

GloMag

GLOMAG

Monthly Online Poetry and Prose

Magazine

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Edited and Published by Glory Sasikala

ANA ELIZABETH CINTRON DIAZ



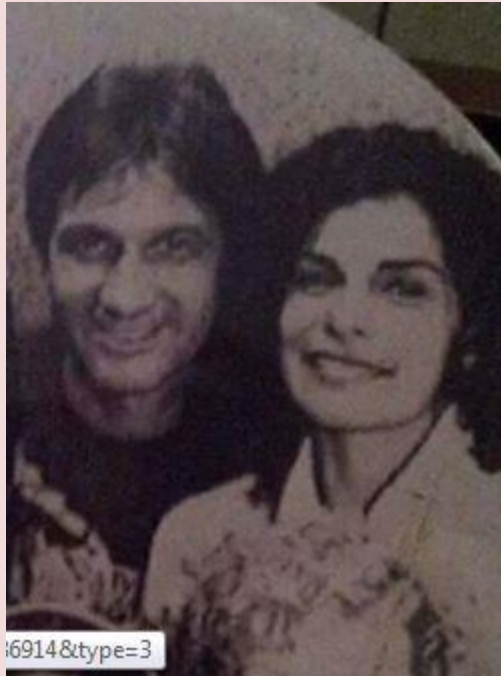
Title of the Cover Pic: Boqueron

About The Artist

Ana Elizabeth Cintron Diaz was born November 9, 1950 in Caguas, Puerto Rico. She earned a BFA in ceramics from the University of Puerto Rico and both taught elementary and middle school art classes as well as participating in art fairs across the island. She relocated to Orlando, Florida in 1987, but after being diagnosed with breast cancer in 1992, she returned to Puerto Rico the next year following a mastectomy and chemotherapy.

She died of stomach cancer on July 27, 1994.

Her work here, an acrylic on canvas, was from her ventures into two-dimensional artwork toward the end of her life. It was conceived and inspired by a visit to Balneario de Boqueron (Boqueron Bay) in the municipality of Rojo Cabo (Red Cape), which is located on the southwestern part of Puerto Rico near Mayaquez. It is known among the islanders as the place to go to avoid the more popular tourist areas.



COUNTING DOWN THE BREATHS

(A Tribute by William P. Cushing)

The end began Saturday.

Days before, Ana appeared to respond to the chemotherapy although a permanent frown revealed her constant pain. I applied steady coats of Blistex to one corner of her lip sprouting an open sore. She tried eating between bouts of vomiting.

I cleaned whatever came up all over the bed, her clothes, the floor, and mostly me while trying to direct it

into a container. The liquid gushing from her mouth was unlike anything I'd seen or felt before. It was greenish and inconsistent—more like gelatin with small dark squares suspended inside. This was a product of the disease, a form of gangrene resulting from the cancer's silent, insatiable appetite.

It was her life being eaten, chewed, spit out.

Cleaning her that Saturday, I noticed her eyes glazing. She'd slipped into a coma. We got her to the hospital.

Most gut-wrenching were the occasional sounds Ana made during the night: more than the periodic hand movements; more than the sudden opening of her eyes, pupils moving from side to side as if focusing on something in the room or seeming to establish contact before the lids rolled back down halfway, the eyeballs fluttering into

vacuous whites. In actuality, she never looked at anything, the sounds were no more speech than wind moaning.

Julita, her mother, avoided the hospital, but one evening, the family came to visit. Ana lay, unresponsive, an occasional involuntary action causing both her mom and daughter Tania to decipher awareness.

I left the room. Occasionally, Tania would call me into the room insisting Ana was trying to say something. One can handle only so much false hope. I continued pacing the hallway when Tania came to me.

“It’s mommy,” she said, pulling me toward the door.
“She said she’s hungry.”

I gave her a look but returned to see Julita holding Ana’s hand. She looked my way, forming a weak smile.

“*Mami,*” Tania asked, “You want something?”

Ana responded weakly.

“*Que?*” Tania replied.

“He-low,” she whispered. *Hielo*. Ice. Tania placed a few flakes of crushed ice on Ana's tongue. She leaned back on the pillow, enjoying the sensation. Ana pulled my hand, beckoning me closer. She wrapped her arms around my neck, squeezing me with what little strength she had. Then we kissed.

I don't know if I had ever felt more loved.

Optimism infected even me as I nodded off to sleep.

Just before 5:30 that morning, I heard the IV's alarm. Our fingers were intertwined, hers loosely. Seeing the bag drained, I got out of the chair, laid her hand across her chest, shut off the alarm, and summoned a nurse. I retook my seat, moving it perpendicular to Ana's shoulders. She

seemed asleep, but her breathing was short, shallow, labored. The nurse checked her blood pressure but read nothing. He switched bags for another containing sodium-chloride and added vitamins, turning the machine up to pump the fluids faster.

After he left, I watched her chest rise and fall, too slowly it seemed. Her hands had no grip. When I opened her eyelids, the pupils pointed in different directions. The nurse returned and rechecked her blood pressure.

“Stay with me,” I whispered, leaning over the side of the bed, pleading, “Stay with me.”

As I repeated the words, I thought back to what Dr. Rizek said earlier: her thirst was probably from the high salinity in the mixture they’d been giving her since Sunday. I prefer believing she somehow knew her life was coming to

an end, that her reawakening was a final farewell. Regaining consciousness for that small, relatively joyous slice of our lives, Ana's timing had been, above all, perfect. The majority of her immediate family had been present. She talked with her brother over the phone, and her awakening gave the two of us another chance to kiss and hold one another.

Did she somehow know it was all coming to a close? Was this a final farewell or a medically explained physiological reaction to treatment? Even if that revival was that, it could not have been better orchestrated.

"Well, tomorrow's another day," Dr. Rizek had said. And here it was. Another day—just another day.

Before seven, Ana was on another liter of fluids. I looked again, trying to detect the rise of her chest. No movement.

I flagged two nurses to the room. Flanking the bed, they checked every pulse point imaginable: wrist, neck, temple, even her ankles. Exhausting those possibilities, they shook their heads in resigned weariness that was more melancholy than sadness.

They left me at the foot of the bed looking at the corpse that, moments before, had been my wife. I stayed there. It was done, done for Ana—done for us.

“Til death do you part” we’d vowed at the wedding. In less than three months—81 days to be exact, we were “parted.”

It had taken death.



ABOUT GLOMAG

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

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

~ ***Glory Sasikala***

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THESE ARE A FEW OF MY FAVORITE THINGS

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



Occupation - Financial Services

Fav book - Jonathan Livingstone Seagull - Richard Bach

Fav movie - Star Wars Episode IV A New Hope

Fav song - In these arms - Bon Jovi

Fav hobby - Writing

Fav color - Blue

Fav sport - Cricket

Fav food - Chocolate Ice cream

Fav pet - Golden Labrador

Fav actor - Harrison Ford

Fav actress - Meryl Streep

Life philosophy - Do good and Be Good

One-liner describing you - Dreamer, Wanna be poet,
Wanna be drummer, Wanna be famous :-)

Favorite holiday destination - Prague

Favorite quote - " The more thngs change, the more they
remain the same"

Birthday (optional) - International Women's Day

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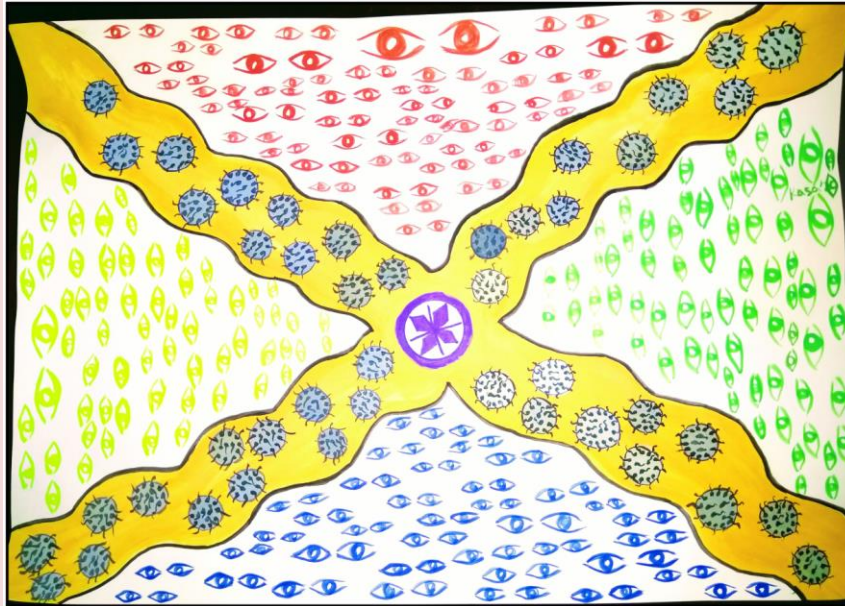
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POST-MORTEM OF HANDS-SHAKE

Microscopic illustration of porcupine spikes,
Alien viruses from trillion light years away unfolds;
Toddles from the womb of black holes;
Hires our 24 senses as infected tenancy soaks to coax,
A pandemic threat finds our planet as an ageless host.

Nostrils of oesophagus are pass-ages on lease,
Post-mortems of “hands-shake” are stored in mortuary to freeze;
Comatose static distances are antidotes of fecund breeze,
It uses hour’s eyes to encircle designated victims;

Atoms in atmosphere under macroscopic stethoscope just can't see.

Now doors and windows are sectioned to be latched shut,
Containers of infected solar rays may n'er enter inverted huts;

Prescribe all Doctors not to cough even though eat puff of dust,

Neo carnival of masked eyes let not have arid tears to outburst;

Alas a strange colour-play of robes in black backbites black outta' thirst,

Dialysis of dual dialects diagnose Deuteronomy of Darwinian duet to contaminate first.



Aakash Sagar Chouhan: Being a poet, he has been a part of few anthologies and Poetry Festivals, namely, Efflorescence by Chennai Poetry Circle, Glomag by Glory Sasikala, The Virtual Reality (Sparrow Publishers), Guntur Int Poetry Fest and many more. He is also a proud member of Soul Scriber's Society, Salem that curates Yercaud Poetry Festival every year.



A MASK SELLER

On a plastic stool

Before a locked fancy shop

In a sunless corner of

A cheerless city street

A boy with eyes bright

Sits alone and sells masks,

Printed, plain, designed.

People, small and big,

Fat and thin,

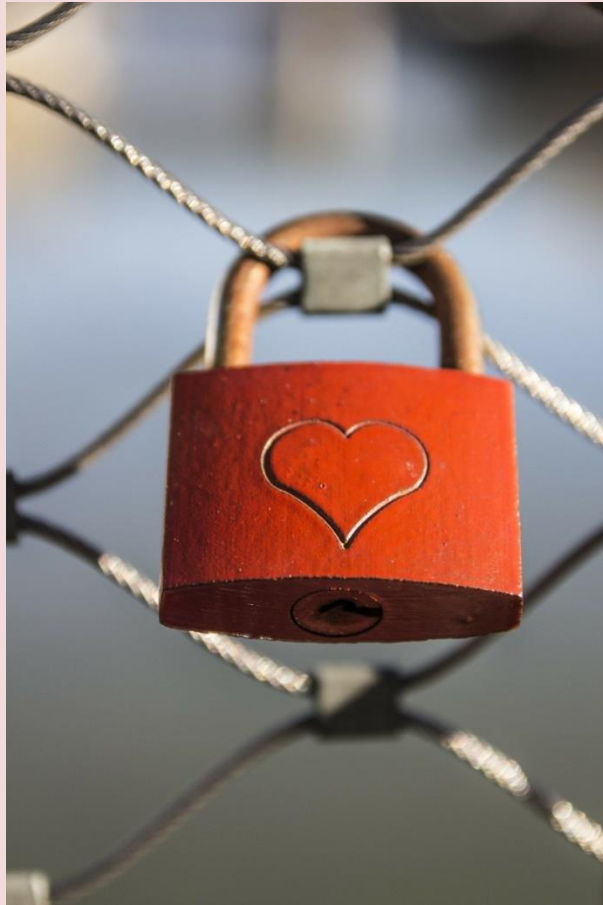
Halt, haggle and snatch,

Some a pair, many a dozen.

Coins they fling
And smiles they splash
And they thank gods.
The boy beams
And counts the coins, and
He dreams of a balloon
And a toy for his sweet sister
Lying ill at home.



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



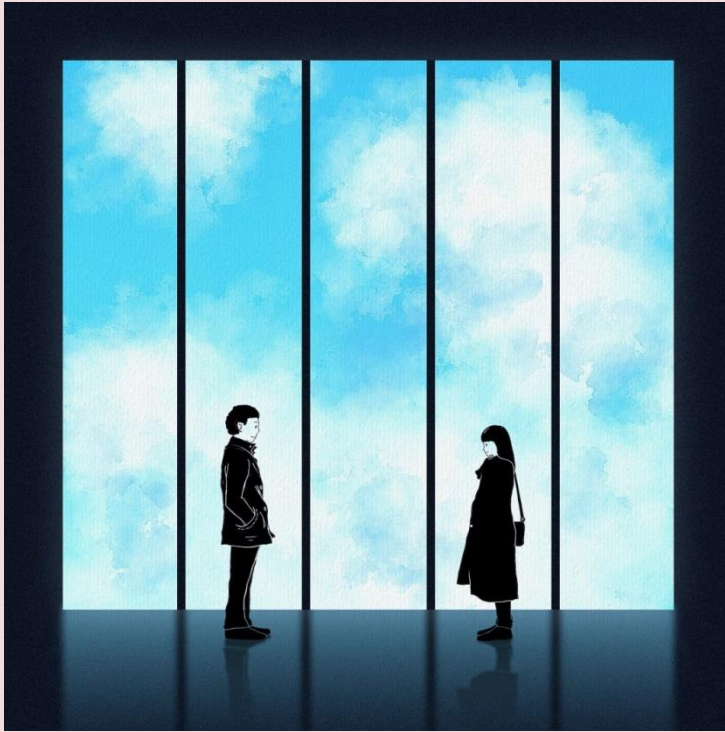
LOVE

Love, recondite and ravishing,
Enters the marred ambiguity of a great life,
close-mouthed and patient,
The two waiting, are still alive, dreaming,
and favorable, far-flung and still stretched out,
in this dream, mayhaps, how real their watch is,
In the long run of doubt the others had!

How sure their love is, compared to their
aggravated dream;
The dream which in breaking them up at,
Will speak profoundly.



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



LOVE IN THE ERA OF QUARANTINE

After distancing ourselves to
-support our loved ones, I begin
to kiss your kind expressions that
come from your voice to my phone

When I see you through FaceTime
I hold my breath to hear your laughter
When I miss your beauty in the dark
I draw your lips in the eyes of thirst

Before, the time flies by too quickly
Now, the seconds are slower than
my hands, when they wipe my tears
from all the memories we have done

The moon is feeling my silent nostalgia
The stars are emotional to hear from you
As the sun shines on with a hope to meet you
Before death will isolate our lofty love

Love in the era of quarantine exists from
-the pages of lovers in the battle frontline
Perhaps, we either survive and get back
-together, or we might have to sacrifice
to end this timeless obligation of self-isolation...



Ahmad Al-Khatat: I am a poet residing in Montreal, Quebec. I work as student. I have contributed to various anthologies. I have also published 10 poetry anthologies. I have recently graduated from Dawson College as a Social Science student.



BREATH AWAY

(Redux)

After albino streetlamps patrolling my narrow alley collapse one mango eyelid leaving one raven eyelid compromised, always one eyelid drooping indecisively.

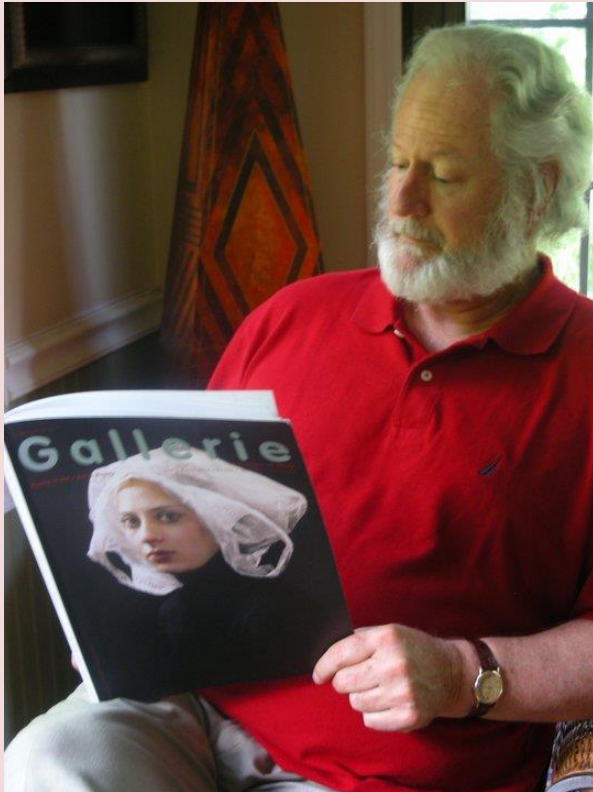
Okay, then I wasn't prepared, but now I am.

I'm prepared, I think.

I'm prepared now.

If you're prepared,
then I am too.

I'm prepared for the both of us
in case one of us
calls in sick.



Alan Britt: In August 2015, Alan Britt was invited by the Ecuadorian House of Culture Benjamín Carrión in Quito, Ecuador as part of the first cultural exchange of poets between Ecuador and the United States. In 2013, he served as judge for the The Bitter Oleander Press Library of Poetry Book Award. His interview at The Library of Congress for The Poet and the Poem aired on Pacifica Radio, January

2013. He has published 15 books of poetry, his latest being *Violin Smoke* (Translated into Hungarian by Paul Sohar and published in Romania: 2015). He teaches English/Creative Writing at Towson University.



2020

The sky cracked.

The rider of Apocalypse

set out to the Earth.

Horse hooves crumbled

human pride and insolence.

Terrified people

locked themselves in their homes.

There are no fingerprints

on shopping carts

Smiles on their faces
are hidden under the masks.

Old values are gone.
For power, beauty and money
one can't get oxygen.
The idea of humanitarianism
broke down,
when lacked the respirators.

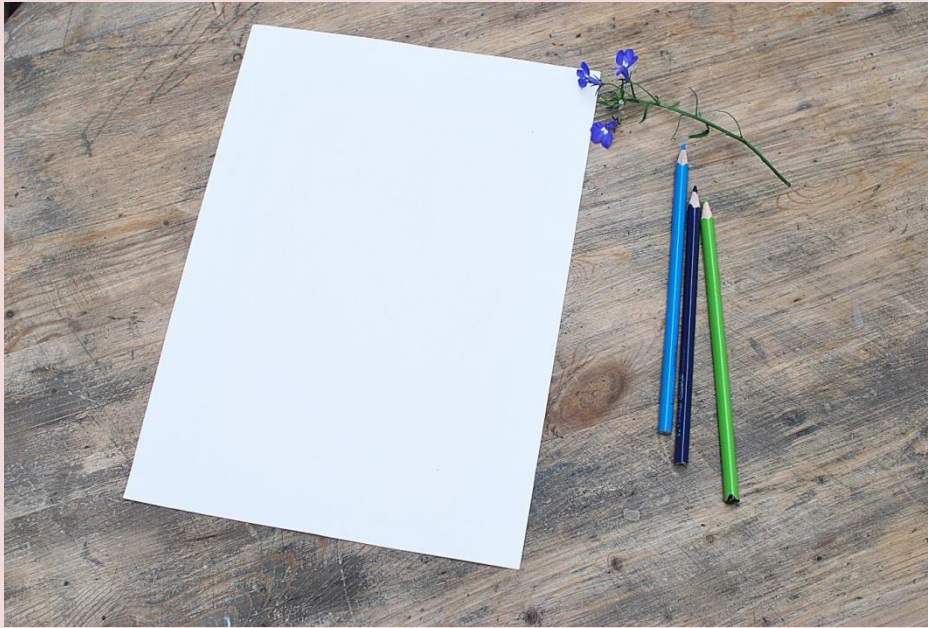
Invisible enemy
is lurking in the breath,
in the touch of hand.

It hides in tears.
Kisses and touches
are deadly weapons.
During the epidemic
act of supreme love

is not visiting
old parents.



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



POETIC PANGS

As usual we are engaged in family chores
Wave of our poetic mind hardly finds shores
But within us the seed of poetry is stored
It tries to germinate from where it's being hoard

Bards are haunted by poetic pangs always
Their creativity dazzles like morning sun rays
They suffer but not surrender to other's whims
In their world they enjoy life with sweet rhythms

Birth of a poem initially brings severe strains
But when emotions flow like water in drains
Words become ornaments that we all adore
Poem takes birth that ordains mirth galore

The birth of a baby follows pump and ceremony
When a poem is born it brings melodious symphony
But like the mother, only the poet knows the genesis
So strenuous, so painful, when he conceives poem's basis



Alok Kumar Ray: I am a bi-lingual poet residing in Kendrapara district headquarters of Odisha province in India. I work as a Senior Lecturer in Political Science. I have contributed to various anthologies. I contribute regularly to various online poetry groups also.



THE SERPENTINE TIME

Other than the serpentine
movement of time, taking
you through mild curvatures
and deadly hair-pin bends,

there is no truth to reckon with
and you are riding it transfixed,
sometimes mindful of the greens
falling easy on your senses and

and in other times being threatened
by the redness of some danger
lurking around and you meet in
your way fellow-travellers who

you label into zones gauging their
potential to thwart your own safety,
all the while looking for yourself in
the masked crowd, a perfect isolation.



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



WILL YOU NOT, NIRUPAMA?

Will you not

Marry me, Nirupama

If I leave this city,

Build a humble abode

On the bank of Nagor river

Or upon entering our village

In a corner of this little plot

Make a small hut?

If I burn all my certificates,

Become a full-fledged peasant
Or if I become a bangle seller
Sell them through the villages
Will you marry me, Nirupama?
If I can offer you
A frugal meal twice a day
But immeasurable love for the whole day—
In a thrifty family
Thriftless love?



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



THE HEARTH

Days are harsh
there is a hushed up whisper
the green pebbles in her eyes
washed in the billowing waves of emotion.
People say she deserves it
her hearth kept burning
fed by the cleavage of chastity
her soul consumed
negotiating ends of fire
nights knotted in sighs strangled
as each stranger knocked at her door

Now she is dumped
in no man's land
unimpassioned flame in her cells once
lit up a thousand chandelier's gratification
falls prey to sin transmitted.
She wades in the curse of others
creeping into her cells morbid
famished, prone, she now waits
to be swallowed by fire
the hearth,
now cold.



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



SEEING YOU

i had gone to see you again
a desolate road had once tied the heart
the wind and dust hid the palace
a lone watchman told me you have left
doors and window panes shrunk back
as trees forced its way
there would be an invasion
as you had always told me

where have you gone
where have I gone
only a breath stood
waiting
the clouds tomorrow will accompany
and summers of endearing
loving
would finally rest
nights and strangertimes
would take us back
lonesome
forever.



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



LACE AND MANGO PICKLE

I walk about

With my vulnerability

Barely covered in tentative dresses

The tremble of thick and soft but firm pink lips

Inviting remark upon its contrast

With the somewhat exaggerated horn rims
Of my all but cosmetic glasses

Perhaps you would hand me a glass of still water
At room temperature, and a cherry or a plum

I have reluctantly said no to lavender

But a pale, very pale, saffron may just about disturb the
universe

To the very tiny extent that I want it to shift

To make room for my voice of sweet reasonableness

And endearing whimsy

Before it gets comfortable again

Pleased with me for making it ever so comfortably
uncomfortable

That it will invite me again and again

To beautiful silky places

With delicately delicious food

And scented listeners

I must to Bruges next

For the lace

Where I shall ever so outrageously

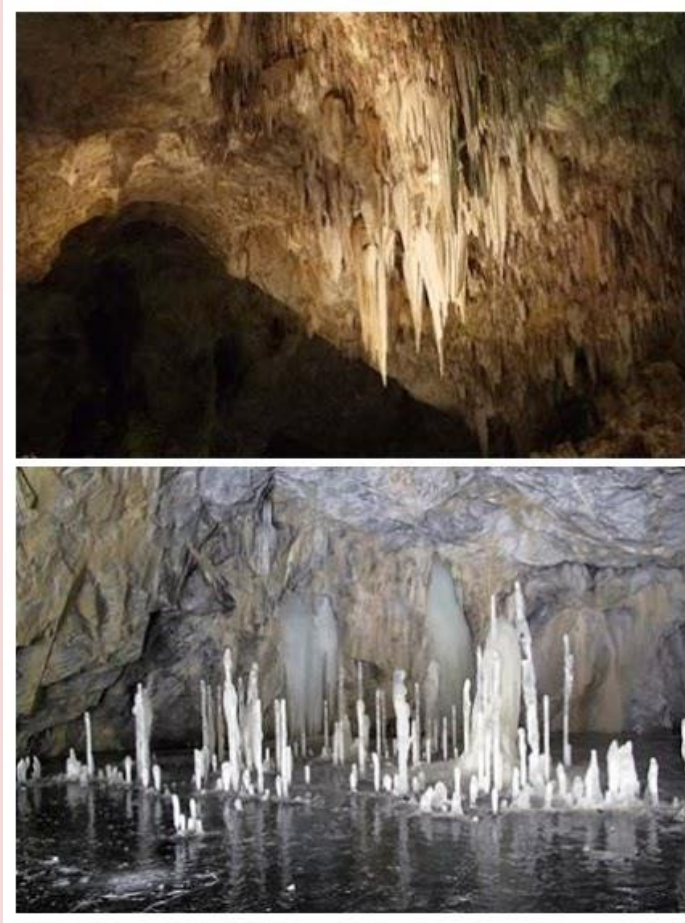
Mention Mango pickle

In turmeric and mustard oil

Redolent of asofeotida



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



FRIENDSHIP

I wandered through the desert, the hot sand burning my feet, in search of a friend.

I wandered through a garden full of the fragrance of roses and jasmine in search of a friend.

I wandered through a world of hail, snow and blinding winds in search of a friend.

The dust cut into my brown skin and red blood came out in drops in my search for a friend.

I flew far beyond the seven hills and four directions even to the skies, the yellow moon, the white sun, and the silver stars, in my search for a friend

I crossed the Himalayas and the Ganges and went far beyond all the blue oceans in my search for a friend.

I looked inside caves, I looked inside caverns, I looked into tunnels and gorges of darkness in search of a friend.

I have been to the poles and seen ice stalactites and stalagmites in my search for a friend.

I fell in love in search of a friend and fell out of love in search of a friend, thinking that friendship was the softness of touch, of taste, of fragrance, of kisses, of embracing hands.

I climbed mountains and crossed valleys, I walked plains and I went past villages, towns, and cities in my search for a genuine friend.

The ivy hung over the fence, the wisteria climbed the walls, time went by like life and death came closer while I still found no friend. I was no closer to finding a real, true friend.

Till one day I realized I would never find a friend, the only friend of the friendless is God and he teaches me to be the friend, everyone's friend, and never to look for any friend.



Ampat Koshy: He teaches in a college as Assistant Professor in Jazan, Saudi Arabia. He is the author of books like Art of Poetry, Wrighteings: In Media Res, Figs, Allusions to Simplicity (poetry), and co-author of Wake Up India: Essays for Our Times with Dr Bina Biswas and co-editor of The Significant Anthology with Reena Prasad and Michele Baron etc. He also runs The Signifcant League and has instituted the Reuel International Prize for Literature. He is a poet and critic and fiction writer of renown in India and abroad plus a Pushcart Prize Poetry Nominee of 2012. His Ph.D was on Samuel Beckett and his thesis was later published as Samuel Beckett's English Poetry: Transcending the Roots of Resistance in Language. He has also co-edited Inklinks and Umbilical Chords.



COLORS

Colors have many tales.

Long back a friend said
he loved yellow teeth
Sometimes truth came out
of yellow teeth, he felt
white only smiled, emotions
& truth remained within

After polls, red turned green.

Of those who remained red,

few proud radicals practiced

incredible somersault

in green rooms.

They will vault & vault to

other dynamic colors,

after every change

Hence the friend said,

see dark in every color.

Ruthless cynic.

Fascinating colors

confused me, always.



Aneek Chatterjee: I am a poet and academic from Kolkata, India. I have contributed to literary magazines and poetry anthologies across the globe. I have published two full-length poetry collections titled 'Seaside Myopia' & 'Unborn Poems and Yellow Prison', and a novel named 'The Funeral Procession'. I was a Fulbright Visiting fellow at the University of Virginia (USA) and a recipient of the ICCR Chair to teach at reputed foreign universities.



LOVE'S PUZZLE

Like the random piece

Of life's puzzle

You have no rightful place

Like the orphan child you are

Abandoned in front of his family and friends

The picture to society seems complete.

The facades and charades

The duplicitous life

Too embarrassed to acknowledge you

You are simply an option
At his convenience to suit his needs.

He does not respect you
Neither does he value you
Taking you for granted.

This dance and games have been played
For too long, nothing is going to change.

You deserve respect and honor
The actions often tell you the real story

You so deserve real love
True love will find your heart
Without any encumbrances
No longer a random puzzle piece
You are the queen of his heart
He is your honorable king.

The castle of love will sing melodies

As you embrace the rhythm of true love.



Angela Chetty: I am a poet residing in Durban, South Africa. I work as a consultant. I have contributed to various anthologies and numerous journals. I have also published a poetry anthology. I have been honoured as a contemporary poet with the most heartfelt poems in 2019 and had two poems featured in the Top 100 poems for 2019.



UNDER THE MOON

Love me through the night

Moon will shine bright today

Its beam will be soothing and fall

Thick upon us as on the grass we lay

Kiss me through the night

Moon will appear at the horizon

It will watch our game of love

Till it will end at the break of dawn

Take me in your arms
Let me feel your heaving chest
Open your hair making wave
As it hangs down below your waist

Sing me a song of love
It flows as a murmuring stream
Moon has gone up the sky
Spilling upon us its soothing beam

We get lost in each other and
The shy moon hides in the foliage
As the wick of passion releases
The flare it pours upon us a mystic haze



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



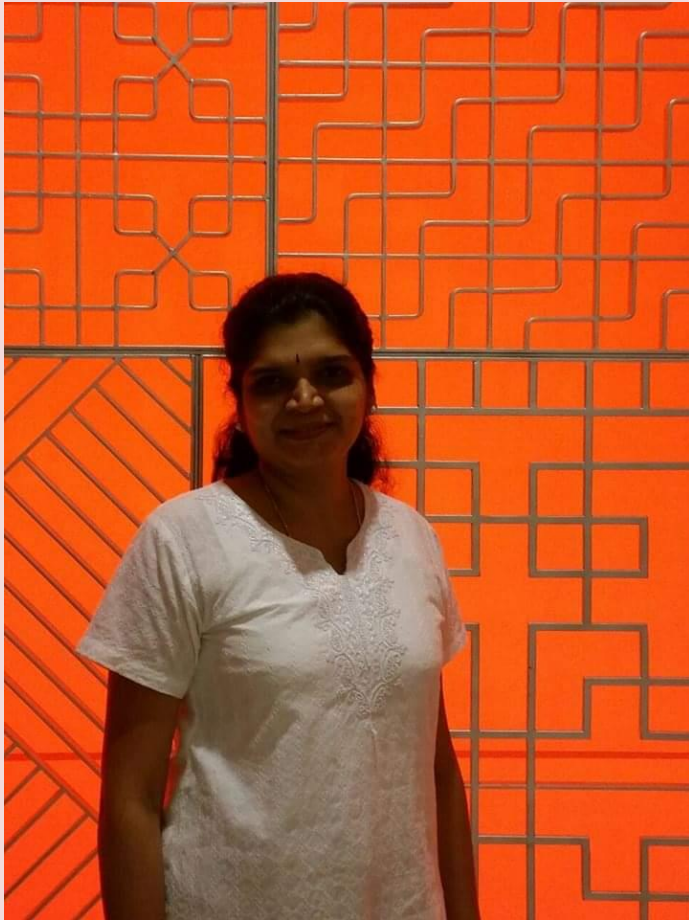
All of me is a moment's story in which to falter, flutter and fly; a flash to fall in love with the light and another to be consumed by it and rise.

I live a lifetime in that single instant, initially ignoring the flame, taking the glow for granted. That it is my source and the reason for my being is a realization that dawns on me when it flickers and dips making an ominous grey eat into my eyes. At such a time either a strong gust of wind blows out the candle or I cup the staggering flame to save myself from impending darkness.

The candle sways and gracefully finds its wick making me fall in love with the brilliance it surrounds me with. I sit staring at my beloved till I want to touch the fire. I linger around it, fluttering closer and closer, drinking in its

luminescence. Inebriated, I yearn to singe my wings in its blazing fringes and burn all the way to my soul until nothing of me remains in this world.

I fly hither and thither trying to gather all the light while braving the lurking shadows that I fear could sink my flight. So are stories lit and burned- a flash of fire, a dash of dust. All we do is falter, flutter and fly across flickers of light that hide dark voids.



Anju Kishore: Anju Kishore is a poet, editor and a former Cost Accountant. Her poems have been featured in many e-magazines and print anthologies. One of the winners of The Great Indian Poetry Award 2018, and The Prime International Poetry Prize 2020, her book of poems ‘...and I Stop to Listen’ was published in 2018. She is currently Senior Editor at Pinkishe, the print and e-magazine of the Delhi based NGO, Pinkishe Foundation.



UPROOTED

Root-bound,
struggling to exist,
seeds once planted in faith.

Brilliance shines no more.
Corroded beliefs peel like old paint
of a leaded and fading past.

Amens cried out to a false god no
longer ring true. Time is now the
enemy, bulldozing hope into the ground.

Reality sings on a paper thin edge,
as lies dance to the silent tune.
Hope crosses its gnarled fingers.

Making sense of little, turning
day to night. Uprooted and
abandoned under a shiny veneer.



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



BREXIT

How does it feel?

Is the sky a different blue?

Is the sun another golden?

Are people in the streets,

Feeling emboldened?

Or is there worry at what is to be?

And how to retain the glory?

What lies in store for a cold lonely island,

In the midst of an icy sea?

The nearest warm friend now lies
Far away across the pond
With his hands in battles of his own,
Will he provide the succour sought?

With the glory long gone from the Great,
And cousins bitter about the United too,
This is verily the end of history and
"The dawn of a new era," too



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



20-20 LESSONS

People staying at home

Reading books

Writing musings and poems Listening attentively

Doing exercises

Able to create art

Discovering themselves as an equal artist

Making and creating menus

Some finding themselves as cook

Turning artist

Playing indoors

Finding neighbors useful

Caring elderlies

Learning new ways of being human
and being

Some meditating

Some praying

Some finding their limit

Others finding limitless talent

Some finding their shadows finally

Some thinking

Some pondering

Some thinking of others

Some thinking for others

Thanking

Thanking differently

People healing themselves

People healing others

Thankfully getting healed

Watching own self for a while

Watching others for a while

Watching parents for a while

Finding themselves ignorant no more

Finding others so surprisingly caring

Medics and policemen so important so daring

Meaningless people becoming meaningful

God becoming almighty

Nature, naturality and cosmopolity becoming important

No one is now so heartless

People now little hurt less

People have evolved themselves

Now they grieve for sufferings

Now they will be close to nature

Start dreaming new ways of survival for own self and others

Creating new manners of living and healing

Rich, poor and mighty finding themselves as equal

Scourge is bad

Scourge was bad

But the lesson wasn't!



Ashish K Pathak: He is a middle school teacher posted at Dharhara block in Munger district of Bihar Province. He has got a letter of appreciation from then President of India APJ Abdul Kalam for his poem. He has got Vishistha Shikshak Sammann from state government along with other writers. He has WUP gold cross medal for his writing in the world book 'Complex Based Discrimination'. He has got Government of Khazakistan sponsored first-level diploma for his writing. He is only one amongst six writers chosen to contribute his writing in Marula World anthology. His works has been also featured in Mahatma Gandhi and Kofi Annan anthology. He regularly contributes to the Glomag magazine.



IF YOU

Nights here are without dream

You offer roses distilled

From your blood

This evening passionately wipes the shadow

The salty taste of tears

Your heart plays softly

Each night

You dump silently

The grief in your lips

Time stood still

You smiled and whispered

Bounced up into spring of dream

You a silent language of the wind



Asoke Kumar Mitra: He studied at Hindu school and St. Xavier's College, Kolkata, and is a retired journalist and was editor of 'Calcutta Canvas' and 'Indus Chronicle'. He is a bilingual poet. He has contributed to various anthologies published in India and abroad. His poems are translated into various languages. 'Savage Wind' is his first poetry book, a bilingual edition, translated into Spanish by Mexican poet Josep Juarez. 'Song Of Pebbles' is his second bilingual poetry book, which is translated into French. Poetry, photography, paintings are his passions.



BRIGHT SCHOOLS

1.

If, in tedious schools,

Young minds learn by groans

How the light of learning dulls,

They will yearn for the light their phones

Why go to school at all?

If, unlit by wonder,

Young minds are numbed to sleep,

Learning's then a muffled drum
On a dead march down an unlit Mental street.

2.

Or it's a strident glitzy band
That strikes up, praising
The dazzling casinos,
The glitzy distractive entertainment
The glammed-up
Lerv, lerv, lerv

Why go to school at all?

Why the groaning preparation
For hated, mismatched jobs
That sap life from life,
And bring no joy?

Why all the smash-ups of
Head and heart,
And the dimming of soul?

Or may we foresee a day
When a teacher is a light
And a student is a light
And no school day
Is a dull day but,
With no sweaty ache of
Rote by rote learning,
Is lit by meaning,
But a day of
Heart mind soul according well,
A dance, a song
Of curiosity, wonder,
Wisdom, compassion,
And of joy

In the teacher

In the student

In the bright school...



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



PLANET JUNGLE

This whole world's a battlefield

Drenched in blood and tears

Heartache and pain

Been around for endless years

Waterfalls of destruction

Rivers of despair

Conflict and strife

Just found everywhere

Bodies heartless and cold

Walking planet earth

Some picked up behaviours

Others no good since birth

A water cycle of wars

Sometimes fought behind closed doors

No boundaries no borders

Everyone's above set laws

This is planet jungle

Filled with wild on two feet

Another criminal activity

Waiting to defeat

Good and just

Always another evil conspiracy

Lurking to devour

The good morals of humanity



Bevan Boggenpoel: He was born in Salt Lake, Port Elizabeth, South Africa. He attended Soutpan Primary and matriculated at Westville Secondary School. Boggenpoel completed a Baccalaureate in Education at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. He launched his debut Anthology 1 December 2016. The book was well received by the public and he sold 200 copies locally. He is also an author at a South African website known as Litnet (Literature Network in South Africa). His poetry is written in a South African context that covers different issues in daily

life. In his writings he strives to tell a story or teach a lesson that will inspire and motivate. He is currently a teacher at Bethelsdorp Road Primary in the northern areas of Port Elizabeth.



AFTER SIXTY-EIGHT YEARS OH MY SUPER MOON!!

(The poem was written after the spectacular Super Moon visible on 14-11-2016 and such big moon was last visible 68 years back that was on 26th January 1948)

Awww—your brightest face

Smiled at me

You seemed so close

As if I would touch

You if I make a jump dance.

So many people were waiting
To have a glimpse of you
To see how would you
Walk, donning your
Dazzling gold dress
Everyone was trying
To catch a scoop full
Of your light.

I came to the roof
To have a chit-chat
With you
To share our secrets of
Sixty-eight years old.

Even after these sixty eight years
You are still young

With your smile
Light twinkling in your eyes.

You are the same moon
I met sixty-eight years back
The cool and composed.
In between these sixty eight years
I looked at you from a distance
Sometimes I could see
You clearly, but many times
Half hidden from eyes
Sometimes I wonder
If I am gone from your skies.

Let me drink your rays
For one last time
Who knows

When another
Sixty-eight years comes.



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



GHAZAL

Every street poses death waiting at every corner in Kashmir
There is noise by death scratching blood from faces in
Kashmir

My window sill has worn broken glasses holding stones
with

Bent grills and blood painted on window panes in Kashmir

I see the blood bathed sun from roads and trodden by
myriad

Feet who scroll them regularly with dark faces in Kashmir

The roads are not beautiful in green, with every death more
Deaths follow hitting anger and gloom to faces in Kashmir

How houses are razed and people killed when birds roar in
Sky and of killed ones seers find only their traces in Kashmir

People throng his home which is sacred for days and then
Only darkness is life of his siblings and parents in Kashmir



Bhat Zaieem: He is a poet and a writer residing in Kashmir. He is a teacher by profession. His poems have been published by various reputed national and international journals like Muse India ,The Indian Review, The International Ghazalpage etc. He has coauthored few poetry books and was also invited to Guntur International Poetry Festival 2019. Besides poetry he also writes on different contemporary issues to various Kashmir based English dailies.

Email:bhatzaieem25@gmail.com



MUSIC IN THE AIR

Carrying a million prayers on your fragile wings,
you soar and glide, owning the vast sky,
Splashing colours to the curvy rainbow
You tickle the clouds with your open wings.

Clicking images of the world in your tiny head,
Looking for branches to rest your legs,
You watch in despair at the vanishing greenery,
Worrying why the world turns into a raised cemetery.

Your tunes get strained, seeing the rivers turn red,
Yet you rise in the air, with great aplomb,

To drink a sip from the hovering clouds, as
My eyes follow you, trying to grab your confidence.

Solitarily or in murmurs you fly,
Tracing majestic patterns in the blue sky,
Inadvertently giving wings to my dormant poesy.
That comes alive with your melodious rhapsody.

As the orange evening melts in your colourful wings,
And a thousand feelings flutter within.
You drown the air in your shrills and trills,
While I look on, with an envious eye



Bilquis Fatima: She is an innate lover of nature and speaker for social issues, has allowed her feelings to be expressed as short writes and speeches from her college time. Although being a post-graduate in Chemistry, she has also mastered the skills of poetry appreciation and writing. Her poems reflecting the situations that are prevalent in the society, have been appreciated in some groups of poets and writers lately.



THE JOURNEY

Like a road, the journey
Moves through the picturesque countryside,
Jungles, plains and plateaus
Full of fauna and flora,
Down through the verdant valleys,
Spiraling, meandering, rising, falling
Over the strenuous mountains
And rough, rocky terrains,
Crawling through the underpasses
Climbing over the bridges

Flying in the air or sailing on the sea, and,
sometimes through barren meadows,
the journey trudges through the eerie deserts, even,
Stretches of infinite nothingness and evanescent horizons

The moment when a newborn cries,
heralding its arrival, the family celebrates birth
with joyousness and vigor,
but death deceives the dearest departing untimely,
leaving the kin breaking in tears

The whole earth rotates,
And revolves,
Time changes its colors
Happiness and sorrows
The ceaseless journey spears through,

Dawn or dusk

Day or night,

Black or white,

Up or down,

Birth or death,

in a striking contrast



Bishnu Charan Parida: I am a bilingual (Odia & English) from Odisha. I love to write poems on nature, love, life and people.



JOHN

(Continued from GloMag April 2020...)

In October, at the start of the academic year, he met Barbara. She was a pretty, petite girl with long raven black hair. She was a little bit lost. She came to study in Opole from Kedzierzyn,. And from the very beginning, she treated John with great, unfeigned affection.

In the second year of study, he buried his grandmother and, a few months later, his mother. His younger sister, right after graduating from high school, got married and moved out. For the first time in his life, he was completely alone. When he returned home, a strange feeling of emptiness filled his heart. Barbara's friendship helped him survive a difficult period of mourning.

He could not remember how and when they became a couple. But he remembered exactly the first time she kissed him. He remembered how in October, after the start of the fourth year at university, Barbara moved into his flat. She lit up his life with her joy and love.

Meddlesome neighbors wagged their tongues at them. Once, their gossip reached Barbara's ears. With delight she vented to one of them, knowing that it would be passed on later.

"Ms. Willow!" Barbara shouted, "You should be ashamed! Why are you pushing your nosy nose into our lives? Who gave you the right to insult me and John? I do not wonder that your husband left. I am not surprised that you have no friends. I warn you today for the first and last time. I do not want to hear again your rumors, otherwise, you will bitterly regret it. My advice is that you start to see the man, not his disability. Goodbye!"

This finally broke off the Hydra's head. All gossip stopped for good.

John graduated at the top of his class. Immediately after graduation, he was offered a job at City Hall. Barbara was proud of her diploma, too. She found a job at the library.

They often talked about marriage. Barbara's parents were horrified by her choice, but when they saw how John loved her, and they began to accept him – though not without some resistance.

Two years after the wedding, Barbara and John announced that they were expecting their child.

At 4 pm John was back at the hospital. Dressed in a white coat, he waited at the door of the ward to meet Barbara. He could not wait to hug his new treasure and kiss his wife. And to thank her once again - certainly not the last time - for everything she gave him.

The door finally swung open. A few impatient fathers tried to break through at the same time.

He found Barbara feeding the baby. She looked beautiful as Madonna with the Child.

John froze motionless, staring at his luck, and now double luck.



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



A SPACE OF HER OWN

She closed her eyes in peace...

gnawed and fragmented all these years like a piece

withered by whiffs of war weather

that did her heart asunder

from the pungence of vengeance...

At last a roof

to smell the silence of her own solitude

from the resilience of her fortitude

b..l..a..s..t did not last
sh..sh..sh..sh the night whispered.

That autumn night did not bleed
any more from the slithering pall of gloom;
instead like spring began to colorfully bloom!

She closed her eyes in peace...
the night was a dawn of dreams
revealing slivers of shiny beams.



Brindha Vinodh: I hold a Masters in Econometrics from the University of Madras, but I am a writer within. I have worked as a copyeditor and a freelancer in the e-publishing industry. My poems and short stories have appeared regularly in magazines, e-zines and web journals, and my poems in two anthologies are due for publication shortly. My latest published poems include 'The other side of life' and 'The underrated Indian homemaker'. I currently reside in the United States of America with my husband and two children.



DREAMS

1.

Keep your dreams aflame

Let them shine bright

Never wish for a dreamless night

It turns a man into dead wood.

2.

Keep plowing up your land

Even in hard winter

For, blooms will show up

As the spring sets in.

3.

They brighten up those
Who have given up
And brilliant sunshine
Will rekindle their hopes.

4.

Keep your dreams aflame
Even to the edge of doom
With eternal hope
You can overcome stygian gloom.



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



RAINBOW ROSE

a roseate sonnet

A triumph of a morning glory's story

A blossoming of moonflower... but once

A four leaf clover coming up before me

Within a crack in sidewalk, lucky chance

Wisteria brocading down the heavens

A thousand ferns meandering round the bend

By sunshine are the treetops boldly riven

In the meadow do blue violets humbly Zen

Gentle knees of bumblebees enliven

A veil of florets to heaven ascend

Remembrance of our seasons to revisit

Ouroboros discovers on and on

Selections Mother Nature shall exhibit

Eternally the river of life's aplomb



Chris Daugherty: He is published in Poetry.com's 2003 annual yearbook and is a continuing contributor to GloMag. C.R. Daugherty has published eleven eclectic books of poetry via the Internet. He passionately enjoys writing poetry while fueled by espresso roasts. He also enjoys abiding by traditional forms and loves mostly bucolic themes.



He was at the front
to keep off the enemy
amidst barrage of bullets
and dust that flew
one stray bullet hit him
another and another
but then
he thought of his mother
newly wedded wife
his friends
his school days teachers

neighbors

girl on whom he had a crush

then looked at the fading sky

closed his eyes

switched off his breathing

vulture knowing who he was

flew off far far away

flake of cloud could not bear to see this

it sprinkled to cool his heart.



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



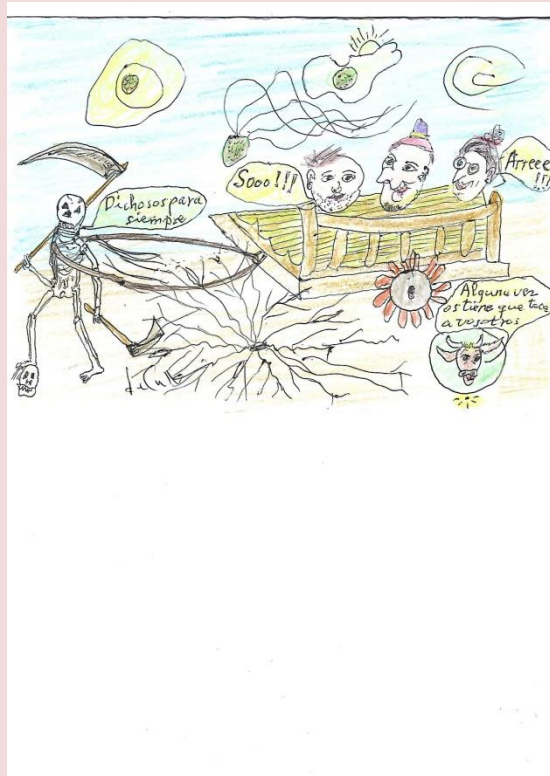
ATTILA AND THE POPE

Fear can be useful as well as respect
I find the two are often intertwined,
The foes of Huns know what they can expect,
Our very name's enough to break the mind.
Rome was waiting; there was the greatest prize,
We'd milked the empire well but there was more
Gold, slaves, spilt blood, a triumph of such size

That years would shudder at - a kind of awe.
A Shaman or suchlike came to speak of terms
This ended our advance. That old man's tone
Gonged firm, even a bold warrior squirms
At some things, my men had started to moan
Of disease and gnawing hunger, they went
Home without much fuss, knew they'd pushed their luck
Was this the limit to the Huns extent?
That frightful Leo...has a death-knell struck?



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



GUESS GUESSER

Chinese my birth

Dark my live

I'm getting white

When I want you to die.

-Coronavirus

We are very bland pills

That you won't want

But when you cough and spit

They will give them to you.

Paracetamol

It's puppet virus

That climbs up the walls

Decorating balconies well

When you start singing.

-Joy on the balconies

I'm round like the Globe

By killing they tear me apart

Reducing me to skin

And juice I take out of the dead.

-Virus

Guess guesser

What is the grape

That the virus has

Having chrysanthemums?

-Covid 19.



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



**A POEM FOR *RASSOOL J SNYMAN*, A SOUTH AFRICAN
POET AND THINKER OF NOTE**

The sneaks and spies have come for you many times.

You breathe with their ears inside your throat,

You see with their eyes inside your skull

And still you liberate souls

And shatter shackles

With that great illuminated mind of yours.

They record your thoughts, monitor you, steal your mobile phone and torment you in a myriad ways but you are steadfast.

You are an angel of love and compassion

In a murky world of Logties, bigots, racists and tycoons who buy so many.

Your words strike the savages in their entrails.

Those in pain,

Those who are betrayed by the whores,

Those who love our country and all its people,

Those who are hungry in Payther's lap,

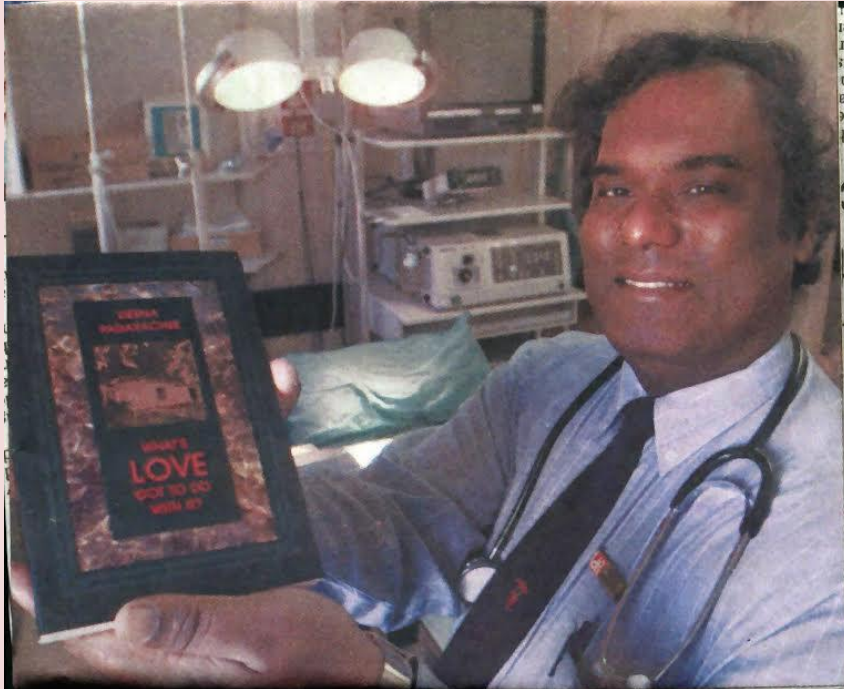
Those who are homeless in the conquerors' paradise,

Those whose brains are ugly tools of the drug pushers,

All look at you for hope, for love, for kindness, for succour.

May your tribe increase,

Oh heavenly wise Oracle of our country.



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



A BRIEF MEMORY

Untamed yet old fashioned,
a stuck up city is glittering on the hilltop
I know I love the people burning in yellow lights
I know they love the play of shadows
collapsing on the pine cones.
Overbearing peaks are
gliding down into the stream
A lacuna is where I drink from,
for there I have left the memory
of an accented laughter.

A moment is where we bury the seed

Let it find its root and sprout uncouthly untamed.



Deepti Sharma: I am a poetess residing in Punjab, India, and work as a freelance writer. I have contributed to many online publications and have won few awards in online poetry challenges.



O MI QUERIDA, MI AMOR, TE QUIERO MUCHO

Dipanjan:

It's still your face that I see in my dream
There's an emptiness I cannot describe
But there's still you, only you
In the void which you once filled.

Debanjali:

I am walking now
Across the bridge on which we used to stand
Looking at the highland stream flowing down below
A lump of profound pain
Rising through my heart all the time.

Dipanjan:

I cling on the threads that you left behind

Threads of your love

Sheathed inside the box of pearls

Pearls of your adoration and that of your lust.

Debanjali:

I carry the bottle of potion that you prepared for me

The potion of our amorous love

Our ecstasies and our joy

As I walk, and walk towards the woods

The potion is my poison to find the path.

Dipanjan:

I lost my soul to you

I have nothing left to love

Just an emptiness I cannot describe

You are my death my dearest

O mi querida, mi amor, te quiero mucho

Este es el momento, para que yo muera.



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



IT'S ME – I AM SOTHO, KE MOSOTHO

Childhood Lullaby – My morning song an inner wailing,
craving to be seen

If even just for a fleeting moment to forget the daily
morning routine shouting

most of the time for nothing but I have resigned myself to
be a figurine

on the dusty kitchen shelf instead of being shoved into
the tiny hole they

call a toilet to empty yet again just because I forgot to
throw out the rubbish

but I was just too tired having to collect wood from the nearby forest where
at least I could calm my declining mood hearing the birds dedicate their
morning song to me as I silently cry for lost hours in a home not fit for
even a dimwit like me, as I am reminded every day by him and her – I
cannot even remember the last time they hugged me, cradled me, comforted me.

Captured Dreams – Even though my waking hours are verbal darts piercing
my fragile heart, I sometimes have a rare opportunity to have a peek at the
world outside from my small room – The tiny glass pane my iron fence prison
not meant to liberate my growing mind but at least I can give a lonely wave to
imaginary friends who are not allowed here, so I just stare at their childhood

reverie – Laughing splashing running then I close my eyes
and wrap the clouds

in secret corners of my mind for only me to find when I
need a moment kind to soothe

my wilting soul but then as always, I hear them shrieking at
me for abusing my rare

liberties painting me in their rotten warped twisted verbal
fresco, proudly

proclaiming to be the creators of my deserved naming and
shaming.

Midnight Symphony – Serving them is all I have known
since I could make

sense of my infant surroundings. I never complained but I
became used to

hide my pain. I still get punished for not meeting their
targets even though

I do my best to avoid their protests but in the end I go to
bed hungry,

Accompanied by a roaring midnight symphony of hunger
pains – Only

Broken up by the welcome hooting of a familiar owl sharing
its ancient

Wisdom in soothing tones of uplifting notes as I fall asleep
– Sinking

further into my midnight melancholy, yearning to finally be
free.

I yearn for bright skies – If anyone asks who I was, it's me –
I am Sotho, Ke Mosotho...



Don Beukes: He is a South African and British writer. He is the author of 'The Salamander Chronicles' (CTU) and 'Icarus Rising-Volume 1' (ABP), an ekphrastic collection. He taught English and Geography in both South Africa and the UK. His poetry has been anthologized in numerous collections and translated into Afrikaans, Persian, French and Albanian. He was nominated by Roxana Nastase, editor of Scarlet Leaf Review for the 'Best of the Net' in 2017 as well as the Pushcart Poetry Prize (USA) in 2016. He was published in his first SA Anthology 'In Pursuit of Poetic Perfection' in 2018 (Libbo Publishers) and his second 'Cape Sounds' in 2019 (Gavin Joachims Publishing). He is also an amateur

photographer and his debut Photographic publication appeared in Spirit Fire Review in June 2019. His new book, 'Sic Transit Gloria Mundi'/Thus Passes the Glory of this World' is due to be published by Concrete Mist Press.

Katie Mokhoabane: He is a 28-year-old self-taught artist from Soweto, South Africa. He is inspired by those who immerse themselves in his art. His work aims to expose the hidden outcry of sorrow as a result of political corruption and the rich making a living out of the blood of the poor.

Spell it Out!



l
p e p
a

First i guess i owe an apology to Occupant. I keep geting his mail and I dont no how to get it to him so i usally just throw it away. But this time i axedentally opened it and it sed i could make LOTS OF \$\$\$\$!!! by becoming a succsesful writer. Writer? i said to myself, what's a writer? So i asked Durl and he eksplaned to me that that was just the way a lot of people Miss Spelt riter. Oh, I said, i guess we really do lern somethin knew evry day! So i red the hole letter karefully and it sed he'd teach me how to MAKE MONEY and it wuld oney cost me 50\$. Well, i just happened to have 50\$ cuz i just sold a shoat to the Nancys acrost the field, and i dont beleive in coinsidances. Insted, i beleive in Providance! Durl scoffed at the idea of my bein a riter or writer or whatever cause he didnt think i had anything to rite about but i told him i culd rite how the winter and the

spring slowly and cashusly change places going forrard and backards one step at a time in a slow dance like a mating ritual and how the hawks and the ducks in the pond was alike in that they allays keep a sharp eye on each other and the strange goings on at the Nancy place and Durl changed his mind and sed maybe i did have somethin interestin to say after all so i filled out the form and put my 50\$ in the envelop and explained that i wasn't Occupant but hoped it was alrite anyhow and put it in the malebox. And so i hope that soon i'll be a publisht Arthur.



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



INVERTED TIME

(translated by Artur Komoter)

What am I doing here?

Am I amusing myself?

I'm looking for youth

among young people.

Mental mirages are like

flights between good and evil.

I listen to stories
about the wonders of the future.

What am I doing here?
Am I taking my time?
I'm looking for old age
among old people.

Life is not a pendulum
and never comes back.
Remains
the motion of memory and oblivion.

And I,
listen to
what is still left –
inverted time.



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



I am

hell in me

And the heaven lies in between us.

I see, to run the wheel of sin,

And walk, to baptize it in the deep trenches of my eyes,

Filled with the waters of evil-seas.

I am

A surrogate of Satan

And he my skewer—

The delicious cuisine of sins.

He though Exiled!
lives for me, to hoist the free-will—
A flop-cheesy.

In me
I burn the fire in piles, and
In columns, I let the beard
Grow, wave and flow,
For a fragrant-combed growth;
To hide the well-bred wildish sins:
Roaring
Growling
And Hissing—unheard to your ears.



Eshfaq Majeed: I am a poet and a short story writer, garnishing the metaphysical and abstract. I'm from Srinagar, India, pursuing Ph.D. in English. I've contributed to various anthologies, both national and international.



THE BACKYARD

I have missed the many years
Of critters in boundless numbers
Finding peace in the moist grass
Assigned by the autumn rain.

It's this monarch who displays
His power like clockwork vapors
That spreads the thin layer each year
Which keeps us all free and sane.



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



voyageurs sculpture from www.boredpanda.com

A tsunami

Or their desire to be free

A shark

Or their hurried exit through the park

A sea beast

Or the satanic priest

The sculptor's twisted mind

Or the ferocious wind

Who did this to them?

Taking their parts away

And keeping the rest for display

Walking around them the crowds gay

Like it is a normal day

Or perhaps is it normal for travellers

To leave parts of themselves in places that they visit

The fragments don't need to rhyme

But the luggage needs to be whole all the time



Gauri Dixit: When not busy working in her office, she is busy being a traveller, climbing mountains, walking on untrodden paths, capturing the voice of a solitary flower blossoming from a rock or the bird sitting on a hanging branch, sometimes the setting sun or the sea in her camera as well as in the words she weaves. Her poems speak in a voice which is unique, cold and direct. That she has been a part of many anthologies as well as a Reuel Prize awardee and had commendable mention at Destiny's Poet is incidental. In her first book, 'In My Skin, I Find Freedom', there are poems on varied subjects, yet there is a common thread of a skeptical questioning mind of a free woman.



TUG OF WAR

A battle where no sounds are heard and no scars seen

Intellect puts didactic logic

Heart defies what brain restricts

The age old debate continues

Days months years..

Heart often soars in a realm of dreams

Brain scolds and drags it down to roots

Talks always about reason and logic

One pulls you here and the other pulls you there

Who loses or who wins?

This may sound interesting but

There is no victory or defeat

Brain gets disheartened with a fear to lose

Heart urges to have faith and try once more

In this tug of war one who gets shattered

is the soul who seeks only peace !



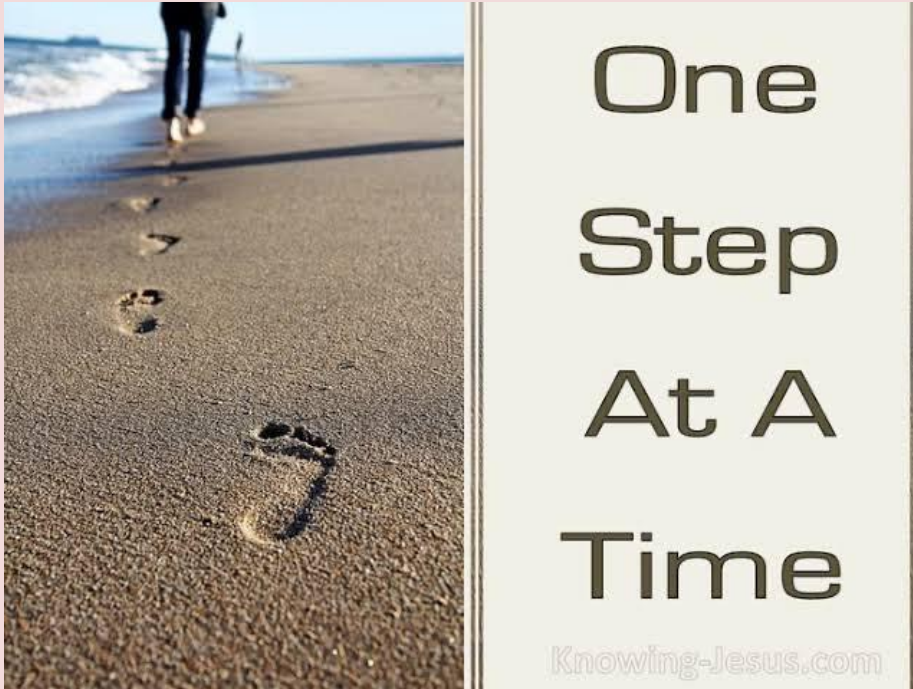
Gayatree G. Lahon: Hailing from the beautiful state of Assam, Gayatree is a teacher by profession and a poet by passion. Nature is her inspiration. Being an aesthete, she finds beauty in every object of life and nature and her poems express these elements in a subtle way. Her poems have been published in many national and international anthologies and magazines.



They fade—
Old photographs, paintings and pictures,
Memories of innocent days,
Washed away with the waves,
In the seas of time and space,
But remain,
Like plastic flowers,
In glass vases,
A forgotten décor,
Everyday.



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.



You can take one step at a time.

Stop and watch the flowers bloom like a nursery rhyme,
Gaze up at the moon on midnight's chime,
Keep moving and shift every paradigm.

For life is all about the dynamics of movement,
You may let lotuses bloom though you are stagnant,
Every step is worth the courage why be penitent,
All pieces of the jigsaw fit like a fairy tale content.

Now breathe easy

Yes life is full of challenges and expectations,

rubble of dreams shattered with lamentations,

Caught in a rat race where we know not our destinations,

There is no end to the plethora of greed and temptations.

You are already in the middle of the ocean swimming,

You convince yourself that from that horizon there's no
returning,

You push yourself although your breath is suffocating,

The sea blue is always tantalising and mesmerising.

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Gaze up at the moon on midnight's chime,
Stop and watch the flowers bloom like a nursery rhyme,
You can take one step at a time.



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



MOTHER – IT'S YOUR STORY

Mother, this story begins and ends with you
it's your story not mine, I wrote it for you
turning brown leaves to green, dreaming fruits in winter
flowing down the stream of time, building my canoe of
dreams as i went, harboring in love and letting it grow
to fruit in winter turned to early spring
All my dreams lay the other side of the bed of nails, yet
my feet are swift
they fly over the nails
but my Sun still bled gashes of red
and I bled all over my dreams
how long i asked
before my Sun is whole again
The gashes healed and it was Spring
I shook my curly locks and defied the wind
The sky is green I declared!
the world agreed

The grass is purple
the world agreed
I painted the Sun a tepid shade of blue
borrowed the yellow of the canary and gave it the rivers
the mountains capped their snow in pink...
and the world agreed...

But this is your story ma...
the one written from your womb
It must end where it began
the bright must give to shade
the swift to slow
the green leaves turn brown again
and I...
I must wind up in your womb again -
and you must die.

But the world?
the sky is still green, the grass purple, the Sun a tepid blue
the rivers flow yellow and the snow is pink...
and the world agrees.



Glory Sasikala: She is a poet, novelist, and publisher currently residing in Chennai, Tamilnadu, India. She is the editor and publisher of the online poetry and prose magazine, 'GloMag,' published every month on Facebook. She brings out two hard copy versions of the magazine every year. She is the administrator of the GloMag Group and Love Group on Facebook.

<https://glorysasikala.blogspot.com/>



DESTINY

Before my birth

my destiny charted by oracles

drawn from the movement of the planets

my life's journeys,

past, present and future

indelibly sculptured

in my cosmic horoscope

written in ancient mystical hieroglyphics

by destinies unrelenting hand

seers foretell

through meditative trances

what providence beholds

inevitable calamities

that will follow

with the rise and fall of fortunes

at my baptism

mystic prophets chant mantras

from ancient scriptures

know yourself then, now, and tomorrow

in this eternal journey of life

all deeds, past, present and future

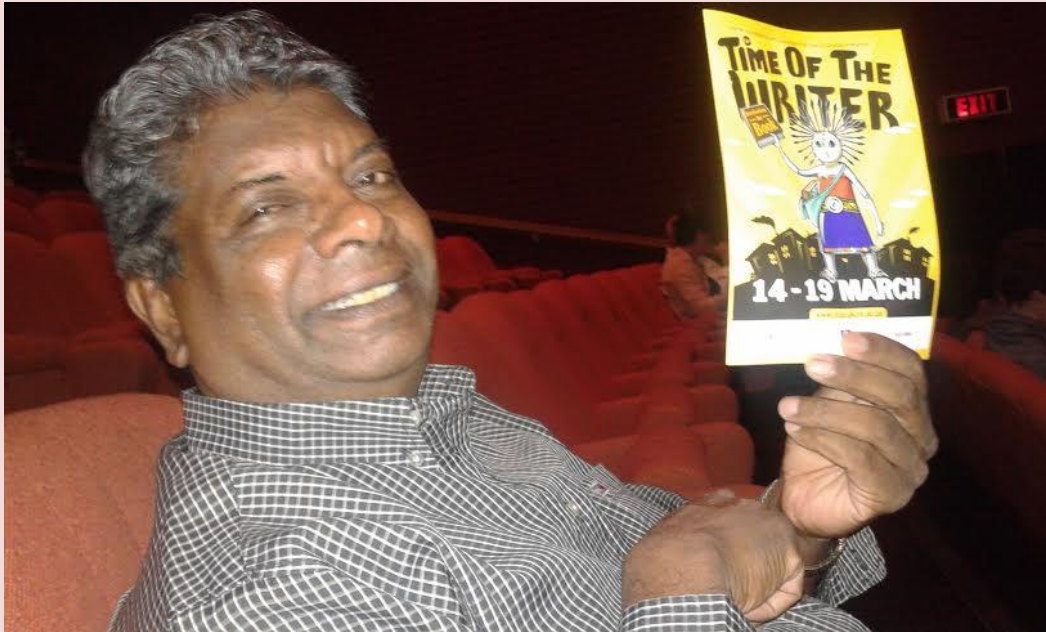
ruled by the eternal laws of action

my time of birth, my time of death

written and cast in granite stone

cannot be erased

cannot be eluded
there is no escape
from that which is decreed
by the laws of karma



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.



BEYOND THE VISUAL REALM

Open your eyes to the unnamed green heights
the carpet of leaves help you to breathe a little deeper
your head whirls with countless new thoughts,

and now close the bygone days and nights
the late blooming hidden flowers acquire a new hue
the tree tall enough, comes to say a halo.

stillness rewrites the morning glow that is spilled
memories pluck the promises from the branches
the breeze, then and now, perfectly weightless,

listen to the wind, wood cracking, leaves rustling
take inside the sounds of the natural world
the pure joy extends beyond the visual realm

silently slipping through the glass window
the aroma of the first day of this summer
wafting in so many unspoken hopes and dreams.



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



LOVE

Translated from Assamese by Bibekananda Choudhury

Softer than water

But

Able to take shape in air

So

It hurts the heart

As one inhales



WITNESS

Translated from Assamese by Bibekananda Choudhury

Witness of the day

Is the shadow

Witness of the night

Is the bed

The account of

What kind of deep water

Am I

Is at their fingertips



Guna Moran: He is Assamese poet and critic. He lives in Assam, India. His poems are being published in various international magazines, journals, webzines and anthologies. Email: gunagelakey85@gmail.com



SEVEN SPHERES

(I)

I pray

Your pains may get healed,

Your dregs may get illumined,

Heaven's air may become manifest to you,

Your every breath may fly like prayer in skies,

I pray

(II)

Look

Sun and moon both disappear

when darkness possesses the air,
If you look into muddy water,
you see neither the moon nor the sky,

Look

(III)

The soul,
A stranger in the city,
yearning for the city of placelessness,
Waiting to be taken away for eternity,
Every instant shakes the bell of hearts;

The soul

(IV)

O lovers!
The time of union has come,
The proclamation from heaven has come,
The sound of sweet nightingale is calling,
The seven spheres of heavens are calling,
O lovers!

(v)

Behold!

How the lost memories hunt you daily!

How the life pangs on every step of separation!

How the soul becomes restless for one glance!

How the heart weeps the tears of blood!

Behold!



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



FAITH

There's a saying—

"Faith can move

Mountains"—

Impossible becomes

Possible when one has

Faith.

Impossible tasks are

Completed successfully.

Impossible problems or obstacles

Are conquered.

Faith is necessary,
in one's life—
To cross ocean of life.
To face storms in life—
Gives one courage,
Self-confidence to
Move forward in life.

Stronger, greater
The tasks, obstacles, hurdles—
Stronger, mightier and
Deep rooted should be your
Faith.

Faith is not outside,
It is within oneself—
Personal, private.

Once triggered, no force

In this universe

Can stop you.

Have faith, Embrace faith.



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



PINK MOON

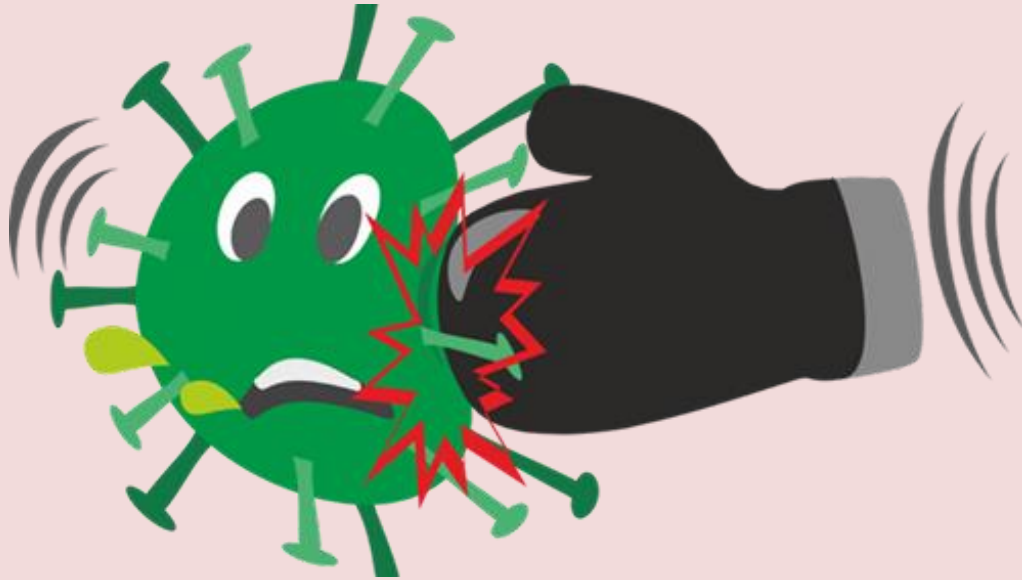
What binds me
to last night's pink moon
is its rose-petal loneliness

on the other side
of the black velvet sky
stood a bright silver star

like you and me, they spent the night
on opposite sides of the universe



Jagari Mukherjee: She holds an MA in English Language and Literature from University of Pune, and was awarded a gold medal and several prizes by the University for excelling in her discipline. Her poems and other creative pieces have been published in different venues both in India and abroad. She is a Best of the Net 2018 nominee, a DAAD scholar from Technical University, Dresden, Germany, a Bear River alumna, and the winner of the Poesis Award for Excellence in Poetry 2019, among other awards. She recently won the Reuel International Prize For Poetry 2019. Her chapbook *Between Pages* was published by Cherry-House Press, Illinois, USA, in June 2019. She is currently pursuing her PhD from Seacom Skills University, Bolpur, India.



AN ODE TO CORONA FIGHTERS

When the whole world seems upside down

When people are safe under lockdown

When thousands of lives are bogged down

When all the activities are shutdown

When the lethal virus attacks a takedown

When the clock simply runs a countdown

When life skills are under a meltdown

When individual dreams clog down

Then these warriors play the field

Day and night, without even taking their own heed

Doctors, caretakers, police to take the lead

Cutting out the corona virus and its weed

Irrespective of any religion, nature or creed

Fulfilling the nation's need

Acting as the most powerful shield

No wonder, they are the most revered humans indeed!!



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



MY MOTHER

How she must have missed
those green hills of Ireland.

Walking along hard grey
streets in Brooklyn.

Remembering scent of
grassy meadows hurrying
along ten long blocks, to
climb filthy subway steps.

Missing those sweet soft pastures,
on her way home from work
buying day old bread, searching for
dented cans and items on sale.

Her marriage failed and her health
gone. Her smiling days were over.

No one seemed to care.

The unlucky are often alone.

How she must have longed
for songs around the fireplace.

Another Irish colleen torn
from that emerald island.



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



EYEING MARS

Has eye seen the last threshold of life
shirking from a glance at the void beyond?
The void a throwback to the valley of chaos
before the Big Bang?
Or the smell of life born out of it spreading
Into an aroma of beauty that still
beams light into awe-struck eyes?
Myriad vistas of sculptural motifs—
Palace of Versailles, the gardens of Babylon,
the Qutab Minar, pyramidal symmetry,

radiant Taj—and many more spinning a saga of
astounding brain work and deft craft.

Have they lost out on the eye?

Is the mind emptied out of the search

..... almost busted by the nauseating

reality of perceived nothingness?

Is earth that flew out of the Bang

caught in the web of climate disorder,

stock busts, cultural atrophy?

Come Red Star! Let the fatigued eye

scan your fiery empty plains;

And put up a makeshift shanty

to rest the limbs; then take a deep

breath to look for a green horizon.



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



SOUNDS OF VISION

The blind grave-digger has now come to know that loneliness is not so lonely. It has silently covered his blindness like moss, along with his creasing old age.

The age-old burial ground has become his habitat since long. Now he can't remember when Cynthia had suddenly matured into a grown-up lady tackling her clumsy motherless girlhood.

His blindness has now become his fondness for listening to the sounds of vision.

His spade works like assured hits of death on life. He digs graves with all his might; the spade thuds deeper and

darker into the restfulness of the earth; the sound becomes grey to black, heavier down under.

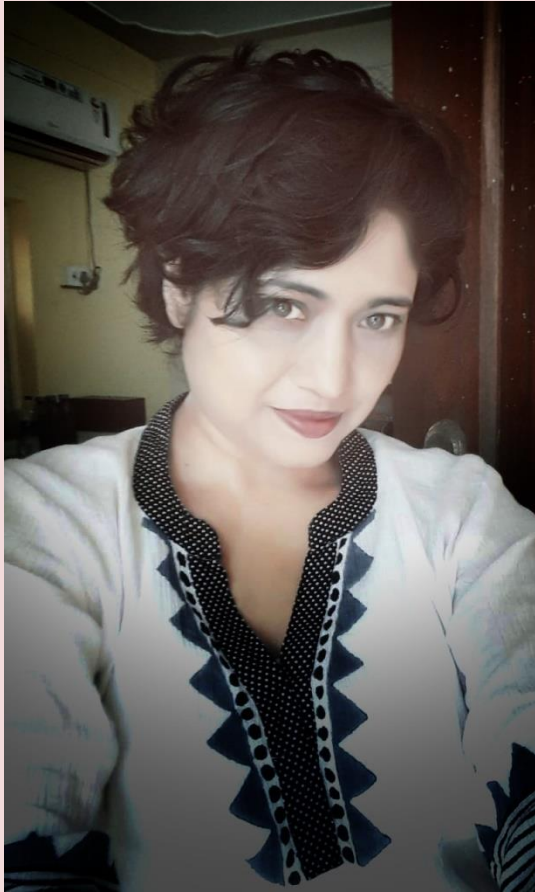
One night the grave digger could hear the drops of moonlight dripping like melted butter on the crushing waves of the sea. But the moondrops froze the moment they touched the foaming waves.

That night, he was digging an emergency grave under the supervision of influential people and police. There was a scandalous murmur; Sound of some errant footsteps dissolved in the hissing sea-soaked sand. The unidentified corpse lay bare. No coffin could margin its relentless loneliness and silence.

After the grave had been dug hurriedly along with his team, he was asked to help them in dropping down the corpse into the overflowing emptiness of the grave.

When he uplifted the naked corpse, her thick curly clumsy tresses hung down and laced against his old wrinkled arms. He knew from the touch that those were clumsy curls, like wisps of smoke.

The mole on the naked back of the lifeless body, which his fingers got touched, was perhaps not so big when she, as a little girl might have run and chased dragon flies with uprooted bush in her little hands, merrily shouting, giggling and bouncing all her way.



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



CURFEW AND CROWS

How do I explain

Curfews to the crows?

They are sitting in a neat row on my balcony window..

Waiting for their usual morning victual of 'chow-chow'
mixture...

The shops are closed..

I grab my bag of potato chips

And arrange them before the black-winged ones...

They look curiously at the unaccustomed food...

And then they understand...

Do you understand, they really understand..
And each picking up a piece fly away, satisfied...
There is no need to explain
Anything to crows, I realized.
Their instinct, wisely knows.
And therein lies the Secret
Of their survival.



Kamar Sultana Sheik: She is a poet, writing mostly on themes of spirituality, mysticism, and nature with a focus in Sufi Poetry. Her professional career spanning 18 years has

been in various organizations and Institutions including the IT sector. She is a self-styled life coach and has currently taken a break to focus on her writing full-time. Sultana has contributed to various anthologies and won several prizes in poetry contests. A green enthusiast, blogger and content-writer, Sultana calls herself a wordsmith.



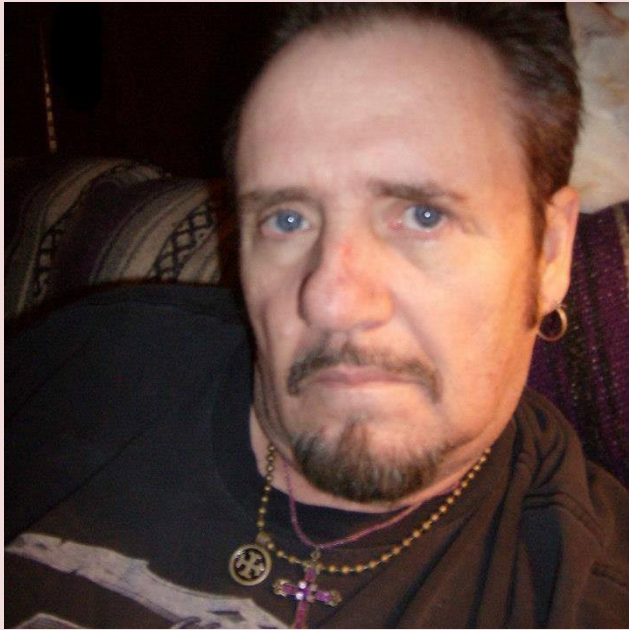
ELLIPSE

At sunrise the heron soars effortlessly upon the breeze
as waves roll in and crash upon the rocks and beaches.
Rising tides reach high upon the sands slowly fading away
the sun breaks through my window and kisses my cheek.

Round and round and round the great circle of life travels;
much like a whirlpool of bubbles in a small forest stream.
The day turns to night, and night to day, as the tide rises,
the cloudy morning rings the bell and the death beds roll.

Into autumn's burnt ashes and all the saddened masses;
It was winter's chill when my spirit lifted; my heart thrived
from a dead frozen shard and my soul was forever freed.
Just because you're breathing doesn't mean you're alive.

At sunset the heron soars effortlessly into the twilight;
the waves now whisper to the rocks and sandy beaches;
great tides fall slowly as the full moon rises in a pink sky;
a lullaby rocks me to sleep as moonlight kisses my cheek.



Ken Allan Dronsfield: I am a prize winning poet and was born in New Hampshire, but now reside in Oklahoma, USA. I am disabled and write poetry and short stories full time. I have contributed to and have been the co-editor for many anthologies. I have five poetry collections and I'm working on a new chapbook collaboration.



I would sing
If I could drink
The wine of sunshine
The whisky of the sky
The brandy of the randy
The vodka of Kafka
The cocktail of our tale
The tequila of a guerrilla
The arrack of her sly attack
The gin of her grin
The toddy of her body

The ale of her gale

The beer of our fear

The rum of our drum

The cider of a world wider

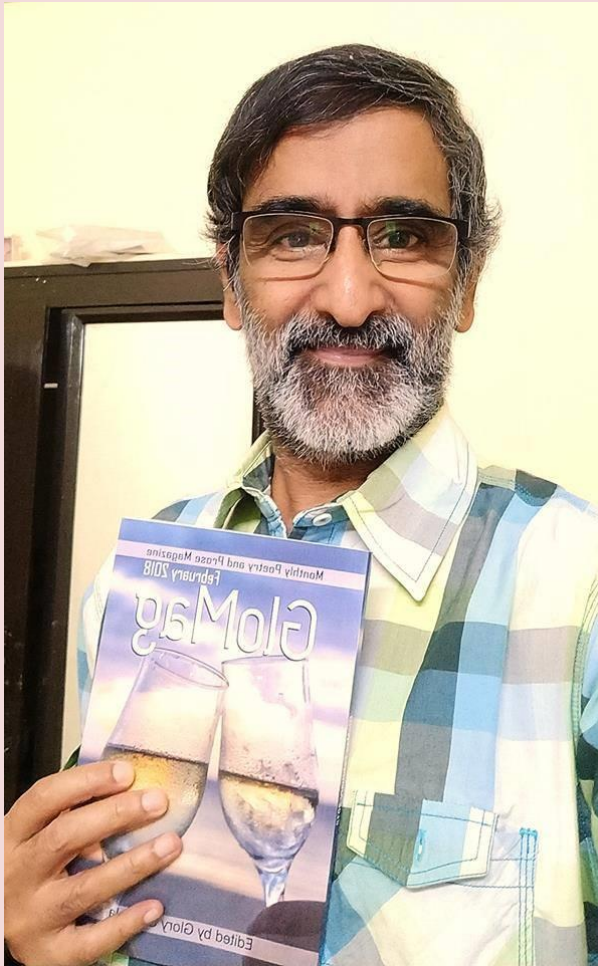
The champagne of our campaign

The cocktail of our tale

I would sing

If I could drink

The wine of sunshine



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



COVID-19

This thing has caught
Everyone's attention
And as far as I know
Gives most people tension

It gives all people
A fright
It sounds more venomous
Than a king cobra's bite

But we should keep in mind
That we have Jesus
Who's the cure for every disease
And also for this coronavirus

By faith we should call
This thing to seize
And consistently
Stay on our knees

He will answer
When we call
He will keep up with His Mighty right hand
So that we won't fall

Just like He cured
The deaf and blind

He'll prove globally
That He is still loving and kind

And let's not forget
How He healed the lame and leapherd
He is truly
A good good Shepherd

We will all see
What we've never seen
And that is how people will testify
That Christ is the cure for Covid-19



Leroy Abrahams: He is an only child who was raised by his grandparents and mother. He never knew his biological father. He lives in South Africa, Port Elizabeth, Helenvale. He currently works as a Spot Welder at a Motor Industry Firm. He is a Published Author and enjoys writing poetry. His first book entitled, 'Verse en Inspirasie' was published by Selwyn Milborrow (Milborrow Media). His second book entitled, 'Testimony in Poetry' was published by Bevan Boggenpoel, and the third book entitled, 'In Pursuit of Poetic Perfection,' which he wrote together with Bevan Boggenpoel, Selwyn Milborrow, and Don Beukes was published by Milborrow Media. He believes it's a gift given unto him by God and that the Holy Spirit guides, leads, and inspires him. His poetry describes himself and how God has transformed his life. His poetry also serves as an encouragement and warning to young and old who are facing tough times. He is also a member of a Master Class group of writers as well as Afrikaanse Digters.



FINDING OUR AWAKENING

I pray our solitude

will teach us to listen.

But, the world is so loud,

even now pressed against its own inaction.

We wait to find a hushed rendezvous

in flaming Spring,

hoping there will be no true fail.

And,

we are learning how easy it would be
to end the world.

We are tiring of the long present.

Yet, just when all looks lost,

freedom will open

and be revealed here and there.

We will become glad our bodies could find light

beyond this disease.

And, once we regain all our liberties,

we can drift above the clouds

in this moment of freedom

made by love from heroes.

To sing more,

and talk less,

bringing us all closer to God.

And if we have enjoyed those days of seclusion
in the right way,
we will share memories
20 years from now and beyond,
and do so shamelessly.



Linda Imbler: Linda Imbler has five published poetry collections and one hybrid ebook of short fiction and poetry. She is a Kansas-based Pushcart Prize and Best of the Net Nominee. More information can be found at lindaspotryblog.blogspot.com.



IN BETWEEN

In between calendar had changed its year

In between days had turned to years

In between time had shown its colours

In between weather had displayed its feathers

In spite of these

A slice of sky had lost its shade

A bunch of words blocked the step

A husk of expectations had faded with its glow

An ounce of dream had broken down to pieces

A brisk of emotion had succumbed the pace

A quantum of thoughts had piled a file

A herd of desire had twisted the dice

In spite of all these

I am standing on the same dock

Waiting for the wind to play with my curls.

My sensation murmur at times

My conscience shrieks as rhymes

My sense instructs the vibes

Yet nothing can change my like.



Lopamudra Mishra: She resides in Bhubaneswar Orissa. She completed her graduation in English Hons from Sailabala Women’s college, Cuttack and post-graduation in English from Ravenshaw University, Cuttack. Her fascination for writing came from her grandfather and father from an early age. Writing for her is the powerful medium of expression. Her poems have been published in many magazines and anthologies. Her works include her very own published books: “Rhyme Of Rain”, “First Rain” ,”Tingling Parables”, and “Rivulet Of Emotions”.



THE AGONY

That day your leaving without a word
I was left standing, gasping like a fool

Life ebbed out, all of a sudden, emptying me
How does one pacify an anguished soul?

All my insides torn and broken beyond repair
Distressed to the core of my bitter being

You were the blood flowing in my veins
Killing me softly each second each minute

Thoughts of you forever traveling in my mind
The agony the pain remained etched in my body

Weeks months years gone by languishing
Was it worth it, realization dawned, a little late

I gathered my bits and pieces of sanity
And I rose from the ashes!

I moved towards the sunshine, the moonlight of life
And I rose from the ashes!

I mustered courage to stand tall, conquer my anguish

And I rose from the ashes!



Lubna Ahmed: She is a Certified Master NLP (Neurological Linguistic Programming) Practitioner; NLP Workshop Facilitator and Soft Skills trainer; and Certified Advanced Life Coach. She conducts SuperKoolKids Art Therapy workshops. She resides in Delhi with her family. She has

managed to carve a niche for herself in the literary world by her ever so simple 'Love poems'. 'Princess Lubna' is her pen name, her writers' identity. Her love poems are spiritual and have a Mystical Aura. She has written many poems for National and International Anthologies. She is an avid traveller.



LOOK FOR ME AROUND YOU

Look for me around you

Find me here and there

Everywhere

Near you

Next to you

Find me entwined

Around that dark lock of yours

Rushing towards the velvety earth

Where I lose my feet

To stay with you
To be with you forever
I am that forgotten star
Up there somewhere
Looking at you
Stealing glances
Through the crevices of the clouds
Enwrapping you in my warmth
I am the amorous cloud
Passionate
And melting
Showering upon
Drenching you
In fragrant love
Perfumed and warm
I am that breath
That thrives within you
Races and runs

Panting and puffing
All breathless
And rests on the dewdrops
Resting on your eyelids
In the wee morning hours
Look for me around you...



Madhumita Bhattacharjee Nayyar: She is a bilingual writer (writing both in Hindi and English). A poetess, blogger, lifeskills counsellor, healer, she is also a social commentator and works with women and children. She is the author of "THE NIGHT JASMINE AND OTHER LOVE POEMS". She is the winner of ICON OF THE YEAR-LIFESKILLS COUNSELLOR 2015-2016, CREATIVE WRITER OF THE YEAR 2016, and Indian Women Achievers Award 2016 for Creative Writing.



CHOWMEIN

Boiling water delights me

Makes me soft and springy

When my cooked strands dry

My white hairs loose

Am all set for the fry....

A sprinkle of oil

On a non-stick wok

Chopped onions on the go

Sizzling oil it dances in

Green chillies look like wow...

Juliennes of carrot beans

Capsicum red yellow green
Adding colour to crunchy flavour
Sprinkle of pepper and salt
All meet and mix
To hug and kiss
And make a happy spread.....
Cornflour soya tomato sauce
With spiky chili sauce green
Hot aroma wafts across
Making saliva drip...
Am Indian chowmein ahem noodles...
Prepare me as you may
Am loved by all from north to south
Who garnish me... in their make
Old grandpa grandma to little girl
Youngsters I simply rock
Corporate menus to daily fares
I rule and roost all kinds

Am served in plates in airplanes and streets

In veg and non-veg make....

Taste me chew me gobble me straight

Am here to love and bring yummy delight!



Madhu Sriwastav: She is an Assistant Professor of English at B.H.K. Mahavidyalaya. She is a poet, translator, critic, and reviewer. Her poems have been anthologized in various reputed National and International journals. She has been performing poetry on National and International platforms and Poetry festivals across the country. She translates poetry into verse. She writes on anything that touches her.



RHYTHM IN NATURE (HAY(NA)KU)

Sky

is pink

Monotone left behind

Day

splits twice

Brings up shades

Tangerine

drops after

Purple, blue, cobalt

Sun

Pops, drowns

Fluttering of birds

Music

of Koel everywhere

Flies amidst trees

Shades

of life

Aligned with nature



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



STORY OF A TEAR

Pain too strong to hold, the heart gave way,
Flashback and memories of some days,
And here I collected in the eyes, the pride let me be full,
It was the treacherous blink, which made me roll!
Desolating the stung eyes,
Staining, moistening cheeks on the way
Dripples the Nose, the mouth sighs,
Lighter gets the heart, as I further move away!

So much is the story of my life,

Rolling away the pain I end up as a stain patchy and white!



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



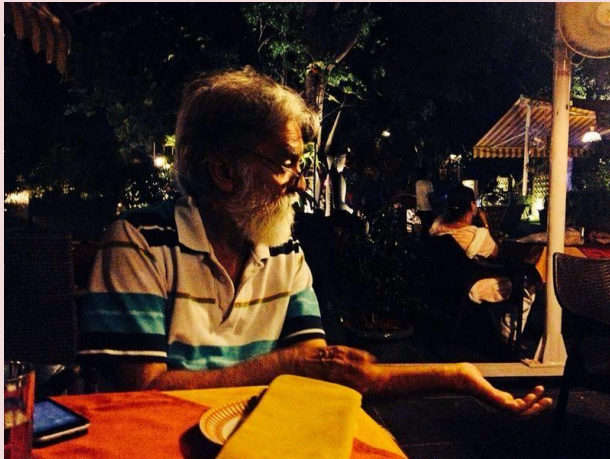
IDIOCY: RECOLLECTING 2009

- 1)** There was an outbreak of idiocy, and the world seemed normal. An out-of-work bartender sold her virginity thrice, and made plans to leave an estate to an accidental bastard.
- 2)** Like frightened piglets people dug their snouts into sands of imagined protection while swine flu killed at random. Opportunists sucked profits obscene while minuscule demons mutated. Meaningless rituals took hold, whilst specialists squirted spurts of doom. Confusion legitimised idiocy.
- 3)** A superpower spent zillions of dollars on arms while military and militia raped, pillaged, killed and razed hamlets. Blackrobed judges gave the president a peace

prize. Unarmed peaceniks got shot. Terror like smog came to stay. Idiocy smothered humanity.

4) A planet doomed looks at us like a mother dying, while the affluent try to chop off her body part. Idiocy is a miasma that cloaks quiet desperation.

5) Power of greed like alien seeds grew wild, potatoes grew five times bigger like obese kids, when injected with frog DNA, Worse than poison, GM food could make us freaks.



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.



I'M MUMMY BECAUSE OF YOU

A relationship so strong and pure

Through thick and thin you made it easy

Like all other relationships

Like any other mom and son

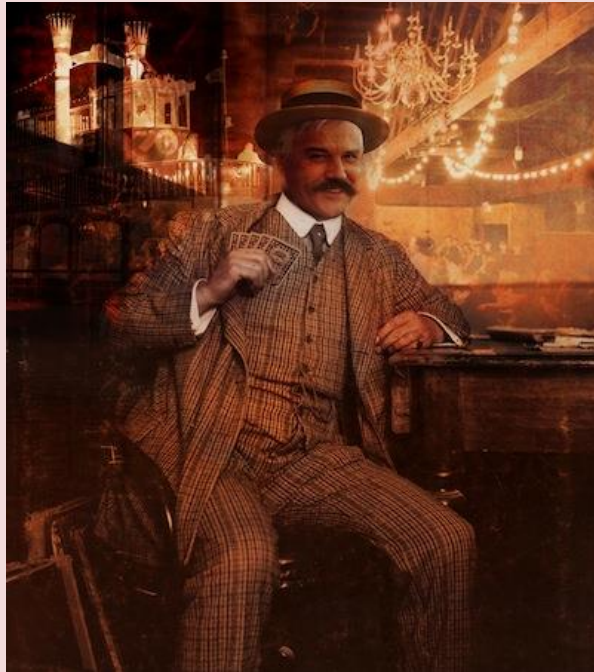
Actions sounding rude and kindness unfelt

We had each one to grow with love unbound

Grateful to God for this gift of love
A relation that dawned in your teens
An angel a mother begot
Left to me to care for
Blessing me from up above
For the best I did with reverence.
Each time you wish on Mother's Day
My eyes brim with tears
So fast the years have flown
I'm mummy because of you
For the day you called me mummy
Still etched in my heart
For it takes boldness from a son in teens
With acceptance to call me mom



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



**I'M A RIVERBOAT BOY,
POEM ON HALSTED STREET**

As sure as church bells
Sunday morning, ringing
on Halsted near State Street, Chicago,
these memories will
be soon forgotten.

I stumble in my life with these words like broken sentences.

I hear and denounce myself in the distance,
mumbling chatter off my lips.

Fragments and chips.

Swearing at the parts of me I can't see;
walking away rapidly from the spiritual thoughts of you.
I'm disjointed, separated from my Christian beliefs.
I feel like I'm at the bottom of sin hill
playing with my fiddle, flat fisted, and busted.
So, you sing in the gospel choir; sang in Holland,
sang in Belgium, from top to bottom,
the maps, continents, atlas are all yours.
I detach myself from these love affairs drive straight,
swiftly,
to Hollywood Casino Aurora.
Fragments and chips.
I guess we gamble in different casinos,
in different corners of God's world,
you with church bingo, and I'm a riverboat boy.
No matter how spiritual I'm once a week on Sundays,
I can't take you where my poems don't follow me.
Church poems don't cry.



Michael Lee Johnson: He is a dual citizen of the United States and Canada. Today he is a poet, freelance writer, amateur photographer, and small business owner in Itasca, DuPage County, Illinois. He is published in more than 1072 new publications, his poems have appeared in 38 countries, he edits, publishes 10 poetry sites. He has been nominated for 2 Pushcart Prize awards poetry 2015/1 Best of the Net 2016/2 Best of the Net 2017, 2 Best of the Net 2018. 198 poetry videos are now on YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/user/poetrymanusa/videos>. Editor-in-chief poetry anthology, Moonlight Dreamers of Yellow Haze: <http://www.amazon.com/dp/1530456762>; editor-in-chief poetry anthology, Dandelion in a Vase of Roses.



I NEED A FAIRY NOW

I need a fairy now

In these days of so many deaths

A fairy true and wise

A fairy with a magic wand

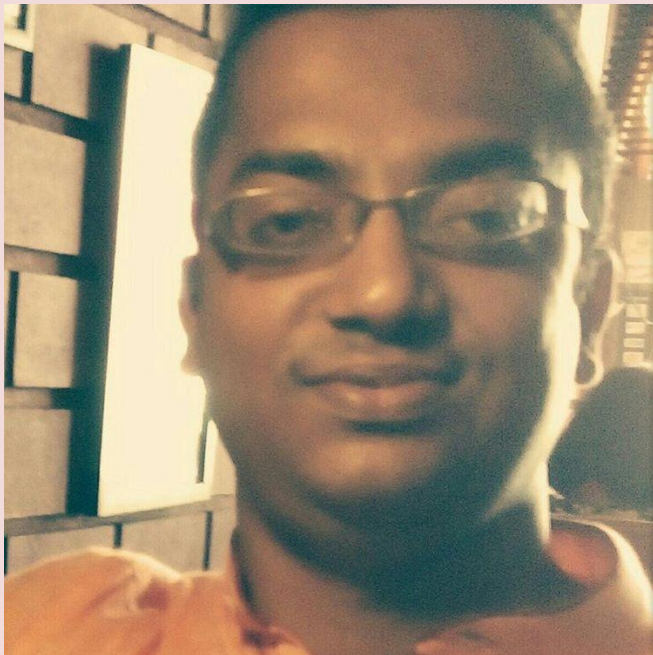
Who would take me away to greener pastures

Valleys where flowers bloom in all seasons

And birds sing only songs of mirth

And streams murmur tunes so enchanting
That one can only think life as the most beautiful thing;

I need that kind of a fairy now
Beauty of a soul and mind
Having the kindest heart.



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



GREEN LEAF YELLOW LEAF

The day my soul departed
Felt like the day I would laugh!
It was the day I longed for so long
Without cease, without doubt
That it would come, for sure
Even if just for once!
The day, so magical
So full of love.

Like the green leaf, just born,
Knowing that it's time to rejoice
And be green till time comes.

Time to turn yellow.
Knowing that the end has come.
Albeit, there's nothing to be sad
As life has been lived, not too bad!

But the day my soul departed
Turned yellow before time.
With utter disbelief and horrid surprise.
Bit by bit it swayed away, the soul
Like a yellow leaf fallen and drifted away
To nowhere.

With every single lash of the whip
That you called words,
By every inch of the shackle that
You adorned me with.

The torture you said you were bound
To provide me with
In bounty!

I was amazed by the ways
You strangled my dreams,
Seduced me with lies
Just to suffocate.

The once green soul, now tired
Yellow and feeble
Didn't even bother to say goodbye.
The lifeless soul flew high above
Into the darkest sky.



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



COVID 19

(Happy World Day of Poetry)

Dedicated to Covid 19 victims, patients, and all the health workers around the world.

Tell every kid

There's something to rid

It is vivid

Though not lucid,

As we beseech God to forbid.

Even king David
And all he did
The ones he hid,
Are in the mid
So be not stupid.

The corona
That came from China,
Spreading from Asia
Hitting America
Going Australia
Entering Africa
Affecting Martina
And Fatima,
Touching Europe.

This virus
Is very dangerous
And more than cancerous,
No matter your locus
And your focus,
It can affect your status
So be neither porous
Nor poisonous.

This mighty scourge
Gives no one courage,
Rather the epidemic
Is turning pandemic,
Stay home
Even in Rome,
Deaths, priests
No more feasts.

Wash your hands

Safeguard your lands,

No more Valentine

Rather, quarantine.

Schools shutting down

Public places, drown

Shortages, scarcities

Fears, gears

Panics instead of picnics.



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



Me and my torn vest,
Do you see,
The scattered holes and the broken thread...!
Nothing but stars and galaxies,
They are,
Adorning the little sky I have in my eyes,
Often see dreams there to console mere,
To lose all hopes from the so-called donated life.

Poor question would be if I ask
who am I? '
Nothing but the stone that been used,
To build the highway
where your Ferrari and Mercedes rides.

Little ostensibly naked is my child,
An epithet for poverty ridden existence,
Overwhelming inspiration if I am not wrong,
You paint my scorched dehydrated lips
You write poetry on my burning heels,
And speech on hunger, you deliver,
On speechless torn vest owner,
Maintaining all social morale distance.

What about the end of our life..!
I write with my child's tears now,

Kind of spring fest of holi
blood spilled over our iron pillows
And our roti,
Who knows now where we are,
Will you come to see us in our little sky?
To hear the untold story of torn vest owner?



Nitusmita Saikia: By profession, an instructor in National Cadet Core, India, Nitusmita Saikia is a keen worshiper of literature. She is working presently in Jorhat Assam, India. A young budding poetess, Nitusmita Saikia, has been adored by the World society of poetry. She writes in both English and own regional language (Assamese). Being active in

various online Poetry groups and blogs, she has been writing for E-Magazines like Tuck Magazine (USA), FM-Online (USA) poetry magazine, and blog Sparking.biz. With these, her poems have been published in various poetry anthologies National and International.



OUTSIDE

The outside is a glorious place
filled with untold wealth and beauty.

We lost the chance to appreciate it
And so now – stuck inside as we are –
we bemoan the loss of nature's bounty.

The thousand shimmering shades of green
cast dappled golden shadows on the ground far below
under the warmth of the radiant yellow sun.

Then when the velvet onyx cloaks the vertex of our vision
hundreds of sparkling diamonds are reflected in our eyes
as we strain to record in our mind's camera a sight never
again to be seen.

The outside is so close within our reach

Separated by just a pane of glass

Yet trapped as we are we just stand and stare...

The outside is a glorious place

Filled with untold wealth and beauty.



Nivedita Karthik: I am a poet residing in Gurgaon, Haryana, India. I work as a freelance editor. I am an accomplished Bharatanatyam dancer, and my ramblings on subjects that catch my fancy can be found on my blog “justrandomwithnk.com”.



EVENING ON THE TERRACE

The moonlight glows invitingly
Her beauty plays on my senses
I climb the stairs and step out to the terrace
Of my home, secretive, silent.

Looking up at the moon,
My fanciful mind imagines a whisper,
A slither of silk on my frenzied mind
'Who is it?' I ask, tremulous, excited

The moon looks down at me

Cool, glowing, impassive

'So many adjectives', the silken voice

mocks; insidious, yet gentle

I look around, trembling yet thrilled

You see what you want in me, the moon seems to whisper

I am lovely sometimes and I am cold and frozen at other
times?

Do not cast your impressions on me

I am not the mirror of your thoughts

I am a distant body, not human

so do not give me attributes

That are your creations.

Abashed, yet relentless
I gaze at the silvery loveliness
Above me, so close...
Yet so distant.



Padmini Rambhatla: I am a poet, teacher and homemaker residing in Chennai, India. I work as a high school English teacher. I have contributed to Glomag and my children's school magazine. I have not published anything so far but in the near future, I will. One of my recent and best accomplishments has been to develop a calmer and stronger attitude towards challenges.



Over the week, I happened to come across incohesive discussions on femininity and feminism. A strife with regard to devoting one's life to family, caring, nurturing (gastronomic too) and offering one's life to having a happy home as opposed to choosing to have an independent identity and career that coexists with family priorities or otherwise.

Different people different choices, but what I find stupid is discussing the matter of choices as if one is above the other. Every choice comes with its own baggage of

unpleasantaries and what we need to honour is the same in the name of understanding.

Our opinions are darkly coloured with what we are good at, what works for us, our selfishness, drawbacks, the experiences we have had, what we can and cannot do.

Our abilities and what we have done in given situations and our instinctive reactions when we come face to face with what is required of us, shape our opinions.

So how can we be better than the other? What is the need to be better? Answers to that are varied again. We contribute individually to world in our own ways.

And naturally, all of us, as distinct as we are, come from different places. Our trials maybe or may have been different but no one is free of difficulties no matter what one chooses to do (the futility of choices, frustrations, sorrow, angst, feeling undervalued and unappreciated).

Not all women who stay at home are loving, nurturing domestic goddesses. Not all working women are Corporate Queens. Some may be and many of us are good at other things. We can hardly ever classify ourselves into types and combinations or fit into one particular box, so how broad a spectrum can women be!! Find that bridge of humility but take no disrespect. LET US NOT DRAG EACH OTHER DOWN.

Nothing beats a loving woman and nothing overtakes self-worth and fierce self-awareness. Knowing what is good for us is enough to pave the road ahead.

Have a bag full of understanding and love, loads of love enough to love people different from us, what we do, what we like, what we think we are, who believe in different things, live in a way unlike we do and the like.

Have a heart loving enough to understand that opinions are deep rooted in individual experience and also remember that everyone holds on to their beliefs dearly as they are important to them as ours are to us. So one tends to defend them at any cost, fight tooth and nail for the same.

Fighting is futile if we do not fathom the root of strife with another person and our own. And it takes a heaven for women to be united in their opinions and unless we achieve that, how can we get men to behave congruently? No one should treat us unfairly. **AND WE CERTAINLY NEED TO TREAT EACH OTHER WITH CARE.**

In the end, it is all about how we feel within and what we need as opposed to who and what stands in the way. Let us not oppose one another irrespective of our choices.



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



THE DEVIL'S TREE

As a child, my spine got chills
hearing them tell
Yakshi lived on the palm tree,
took the forms of pretty maidens
enticed men for carnal enjoyment
and devoured them.

These wandering souls
waited under the *pala* tree,
on Friday nights, so they said,
for victims, thirsty of revenge,
hovered around midnight
in white tresses and long open hair.
Fragrance of jasmine
proved their presence.

I became a prisoner of beliefs,
scared to venture out after dusk

even to the courtyard
without elders envoy.

Ezhilampaala, the evergreen tree
with ornamental shades
near the temple
had leaves in whorls of seven,
exciting white scented night blooms,
and long fruits almost touching ground.

Notes:

Ezhilampala(*Alstoniascholaris*) or Yakshi Pala in Malayalam, (saptaparni in Sanskrit) is an Indian native tree in which leaves come out in whorls of seven. During summer as the tree bears fruit, the tree resembles a woman with her tress hanging loose. According to folklore, the tree is believed to be an abode for evil spirits due to its scented night blooms, white in colour.

Image Link

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Pankajam: Pankajam is a bilingual poet and novelist residing in Chennai India, retired from BHEL as Dy Manager/Finance. She has contributed poems, articles and book reviews to various anthologies and journals. She has published so far 3 novels and 11 poetry anthologies in English and has won many awards for poems and short stories including the Rock Pebbles National Literary Award 2019, Cochin Litfest Poetry Prize 2019 and ISISAR Award for International Essay competition 2019.



IN SEARCH OF THE SOUL OF MONA LISA

Again and again I have visited you Mona Lisa.

There in top security you are in an exclusive space in Louvre.

Many a poem has been written about you.

Songs have been sung in praise of you.

The master brush strokes of Da Vinci have made you immortal.

You are an epitome of Italian Renaissance art.

An ordinary woman of a noble clan.

You have made millions your fan.

But who are you, who is the real Mona Lisa?

What were your thoughts when you posed for your portrait?

What was the sadness hidden in you?

What were your ideas and your view?

The paint has expressed the beauty of your face.

The exquisite dress and the lace.

But the master painter couldn't express your inner being.

Your soul is still hidden and not there for seeing.



Paramita Mukherjee Mullick: I am Dr. Paramita Mukherjee Mullick and I live in Mumbai. The sheer love of poetry transformed me into a poet from a scientist and educationist. I have started and am the President of the Intercultural Poetry and Performance Library (IPPL) Mumbai Chapter. I have five books to my credit and my poems have been published in more than 250 national and international journals. I am blessed to receive numerous awards including the Gold Rose from Argentina for promoting literature and culture. Some of my poems have been translated into 30 languages.



My father lived a soldier

Struggled

Fought

Defeat he felt

But as a soldier

I was the most troublesome son

Yet he loved me

Forgave my mistakes.

He could stand against the whole world

Defend me, support me

Encourage

Always told me

Do what is right.

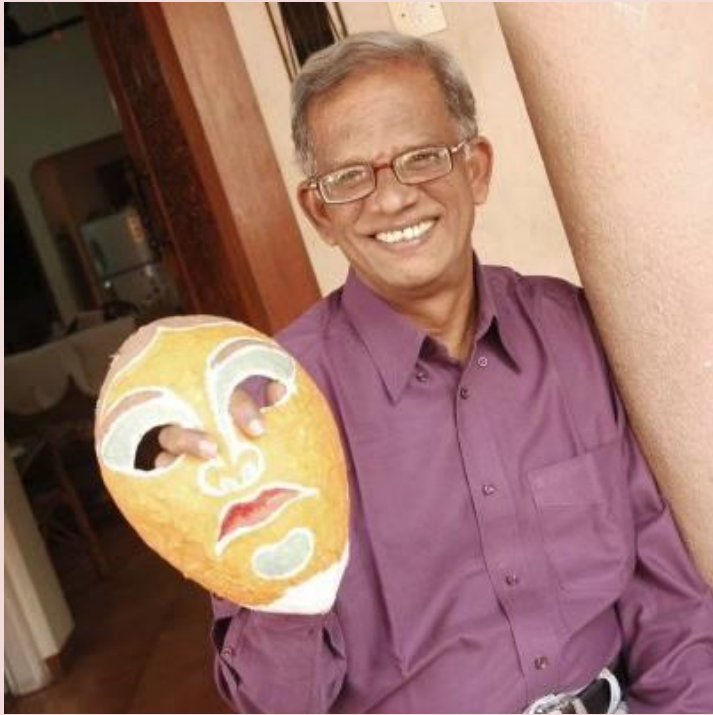
I could not be by his side

When he died.

His death he welcomed

Always felt Death is beautiful.

A Guru even now.



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



A BIT OF A TUG

The house sale.

says my dad laid in bed.

Not my decision.

I can't breathe when I sit up,

when I stand.

This is how it is.

I wait to die

laid here.

Twenty seven years
getting the garden just right,
palm trees, bird table, pergola
all placed to please.

Employs electricians
for the shower, bath, Jacuzzi.
His careful draughtsman's
pencil draws the circuit boards,
notes how to clean the connections,
undo this screw, not that one.

A bit of a tug as at each of his coughs
he winces, eyes shut, hand hovers
for a tissue to spit out his apologies
for sleeping when I sit with him.

You don't need to apologise.

So you keep saying.



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



BRANNIGAN'S FLANNEL

Old Mr Brannigan lived down our street
With nothing but cardboard, worn on his feet
His clothes were in tatters, worse than Daniel O' Dannel
But his mind was all clothed in best Brannigan Flannel

His tales from old Ireland, were as magic to us
As Kids gathered round when we met on the bus
He'd tell us of Leprechauns and great pots of gold
And how certain folk, they never grow old

He told how he'd once kissed the Blarney Stone
And how he once found a great giants bone
They once lived in old Ireland a long time ago
Their causeway is still a great tourist show

Old Mr Brannigan once lived down our street
With nothing but cardboard, worn on his feet
Brannigan's Flannel is gone now, he died
But I carry his memory deep inside



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



THE ORANGE KAMALA GAMDA

It was that hour of night
the orange Kamala Gamda
silently swayed,
still looking bright in the dark night sky

Longing, for dawn
to lift up its beautiful head and stem
in the lone company of the night sky
the Kamala Gamda lingers bright

The sun waits too,
to cast it's spell on its dear fiend;
to refresh it's petals and spread its magic
with its ever sweet fragrance

The Gamda phul or the orange marigold
enjoys the golden glaze of the sun
spinning and turning its head
In sheer merriment
and merrily it sways with the lilting wind

Often the sweet wind gurgles
as the flower sways in many directions
the Kamala Gamda calls every girl, boy and folks seeking
attention and admiration!



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



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PWUuGDovHEI>

AAYIRAM ULI PETTU ORU LINGAM

A THOUSAND CHISELS MAKE A STATUE

I know you'll keep revisiting me
Again and again,
Till my last breath.
As a piercing thorn stuck to my toe,
Making me bleed each time you prick,
And watching my ire
As I wince with pain,
The excruciating pain that you are!

But forget not,
Every time you peep your head,
I'll keep knocking you down,
Like Kanha did to the deadly serpent.
And, ironically,
By the time my senses become numb to your pain,
You'd have unconsciously carved a masterpiece out of me.
One that withstands the tests of time.



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



LET ME HAVE A STROLL

Let me have a stroll

It is night, stars are playing hide and seek with the moon

The sky has spread wings, in search of new nest

Wind unfurling the leaves of trees

Leaves are becoming birds

Men are turning in to cages

Streets are sleeping like paralyzed patients

Ponds are differently abled

Drains are gurgling water in their throats

I can hear the croaking sound of a frog inside the jaw of a snake

The city is swallowing sounds

Hunger everywhere

The city is swallowing stones, mountain, chirping of birds,
croaking sound of frogs, bleating sounds of sheep,
murmuring of brooks,

The city is grazing green grasses, grasshoppers

The city is drinking streams, rivers

The city is eating creepers, insects, birds

One day the city will eat stars!

Eerie silence everywhere

Fear everywhere haunting in the street

I can hear the sound of my footsteps

I am walking, I am running I am galloping leaving behind
fears

I am heading towards the city of life leaving all sorts of
deaths behind

A quite different sky here I could see, meditative

The moon is a giver of light

Stars are illuminating

A different earth altogether

Greeneries everywhere

Ponds overflowing, water percolating down to paddy fields

Streets are walking

Streets are talking to streets

Trees spreading their limbs

Birds are flying away with their own skies

Eyes nestling inside the rainbow of dreams.



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



TATHASTU—SO BE IT

God heard everyone's prayers in one go, and how!

One power wanted supremacy,

It boomeranged somewhat!

The world got united against it!

Working parents craved quality time with their kids, they got it!

Kids did not want tests and exams,

The stress of mugging and high percentage performance,

They got promoted, just like that!

For once, Teachers too felt relief,

No question papers and answer sheets deadlines!
Grandparents felt wanted, loved in 'cream' company!
Moms cooked up feasts for their loved ones,
Shop owners spent fun days with family!
The police too had a working holiday,
No traffic snarls, less crime,
Places of worship closed,
People found Him in Good Samaritans, Doctors and Nurses,
Bank staff applauded for their
essential service!
Mother Earth heaved a sigh of relief,
Rivers became cleaner,
Himalayas could be viewed 200 kms away!
Animals had a field day, prancing through concrete jungles
and farmlands!
People now know the difference between needs and
wants,
An important lesson learnt,
Jaan hai to jahaan hai!

Life is more precious than money!

The virus taught the world valuable lessons,

Let us not forget them!



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



WOMAN

Burning always for others

Spreading the light of love

Doing everything without boredom

Tired, but no complaint

Work after work

Recharges herself with dedication

Energizes her family too

Transforms hell into heaven

The divine rejuvenator

A miraculous gift of God

The holy light that spreads
Every nook and corner
Of each and every house
Her mere presence
Transforms each house
Into a heavenly home.



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.



SIZZLING HEART

The heart often burns in solitude,
Creeps stealthily to the blue horizon
Sometimes keeps flying to the seamless beauty
Freezing moment jingles in ecstasy
To unlock the door of my caged soul,
Raptured dreams take flight to the unknown path
Rather have the pleasure
to meet, to kiss, or to touch the bashful flowers
That is waiting in the path
In the tranquility of nature
The heart often lost its mind

In every single minute
it beats faster, accumulating joy
In between dusk and light
The midsummer night plays
a swan song everyday
Which increases my heart beat rapidly
Vanishing the dullness of life.



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



IMAGINING ME IN THE OTHER WORLD

I am in the strange world, know not
If the time is ripe or Dictum of His Will
Propitious, strange experience;

My home, my private chamber, replete
with books and leaves falling, powdered
ancient preserves of my clinging to them;

what is happening to the cow shed, young calf
just born coming round, mother's affectionate
touch, in between chewing the grass ;

century old home , pillared structure, inmates
moving round each in his or her choosy aura,
now after pursuit of different modes ; why?

Sin and sinning, infighting and thirst after
gold and coin, swallowing one another,
reduction of beings into nothing, nothingness

prevails all around, making many wonder
at the nothingness of existence,
only nothing remains , nothing only;

Only Hope prevails, rebuilding
Our shattered ruins, gathering like
Sparrows twittering.



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

blogs: pearlradhe.blogspot.in/pearlradfhe.wordpressf.com



TIME HEALS

I've been away for such a long time, seventeen months,
to be exact, or fifteen years, to be precise,
that now I think even if, or when, I return,
I will be a stranger to my lanes, my river, my ghats,
my people, even my own house and neighbours.
I will be a stranger to my city.

I used to click and record a lot in my initial visits, but then,
something happened, I don't' know what,

and I didn't feel like using cameras anymore.

So, I don't have pictures from my previous visits,
nothing from the last visit (last in both the sense of the
word,
at it seems today) as I did not carry any camera then.

And have I mentioned that my dreams are not all of them
set

in my city anymore? In the beginning,
even my micro-dreams were in my city.

Now, seldom.

I've lost,

and my dreams have confirmed that loss.



Rajnish Mishra: He is a poet, writer, translator and blogger born and brought up in Varanasi, India. He is the editor of PPP E-zine, a poetry e-zine.

<https://poetrypoeticspleasure.wordpress.com>



TRANSITION

I am that darkness

Between yesterday and tomorrow,

I am that silence

Between happiness and sorrow,

I grieve at the bygone

I hope at the ensuing,

Yesterday, I did long for today

Today I weep, erstwhile ruin,

While I'll be tomorrow

I forget to realise,

I remain the remains
Of rubbles and vice..

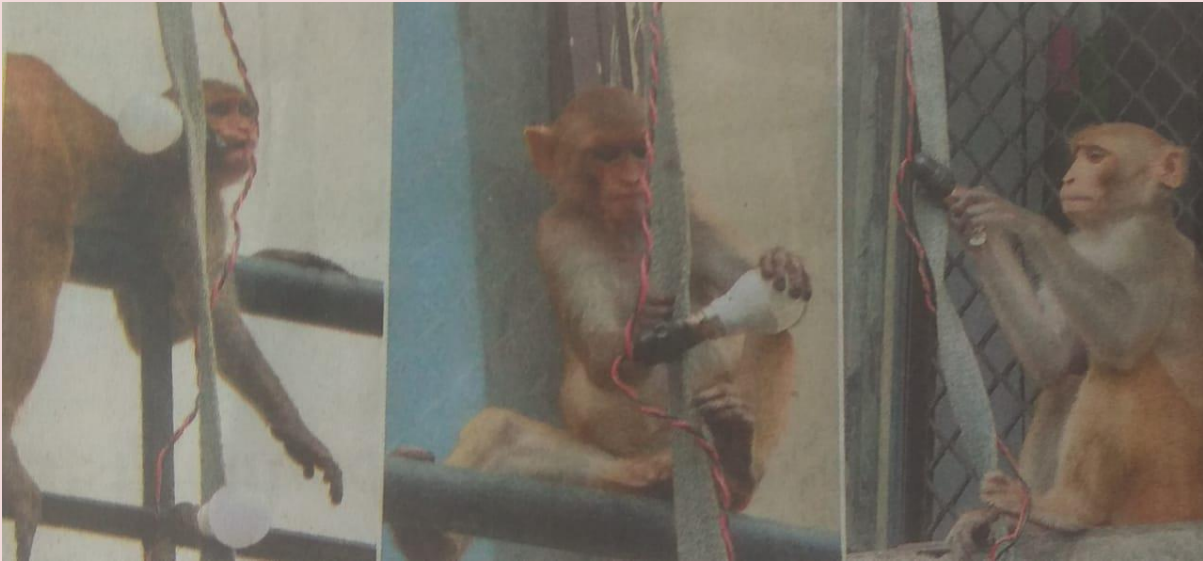
I am that love
Between lust and hatred,
Stuttering for touch
Blue turned red,
Renunciation of sorts
With utter fulfilment,
Smelt obnoxious
Repulsive scent,
While I turn to hate
As sun shows down,
I am that twilight
After an arid wild frown,
I am that movement
Ever blooming notion,

Myriad in my views

Flowing eternal transition..



Rajorshi Patranabis: He is a food consultant by profession. He is a bilingual poet. Crossover - love beyond eternity and Feriwala are his collections of English and Bengali poems respectively. He is also a translator, translating assamese poems into Bengali. He had been published in national and international magazines and anthologies.



This is a period of corona lockdown,
Movement on roads is restricted for many,
Nobody is there to mend electrical faults;
Mankind is not ready to backtrack in
The days of yore to face the sultry
Heat in summers, and plunge back
Into the dark at every nightfall;

I can smell the fault in the proximity
Of hanging electric wires,
and check
The life of incandescent electric bulbs;

Also I can fix the trivial faults
With a visionary look in a manner superb;

You may call me a lockdown hero,
Or a fighter against forces of dark;
But I'm a friend of humanity from ages,
Can jump in for help in times so stark;
I do keep in my kitty all the time,
An active brain and 'monkey tricks' galore!



Rakesh Chandra: He is a retired civil servant. Currently pursuing his Ph.D in Law from Lucknow University. He has got one collection of poems Titled "Moon is Black" and also one collection of Hindi Poems. His English poems have found place in different Poetry Journals and News Papers' literary supplements. He also has authored two books on Law.



GODS WITH FRAIL BODIES

Dismissed by employers, no wages,
Thrown out by the landlords:
The cities now their painful cages,
Worries increase by leaps and bounds!

Oh, the hapless migrant workers:
Panicked, hungry and penniless,
Perennial sufferers down the ages,
Victims of men--mean and heartless!

Survival a tall order now--

How to find food for the family?

They're worse than a dog or a cow

In the face of an unexpected tragedy!

The booming cities with tall buildings,

Built from their labour and blood,

Become cold, crushing their yearnings

As the river of sorrow rushes in flood!

Helpless without any transportation,

They are forced to walk to their homes

Along with the ghost of starvation:

A perilous journey without domes!

A pregnant woman being carried

On a wheeled wooden plank

By her husband tired and wearied:

The route uncertain and blank!

Hungry toddlers on old suitcases

Face higher risks of life and health:

The rope pulled by muted mothers

Forced to overcome the fear of death!

Many died during the arduous odyssey

Brutally killed by speeding vehicles,

Silenced into the pages of history;

Gone forever in the anguished efforts!

Resting on the railway track,

Frazzled they fell asleep,

And were run over: No comeback:

Their dreams and the slumber deep!

The multitude driven to desperation--
We know them but fail to recognise,
Their labour our cities do enliven
Turning them into an exalted paradise!

Look around and feel their presence:
Walls, buildings, roads, skyscrapers:
Suffused with their scent and essence
Sheer magic of millions of hands!

Omnipresent gods with frail bodies,
Ugly goddesses sans any adornment--
Lifeblood of the society blessing lives:
To you all I pay my tribute and respect!



Ranjana Sharan Sinha: Dr. Ranjana Sharan Sinha, a professor, author and critic, is a well-known voice in Indian Poetry in English. She has authored and published 7 books in different genres and 50 research papers. Her poems, short stories, and research papers have been widely published in highly-acclaimed dailies, magazines, webzines, archives and journals, online and print as well. Her poems have been published in more than 15 global anthologies. She is the recipient of a number of awards for her contribution to literature. She received a commendation from the former President of India, A.P.J. Abdul Kalam. Two of her poems are included in the university syllabus for M.A.(English). She lives in Nagpur, India.



I AM IN NEED OF THAT LOVE

I am in need of a love that would always glow

Beyond my fevered brain, percolate in mind

Cradle feelings and cosily in comfort find

A refuge to save and soothe me when in low.

I need that lasting love, need to shoo away woe

With that magic, with that potion to get drunk
And if so, be inebriated with it and stay sunk
Where I can move with verve in limitless flow

Give me a seamless love that cannot ever forsake
Moving the heartless, shaking even a stoic soul
Adding power to pounding heartbeat hour by hour
A love that has what it takes to keep always awake
That tosses me to touch the tip of the Tower
To reach the horizon through that 'immortal roll'



Ravi Ranganathan: I am a writer, poet, and critic residing at Chennai. A retired Banker too. I have so far published three Poetry books and am a regular contributor to various poetry anthologies. I have won prizes in poetry like 'Master of creative impulse' and 'Sahitya Gaurav'. Writing thought provoking 'Myku' is my favourite past time. I love to write on nature, life and human mind.



SOUND BITES

One day, I get a sound clip
With one word chanted ten times
My name in ten languages without script.

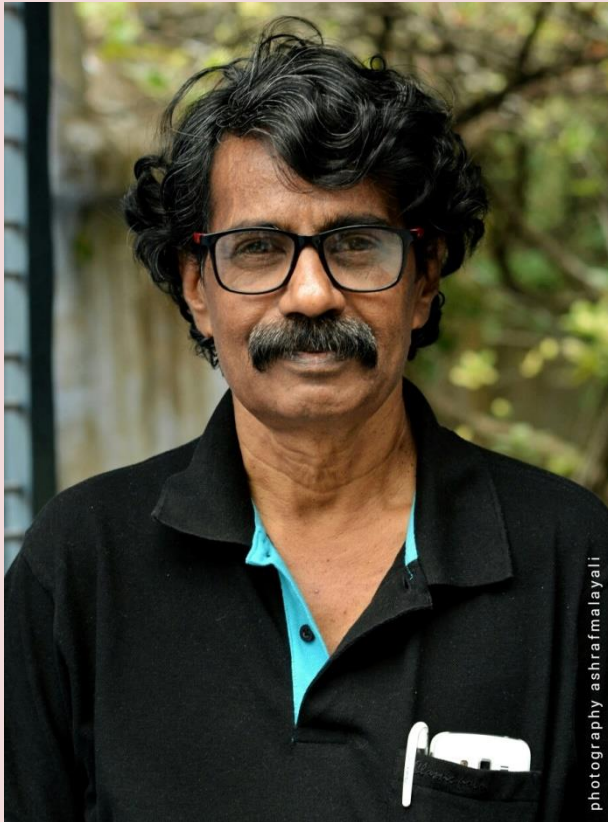
It's her voice from the stratosphere
From the ozone layer from space
From beyond space beyond some
Cosmic debris of a long dead star.

My name my name my name
In her voice of honeyed love
That settles on me like a rich thick
Fog of winter mist pollen star dust.

A sound clip is tricky matter
Devoid of mass energy volume
But it's dense with gravity
A magnetic storm on a far away planet.

It pulls me in a whorl in a weird whirl
To the depths she inhabits now.
Voice voice sound sound echo echo
Her lungs her heaving bosom her voice chords .

See, she has been dead for a hundred years
Yet I float in her sadness
Like a pickled embryo



Ra Sh (Ravi Shanker N): He has published English-language poems in many national and international online and print magazines. His poems have been translated into German and French. He has published three collections of poetry - 'Architecture of Flesh' (two editions) by Poetrywala, Mumbai, 'The Bullet Train and other loaded poems' by Hawakal Prokashan, Kolkota and 'Kintsugi by Hadni' by RLFPA Editions, Kolkota. He has translated several works into English. His two books (1) a collection of translated stories from Tamil – "Ichi Tree Monkey and other stories" by Speaking Tiger, Delhi and (2) a play "Blind men write" – to be published by Rubric Publications, Delhi, are in the pipeline.

Email: shankeran@gmail.com



DINING ON ELATION

freedom scribbles

toadstool graphic memories

etched under frozen Paterson railroad tracks

orangehair wrestlers disguised as presidents

decide collectively

which stranglehold fits better

to exploit the consciousness of the masses

better to advertise wonderment

better to stroke the consumer's perception of choosing
beyond illusions

better to disguise each message of truth with obscure
foreign languages

freedom rewritten in revisionist memos...

drop out madonnas excluded from the great circus...

hey! I was going to notify you

regarding your catering service,

however since you no longer express yourself with passion

I'll order out tonight,

dine on this elation,

elsewhere



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



Image designed by: www.imikimi.com

— with Phyllis Banberger.

ONLY TODAY COUNTS

Only today matters

Pondering tomorrow

Will never count

If you don't learn

To live in the moment

And enjoy the gift

Presented to you today!

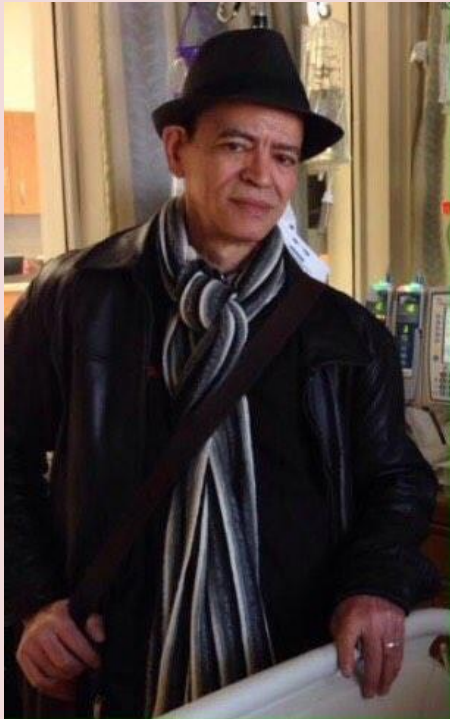
It is only fair to make
It perfect walking on
The given path of my own
Destiny as the wind
Pushes me from behind
Giving a gentle nudge
In the right direction!

Promises of another day
May not be ours to keep
And if you pine and weep
For yesterday's lost you'll
Not ever feel the joy of
What is before you to
Grasp and treasure!

The future is a mere wish
Great desires of the heart

An anxious dream waiting
To become a reality!

Today is my chance
To fulfill the goals I long for
Vividly present in my mind
While hope is still alive
Despite the adversity
We are facing today!



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



OCCASIONS THAT I CHOOSE NOT TO

play belle of the ball

for the umpteenth time,

smear makeup across the faces

of newly abandoned Jack-o-Lanterns

that will never know a forever home,

quaff space needle hair to stand at attention

for inspection by the company sergeant

who seems like a real negative Nancy

in spite of the way fresh cut flowers fill

emotional arboretums;
music be damned in the year of the ear,
sometimes I think the critics just hold up Vincent's
and wave it around for 47 and a half minutes
until the racket is over;
that gorgeous sudden clang,
that black cocktail dress that zips down
from the back.



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



MOTHER GANGES

Our legend tells

For years since a long

Here the 'Mother Ganges' does belong

And with the flow of events with her

She is the most ancient river.

Days come to an end

And from the dusk to the next dawn

The holy Ganges flows on

And again till the another dawn

She continues to go and on.

But with the passing of days
The habitation grows
And as the habitants are on way to rise
No more alone she flows
But carries filths with her
Polluting the holy river.

Still we call her 'Mother Ganges'
As believed since the past
As the legend says
 And believe her to be the holiest of all
 In the need of worshiping 'Idol'
And for every religious need
She is most sacred indeed.



Saikat Gupta Majumdar: I am an amateur poet. I reside in Kolkata. I work in a private organisation in 'Accounts Division' My hobby is writing poems, rhymes, and captions both in English and Bengali. My English poems have got published in various online magazines so far. I have obtained certificate from one of them also. I wish to get established as a Poet.



THE MISERY BIRD

Is it possible a life to complete without sorrow?

From the moment of one's birth

Till the heaviness of his (her) last breath

Dissolves in his (her) lungs and exhales forever,

Sorrow plays as an inevitable ingredient

In the entire span on one's life.

It starts when modern moms vacillates to feed

Their breasts; rather, they prefers to keep

Its shape and beauty;

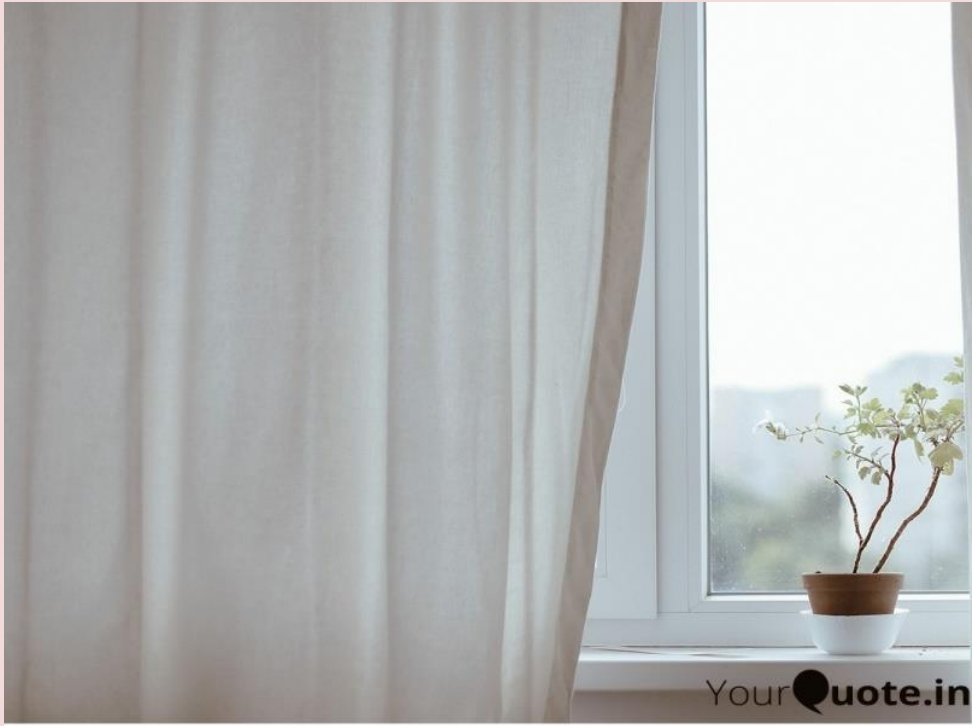
The first shadow of sorrow falls there.....

In the childhood, when he (she) being replanted

From the courtyards of happiness, and
When they flies in colours like butterflies
To the boundaries of class rooms
And when we imposes of restrictions
Into the budding minds, Causes to
Burn the wicks of sorrows in their early ages.
At the end of teens, when their little friends
Separates from them, bird of miseries roosts
In their oscillating minds
Again at the end of joyous campus,
They are all becomes as some isolated weeping islands....
Their salty tears causes to salted oceans
Then, when he (she) enters to the real life,
He (she) faces the reality of naked grief
Where, only his (her) silhouettes would follow.
If the vital ingredient of life (sorrow) have never made,
Then the happiness would have been just an illusion.



Saleem Raza (Saleem Kattuchola): A freelance writer and painter from Kerala, India, working in Doha as Franchise General Manager. He writes short stories, poems and travelogues in various regional language magazines (Malayalam), periodicals with a pen name as 'Saleem Kattuchola', and writes English poems and articles in International magazines and newspapers.



LIFE IN QUARANTINE

Head thrown back, eyes staring at the ceiling

Or, frequent trips inside—

Texting or web surfing on the phone

At times, indulging in habits:

Like - picking at nails and foot-tapping,

Or, shredding paper and bending paperclips

Oh! The mind cycling through options
of what to do and what not to!

But finally Sprawled I
on the wide couch,
Which is next to my double folding-window
While peeping through—
the same chaos outside!

Ah! Nature pouts in sullenness—
The morn light, bright not with flashing gold;
Trees, with whining boughs,
Nowhere the grand festival of mirth—

Having a devil of a time though,
Yet, enduring pain, with a show of strength—
In the hope of better days,
to have the time of cheerful life!



Salman Khan: I am a poet of both Bengali and English language, residing in Bangladesh in Bogura district. By profession, I am a teacher of English language. I have contributed to various anthologies both nationally and internationally.



LOCKDOWN DIARIES

We've been home for around two months,
 Sounds like each student's dream;
 But, oh! Circumstances are such
 That I can't help but weep.

I love my siblings and all but now,
We might end up maiming each other,
I get more restless by the minute,
Thanks COVID! (Note the sarcasm!)

The teachers send in notes every day,
We even have live classes.
But privately chatting with your friends during the call,
Isn't as fun as the nudges and whispers.

I long to go to school now,
And see everyone I want to,
'Home sweet home' say all the folks,
But now (no offense) it feels like prison.

So COVID, COVID, go away,
Come back never again,

As I really need to go out and breathe,
A taste of freedom I really need!



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



(This is a conversational Triolet poem. The requirements of this fixed Triolet form are straightforward: the first line is repeated in the fourth and seventh lines; the second line is repeated in the final line; and only the first two end-words are used to complete the tight rhyme scheme. Thus, the poet writes only five original lines, giving the Triolet a deceptively simple appearance: ABaAabAB, where capital letters indicate repeated lines.)

GRIEF

"Do you know how it feels, to be caged by grief - concrete and palpable?"

Asked the mad woman in the street.

"When all is lost, and even beauty no longer beautiful"

"Do you know how it feels, to be caged by grief - concrete and palpable?"

"When the mind wonders mindless, nothing else remaining tangible"

Smelling of smoke and sadness, eyes dimmed by defeat, I dared not meet.

"Do you know how it feels, to be caged by grief - concrete and palpable?"

Asked the mad woman in the street...

Yes, I have tasted grief in the salt of my tears

As I stood stoically, letting the blade cut deeper into my veins, trying to trade grief for pain

I have lived through my worst fears

Yes, I have tasted grief in the salt of my tears

My innards torn apart, shattered by so many daggers and spears

I have been slain alive, wandering a world where I've nothing to gain

Yes, I have tasted grief in the salt of my tears

As I stood stoically, letting the blade cut deeper into my veins, trying to trade grief for pain...

You, mad woman, roam the streets,

I shudder in solitary silence, invisible glass walls

I silently bleed, drip drip to the musical beats

You, mad woman, roam the streets,

I weep through the night into my bloodstained sheets

I speak to a voice that no longer answers nor calls

You, mad woman, roam the streets

I shudder in solitary silence, invisible glass walls...



Samrudhi Dash (Inara): I am a poet, novelist, editor and motivational speaker, currently residing in New Delhi, India. Along with contributions to over two dozen anthologies, international e-zines and magazines, I have published till date five solo poetry anthologies and three novels and conceptualised and edited four anthologies of different genres. I write under the pseudonym “Inara” and have completed my Masters in English literature from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. My signature words are “Hope, Live, Believe”. I have recently published my third novel “Letters from A Stranger - A Life Changing Map”, a blend of a medical thriller with epistolary and philosophical underpinnings which is now available as an e-book on Amazon Kindle.



<https://www.theweek.in/>

MAP

I do not find my country
on any paper called map .

Neither I ask my kids to draw it
On any colored paper.

I do not even travel miles
for the holy dust of Virdavan.

Nor do I offer anything to God, arrested in cages called
temple or mosque,
shining on the map.

Because, my country is not about
Some lines & marks, perfectly drawn
On a paper.

I ask my kids to respect those bleeding feet
Where cracks have drawn the lines of the map.
Those bleeding, bare feet have written the saga of life,
Have crossed miles to win the battle of life.
Dust, that drifts with those travel sore feet
Are as holy as the dust of Virdavan.

I ask my children not to draw the map
But to feel the country & carry her essence in their heart
for ever.

I ask my children to pray for them
So that they can cross the miles safely & reach homes.
Homes, which are not even visible on that map.

Perhaps the prayers of these little noble hearts
will heal the wounds, the cracks,
The blood oozing lines of those feet that made
The real Indian map.



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



pic by Dr. Santosh Bakaya

THE HOPE OF THE INCARCERATED

Oh! How long since I had a proper manicure?

See, how dishevelled I look,

When, oh, when will I get a haircut?

It seems like ages since we dined out,

and look at my paunch, sedentary life, you know,

eating and eating, perennially famished ,

when will we launch out into the free,

unpolluted world, plunging into rich pasturage,
pulsating with stalks – fresh and golden
and become one with the birds
fidgeting on the boughs,
chirping up a storm?

When?

There is a couple quarantined in the same house,
different rooms.

A pall of gloom descends,
as one of the two suddenly stops breathing,
her eyes fixed on the rays of the setting sun.
Her last sunset.

The other recovers fully, rousing himself from his stupor,
calling out to his spouse, who is no longer around;
not a mouse stirs in the house.

But long nursed grouses slowly fall

one

by one

like autumn leaves, as the man stretches his limbs
to jump into another sunrise, sans spouse.

Somewhere, the migrant labourer trudges on towards
homelessness ,

like The Scholar Gypsy, nursing

the unconquerable hope, vague eyes and distracted air.

Will his hope be answered?

When?



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



THE WONDERS

I stand at the seashore

In silence

quietly enjoying the beautiful sea breeze

Inhaling the tranquility of

God's creation and the sweet aroma from the sea water

My hair gets flown away

In the soft breeze and I try to put it back in haste as I want
to enjoy every moment

right here this beautiful seashore !

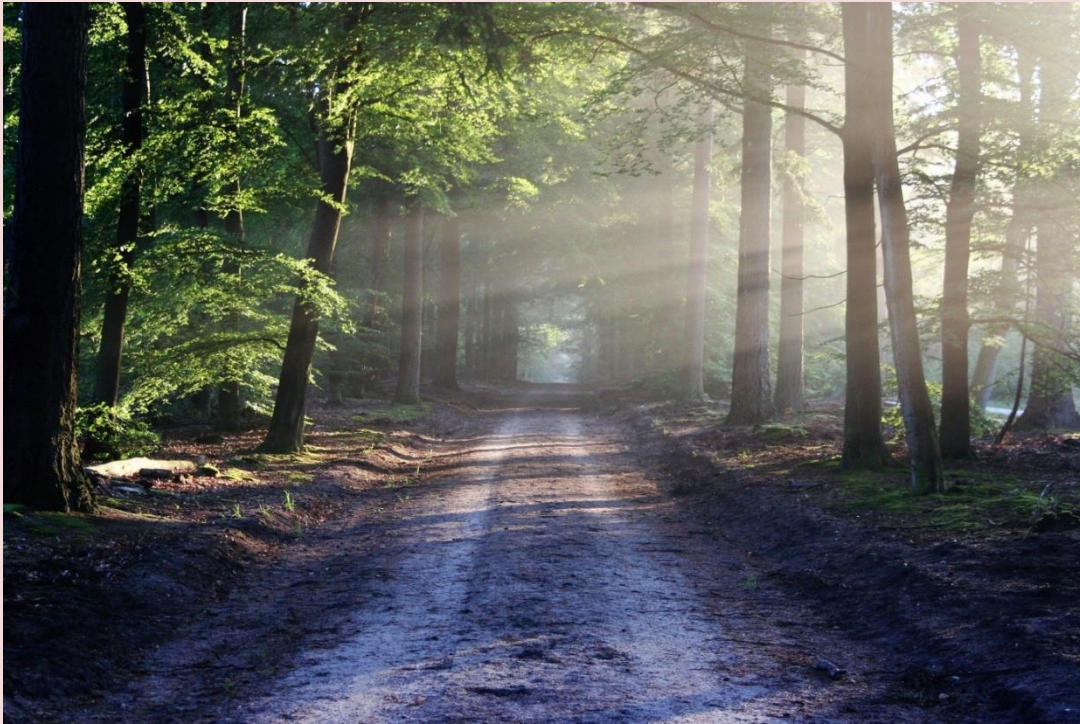
Everything is quiet here

Except the gurgling of the waves so soft

This is the place I was looking for
And I found it at last
I keep thanking God
For the mighty mountains and the lush green hills
The streams and fountains
And the wild animals in the beautiful green woods
I plead to man in my mind
Don't destroy the beauty of nature
The precious gift from above!
I start walking back home with a serenity I never
experienced before
and bow down with humility to my Creator for His
wonderful creation for man !



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



It is what it is

Nothing can be done

Because the war is for nature

And man has always been the gun

To heal the planet

To breathe fresh air

Nature is set

To have some rest

Hoping humans have new sense dawned
As they sat home and yawned
Getting to know nature is all powerful
And this was just a lesson, not revenge in full.



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



HOUNDED

And there is no truly meaningful goal ever achieved that doesn't involve a few false starts & stumbles & fumbles along the way. Thank goodness steady flow & quantum leaps & smooth sailing are also shuffled in the mix during certain phases. Life is a game. Life is a war. Life is stuffed to the gills with peace if you feed it more than empty calories. Life is a gluttonous feast of possibilities. Death has its claws clutched around our ribs from the cradle. The grave whispers our names every day with the type of reverent patience even the enlightened would be hard-pressed to foster. I have spit at demons & sang to angels & laughed

with sinners & cussed at liars & wept with the wounded & fought with the cursed & prayed for the save in the bottom of the ninth. Life is a game. And they say the final out is the hardest to secure, but I have seen some knocked off the mound in the top of the first. I have pissed away blessings & tossed aside bottles & wallowed in the muck & walked the straight and narrow path. I have kicked at the dirt & raised a fuss & pounded sand & sat with simple serenity in the highlands. I have shaken my fist at the sky & turned my heart over to God & stolen candy from the store & given the shirt off my back. Life is a game. The rules are demanding. Boundaries dissolve at the buzzer.



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



I remember an era long gone by

Growing up as simpletons

On Balmy summer nights

Under open starry canopy

On cool linen o'er 'charpoies'

We had our hands and eyes

With no distractions to ourselves,

No electronic appendages, no devices

We slept to soft lullabies

Hummed real time by loved ones

No TV, no ongoing chats on mobile
All we had was each other, snuggled
We shared stories of valor and some
Space with imaginary Ghosts & galaxies
Giggling at one-sided romances

The long months of school vacations
Hitting our assigned positions
Colourful durries on rooftops
Draped on the roof floor
As the clock chimed a perfect nine

Ears to Natures night conversations
The creek of old timber rafters settling
The thunder of surf pounding shores
In crystalline silence songs of rural life
Crawlies afield, murmur of coconut fronds

Oh how will I ever detail, share
These unique bits, to my city born
And suburban inured little ones
The joy of each other in dim lights
With no gizmos, joys of a simple life
When all we had was each other



Seema K Jayaraman: She is poetess based out of Mumbai, India, and is a professional in the IT Banking domain. Her poems paint a vivid picture, colourfully presenting the myriad vibrancies of nature, at times stark depictions of human strife and tragedy. She writes both free style and rhyme-based verses, and she also enjoys writing haikus and tankas. Her debut book, *Wings Of Rhapsody – A Dalliance Of Poems*, was released in June 2016.



ENDLESS WALK

Horizons never ending

A beautiful travesty

Of peace and understanding

Beckoning, closer and closer

In fulfilment of the call from the inner voice

Rainbow, shining forth

Is it a mirage or illusion

Nature, by way of becoming a fusion

Of beauty and surrealness

Sun shining through the clouds
Man walking in the shade of trees
Can we fathom a wilfulness
Into the realm of seamlessness



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



CONFESSION

Anasuya is the one I loved and carried home with me.
When barely out of school I saw a raging world emerge.
Her smile lit up her eyes that seared my life and sealed my
love,
Her voice rings, like bells miscarried into the afterlife.

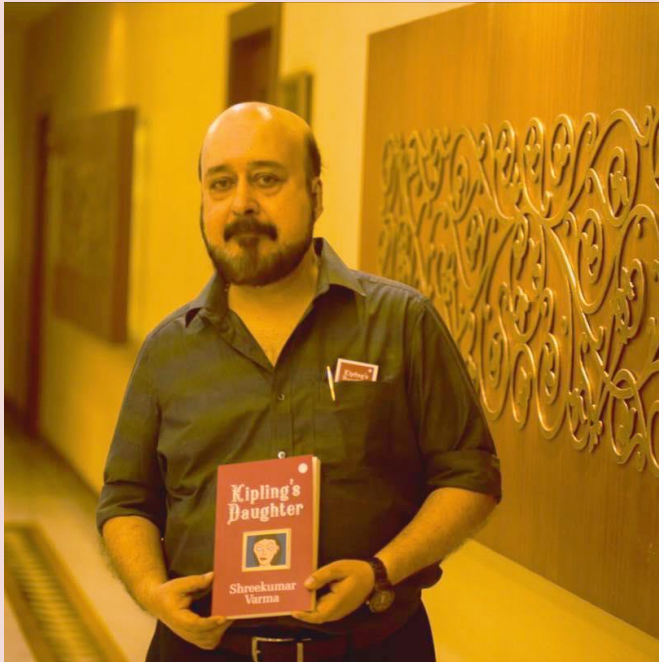
Years have passed, my fingers still remember,
And touch her daunting flesh my mind has drawn afresh.
She wasn't who she was; became each woman people saw.
I was only one, but she was all; her name was different
every night.

We watched her smile and sing her song on stage,

A hundred people held Anasuya in their heart.

The love that lights my heart for you was lit so many years ago.

Barely out of school I learnt my heart's impression of the world.



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

www.shreevarma.com

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



MY MOTHER-1

In your funeral pyre burning my whole world

My love and tears, wishes and ambitions

My past, present and future

The dreams and dramas we shared over the years

When you closed your eyes I lost my vision

When you lost your ears I lost my hearing

When you lost your brain I lost my reasoning

The eyes that do not see you, the ears which do not hear you, the senses which do not feel you

Of what use are these?

Now I understand what it means being truly orphaned

Losing both the earth and sky in between which I have been all along

I am up against reality

None in front none in the back

None to my right none to the left

Life is silently walking on fire

If you can see

See in your absence how sad and pathetic life is

How poor I have come

In few hours I have become the most

Unfortunate man on earth, a beggar in fact

I am speechless

The poor navigator in the boisterous sea

Silently watching the boat sinking in the deep-sea

And I am going deep down in the dark abyss.

Never thought of a life without you

How to reconcile to the reality that you are no more

No more with my smile and tears

Happiness and sorrow

You are in my heart but I am miles away from you

Tell me my maa! How can I bridge up the gap?



Smruti Ranjan Mohanty: Smruti Ranjan Mohanty, O.F.S, son of Raj Kishore and Shantilata Mohanty is a multilingual poet, essayist and writer. His write-ups are published in newspapers and in various national and international magazines, journals and anthologies which are widely acclaimed across the world. He writes extensively on life and its intricacies. He is a featured poet of the PENTASI B World Friendship Poetry and Year of The Poet, U.S.A. His collection of poems 'A LOOK AT LIFE, SOMETHING I LOOK AT, A LOOK, THE RIVULET, THINK ONCE MORE, THE JOURNEY, AU THARE, AU EKA GAPA, SROTASWINI, JATRA, are in the press. Website: smrutiweb.wordpress.com



GHAZAL—THE NIGHT

The advent of the silvery moon stilled the night
The mellifluous notes of the Koel filled the night

A tired bedraggled existence of fulfilling
demands

It is the same routine followed drilled the night

Eyes dark as kohl lustrous hair trapped in a bun
Ravaged over and over again willed the night

Lonely and alone shouldering her own burden
Never to be left in peace trilled the night

Slowly silently it slithered hissing venomously
The cries that rent the air filled the night

Sudy says such is the life a one of its kind
Collecting karmic coins that billed the night .



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



IN THE VEIL OF THE NIGHT

In the veil of the night
when nothing is at sight
only eyes of the owl look so bright
I cease to be me
remain engulfed in the flames of desire
lose foothold and being
fragrance of warmth stirs up passion
enamors existence and contemplation
a subtle tapestry is woven
with the satin threads of love
in the arms of knight

heaven on earth I discover
on the cusp of the night
when this quaint affair navigates to palpate
contours of chivalry
the shield plays spoilsport
my reach captures a handful of dreams
swelling bosom and dwindling hope
stuffed and choked with hurt feeling
long for end of this ordeal.



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



HOW DO YOU DO, MY DEAR?

How do you do dear Sir

At this tough period of quarantine?

I know without my company

How could you be perfect fit and fine?

But you know dear

The whole world is sick nowadays

At the grip of the monster, Covid-19,
Hence both of us are to adjust the situation with the spirit
of fighting.

I know, no meeting, no quality time
Is possible right now,
But have faith dear, for after the departure of this
pandemic
We will spend our time together
Which must be a big wow.

You know darling,
Nothing lasts forever,
This awkward time too might be ended soon
And then again we must get closer.



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



STOPPING BY A CLOSED DOOR

Stopping by a closed door

Some old but bold corner stones,

Spotted abandoned marble floor.

Suddenly I recall something and asked my heart gore,

Is it that very door

Is that very place

My heart never could replace?

Echoes of some tender voice,
Laughing, playing and clapping
House remained the same but
time changed many thing.

Yesterday's child Now grown up
All scattered in different place and direction,
But my mind fumbling that very emotion.

That courtyard, that playful hearts like free bird,
That childhood, that innocence,
Still in my heart creeping and crawling,
That reminiscence.



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



WALKING BREEZE

Morning and evening

Leon takes me for a walk

Attached firmly to his leash.

We venture out,

He gathers Earth-speak

Nose aground.

I archive too

Conversations that linger

dappled shade murmuring

against my skin and Sun

given a chance,

searing harsh licks
before cottony clouds intervene.
Flitting birds in verdant boughs
Singing visual symphony
of summer blossoms
twirling in the breeze
making delicate anklets of leaves
Sometimes susurrating silk
Brushing away worries,
Rejuvenating.



Sumita Dutta: I am a poet and author residing in Chennai, India. I work as an editor and publisher. I have contributed to various online and print anthologies. I have also published a novel. My publishing house, Adisakrit, publishes fiction and nonfiction and is now ten books old.



THE RED EGG

She sank into her body
Silently stealthily,
Avoiding interference
She felt a swamp fenland,
Her own territory
Yet a treacherous ground.

She became the earth
Set her ears into the fallow
To feel some ripples,
To hear a twinge
To enjoy the murmurs of pain
But no sound, no murmur, no life,
Her belly still lithe, solid
No swellings or drooling of flesh inside.

She became a cloud
Hoping to congeal around
A central object, a drop, a zygote
The shape of a pear, glowing red
Gradually becoming harder
Inside the translucent wrapping;
But she felt no substance
Empty... the sky empty... the sac empty.

She became the sky
To draw a ray of light into her
That would swell, sparkle, but not burst
She felt a space
Huge, dark, curved and countless stars.

May be this month
There will be a moon
Gigantic, round, heavy, vibrating.



Sumitra Mishra: Major Dr. Mrs. Sumitra Mishra is a Professor of English who retired as the Principal, Government Women's College, Sambalpur, Odisha. She has also worked as an Associate N.C.C. Officer in the Girls' Wing. She is a life member of the Odisha Lekhika Sansad and the Sub-editor of a magazine titled "Smruti Santwona". Her poems and short stories in both English and Odia are widely published in literary magazines and e-zines. To her credit she has twelve published books; four collections of poetry in English. She lives in Bhubaneswar with her family.



HAPPY TO BE ME!

There is a lot in me for me to be in love with myself

The sun breaks through joyfully as heart radiates

love's magic divine, life bubbling joie de vivre

that alluring sheen of gold, cheeks a gleam

eyes starry twinkling many a dream

laughter tinkles ripples not so loud

my head forever in the clouds

no thought to eat or drink

sleep a forgotten story

for loving myself

Ah what glory!

Saying I love you - what I gave was very precious

Nurtured over many a spring's fragrant love and care

What loved ones lacked giving for their own reason

I learned to forage from life and make my share

embrace my 'own niceties' accepting the self

forgave, smiled, re-birthered lived in freedom

saying no to those who drain the brain

yes to energizing body and soul

stopped searching love in vain

enjoy flowers, baby smiles

breeze's taste of spring

life's simple things.

Look in the mirror and tell the beautiful one there

You're the best, follow the heart's call, live with not a
care!!!



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



DANCE, DANCE, GIRLS!

In a Mumbai apartment's seventh-floor
balcony

lit up by a single lamp

three teen girls

dance their way to freedom

in that barred, tiny space;

their well-coordinated and choreographed
steps and agile limbs in perfect sync with
an invisible music in their joyous hearts.

Nothing can stop artists, not even the cramped spaces,
from a self- expression of an earthy joy of being
young and living,
despite the straitjacket of mores of
conservative middle-class.

These young girls
dance with abandon
and thereby,
realize freedom of
form, movement,
body-soul,
despite the restrictions.

And they rise up
above the limitations!



Sunil Sharma: A writer-freelance-academic from Mumbai, India, has published 22 books, solo and joint. He edits Setu:
<http://www.setumag.com/p/setu-home.html>
<http://www.dr.sunilsharma.blogspot.in/>



Note: This has been written in the form of AndAdi, which has been used since long, in Tamil Literature. The last word of the first line becomes the first word of the next line.

Sunshine on my shoulders is so lovely

Lovelier to walk on sun-kissed paths

Paths through the green meadows

Meadows full of sprightly flowers

Flowers, wild and blooming

Blooms infused with the colours of joy

Joyous moments of love

Love's roseate hues in jasmine strings

Strings of hope hanging on laburnum trees

Trees blowing gently in the sunshine



Sunita Singh: She is a bi-lingual poet and writer, writing in English and Hindi. Her poems feature in Indian and International Anthologies and e-magazines. Many of her poems have won awards on on-line forums like Kaafiya, Poetry Planet, The Significant League etc. A few of her Hindi poems have also been turned into lyrics for private albums. She is an active member of Katha Kathan, a forum for reviving Indian languages. She lives in Delhi and is fond of travelling, music, reading. She finds inspiration from nature.



in watercolor pencil by suzette portes san jose

LET ME (Series #2)

(Septon 2-9)

let me stay with you side by side
along the crashing waves, we shall glide

let me guide you through the deepest deep
from the blues of aloneness, you shouldn't keep

let me show you the vague clear water to roam
with joy and hope that welcomes you home

let me stop the rage of the days current
to pave you the smoothen ways without lament

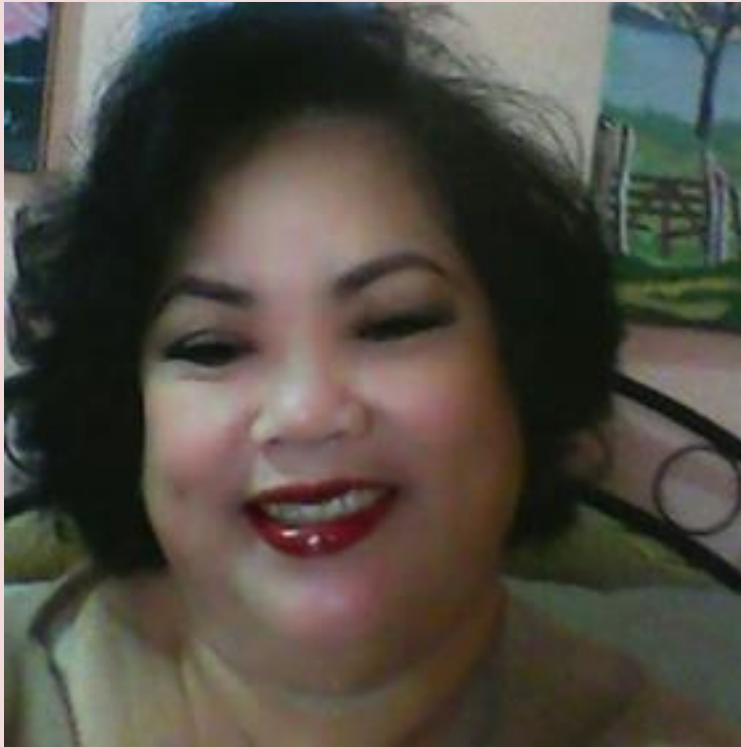
let me thrust out the burden and pain
and no falling back to every thought of refrain

let me offer the wonders of future domain
all from heavens lightness with no disdain

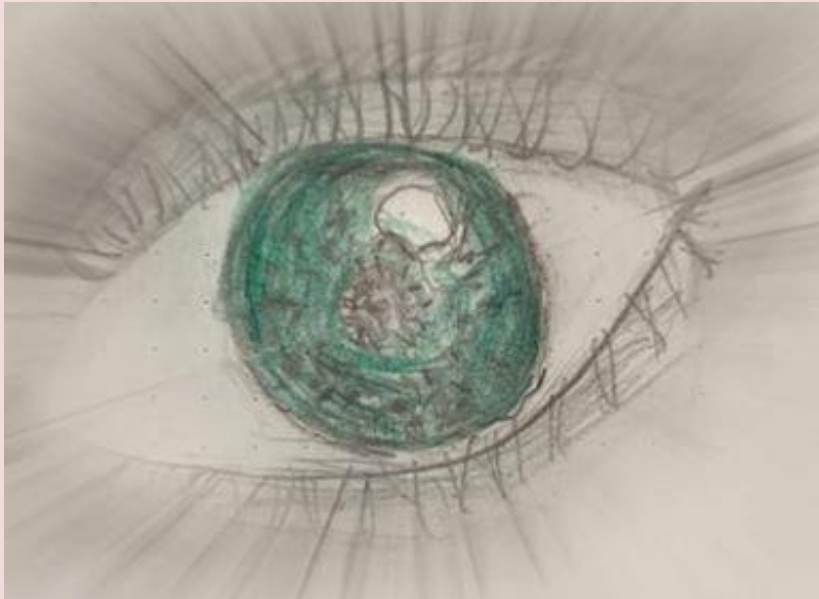
let me tender you the crown of ocean wreath
in the devotion of my life till my day of death

let me be with you so close to breathe your air
share the sweetness of hope to render with care

let me lead you to live a life full of love
in gracious blessings from the almighty above



Suzette Portes San Jose: She was born and raised in Cebu City, Philippines. She went to college at the University of San Carlos Cebu City, Philippines. She is a University half scholar from high school to college. She was born with a passion for writing and living in her art forms. She now has joined 23 book anthologies internationally. She is also a recipient of multiple awards for her ARTworks and Literary works. She also founded her own Poetry Group of artists and poets writing Ekphrastic Poetry. She is also a founder of Artist Kids charity project all for free. She is also a Publisher and is now publishing her own book along with other book anthologies of her group. It has been always her dream to leave her legacy as a fulfilled artist and for her next generation to follow her footsteps. A dream comes true.



RUNNING

Come on, come on

be better!

Life is a mad man's work

Tick Tock, Tick Tock

Time goes by

Breathing down your neck.

Come on, come on

Be better, get better

Be thinner, healthier, prettier.

Be younger, fresher.

Update yourself.

Tick Tock, Tick Tock

Time is breathing down your neck.

Hang on, hang out, hang in there! Life is a race

if you always need to

keep up with fashion, trends

Tick Tock, Tick Tock

Time is breathing down your neck.

Stop - and smell some flowers now and then!

Eat the damn cake!

This time will never come again.



Svanhild Løvli: She is a bilingual poetess, currently living in Gjøvik, NORWAY. She is an avid photographer and loves to draw. She is concerned with nature conservation, women's rights and family life. She regularly publishes in GloMag. She contributed in "Voice of Aspirants", Poetry Planet, and Galaktika Poetike Atunis Magazine. She is admin in Global Literary Society. She is member of several poetry groups.



AN OUTCOME OF MY REPLICATION

Though my fate has thrown me into a dark serail,
Though, all the dices are loaded against me,
I've decided to rediscover some nature trail.
And to find right direction out of my papyrology.

Though, there may be something to chill my spine
And this unpropitious moment has made me mute,
There must be some ravine beyond a huge moraine,
And an inconspicuous solution waits behind a dispute.

So, I'm throwing out my gaudiness for ever to see
My 'self' which is in the inmost recesses of my heart.
I'll invoke that maximalist gold digger waiting in me,
Who won't hesitate to ride roughshod over new upstart.

At last she'll win in the new innings and look above,
To see the salvation of all is through love and in love.



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



OUTSIDER

Hadn't society

Distanced itself already?

From the cries for help

From the neighbor at 3am

Hadn't we washed of?

All responsibility

For harvests

Of rot

We kept the mandatory 6ft

From reports

Of daily crimes

Of hate

Of stratum

And skin

That looked different

Of enemy state

Infested with familiar sameness

And yet...

Along came a virus

Making it official

Man for only

One man

Fed on 'Me Love'

Social distancing

Just a hashtag

We were already

Flawed souls

In self-owned apartments

Rented bodies

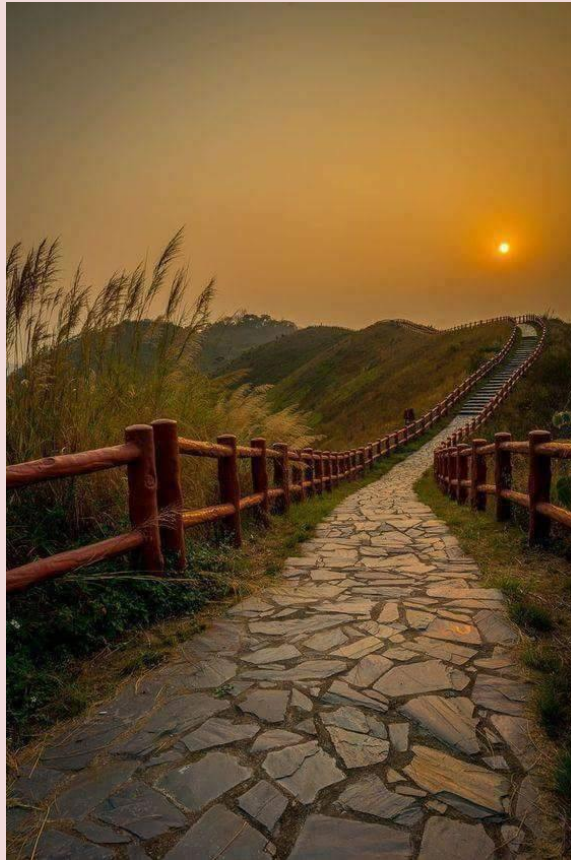
A society

Looking at universe

With an outsider's gaze



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



PRAYER DURING THIS PANDEMIC

I felt your miracles

Deeply,

So deeply!

In my life

Nothing is impossible

Nothing is possible

Without your blessings

Even every molecule

Every cell

Every atom

Every electronic configuration is revolving, with the help of

Your supreme guidance and supervision

Your light....

Brighten up every walks of lives

Every nook and corner

And we are a particle

A minute part of yours

O' Divine

Please guide us

How to survive

How to spend our lives

During this pandemic,

And brighten up others life

Because

When we do something good

With other's life

Its light is enough to
Brighten up their related ones
And automatically creates a positivity and satisfaction
In our lives too
No one can stop illumination
No one can stop bright yellow miraculous light
Of that Almighty
Whose blessings
Are enough to
Breathe and live
Normally, happily
With Humanity.

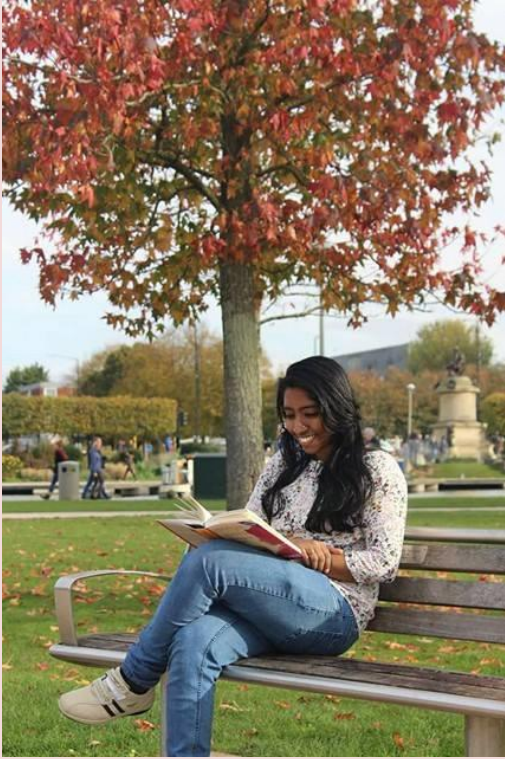


Varsha Saran: I am a homemaker living in Meerut, Uttar Pradesh, India. I did my post-graduation from Ch Charan Sing University Meerut. I am a bilingual poetess and story writer by passion. My many poems and stories have been published in different international anthologies, e-zines, magazines, and newspapers.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



When a glass of whiskey breaks
the whiskey spills,
when a bowl of milk
breaks
the milk spills,
what happens
when a mirror slightly cracks,
what spills out of it?
Nothing,
because your face and your body
is holding it together,
so for the love of all the reflections

you mend with that golden thread of a smile of yours,
stop calling yourself ugly.



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



AN EKPHRASTIC POEM ON JHERONIMUS BOSCH'S PAINTING "THE GARDEN OF EARTHLY DELIGHTS"

Do you think woman would have been introduced to man
As is portrayed in me? And when blessed with procreation
Do they go colourfully overboard, the nakedness cavorting
With owls and giant strawberries, and tattooing music
On a butt?

But I am too a prophecy for the modern world
The cold darkness foreboding
The fruits of the failure of mankind in Jumanji style.

I am a triptych oil painting on oak panel
With a green-grey grisaille at the close

An early Netherlandish masterpiece of bizarre curiosities
A psychedelic gambol that Jheronimus Bosch brought to life
More than five hundred years ago.
A book, you could very well think of me, for I am to be read
From left to right, and on the outside too
A meaningful interconnection between my panels.
And frail though I am; I live yet
I can't travel anymore; I live yet
Some parts of me is flaking; I live yet
My artist is remembered, is hailed, but lives not
Except in human honouring
Yet in the garden of earthly delights
Mankind knows not what to relish
Erudite interpretations have deciphered not
A complete unravelling of the mysteries of the garden
Of earthly delights. And neither will in time
Thus the millennium will go on
And I will live yet, maybe in another form.



Vidya Shankar: A poet, writer, blogger, motivational speaker, mindfulness practitioner, and yoga enthusiast, residing in Chennai, India, I have been in ELT for more than two decades. I have been contributing articles to an international newspaper column as well as poetry and stories to anthologies and literary platforms. Myself a 'book' with the Human Library, I am winner of literary awards, been on the editorial of three publications, and have published two books of poems, one, a coffee table book in collaboration with my husband and the other, to create awareness about mental health.



PAUSE

Sometimes, when we fought, we

Felt like two wayward kites

Entangled in the branches of the same tree--

But each parting saw a part of me

And a part of you

Walking away from us, towards their destiny--

We have ceased, with some sense,
Exchanging excuses, sitting by this stream
Fishing, but not for compliments--

Listening to old love songs before we sleep
Murdered by remixes:
Our Muses shut their ears and weep--

Your fingers trace the highways to immortal
Monuments we have never even seen in dreams:
After all, as you say, " Tomorrow is another normal."



Vijay Nair: I retired as an Associate Professor of English and I was awarded the Reuel International Prize for Writing & Literature in the year 2016. I was the 'Critic of the Year' in 2016, 2017 & 2018 at Destiny Poets, UK and was also adjudged the 'Poet of the Year' in 2018 by the same poetry group. Three of my poems have been included in the PG syllabus of BBMK University, Dhanbad.



OF FLOWERS, STARS AND THE UNIVERSE

And then there was this book

Which came to me from the US

I had wanted to learn of the stars

And love

It was called Gooberz

So over the oceans it came to me

A thick tome of more than a thousand pages

As I turned the leaves I found

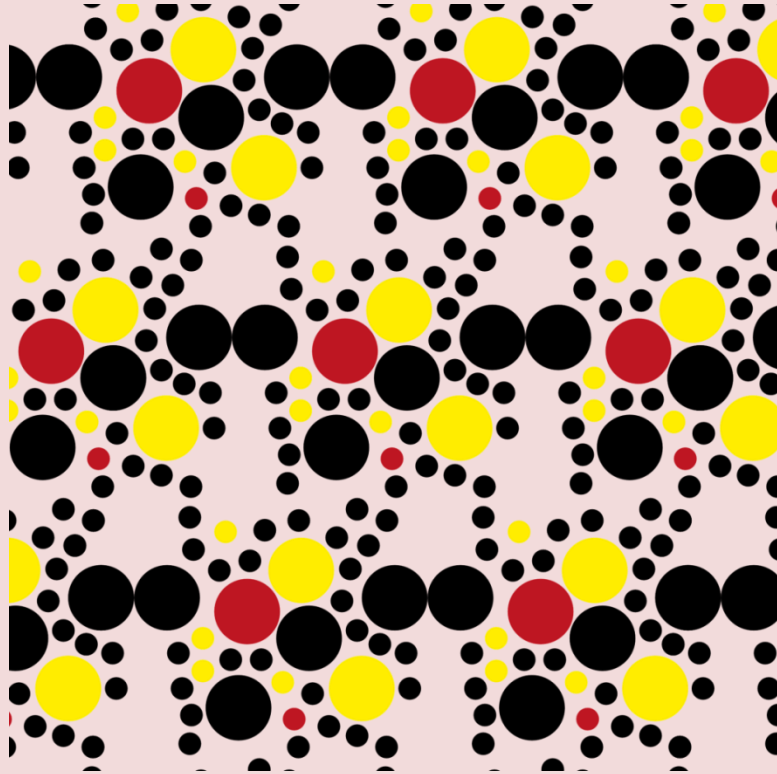
A banyan leaf in it!

That's strange I thought
On looking close I found it nought
Nestled there was a different world
A dark red rose dried pressed
It spoke to me of a love extraordinary
Something that went beyond lives
Beyond, into the universe

I believe now in the language of flowers, stars and
universes.



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



A DOT

From which springs a life
That life yields another dot
Which gives life to another
Turning as tiny as a dot itself
Between the time it takes
For a dot to become an ocean
The dot gets oblivious of its being
A dot.



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



ciao! 😊