astronomy, the occasional trek, some peer counselling for suicide prevention, and learning languages in between. He thinks he is funny, but his friends vehemently disagree.



ON SNORE AND SNAIL

It is a midway between City and Town
and Hamlet. A peculiar time for celebrations:
Father's Day, Mother's Day, Martyr's Day,
Children's Day, All go well in their
well set cuisine. Hassel free.

Blissful eventide falls,
Poet carefully sits and types
On Karma's plight;
a prolonged snoring
dismantling all our Peace.

This loud, snoring ringing and rhythmic
at breathed intervals, a disturbance
in the room for the inmates.

But, for the person, a blissful
Sleep, poly vocalic language.

A child claps at the sudden,
Clasps at the pillows and
bedspreads and colourful
Sheets strewn, some piled up.
Snoring amidst coir sponge.

Yonder, on the clipped lawn,
Snail, seeks to maintain its (celerity).
A linguist perhaps would clap
to beat in tune with the rhythmic
Syllable count of snore and snail.



S. Radhamani: She was born in Madras, did B.A. English ,obtained M.A. English from Venkateswara University, Tirupati, did her doctoral thesis on W.H.Auden's Plays, subsequently obtained PGDTE from CIEFL (Hyderabad). A Professor of English with 31 years of teaching experience in a post-graduate and research institution, published four books of poems and one book of short story, widely published and anthologized, guided M.phil research scholars and PhD candidates, and a reviewer and critic. Also published poems and short stories in many websites, presented papers in National and International conferences.



DISCOVER ME

~n~

in the dead of this night
as you pulse in my chest
my thoughts unfurl
in your colours

~

i dip in the brown
of your cavernous eyes
and write you this poem
my handwriting
slanting to the right
my thoughts
drifting towards you

~

your eyes so calm

like a monday

midnight drizzle

a smile

somewhere between

rumi's ghazal and

an italian sonnet

~

i'm discovering you

in every layer of me

open your heart

and find me in

every shade of you

~

"we didn't finally meet somewhere. we were in each other all along" (Rumi)

(love • personal)



Rajesh Jethwani: He was born in Madras and has done his BA in economics. He now takes care of his family business and has his own online store. His love for tea resulted in a beautiful tea house he now runs along with his best friends. He loves train journeys, photography, eating out and playing cricket. He loves writing and reading love poems. His poem was first published last year in South Africa.



YOU

Scribbled-

In one corner

Of

A tattered page

I found

Your name,

Sweeping away

The cobwebs of time

I saw

You -

The Nucleus

Of

My existence.

Now,
Your memories.....
Patches of clouds
Flitting across
The blue expanse.

The softness
Of
Your lips-
A gentle caress
Indelibly etched.

Your eyes-
Glowing embers
Lighting up
The inky blackness.

Your smile-
Creating ripples,
Punctuating

My thoughts.

Your memories.....

A bookmark

The only reminder

Of

Yesterday



Ramendra Kumar: What would you call a person who is a writer by passion, a story teller by obsession, a mentor by aspiration and a communicator by profession? You would probably call him insane. Well, we call him Ramen.

www.ramendra.in



PARALYSIS

Told my toes.

Wake up, brothers, wriggle.

Don't you touch the quickness of her waves?

She is riding them, she is coming.

Wake up, my numb brother.

Feel the flame on her tongue

As she engulfs you in her blushing cheeks.

Told my thighs.

Wake up, brothers, quiver.

Don't you feel the tremor in her gait?

She is striding towards you, she is coming.

Wake up, my numb brothers.
Feel the lightness of her wings
As she flutters above your shaking flesh.

Told my lips.

Wake up, brothers, part.
Don't you taste the rush of her honey?
She is flowing to you, she is coming.
Feel the sting of her jasmine teeth
As she pries open the urn of your mouth.

I discern her on the far horizon.

She is near.

She is.

My body groans.

And, splutters to life!



Ravi Shanker (Ra Sh): He translates from Malayalam and Tamil to English and vice versa. Published English translations of stories by Bama (Tamil), Mother Forest (from Malayalam) and Waking is Another Dream (Sri Lankan Tamil Poetry) and for Anthologies of Dalit literature published by OUP and Penguin India. Published poems in magazines, journals and anthologies. He is one of the five contributing poets to the anthology, "A Strange Place Other Than Earlobes" (five voices seventy poems). A collection of his poetry, "Architecture of Flesh" was published by Paperwala in 2015. E-mail: shankeran@gmail.com

Blog: bonoboland.wordpress.com



SOUL THIRST

Knitted word webs

Extensions of your deft fingers

but with roots in base desires

An ancient being sprouts feathers

Familiar shapes within the filigree

A remembered thirst lives

sunk deep into dried up streams

when possession was not a requisite

to love

My leaves droop on their own

It is afternoon

in the land of ardour
Keep stamping out red ants
from under your trees
but apathy of a soul is final

Let those perfect words
fly into space and
find cosmic slashes
deep enough to cement
but assuage my thirst first
Lend me a soul to drink deep from



Reena Prasad: She is a poet/writer from India, currently living in Sharjah (United Arab Emirates). Her poems have been published in several anthologies and journals e.g. The Copperfield Review, First Literary Review-East, Angle Journal, Poetry Quarterly, Lakeview International Journal etc. She is

also the Destiny Poets UK's, Poet of the year for 2014 and one of the editors of The Significant Anthology released in July 2015. More recently, she was adjudged second in the World Union Of Poet's competition, 2016. She writes at Butterflies Of Time.



IN A THOUSAND YEARS

nothing will be left.

the silence
of our poems
will suffocate
and necrose as gangrenes.

the rooms
where we floated
with ecstasies
will turn into
fistful of ashes.

our civilisations

will be decimated
in a stampede
of foetuses.

our discourses
become winds

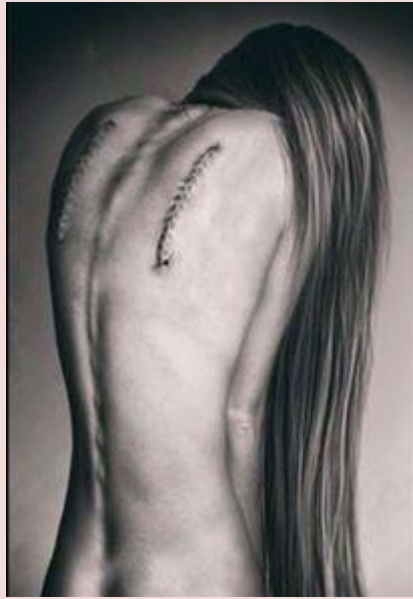
our towns turn into
shadows and whispers

In a thousand years,
nothing will be left.



Ro Hith: He is a poet and a medico from Andhra Pradesh, writing poetry since 7 years. His poetry has been published in various online magazines, including Muse India, The Four

Quarterly, Istanbul Review, Kritya, New Mirage Journal and print magazines like Kavva English, which was applauded and complimented by various senior poets. Currently, he is working on his first book of poems, which will be published shortly and an online magazine that deals with progressive poetry and translations from various Indian languages.



A MISSING ANGEL

An angel from heaven narrowly escaped
And now is peacefully resting in my nest!
She has long and thin streaming hairs
And her passionate love with me, she shares!

Big rounded eyes without any marks,
Beautifully, like diamonds, they spark!
A body as soft as a baby's skin
Which makes me think of a classical violin!

Possessed by a unique scent like a flower,

She stands, elegantly tall, like a tower!
Bewitched by her tender voice caressing my ears,
I feel loved and vanished are all my fears!

Describing my real emotions in simple words,
I suspect that really worried is the Lord,
Since I am with the angel from heaven missing
And definitely, I find her company so pleasing!

Forgive me my dear Lord!
But I don't want to let her go!
Since she is the only inspiration
Behind all my poems!



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. As a citizen of the world, there is not race, color, or religious beliefs that would stop me from searching for happiness...I have become through times passed that 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!

www.romeodellavalle.com



Its time its time,
Hearty welcome
Please join the line,
for objection is seldom

Hearts filled with delight,
as the anniversary has come
Each one got something to write,
to make this month awesome

It's wonderful to be a part,
besides meeting each of you

Though i did just start
and many here i hardly knew

While amazing poetry we cherish,
Each day meet someone new
I wish that this journey flourish
Let the saga continue



Satya Vadlamani: She hails from Hyderabad and works for a construction company. She likes to experiment on various poetry forms with diverse genres and feel that one should be exposed to enjoyable forms of writing. She writes poetry under the pseudonym “uniquusatya” and also blogs at uniquusatya.wordpress.com. Her works are published in anthologies like ‘The Gospel’, ‘Taj Mahal review’ and in various online poetry magazines, viz. ‘Word weavers’ ‘Writing geeks’. She is also a co-founder and organiser at Twin cities poetry club, Hyderabad who recently launched their first anthology, ‘Lakadikapool-The poetry bridge’, written by the members of the club.



HIGH TIDE HALLELUJAH

Crystalline shards/shattered
across the spine
of a skeletal system/infused
with hues
of explosive blue/adrenaline
pumping
in waves of paint/pouring
forth from ecstatic neurons
to cover the canvass
in electric yellow/yelling
Holy Hallelujah at the crescendo
where glass meets God meets window/

stained with higher visions
of primal focus
manifesting into form/fallout frenzy/
flapping wings
of butterfly dreams
float through wild winds/abstracted
chaos melts/merges/coalescing
into strains of structured order/
amalgamated/nesting at the zero-point/
the perfect pitch
of color/of sound/of fury/
where truth meets taste meets tangible
realizations of randomness/righteous rumblings
reacting at the center/the core/
the truth/the tidal surge
of waters that wish only to dance



Scott Thomas Outlar: He hosts the site 17Numa.wordpress.com where links to his published poetry, fiction, essays, and interviews can be found. His chapbook "Songs of a Dissident" was released in 2015 through Transcendent Zero Press and is available on Amazon. His poetry collections "Happy Hour Hallelujah" (CTU Publishing) and "Chaos Songs" (Weasel Press) are both forthcoming in 2016.



Charity Janisse: Artist, Author, Poet, Mystic, Explorer. Art is knowing, appreciating and expressing what moves you. Find out more at charityjanisse.com



LANDSCAPE OF LIFE

We often draw
landscape of life
filling it with colors
of our choice
and outlining it
according to our wishes
Making it very beautiful
as per our desire.

But these are mere imagination,
far away from reality
and never to be fulfilled.



Shamenaz: Doctorate with specialization on Sub-continent Women Writers and a teacher residing in Allahabad, which is my birthplace and a city very close to my heart. I have a passion for reading and writing which is above all anything for me, and recently, for poetry, and have published many poems in E-journals & magazines in India. I am a great nature lover and love to write poetry based on it but I also like to write on various issue relating our everyday lives. I have presented papers in Seminars/Conferences all over India and have published papers in many refereed journals in India and abroad. I am in the Editorial board of journals: Literary Miscellany, CLOJ (Cyber Literature, Research Access, Expression, The Context & IJRHS (Jordan). I am the Guest Editor of 'The Context' Volume 2, issue 3. I have served as a Chairperson of Women Cell of my College, AIET & Cultural Incharge, AIET since 5 years. I am a freelancer, who writes reviews, articles & blogs.



BUTTERFLY

A brush of springtime taps my shoulder,
Painting velvet shades of green
With shooting stars of falling petals
Dancing, to their colourful dreams.

And in my presence lay observing,
With quick rhythmic blinking eyes
Blind, yet so full of colour-
The gentle wings of a butterfly.

She dilly-dallied amongst the daises
The wind and pollen joined her dance,

And in her cocoon of self-improvement-
Defied the role of fate and chance.

Her timeless striving for perfection
Gave her colourful wings to fly,
And like her, I hope us crawling caterpillars
Take the world by surprise!



Shivank Sarin: Like chocolate sprinkles on dessert, poetry and music have added excitement and sweetness to my life. I'm technically 18, but to me, age acts as no barrier towards being cynical or insightful. I'm notorious for my gluttonous appetite and even skipping social gatherings just to attend music lessons. I'm soon to be a first year student studying

Economics at Ashoka University, where I hope to further develop my musical, literary as well as professional abilities.

Would love to hear from you at-

shivanksarin98@gmail.com



LOST LOVE

Hands holding

The pair walked by,

Best of friends, remembering,

Recollecting thousands of memories gone by

On the gravelly path called life.

Reminiscences, swinging away

From the wheel of fortune

Pathway broken

Giving tokens of love and sweet memories

Hours ticking by,

A flower here and a flower there

A lovely sight to behold
Slipping through galoshes
Oh! what fun there was when we a threesome

Rainy days, sunny days close by,
Days of foregone conclusions
Is it the face I love
Memories I strove
To put behind
She, wearing clothes of multicoloured hue
And me, standing by the mistful dew
Was it a shade of grey
Like curds separated from whey.

Smiling face pressed into mine
Crystal clear like wine
Lips that locked were not mine.
Forgetfulness-a sign of remorsefulness
No, no, I cried
Misery and wantonness

Fired in a clash between
Fear and helplessness.

Memories, like fragrant red roses

Withered but not dried

Happiness-a state of mind

I stand here, by the gurgling brook

Listening to the whispering of leaves.

A silent, soft sound

Carved in the nook of mind and sound.



Shobha Warriar: Born near Trichur in Kerala, she did her schooling in Mumbai and Chennai. Shobha was highly influenced by her maternal grandfather who was a distinguished Sanskrit scholar. Shobha had a keen interest in

languages, be it prose or poetry, from her school days. She completed B.A. and M.A. in English Literature as also B.Ed. She has also worked as a teacher in schools for some time. Shobha's father, K. Ramakrishna Warriar, is a distinguished writer in Malayalam, and recipient of the Sahitya Akademi award for his contribution in Sanskrit. Shobha is married to an engineer and has one daughter.



yesterday on the terrace as night fed small but sparkling stars,

a mighty cloud formation of lush lips parted in a sigh;

but even as i looked they transformed, mutated,

the upper lip became an eagle with spreading wings,

the lower, a struggling tiger clutched in its talons.

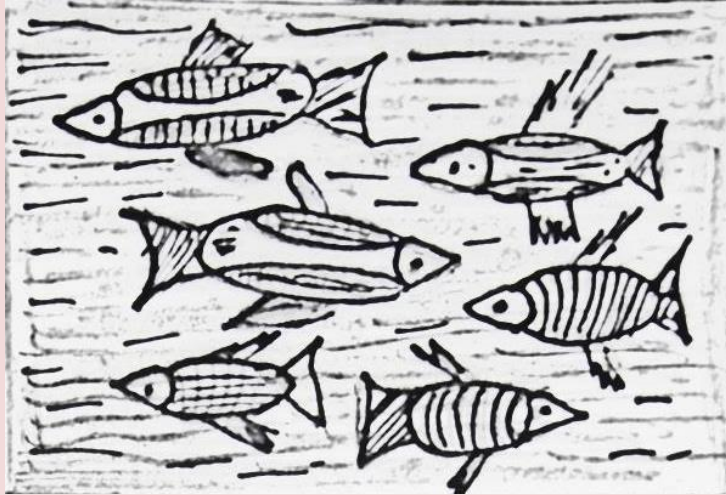
i watched in wonder, believing my eyes this time

only because, after the floods last week, i know

these clouds are capable of anything.



Shreekumar Varma: He is an Indian author, playwright, newspaper columnist and poet. He received the R. K. Narayan Award for Excellence in Writing in English in 2015. He is known for the novels Lament of Mohini, Maria's Room, Devil's Garden: Tales Of Pappudom, The Magic Store of Nu-Cham-Vu and the historical book for children, Pazhassi Raja: The Royal Rebel Born as HH Prince Punartham Thirunal of the Travancore Royal Family, he is the great great grandson of the artist Raja Ravi Varma and grandson of Regent Maharani Sethu Lakshmi Bayi, the last ruling Maharani of Travancore. He is married to Geeta Varma (poet, teacher and columnist) and has two children, Vinayak and Karthik.



LIVE LIKE THESE FISHES

Beautiful creation of that Almighty
Even seek the life in deep waves and tides!

Always buzzing in own tune
and never ever lose a hope to live!

Then why we human beings always
remain afraid of losing a dream!

Why do not we live like fish?
Why do not we glow even in gloom?

Behind every creation of that Lord

There is some meaningful theme!

Only thing is that one should learn
Everything is beautiful created by him!

Live life with a zeal blessed by him
Live life with courage blessed by him

Learn to live like fish O man!
That always lives with a hope O man!!!



Sonia Gupta: She hails from Dera Bassi, near Chandigarh, India. Though, a doctor by profession, yet poetry is her passion. She started writing in 2006 and her journey of poetry continued afterwards. Her many poems got a place in various Hindi magazines and English anthology books. Recently she became an established poetess after getting her

two Hindi poetry books published. Her three English poetry books are releasing soon. Besides poetry, she is fond of paintings, singing, cooking, knitting, designing, stitching and embroidery too!!!

E-mail: Sonia.4840@gmail.com



SURRENDER

Yes totally

No don't, don't resist

It will give you pain

This place demands and commands full devotion

Its lifeline molds your personality

Teach to be tolerant, competitive and equal

The ease of unease is the way to be

The pushing, kicking and shoving

Equates to greeting to join league of dreamer

Million people billion dreams

Echo in form of prayer, story and mid-night tales

Denizens of this city enjoy the extreme

The skyscraper and Jhugi co-exist in peace

The intoxication for material supremacy is being balanced with open heartedness

The is Mumbai



PAIN OF LOVE

Tried wiping memory with you

Becoming oblivious of time together

Burying the passion, emotion & love

Failed terribly

Heart is withering and Soul is suffering

Being in state of bewilderment

It seems

Will die with curse of love

Sin imprinted on departed spirit

Pain of love not allowing to RIP!!!



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



MAN

Living in his skin

The whole maketh by clothes

Working in little concrete boxes

In tunnel like narrow rooms

Windows and doors—

Light at the end of the tunnel.

Unaware

Of the living sights and sounds around

Of the moon riding high

Of clouds glowing diffused moonlight

Of the beauty of silhouetted moon bathed trees

Of a moonlit road snaking into shadows

Of taking a walk with a half moon.

Unaware
Of the sounds of cricket
so loud once you tune in
Of the croaking frogs
serenading mates
Of the wind rustling sleepy leaves
The beat of rapid shoe fall on tarmac
Rhythmic like heartbeat
Life is to live the moment.



Sumita Dutta: She is a photographer and the proprietor of Adlsh Photo Art. She has a degree in Fine Arts (Painting) from Chitrakala Parishad, Bangalore. She loves writing both poetry and prose. She resides in the southern end of Chennai with her two sons, her father, a cat and a dog. Find her blog at: <https://zippythoughts.wordpress.com/>



ABSENCES

Miss you a lot

dear.

Inside like an empty room

Feel the absence

in a battered heart

the way you hear

a tabloid left casually

its pages fluttering

in an empty hall

stacked with live memories.

The shrill noise

waking up a grieving man

on a summer afternoon

in a yawning house in a

town deserted by its young.

Remembering a face fading

the way a retreating ship does

from the yearning view

and a gnarled figure frozen

on an empty beach hit by the

relentless rains of a ferocious July

the bloated sea

lashing the ship

with watery fists

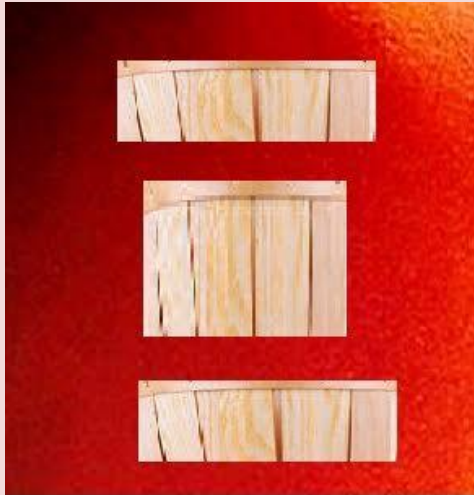
the distant ship
appears tiny and fragile

yet etched forever
in the dim drinking eyes.



Sunil Sharma: He is a writer based in Mumbai, India. A college principal, he has published four books of poems, two books of shorts and a novel in English, apart from co-editing six literary anthologies. He edits Episteme:

<http://www.episteme.net.in/>



POOF

Madame Lugo appears like a bad sack of cents. She puts a shawl (actually a strip of dried bloody gauze) around my Lisa's head. They must attend a funeral.

A balding man steps from behind the cactus. He is dressed in a white flannel suit and carries a basket of giant peaches provided by an anti-Semite from Missouri. The Madame sneaks up on him with a black butterfly net in hand. She drops him into a bucket awaiting some chic Inquisition.

"Lisa, let's go." I try to grab her to stuff into my pocket!

"You're embarrassing," she says.

I try to touch her minuscule hand.

"I think it's time to start counseling again."

"I believe you are right." Her voice is tiny as a moth's.

“There’s a place in the guidebook that sounds good: The Café Temporal. It’s in the Latin Quarter. I’ll order our chamomile correctly.”

“Good idea.”

When I hear a plane overhead, I lock my eyes and I’m in Paris during WW II. The bombs will be falling soon. Poof! Lisa is back to size as if an inflatable doll just patched. We are in the artist alley when I hear a sound like a balloon leaking.



Thomas M. McDade: He is a former plumbing industry computer programmer / analyst residing in Fredericksburg, VA, previously CT & RI. He is married, no kids, no pets.

He is a graduate of Fairfield University, Fairfield, CT.

McDade served two tours of duty in the U. S. Navy, serving ashore at the Fleet Anti-Air Warfare Training Center and at sea on the USS Mullinnix DD-944 and USS Miller DE/FF 1091.



THE APPARITION

It was that kind of an evening, I will have you know.

An expectation in the air that just refused to go.

I was seeking the address of an age old friend,

Not knowing truly what my quest would portend.

We knocked on a lot of doors, my driver and I;

Climbed a few stairs and looked him in the eye,

A craggy watchman who would not let me read

The names on the nameplates. Even so I plead.

Sorry and tired and itching from the sweat,

I told myself one last knock and then I would rest.

A skipping angel stood, looking askance at me;

Ran into the house, calling her mother to "see"

The light was behind her as she came to the door,

She asked me my mission and then some more.

My tongue was tied I could not speak,

Her voice was soft and musical; I could only squeak.

Never have I seen a face so full of joy,

A divine light seemed to come from each eye.

She took in my plight in an understanding smile.

My driver swore he could see a halo a while.

She was swathed in nine yards of her traditional ilk,

A deftly worn adornment of yellow and green silk.

The strong scent of jasmine in her long plaited hair

Melding with sandalwood incense in the cooling air.

A lovely ghostly wraith; a beautiful end to a tiring day.

It did not matter that she could not show the way.

My impression of a deity, a divine presence stayed.

A feeling of well-being filled me as that night I prayed.



Usha Chandrasekharan: She is a believer in the power of the universe, in the power of positive energy, in the power of words, in the power of good intentions. She has two children both of good literary prowess, both creative in their own way.



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Quo Vadis my lone voyager?

What takes you on this sojourn?

Your shadow once chased the Manhattan skyline

Giddily rubbing shoulders in corridors of power

The seasoned traveler

What restlessness does your solitude seek?

Your residence was once a million ports

And three loves you inflamed en route

Friends lost count of your shifting zip codes

As your rucksack emptied of each travel souvenir

Wither goest thou today passenger?

As you stand on platform number 7

The station of the now, not so sleepy town

An infinite wait

And yet no sweeter sight
Than of the slow train that takes you home.



Vandana Kumar: She is a bon vivant who loves travelling, working with young minds and exploring creative possibilities beyond the ordinary. She has done her masters in History from Lady Shri Ram College and her Diplôme from the Alliance Française de Delhi. She is a French teacher in a couple of schools and private institutes and also translates for various publishing houses and corporates. An active member of various quiz clubs across Delhi-she has a soft corner for Kolkata where she spent her childhood. Her various passions include singing, playing the piano, composing music and participating in local antakshari competitions. She describes herself as a dreamer...a wanderer and a certified incurable romantic...the romantic moorings worsened with all her fancy French studies. Poetry for her is her stress buster -her flight of fancy-and strangely – what keeps her rooted too.



HIDE AND SEEK

We draw curtains, wrap blankets,
fix masks, shut windows,
and breathe inside known spaces
securing all the deep scars,
locking up the unmoulded self
that doesn't fit into society's caves,
the blemished self
hides behind neatly
ironed thoughts,
and one day
curtains withdraw,
blankets fall, masks melt
windows crack,

and you'll drown in
waves of embarrassments
and inhibitions,
but dear, believe me
it's your flaws that
make you complete,
and that's where
beauty resides.



Vasanthi Swetha: She is an Economics student who 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.



THEY HAD SAID

*This, God Himself has willed,
The infidels have to be killed,
They had said;*

*Today, I am down with guilt,
A wasted life, doomed to wilt;
My soul is dead.*



Vinay Virwani: A marketing guy by profession, I can't help but try and convince you that a particular brand of detergent powder can really change your life!

And while you may choose not to believe me, at least I ended up telling you a story!

Alas, while the breed of storytelling marketers is fast getting replaced by number-chasing, profit-making, excel sheet enthusiasts, I write....to continue telling stories....

A misfit perhaps, in a rapidly format-driven, number crunching world.....but a misfit who has successfully blended in....:)



SPICE OF LIFE

sans desires?
Wandering little soul;
eager and enquires!

What if life
no aim?
What if never an erroneous blame?
What if no challenges
deter the path?
What if no day with another fresh start?

Every desire,
a fresh fervor
Every new dream
a road to destiny
Every stumble
making life humble
Every achievement
testimony to life's sanity.

Life's endurance
peppered with sweet and bitter experiences
pinch of salty criticism
and sweetness of success

Spice of life!



Vishal Ajmera: He is a Business Strategy consultant by profession working with a reputed MNC in Mumbai. Over the years, Vishal has developed a penchant for poetry and has established himself as a successful poet cum lyrics writer; composing poetry across several genres and encapsulating various aspects of life from psychology, nature to imagery. With contributions in several international anthologies and magazine publications, his journey in the 'poetic world' continues unabated. Apart from poems, Vishal is an ardent music lover and plays guitar.



RIGHT ON TIME

While waiting
at the bus stop,
he approached,
asked for the time.

Once told, he recited
the bus schedule
within that time frame
for both lines
that run
past here,

plus

where they meet the outgoing driver.

“But I never really depend
on either one,” he said,

forgetting, I suppose,

that it was he
who asked me
for the time.



William P. Cushing: Bill has had a very productive year with his writing, including multiple appearances in the pages of

GloMag. He has recently teamed up with a childhood friend, and the two have formed a musical-poetic act named "Notes and Letters." This picture comes from a recent reading they gave in East Los Angeles, one of the locations where he teaches college English classes. Bill invites everyone who reads this to "like" our Facebook page under the same name to keep up with our activities as well as watching videos of our work. In the meantime, he hopes you enjoy this "slice of life" poem from his own past.



ciao! 😊