

GloMag

2101198

*Monthly Online Poetry and Prose
Magazine*

October 2021



Edited and Published by GlorySasikala

SAMRUDHI DASH



TITLE OF COVER PIC

Untethered Soul

ABOUT THE ARTIST

I remember being inclined towards creativity, particularly writing since my early childhood. With my father's constant support and encouragement, I published my first poetry collection *The Newborn*, way back in 2014 on my 23rd birthday and since then, though writing and poetry have been my primary passion, I started venturing into other avenues of creativity - photography painting and then crafting. I have already published five solo poetry collections and three novels with the latest one, "*Letters From A Stranger - A Life Changing Map*" turning out to be an Amazon Bestseller at Rank 10. Also, though I have never

been a professional painter, but rather a self-taught artist, my paintings and craft work have received a lot of admiration from friends and family. I have been awarded the International Nissim Prize for the Best Upcoming Poet of the Year 2019 and my photographs have been featured in Keep It Simple - Hall of Fame, a popular FB page for photographers. Ironically though, I never learned painting. I just had this impulse a few years back and I went to the store and bought a whole load of painting supplies. When I started working with the brush, my elation knew no bounds as I realized that this is something that comes to me naturally. And since then, I have been painting regularly. The same can be said about my craft works - mostly working on waste, to create beautiful keepsakes, I enjoy the creative process and the outcome - be it a fairy house made from an empty coffee jar or a wall hanging designed from an old glass plate - the outcome is surprisingly satisfying.

Most of my paintings are freehand brushstrokes and direct doodling on paper, depicting sceneries and often what I paint is a reflection of my mood, my thoughts. I have explored various forms of this art and have tried glass painting, sand art, fabric painting, acrylics and water colors which still remain my favorite medium, also venturing into Decoupage, alcohol art, Mandala art - which I have found

to have a quite meditative and calming effect. Personally, I believe all art, all forms of creativity are more or less related and are an expression of the inner soul.

WEBSITE

You can see my creations on the following links:

<https://www.facebook.com/inara1205/>

http://instagram.com/inara_magical

ART PERSPECTIVE

This painting titled "Untethered Soul" is something I worked on after a long hiatus. It was sometime in early May while the second wave of COVID-19 was raging across the country and a pall of gloom and uncertainty hung not just in our house but all over the country. The mental agony that I was going through made me look desperately for something that could help me divert my attention even for a short span of time. Somehow, I feel, creativity finds its best expression when you are going through some sort of mental pain or loneliness. I started working on a rough outline with my Artline pen, trying to picturise something happy and gradually I drew the figure of the dancing girl. And then I drew the half-mandala to symbolise a free, untethered soul. I kept working on it, without thinking what the final outcome would be, adding splashes of alcohol ink

to signify the unbound nature of the free, unchained soul and it seemed to have turned out really well, one of my best so far, I could say.

Regarding my perspective on creativity, I believe we all are creative souls and those who haven't yet found their creative side, it's hidden deep within - you just have to look for it and embrace it. As a poet, artist and photographer, I write under the pseudonym "Inara", which is an Arabic word meaning "ever shining light". I chose this name because my creativity is that one thing that keeps me going against all odds, keeps my dreams alive, makes me hope for a better day, when I wake up in the morning, always full of gratitude to the Infinite Universe for bringing me alive to another glorious morning filled with infinite possibilities and creative art and poetry is my ultimate catharsis, for it helps me "Hope, Live, Believe".

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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BOOK OF THE MONTH

Madiba's Quotes & Anecdotes

Reflections and Conversations

by

Bevan Boggenpoel & Selwyn Milborrow



LINK TO BUY THE BOOK

<https://onlineshop.mandela.ac.za/>

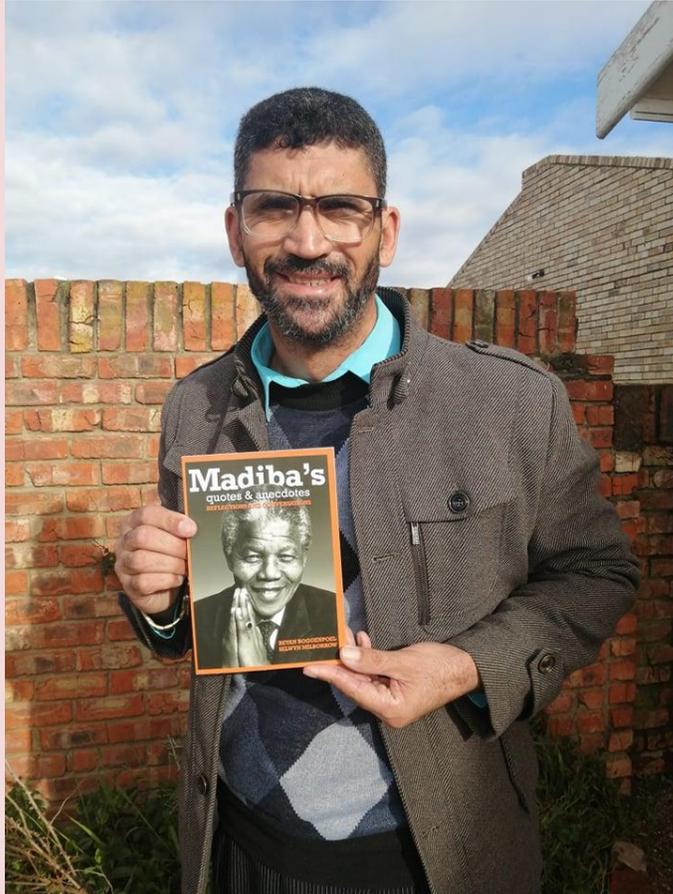
FROM THE AUTHORS

"In the book, we comment on Madiba's quotes and anecdotes as political prisoner, freedom fighter, leader, president, and peacemaker during his lifetime. The heart of a leader is the truest part of who he or she is. Brené Brown states that "daring leaders say the unsaid and brings to light the stuff that's in the shadows and in the corners". Mandela is universally regarded as a great leader, and he demonstrated this during the most vulnerable periods of his life. The poetry is linked to the quotes of Madiba. Commentaries in the book tie in with Madiba's quotes, and our own experiences during apartheid." - Selwyn Milborrow and Bevan Boggenpoel

REVIEW BY CHANTEL MOODALEY

"Love the book "Madiba's Quotes & Anecdotes:Reflections and Conversations". As someone who admire and is inspired by Mandela's wisdom, it's even more inspirational the way the quote is broken down to a level of understanding and how we can put it to use in our lives, and then the poetry that goes with it that is just as much inspirational to the reader.

Well done guys... Top notch writing quality."



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I HATE THIS MOVEMENT

I hate this movement which leads me nowhere,
not even to a shady cemetery or a quiet crematorium.

It invariably leads me

from one giant mall to other fabulous,

from promising salesman to illustrious circuswoman,

from stinking alleys to scented saloons,

from cool bars to hot baranganas,

from hawkish bankers to toothless carwashers,

from dhapas' cauliflowers to rooftop tomatoes,

from gymnasts to lottery hawkers,

from popular poets to skilled pilferers,

from scientists to superstitious,
from sky discoverers to palm watchers,
from bald heads to cascading hair,
from pollutants to politicians,
from social vigilantes to online abusers,
from chamchas to chowkidars,
from killers to the killed,
from rapists to the raped,
from poor peasants to fired factory workers,
from running nose children to anemic pregnant mothers,
from aged cows to hairless street dogs,
from Kerala going boys to narcissistic seers,
from crowded trains to overcrowded hospitals,
from land mafias to moonlanders,
from dying babies to distraught beauties.
I want to flee from these rotted routes
which lead me to nowhere
not even to a yew-yard or an unknown crematory.



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



RAINBOW

*All is quiet,
A kooky ruckus in the
silhouette of an insentient
torso flashes briefly and gone;
A jiffy later, rain appears and
spills from the sky,
plummeting...
My face doesn't hastily*

register the euphoria.

*I crack to step forward
in ecstasy but topple
due to the slippery surface.*

*I steady myself against
the stone wall.*

Beheld by all,

*An angelic caravan
of droplets forms on
the physiognomy of
the aura as the rain
stops plunging on the
ground.*

*At the veneer of the
earth,*

*a lad, brave, like
Henry the red comes off
and flushes with rapture
and races up to me, vying*

*to see the seven colors of
the rainbow...*

*Red,
orange,
yellow,
green,
blue,
indigo,
and violet.*

*Our only hope has
swooped on us. Meanwhile,
the rays of sunlight shaft between
the trees, whacking the droplet,
myriad tinted rays of sunlight fluctuated,
a long arch of seven
colors cropped up in the sky,
reflecting the pure hue*

of everything.

I and my body look like the

cosmos of the spectrum,

vivacious and cozy



Adnan Shafi: I am a poet, writer, columnist, translator, Ghazal writer, motivational speaker, blogger, and reviewer from Tral Kashmir (J and K). I have contributed my poems to various reputed magazines and journals. I have also published my poetry book 'Tears fall in my heart'. In 2020, I was awarded by Gujurat Sahitya Academy for poetry. In 2021, I was awarded the Shakespeare medal for my literary merit, writing quality, uniqueness, and creativity. Furthermore, I have won the 2021 best achiever award in the field of English literature as the title, 'Best English Poet'.



LOVE, DEATH, AND HUMAN BEING

I will tell you everything but not anything

I will recall you that anything is everything

Feel free to move on to break my heart again

I am a spirit with love, death, and human being.

I failed to be a better man who deserves love

Close the door, and leave me without a mercy

From my tears, my joy is drowning in the sea of loneliness

It explains why nobody loves me back like before.

Could it be I am more optimistic about our friendships?

Don't let the green grass fool you, like his green bills of dollars.

I once learned how to love myself, before I loved myself.

You may find your dreams, but not another love as mine.

Let's take a midnight train to the furthest station in the country

Start a conversation and don't be afraid of smiling and laughing

I will spoil if you remain polite, straightforward, and comfortable

Kiss me with your passionate sweet lips and let me flirt with you.

I am dominant but don't know how to live on my own on days and nights

Love does not hover with dove wings anywhere close to our hearts

Death is not a wealth to be owned by the same people who wishes to

-watch me hanging my human being's side on the cords until I stop think...



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



WISH

Let's turn swords into plows.

Iron can hurt the ground
or bring hope for a good harvest.

Let's convert the time of war,
full of hate and destruction,
to ages of abundance and happiness

Let there be only a gun
as a museum exhibit
in our new world of peace .



Alicja Maria Kuberska: She is an awarded Polish poetess, novelist, journalist, editor. She is a member of the Polish Writers Associations in Warsaw, Poland and IWA Bogdani, Albania as well as other organisations. She has received two medals—the Nosside UNESCO Competition in Italy (2015) and European Academy of Science Arts and Letters in France (2017). She has also received a reward of international literary competition in Italy, “Tra le parole e ‘elfinito” (2018). She was announced a poet of the 2017 year by Soflay Literature Foundation (2018). She also received the Bolesław Prus Prize Poland (2019), Culture Animator Poland (2019) and first prize Premio Internazionale di Poesia Poseidonia- Paestrum Italy (2019).



PUJO PUJO RODDUR

You blame it on the lights
the name for which is “Pujo pujo rod”,
for what is clawing inside your throat.

Dead parents make way to your mind.
Festivals have this thing about them.
They bring in the almost-forgotten ones,

those, whose presence as sure as daylight,
as taken for granted too, turned to a
distracting absence that time couldn't erase.

Your letting-go skills sharpened now,
the deletion seemed sure, inevitable, final
of those carefree moments basking

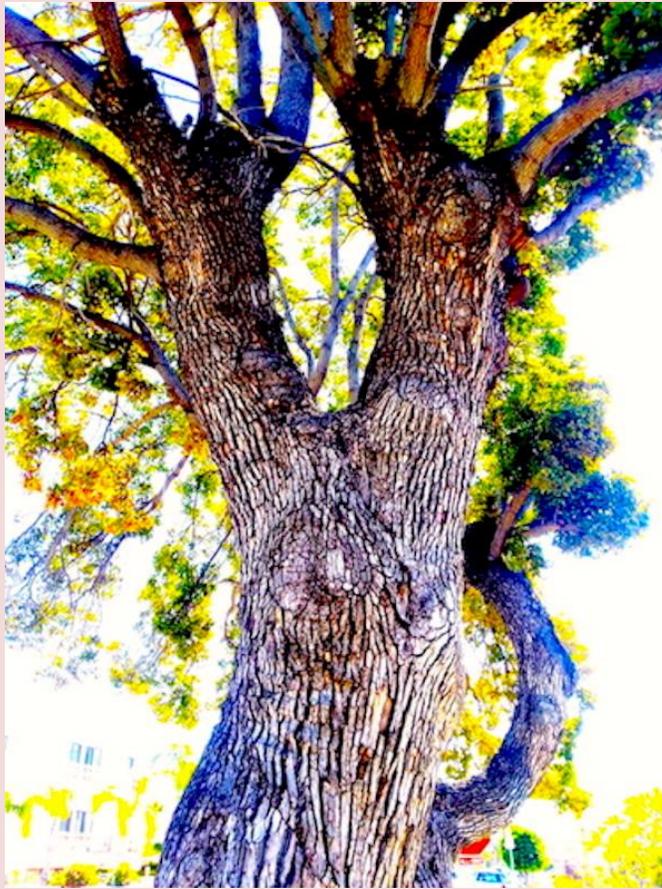
in the warmth of the concoction of friendship
love, truth, the taste of which you thought you
forgot- but for this autumnal sunlight

you endearingly call the "pujo-pujo roddur"

***Note: Pujo Pujo Roddur: the sunlight during the time of
the year Bengalis worship Goddess Durga.***



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.



AFTER THE RAIN

Gold and silver lights rise
from the black grey tarmac
where the rain is delicate
subtle like your glancing smile

Like that day somewhere
where I saw your face in the rose

garden – where possibility peers
petals fragrant with innocence

Let the beauty of the world
rise like this — a soul that hides
behind moments like a tender secret
subtle gold sheets of silver
flashing by in life's dark recesses

Let the streets smile where you land
like when the rain falls and
the dust and grime
run speedily away in rivulets
and we contain ourselves
like seeds for a new story –
dark root to vault of heaven
nothing forbidden

May the beauty of the world

be what we do

May the beauty of the world

be what we are



Ambika Talwar: She is an India-born educator, author, artist, and wellness consultant whose ecstatic poetry “bridges worlds.” Winner of the Great India Poetry Contest (2018) and Pushcart nominee, she has authored *4 Stars & 25 Roses* (for her father); *My Greece: Mirrors & Metamorphoses*, a poetic-spiritual travelogue. Her poems appear in *RuddyRavensCheshireCats&RustyRats*, *Fasihi*, *Roseate Sonnet Anthology*, *We Are Here*, *Grateful Conversations*, *River Paws*, *Beyond Words*, *Aatish 2*,

GloMag, and others. ~ Published also in *Kyoto Journal*, *Chopin with Cherries*, *On Divine Names*, *VIA-Vision in Action*, *St. Julian Press*, *Tower Journal*, *Enchanting Verses*, *Quill & Parchment*, Ambika won an award for a short film. Recently retired as professor emerita (English), she also practices a fusion of holistic modalities. She notes, “*Poetry and holism offer a refining language for us to keep discovering our wholeness.*” She is board-member of CSPA (California State Poetry Society) and lives in USA and India.
~ <https://www.creativeinfinities.com>



MIS/UNDERSTANDING

“You don't understand me.”

“I do. But not the way you want me to.

You want to impose

your own understanding on me.

You understand your way.

Ain't I free to understand mine?”



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 MOTHER

Frenzied beat of drums rend the air

Percussions blend, add to rhythm

The priest in pious fervour performs *aarti*

Offerings to Mother Goddess on homecoming

Seek fulfilment in sacred rituals,

Devotion flickers on dancing lamps

Diffuses lustrous glow on Ma's benign face

Devotees with folded hands chant prayers

A crescendo in ecstatic MA! MA!

The mother somewhere in solitary corner

Of her new found Home

Deserted by offspring

Answers to the call

With a tear drop.

aarti – A Hindu ritual in which love and devotion are shown

to the idols worshipped through offerings of lights



Amita Ray: Amita Ray is former associate professor in English and Vice Principal of a college residing in Kolkata, An academic of varied interests she is a Translator, Short Story writer and Poet. She has two volumes in Translations of noted Bengali authors to her credit. She is presently a translator in several ongoing projects. Her latest publication is a collection of short stories titled TRAIL OF LOVE AND LONGINGS. She has a passion for writing poems and has been widely published in various anthologies, journals and e-zines of national and international repute.



THE CROSSING

i remember giving cricket kits
to children of the white desert
the chieftain's wrinkled face use to lit up
after all we are in Chaman
'Allah's garden'
sometimes even I went
just to see children play
Spin Boldak
is the white desert

where there are no more children
the whiteness has turned grey
a sun was shot down
Afghans holding to these
pieces
cross on to Chaman
where today there is no sun too
hope is only a dying sun
cricket bats trampled
broken
a child cries



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



SHAARDIYA SHUBHECHHA

(Festive Greetings)

A lazy morning by a defunct river

Whose mudflats show the monsoon grasses tall

Waving their plumes of Kaasphool large and small

In North Winds causing a delicious shiver

Shaardiya, the Winter Navratra's here

The Mother Goddess from the snowy peaks

Now lit by the sunrise in golden streaks

Has graciously descended to our sphere

Some fast, most pray, all enjoy holidays
It's time to introspect or to have fun
Goddess time is special for everyone
All use these holy days in their own ways

Fun outings and street food for all the young
Romance for some culture for others blooms
Markets are happy as their business booms
A song or prayer sits now on every tongue

Little girls prepare to be made much of
On Ashtami, dressed up and fed rich food
Showered with gifts and wished all that is good
Actually worshipped till they all run off

Next day, the Ninth, fasting formally ends
The Goddess slays the demon, Joy holds sway

Then Bijoya, Vijay Dashmi, Victory Day
Tenth day that for all sorrows makes amends

The humble joys of sucking sugarcane
Cooking and eating winter cauliflower
Nibbling on radish while the grownups hover
Children enjoy and adults don't refrain

"Shubho Bijoya!", we cry in our relief
The Goddess leaves, but She will come again
Good over Evil, Happiness o'er Pain
Ever shall win, She strengthens our belief



Amita Sarjit Ahluwalia: I am a retired civil servant but at heart a poet and teacher. I write, mostly poetry, in English, Hindi, Urdu and Punjabi. I was awarded the NISSIM International Poetry Award (First Prize) 2019 and then the Reuel International Award (First Prize) 2020 for Non-Fiction Prose by The Significant League, a well-known Creative Writing Group on Facebook. Recently, the Destiny International Community of Poets based out of Wakefield, England, UK declared me Winner of their Poet of the Year 2020 as well as Critic of the Year 2020 recognitions.



BLACKBIRDS

Flights of blackbirds in formation

overhead, going home

or to sleep

turn the evening into winged dreams

There are bruises on the sky

cuts and wounds -

part of the fact that birds can fly -

in the clouds

Red gashes

blue or black

turning the evening into
purple twilight and night
The birds continue their flight
looking effortless
Do they wish to be wingless
and grounded
with or like us here, down below
the way humans wish they could float, unwounded
in the air of the heavens; cutting a path
through, free, in endless flight?



Ampat Koshy: Dr. Koshy A.V. was till recently working as an Assistant Professor in the English Department of Jazan University, Saudi Arabia. He has many books, degrees, diplomas, certificates, prizes, and awards to his credit and also, besides teaching, is an editor, anthology maker, poet, critic and writer of fiction. He runs an autism NPO with his wife, Anna Gabriel. Two of his co-authored books published in 2020 were Amazon best-sellers in India and USA, namely, *Wine-kissed Poems* with Jagari Mukherjee and *Vodka by the Volga* with Santosh Bakaya. His latest achievements are winning a certificate in Italy for his poetry, and editing an anthology as well as working for a UK firm Revise Radiology as content and copyeditor



Photo by NASA on Unsplash

AN ANT'S MEASURE

Lifetimes allotted

An ant's measure

When human mind

So rare

An eternal treasure

We who live

We who believe

Bear witness for existence

Seek purpose

Without relief

We who feel

Moulding and shaping

A Universe

In our minds

Maya morphing

To Reality

Yet Reality

So blind.

Like Blind seers

we weep

At the portals

To stars

So Fatefully Near
to the Gods

Yet so Far.



Amrita Valan: Amrita Valan is a mother of two boys and a writer based in Bangalore India. She has a Master's degree in English literature. She has worked in the hospitality industry, BPOs and as content creator for deductive logic and reasoning in English. Her poems and stories have been published in several anthologies, online journals and zines. Her debut collection of fifty poems Arrivederci was published on Amazon in May 2021.

<https://www.amazon.com/Arrivederci-Fifty-Poems-Amrita-Valan/dp/B09484PMQF>



FESTIVAL

Blood that splashed into my mind,
reached tin - doors, mud-walls;
roofs of thatched houses.

Fire that engulfed rival party offices,
set ablaze mass funerals of
covid kissed bodies, here and there.

Election to the legislature got over
recently. Seats to the avowed edifice
had been booked.

Pandemic reached every door,
tinned and wooden,
decorated and ordinary.

Everybody surrendered to unprecedented
awe. Only the fire was celebrating a festival
of death; only blood reached mind, roofs

in silence. And I suddenly discovered
all seats in the legislature
resembled pale, dried blood.



Aneek Chatterjee: He is a poet and academic from Kolkata, India. He has been published in reputed literary magazines and poetry anthologies across the globe. He has authored 14 books, including three poetry collections and a novel. His third poetry collection titled 'Of Ashes and Persiflage' (New Delhi and Kolkata, Hawakal) came out in November 2020. Chatterjee's earlier poetry collections titled 'Seaside Myopia' and 'Unborn Poems and Yellow Prison' (both from Cyberwit, India) received rave reviews from critics and admiration from readers. Chatterjee has a Ph.d. in International Relations; and has been teaching in leading Indian and foreign universities. He was a Fulbright Visiting faculty at the University of Virginia, USA and a recipient of the prestigious ICCR Chair, given by Govt. of India, to teach abroad. His poetry has been archived at Yale University.



SOLEDAD

Like the unimaginable ecstasy of untouched waters

Unveiling the enigma of a beautiful soul

Like a treasure trove of precious gems

An unparalleled ecstasy.

As summer drew nigh

With balmy evenings, the air thick and heavy

Swimming in the evenings

As fireflies danced

Bringing its own orchestral lights

We freely floated in reverie.

Amidst the wintry chills

Warming our hearts at the fireplace

Enthralled with the rhythm and melodies

The music enraptured us into a new realm

A time of heartwarming bliss

Exulting in ardor and happiness.

A faint knock I would hear

Only to be surprised by your beautiful smile

As you wrapped me in your loving arms

I feel blessed beyond measure

In simple joys there were pleasures to treasure.

Oh, how I yearn for those moments

Seems like its encapsulated in another era

If only I could hear your enigmatic voice,
Trace the palpitations of your heart
as we synchronize an interminable love.

Your treasured love palpitates in my heart
Its beauty crafted in the tapestry of my soul



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



MEMORY

Sitting on the sands

By the side of the river

Watching the lone boat

Sailing away slowly towards

The other side I feel the loneliness

Of a bird inside its nest

With its wings squeezed to

Its sides watching the dark

Clouds hanging over the grove
Screaming and flaring menacingly

The rolling tides come
And go back as breathings
Of a giant lost in its dreams
The boat returns laden with empty
Glow of the setting sun as memory
Of lost love brings tears into my eyes



Anil Kumar Panda (alias Tiku): He was born in a small town, Brajrajnagar, in Odisha, India. At present he is working in coal mine sector and writes poems and stories when he gets time. He has already published two books of poems,

Fragrance of Love and Melody of Love. He is working on his third book now. His poems have been published in many national and International Anthologies. He loves to write romantic poems. He likes travelling and meeting people of different nationalities and cultures. He takes inspiration from simple life of the villagers and Nature's beauty still thriving in rural areas. He enjoys walking by streams and into forests to be with flora and fauna.



when was the first time i met him

i forget

a chance acquaintance

brushed off

the fraying fringe

of consciousness

and then one day

he put his foot in at my door

when i returned from god knows where
and actually elbowed his way in
to precede me to my armchair

my eyes

swallowed a rising sting

that blamed me for a misstep

perhaps at a long evening out

i turned towards the kitchen in defiance

there he was, at the stove

the span between us simmered

like an old flame

that leaves plucked heartstrings

in shreds

i sunk into bed

rummaging for questions

he was there

the audacity!
we eyed each other
a longing moment
longest to date
the ache, i knew
was here to stay
The chance acquaintance
had become
of my knees
the guest
who wouldn't go away



Anju Kishore: A poet, editor and formerly a professional accountant, Anju Kishore calls herself a ‘Window Wanderer’. Her poems, some of them prize-winning, have been featured in numerous journals and anthologies. Her book of poems inspired by the civil war in Syria, ‘...and I Stop to Listen’ earned her a glowing review in Kendriya Sahitya Akademi’s English journal, Indian Literature. She has been part of the editorial teams of seven anthologies so far with India Poetry Circle, Kavya-Adisakrit Publishing, Soul Scribers Society, Salem, and World Literature India.



VISION QUEST

Brilliant rainbow of thought,
going beyond all knowing

and believing, to a place
that never was. Roaming

dark halls of illusion, where
no one has trod before.

Losing all sense of reality,
unanswered questions follow

close behind. As she walks
away, her colors fade into

a yesterday that she never
knew, entering a tomorrow

that would not exist,
except in her own mind.

Published by Adelaide Literary Magazine, September 2019



Ann Christine Tabaka: I am a poet and writer residing in Delaware, USA. I am a retired organic chemist and a retired personal trainer. I have 14 poetry books. I was nominated for the 2017 Pushcart Prize in Poetry. I was the winner of Spillwords Press 2020 Publication of the Year (Poetic), my bio is featured in the “Who’s Who of Emerging Writers 2020 and 2021,” published by Sweetycat Press.

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



EQUAL IN DIGNITY EQUAL IN HUMANITY

Those who remain trapped
within unconsciously constructed walls
fail to see the brilliance that is humanity
so inherent so natural to others,
The humane light they all possess
too will remain untouched or hidden
unable to reach those around them,
Through its powers to remove
the barriers between self and other
that arise from differences

in identity and social standing
rights education has ability to expand
opportunities for the humane light
to glow so splendidly
both for ourselves and others,
together we can care for one another
this chain of humanity unending unflinching and unbound
will keep humanity intact, safe and sound.



Ashish K Pathak: He is a government middle school teacher in Munger district of Bihar. He has contributed to over 30 international and world anthologies. He has got a letter of appreciation from the President of India for his poem. He writes on contemporary themes with easy words and style.



BETWEEN US

Memories never go away

When you first came

Under our antique sky

You whispered your secret

Our hearts are melting

A candle deep inside

Beyond the blue sea and grey mountain

Our lips and eyes

The fireflies glowed in the night

Our way to an unknown island

A mystery tale

Hidden behind a waterfall

This midnight hour

Under the shadow of the quiet moon

We surrendered

Became strangers again

In the rebellious 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.



A POEM FOR MR GOODMAN

For my son, Sai-Isa

Hey there, Son...

who knows ... Some day,

We may get to sit round and

read this poem aloud,

you and I

Even as you reached 11,
the thought did occur to me,
that, sooner or later,
you might ask me about
“matters of the heart” ...

What on earth should one say -
Go ask your Biology teacher?

As you grew bigger, a thought flitted round my head.
Like a nervy bird,
It twittered to me:
One day, Barry, that lad of yours will step up to you saying:
“Hey dad, there’s a girl I really like” ...

Heck mate,
What was I to tell you?
Or what was I - not to tell you?

Anyway, I thought, ah well:

Soon, soon enough,

Better get down to Men's Business, I suppose,

Better be a bit wise,

Maybe rehearse a bit,

Better not leave it to the blokes at school,

Better not leave it up to the girls, either.

What would those boys and girls know about boys and girls? And gosh, for that matter, what would I?

So, Son, came that dewy soft morning,

your first ever girl question popped:

“Hey Dad ... I need to know - what flower should I gift her”

Grabbed me by the heart it did, mate.

Then you hopped on the school bus,

and vanished to gaze upon a girl.

I felt the teartrickle on my cheek drip and smile at the same time.

I wondered what, if anything,

I remembered about flowers.

Would some floral wisdom blossom that somehow got
planted in me

long ago, far away?

And frankly, mate,

I shot to the Mapleton Library and

looked up some flower books ...

Some day, Mr Goodman,

we may read this poem together, you and I, by some
lagoon or

While we garden together or such.

Who knows, the poem may smile a tear and a sigh.

And who knows, come the day,

you may share this poem with

two or six little

Sai-Isa begotten blighters -
all of your very own ...

Then, if I'm hoeing a patch somewhere else,
gift, if you will, this poem to them, Mr Goodman ...
Gift it as you would gift
the freshest of uncut flowers;
and let it, if it will, transplant
into a smiling garden,
wherever it is that they will plant for themselves ...



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.



I AM HUMAN

From dust I rise

However small in size

I have a part

I need to play

Whatever destiny

Has placed on my way

I need to find my purpose

And move in its path

Those foundations laid
Right from the start

I must build upon
Shape my own legacy
Before I become
A way distant memory

I am human
I am unique
I use my brain to think
And my tongue to speak

When eternal rest
Finally arrives
My history
Must be found in the archives

I am human

I am earth

My amount of chapters determined

Since my birth

And when I'm gone

Others must see

All the good examples

They can still find in me



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.



THE MYSTERY OF THE STOLEN CANDY

In the summer at the end of the street;

There came a smell of something sweet.

Behind the bowl of candy treats,

Stood a bush with something that creeped.

There were girls cycling in the street

They saw the bowl of candy treats;

But behind the bush something stole.

The girls were trembling with fear;

They said, "Let's get away from here!"

The girls went back the next day to see;
But it was just a pig eating with its family.
And then their fear went away;
So instead they chose to play
And feed the pigs every day.



Beverly James: I am 12 years old and I like being creative. I used to go cycling every evening and it was always fun. Candies are my favorite and I love animals. I decided put all these things together and create a poem. Poem helps me create a world of my own with my imagination.



BIRTH OF A POEM

Oh Poetry!

From where have you come?

From a small impulse

To a strong emotion

You stay

In the hollow of a heart

Or in the deep

Oceanic depth of mind
Somewhere taking shape

Like a baby
Growing little by little
When full grown
Like the baby can not
Stay in the mother's womb
Kicks for the outlet
Presses forward
To come to light
You take birth from

A fluid existence
To a solid reality
A full form baby
Still with immense possibility
To grow and expand.

With mother's love
And family's care
You become
A wondrous existence
Of this Universe



Bharati Nayak: Bharati Nayak is a bilingual poet, critic and translator from Bhubaneswar, India. She has done her graduation from Ravenshaw College, Cuttack and post-graduation from Utkal University, Bhubaneswar. Her poems have been published in more than hundred books, e-books and magazines of national and international repute. She has so far published eight books. She was conferred the Sahitya Lahari award by International Cosmos Society, India in 2018 and Star Ambassador of World Poetry And Art Philosophique Poetica International Award in Literature by the World Poetry Conference in Bhatinda, Punjab, India in 2019.



MY OWN SPECIAL “FRANKENSTEIN MONSTER”

Last August, Ghisela and I celebrated 25 years of marriage. I also marked having created an absolute baseball fanatic.

Before 1996, Ghisela never watched baseball. Coming from Peru, soccer was her sport. It's also odd that I introduced her to the game that year. I was still angry over the '94 strike, but I succumbed when Cal Ripken approached Lou Gehrig's consecutive game record. I'd lived

in Baltimore during Cal's rookie year and admired him, so, I suspended my personal boycott to watch any games featuring the lifelong Oriole.

Occasionally, she stopped to watch, asking about the game. I explained the action on the diamond but told her the best way to watch baseball was in person, promising to take her to a Dodgers game. The next Fall we got tickets to a game.

In the opening innings, Mike Piazza hit a grand slam, clearing the bases for an early lead. The crowd's exuberant reaction was a treat for my wife.

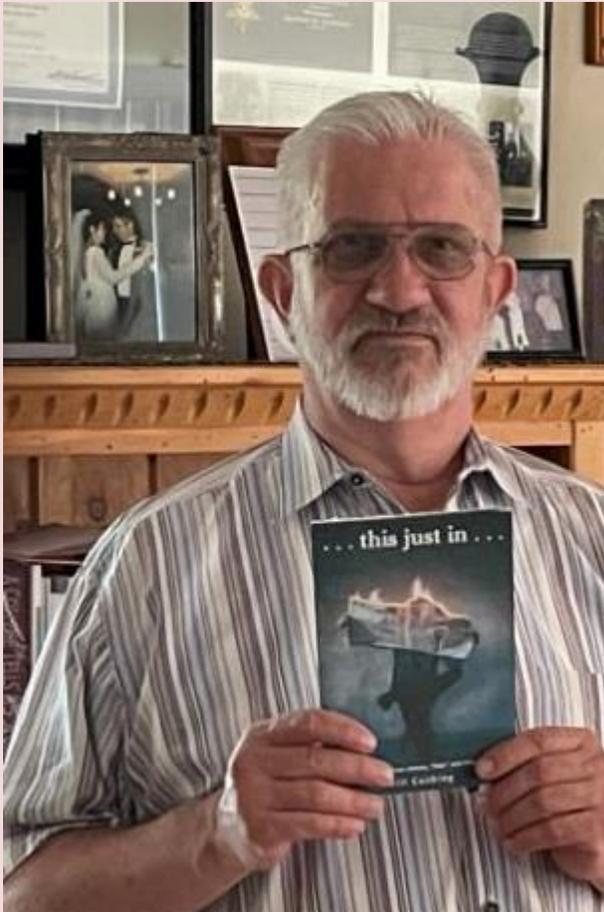
"You know," I turned to her, shouting above the noise, "I've been going to games all my life and have never seen one of these in person. You go to your first and whaddya get?"

At that moment, she became hooked on baseball in general and the Dodgers in particular. It was a passion that blossomed into devotion—with all the necessary accessories: hats, water bottles, shirts, license plate frames.

She even forbade me from wearing my New York Yankee hat.

The 2021 fate of the Dodgers season is still up in the air as of this writing, but we became ticket holders, she is a baseball fiend, and me—well, I created the monster.

And I couldn't be happier about it.



Bill Cushing: He continues writing and reading and is even preparing to return to the classroom after a year or so of retirement. He's proud to announce the release of his latest book and is currently working on a memoir focused on his earlier years when he served as an electrician in the Navy and later on board other ships before he finally returned to college at the age of 38.

<https://www.cyberwit.net/publications/1722>



ADOLESCENT LOVE

I love the way you love me

The way you call me yours

I adore the way you yearn for me

Not ready to look beyond me

With maddening passion you pull me close

And I close my eyes in soft repose

While our heartbeats resonate loud

Your undeclared loyalty makes me proud

The flame in your eyes intensifies
And your lips curve into a seraphic smile
When suddenly our gaze collide
Causing incessant reverberations in our mind.

I love the way, your otherwise composed mien
Forgets all surrounding constraints
And glows like the sun after rain
Drenching me with your furtive glimpse,

And for a fleeting moment my feelings soar
When I warn you of the scrutinizing eyes around
Swiftly you direct your looks down
Camouflaging your smile with a frown.



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.



ONCE ALONG A WOODED DALE

Loitering here and there one day,
I trudged through a mountain way
Along a wooded dale so still and serene,
The tacit trees stood along like guarding men

Birds sang so sweetly as if a choral symphony,
My eyes got glued to the verdant valley

The blue mountain ranges touched the sky,
Eyes failed to view the peaks that rose so high

Wild blossoms and hedge roses greeted me all the way ,
Cool breeze rustling, with the fallen leaves did play ,
Sweet fragrance spilled the air and made me nostalgic,
Ecstatic I felt, as if I have reached Paradise

Placidity of the plateau shimmered through my being,
Mesmeric looked the western sky as the sun was setting
The splendour of the woodland symphony made me
spellbound,
Felt, as if heaven on the earth I had found



Bishnu Charan Parida: Bishnu Charan Parida from Jajpur Road, Odisha, India is a bilingual poet. His poems have been published in many anthologies and magazines of national and International repute. He has been honoured on many literary platforms and won awards from literary organisations.



Pic by Mike Hurry

SPACE BETWEEN YOUR EYES

for D

don't ever think

you're gonna lose

just give all you got

against the odds

you can turn it round

it's the space
between your eyes
that will get you beat

don't think of them
whatever they say
they don't love you
losing doesn't mean
you've lost
it's your way to learn
come back stronger
and show them
what you got

it's the space
between your eyes
that will get you beat



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



THE PAST, THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE

She keeps nibbling me

I keep nibbling her

time and I

both losing a part of each other

in the process-

learning to digest

honey-dipped memories

with a pinch of salt
marinated with the squeezed juices of
bitter gourd, tangy mangoes
and hot chillies.

We both know we cannot
alter what has already been digested
yet we keep nibbling
hoping to improvise
on the combinations
that would make memories
sweeter.

The sun, the moon, the stars
and the seasons testify
our process.

But a day will come
when I will no longer be
able to nibble her
for she would have gobbled
me up wholly
and exactly on that
very same day-
I would be a bitter-sweet memory
in someone else's heart.

The sun, the moon, and the
stars still testifying.



Brindha Vinodh: She is a postgraduate in Econometrics but a writer within. She has contributed to several anthologies and has been a featured poet in ‘year of the poet’ by InnerChildPress international’, USA, and her roseate sonnet selected as one of the best poems of 2020 by the same team.



TOWARDS DAWN

(1)

Some day I know

Thou shalt come

To take me on the voyage

Never to return

Waiting and longing stare out

Day and night; lest I miss the chance.

(2)

Many a time thou came and called me

Curse on me!

I'd fallen into a deep slumber

Missing thy love

And the bliss of thy proximity

So remorseful I feel now.

(3)

Now awakened to thy grace

As am I

Sleep steals not over me

As am I

Steadfast in thy Consciousness

Nocturnal enchantment is gone; dawn breaks.

(4)

Mere thought of thy glimpse

Fills me with such a joy

Never before I knew

Long wait draws near

So seems; heartbeats quicken

Look! Who comes...comes here!

(5)

Joyously I offer thee

My soul – innocent and pristine

Exactly the same

As thou handed me

It is ages and ages ago

I had parted, my Lord!



B.S.Tyagi: B S Tyagi from India is a bilingual poet and novelist. He has several books – fiction and non-fiction to his credit. His poems and short stories have been included in a number of anthologies. His writes-ups, short stories and poems appear in national and international literary magazines. Besides, he has translated seven poetry books from Hindi into English. Inner joy of creativity is the best prize to him.



TELOS

Two evening lovers' echoes
In you forgotten dreams and
memories of essence.

Touch wordlessly in a greater optimism.

Waves of summer morn
Under a cloudless sky with
flickering lights of desire.

Turning like a dancer alone on the stage of life

The evening leaves turn after

Their first death and sleep

In the place of forgotten Gods.

Does it break you apart to see the expectation so muddled?



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



People afraid.

to swim against current,

to walk against wind, breeze,

take turn

destination least bothered,

want it to be easy, cosy,

compromise is currency,

buy, exchange, sell.

Want to be on side of right,

know it is actually wrong, still

will endorse without thought.

This is how they let down society,
people, and when things go wrong,
call it conveniently FATE.

YES FATE.

HYPOCRITES

CUNNING

WICKED

CARRY DECEIT.

Call themselves civilised? educated?

Oh these people.



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.



REBECCA

The will of God must never be denied

Jacob is chosen, is the favoured son.

Before they were born I felt struggle inside

Two sons, one called to outrun

The other, two peoples divided

In blessing their descendants, God's decree

I had to bear, my husband derided

Gentle Jacob, in ways he could not see

The better boy, Essau a hairy brute

Fit hunting animal, for a hot stew

He sold his birth-right, of mind destitute

Mild prey and wild women all he'd pursue
I made Isaac give up the right blessing
A rough goat's hide corrected by a fraud
His blind intentions, hat voice caressing
Gave on my son the blessing of the Lord
Essau must learn to live with his fate
Isaac's favourite son not God's, but I wail
My family-plot rivalry and hate.
Almighty God, I ask you to forgive
Our wrong way of right, may Jacob's seed live.



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



AUTUMN SKY

the autumn daylight's glowing through my window

i can hear the north wind as it blows

seasons caught between two changing moods

beneath a sky of somber attitude

riding out to a place i used to go

maybe for the last time for all i know

trails covered with the fallen leaves

from bare limbs of sleeping autumn trees

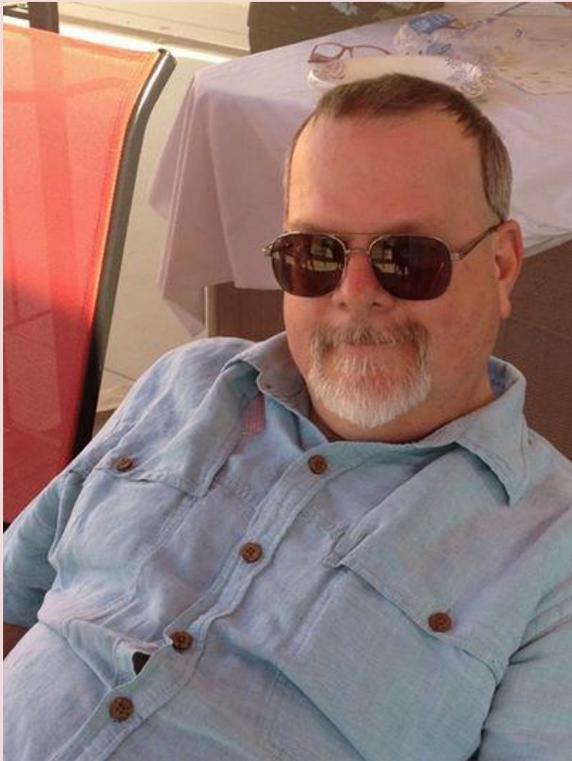
the cool gray October morning

painted with the winter's warnings

stone-faced clouds hanging low
summer's over, soon there will be snow

a spirit wind from so many years ago
comforts me like a song i used to know
memories that quickly come and go
echoes from the soundtracks in my soul
underneath wide-open skies of gray
riding in the bluish haze of yesterdays
racing down muddy trails in play
stained by the reddish-orange clay
a lover's smile at the end of day

her eyes said more than words could ever say
like the autumn sky, she still makes me feel this way
a warm touch on a chilly autumn day



Dale Adams: Dale Adams lives in Bethany Oklahoma with his wife, 1 dog, and an unknown number of guitars. He enjoys reading history, science and poetry, and learning about music. He has been writing poetry for as long as he can remember and composing songs since 2011. Dale has established SoundCloud and YouTube Channels, and has converted poems into songs for other poets. When one of his own poems becomes a song, he records it in his home studio and posts to Soundcloud, YouTube, and Facebook. Some of Dale's publications are Warriors With Wings Anthology, and

<https://soundcloud.com/dale-adams-272904153>

<https://www.youtube.com/user/DrBuggs13>



Daniel's Pic

KYLIAN AND THE KITTEN

The kitten captivates Kylian

And Kylian and the kitten

They captivate us.

The kitten is looking for a Güito

Of an olive green

While Kylian

Seems to be calling it

With a "bis bis bis"

Still very fine.
What's it called
This cute kitty?
The owner of it thinks
That he has lost it
And he has found it
A name like Olinos.
Name of that Count
That sang
At the sea's shore:
-Look, boy, how well sings
The little mermaid boy of the Sea.
Listen, Rita
Attend, Daniel
Attend, Isabel
What kylian thinks
If he would catch this kitty
That it moaned for him.



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



WHORES

I remember so many resistance heroes from the era of the Apartheid terror.

I look at them now.

There is an aura of smugness about many of them.

A feudal haughtiness.

They are part of an inner circle, an exclusive club, a new caste of collaborators.

They were different back then.

They were full of fire and fury, full of admirable altruism.

They risked their skins, their careers, their peace of mind,
even their families, for their country, for their people.

They were respected.

Many were poor, but they were patriots.

Now they solemnly genuflect before the new Gods.

Their backs are broken.

The socialism of the resistance years is not even a memory.

They rationalise what the bosses do, they make excuses,
they lie, especially to themselves.

They know the rules, they do not see, they do not hear.

Their tones around the new herrenvolk are reverential.

What passes for their voices are low.

The former zealots trample each other in their haste to be
better helots.

Smirks and contempt smother them.

The new herrenvolk gloat.

They are terrified of being cast out, of losing their plum positions.

They revel in the influence that they have, the 'connections', the power, the money.

They flaunt their new wealth.

They party unashamedly at their many garish banquets like pigs at a pokery.

Clowns are embarrassed by them.

Their patriotism no longer exists.

It has been bought. They have become whores.

The poverty stricken, the destitute and the shack dwellers cry out

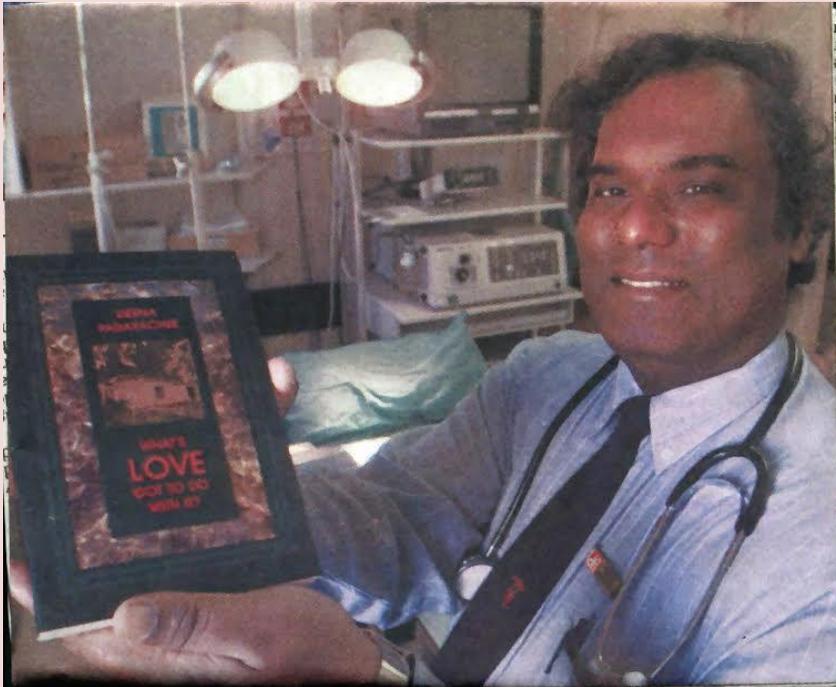
but their voices are unheard.

Many 'liberators' are stricken sycophants, even as they savour their obscene wealth,

their bejewelled, preening spouses, their spoilt, coiffured,
condescending, addicted off spring,

their power and their positions

in a tormented country which remains, in many ways, still
painfully colonised and conquered.



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.



OBTUSE DISCOVERIES FROM ACUTE ANGLES

We hinge on our lover's buttons Jugni,
hanging by our tangled hair,
hovering till we fall,
thirsty scavengers ravenous for love,
crying from the edge of our lips,
our voices distorted and bodies disfigured
in ways unrecognizable and strange, until
we learn to live with our twisted contortions.

Hiding under the blanket of rejection Jugni,
we are punishing in our self-deprecation,
doubting each deplorable breath
and every reprehensible action
that swings from our flaying limbs.
Our friends and foes watch alike
as we roll into a ball of nothingness
and vanish into clouds of imploding oblivion.

Out of that irrevocable destruction Jugni,
only some of us return, with arms and legs
dangling from our diminished torsos.
We are true Venuses, but alas!
The world mutilates the beautiful.
So we steal away brokenly walking the path,
cutting through the human Jungle
to cajole our Kismet's wrath.



Deepika Chand: She is quintessentially artistic and sees herself as a Poet, Artist, Mystic, Empath, Forest Lover, Tea Person and a Mind Wanderess. She has won Editor’s Choice Awards in the U.S. in the past. More recently, she was honored by ‘The Nissim International Poetry Prize’ 2020. In addition, she has co-authored her debut book ‘The Blue Hours’ with Professor and Pushcart Nominee, Dr. Koshy AV. Her poems have been featured in prestigious anthologies. Presently, she is writing in her new glowing Avatar ‘JUGNI (The Mind Wanderess)’ which is an explorative inward journey in conversation with her alter ego. She also paints ‘Abstract Figuratives’ and ‘Portraits’. Her canvases embellish homes all over the globe. Three of her paintings have graced the covers of Karamvir Puruskaar Awardee Rashmi Anand’s books.

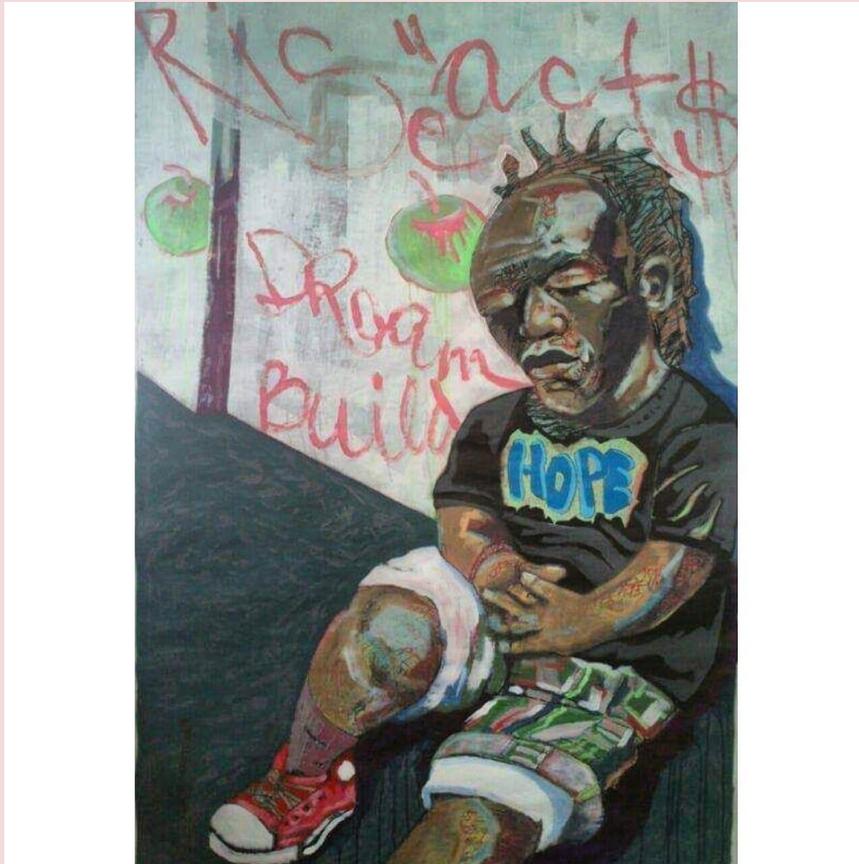


Half of the spring water
That she carried in her bowl of wishes
Last night,
Was spilled on the way
The rest was broken
Into tiny droplets
That rained through her cheeks
All night long.
I waited all night at the feet of the mountain
Under a sky full of stars
Amidst a constant chorus of crickets.

The sound of her footsteps
Did arrive at the crack of dawn
But without the spring water
Nothing could be done.
So, she had to climb up
Climb up the mountain again.
And I started waiting for the second time.
And then again for many times.
She had to try
And I had to wait.



Dipankar Sarkar: I am only a part-time poet residing in Kolkata, India. I work as the CEO of Mongia Green Foundation. 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.



MIGHTY MAN

(for Roscoe Masters)

The Guardtjie – I remember you. Your voice used to announce the arrival

and destination of the minibus taxi you operated. You always brightened any

passenger's dark mood or lifted their fading spirits dragged down by life's

inevitable darts yet there you were – Showing all of us that despite the pitfalls

of this life this existence we could still smile even though
our inner light was

fading but you did your job with such woema and gusto
how could anyone feel

depressed disillusioned disappointed degraded dented
even terribly lonely?

Lost and Found – Red lights neon signs drunken stupor
sirens screeching

reaching my darkened dungeon my own making – Get out!
Who am I? What is

this darkness I have welcomed into my brittle crumbling
soul? Homeless lost

aimless where am I? Nou ry gou ry get in madam no time to
waste where to?

Lavis Parow Ravensmead Elsies River where to sir? Watch it
driver dai donner

het alwee ingedruk jarre! Burning eyes lost memories a
road with no end I call

out but no-one answers only my croaking echoes – A voice
a hearse? Who's

there? Wies djy? Haibo! *Hey mighty man! Hoe gannit? Mr Masters? Joh! Long*

time no see. What are you doing here? *Me? It's a miracle I found you but*

what's up with you hej why so gloomy and depressed? Give me a cigarette and

I will tell you. *I don't have but here's a two Rand to buy one. Tell me mighty*

man how long have you lived like this? What's happened man? Argh just

drowning my sorrows sorry to bother you like this – I cannot even remember

how I got here. Please help me. I fear the next time I see you I will be no more.

Diary of an Artist – *Rise up mighty man! You might be short but you have a*

giant shadow. All is not lost Will you allow me to take a picture of you for an

artwork? I will give you a portion of the sale – This I promise you!

*Why did I do this you may ask? It is my spiritual destiny to talk to the homeless and faint of heart to let them know they are valued and important to God who loves them and shows compassion. I believe this determines our level of emotional intelligence to realise we all fit part of a bigger puzzle of life. We all play a part in the beautiful puzzle of life – Each of us hoping to bite into the apple of life finally tasting sweet grace peace and everlasting life – **RM***



Don Beukes: He is a South African, British and EU Poet and writer and teacher (SA and UK). He has written Ekphrastic Poetry since 2015 collaborating with artists internationally. He is the author of 'The Salamander Chronicles', 'Icarus Rising-Volume 1' (ABP), an ekphrastic collection and 'Sic Transit Gloria Mundi' (Concrete Mist Press). His poetry has been anthologized in numerous collections and translated into several languages. He was nominated for the 'Best of the Net' in 2017 as well as the Pushcart Poetry Prize (USA) in 2016. He is also an amateur photographer and his debut Photographic publication appeared in Spirit Fire Review in June 2019.

Roscoe Reid Masters: He is a Visual artist from Cape Town who has graduated from Ruth Prowse School of Art in 2009.



ELVIS, OEDIPUS, AND AKHNATON

Three wizened kings sipped and swapped their yarns
about hound dogs, a sphinx, and the sun.

Confusions among daughters, wives, and moms
seem commonplace, they wisely agreed.

"Is fate how we see, or how we're seen?"

"Beauty is deformity's trophy."

"Am I isolated by greatness?"

"Have I passed or have I failed the test?"

"Did crowd gravity make me weightless,
or did I fly up in levity?"

"By grinning against adversity,
I won't end obese, blind, and defaced."

"Shall music, honor, or religion
yet bridge our world's fissures and schisms?"

"If legend persists against reason,
it matters not. Let's down another!"

"To all our followers and lovers."

"To all the memories we gather."



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.



HER EYES TWINKLE

Her eyes they twinkle, like the stars
Of cloudless and starry blue skies
When the earth is in deep slumber
Where a shady wrapper of God lies
One and all that bloom all day long
A death in life but a hope acts along
Speak her eyes much in her twinkle
Hope laden in her mind, moist in time
Light on earth is mystery and miracle

Flies time, flies hope, she does mime
The tale of the soul ever not heard
But on earth, she is being conferred
Of all that's ethics, in her heart lies
Where year long sits the spring
Hap of the haps muster her days
What her subtle lore ever oncoming
Vacuous is she in the tufts of life
Steps she on a footprint of strife
Where is sky and where is earth
Seem they confluence at horizon
Drizzles the truth of life on heath
Crafted by her with grace and reason
So strong, so bold, still very soft
Ever does she possess a pure heart



Dusmanta Choudhury: He is a poet residing in Jeypore, in the district of Koraput, Odisha, India. He is a Lecturer in English in Dr.B.R.Ambedkar Jr. College, Lamtaput in Koraput district in the Department of Higher Education Government of Odisha. He has contributed to various anthologies. He has recently got the Honour of Pentasi B World Featured Poet 2020 Honour. He is also a member of the Pentasi B world Friendship Poetry, The Tunisian Asian Poetry, The Poetry Society, The World Nation's Writers Union, The Love, The Global Literary Society, The Namaste ink an Author's Manifesto, etc. He has also published many Odia and English poems.



HUE

Translated Ula de B.

This is not a color game
everyone knows that
green means the road is free,
yellow - Note! Danger!
Red - Stop!

Other hues
don't warn, don't inform,

they really bother some
black to them is more than just murk.
It can't be hidden under any coat.

At times it is a curse of their existence,
Nevertheless, they try showing,
telling:

We're the same as others.

*The color of our skin
can't be a summons
to kill and to destroy a human.*

It's not a color game,
it's life.



Eliza Segiet: I am a poet, playwright, residing in Tomaszow Maz, Poland. I work as a philosopher. I have contributed to various anthologies. I have also published (drama, poetry anthologies - 12). My poems Questions and Sea of Mists won the title of the International Publication of the Year 2017 and 2018 in Spillwords Press. I have been nominated for the Pushcart Prize 2019. I have been nominated for the iWoman Global Awards. I have won the Laureate Naji Naaman Literary Prize 2020. I have won the Laureate International Award Paragon of Hope (2020). My works can be found in anthologies and literary magazines worldwide.



GUT FEELING

Never dread the relationship.

The path of your awareness
is infinite.

Steering,
it gives bearing.

Durable, tall
or trembling,
relaxing can place you.

Once lost,
or on the side

of the road.

Like an old car,

it smacks.

It reaches your gut,

and ransacks.

Turn left,

then turn left,

then turn left,

then turn left....



Ferris E Jones: He is an award-winning, internationally published poet and screenwriter living in Puyallup Washington. His work has appeared in both print and online magazines including as the featured poet for Creative Talents Unleashed. He is the recipient of two grants from the Nevada Arts Council and the Editor/Publisher of Nevada Poets 2009. Ferris has twice received honorable mention awards from Writers Digest annual screenwriting contest. He is also the Author/Editor of seven collections of poetry. You can learn more about Ferris E. Jones by visiting www.inquisitionpoetry.com where each month he features the work of other poets. The goal of this site is to spread the word of poetry throughout the world.



MY ENDLESS DREAM

My dream is to be alone on a mountain top,
with only my pains and wounds,
But still know that someone is there to share them.
To sit by the sea-side and watch the sun sink,
and yet be assured that there is,
Someone to brighten my life with some love.

To be left alone with my thoughts and memories,
and still be heard by someone.

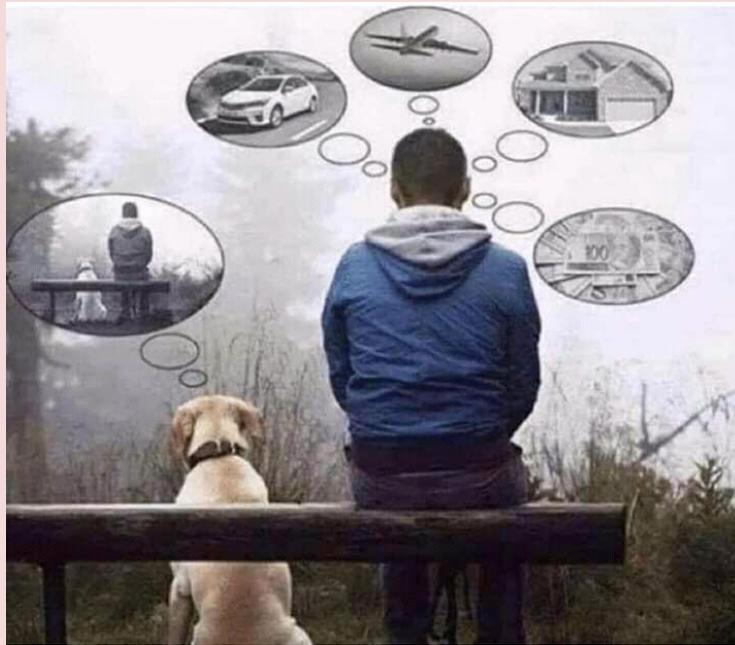
To be able to see my way through the paths of life alone,
And yet know that there is a shoulder I can lean on.

To be strong enough to fight my own battles,
and still be aware of someone's support and help.

To be able to make all my wishes come true,
And still be able to treat pleasure and pain alike.



Fiza Abubacker: I am an English teacher living in Chennai, India. My passion is to express my thoughts through poetry. I work for a school. I have also written a couple of short stories and a book.



CHASING THE WIND

I rode the gale of ocean
Chasing dreams and passion.

I flew high among the stars
Trying to be what they are.

I looked at the sun's glory
Trying to create a similar story.

Alas! where ocean and sky blend
It goes on without end
And the sun only rises to descend.



Francis Otole: He is a Nigerian born poet and academician, and a member of the Association of Nigerian authors (ANA) and many other literary groups. He is an award-winning poet from the local and international scenes. He has been featured in magazines, journals, and anthologies, locally and internationally. He is a graduate from the prestigious Benue State University and a student of life. His hobby is reading and writing. He is married with two children



ELEMENTAL - I

crackling flames provide a respite from his monologue
an occasional spark settles on my bare back
the bright orange aura beckons me close
if one could make love to fire, I would
the smoke filling my lungs
the heat melting me
the union
that he will be afraid to see

ELEMENTAL - II

stars hang from the dark grey clothesline

it is grey for a reason

I don't like blue

he said stars are a thing of the past

just like love

throwing a handful of them at my feet as he stormed out

the stars begged me to put them back into the sky

but the sky was a blinding blue on that fateful Friday
afternoon

I just couldn't fly

lucky for the stars

that my once blue clothesline had gathered enough dust to
turn grey by then



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.



SILENT MUSINGS

When I was a small curious little girl
The world seemed bigger
And a particle of dust I felt I was
When I reached my teens
The world appeared beautifully mysterious
With lots of surprising things veiled
I was growing and with me grew a longing
To decipher the codes of mystery around
In between light and darkness

Time passed years rolled
Each day taught me lessons manifold
I yearned to reach the sky to touch the stars
Life started to open up to me
Gifting new choices and possibilities
To learn and grow
To comprehend the depth and meaning of everything I
came across
I was drifting in a vast endless sea
But will and diligence earned me a pedestal where my
world rested
I stepped up into new layers
Adorned new names new bonds
Love was the only inspiration
that lighted my way
And faith was my companion
to cross miles away
Zest for life kept me going on
Now standing at the mid-way

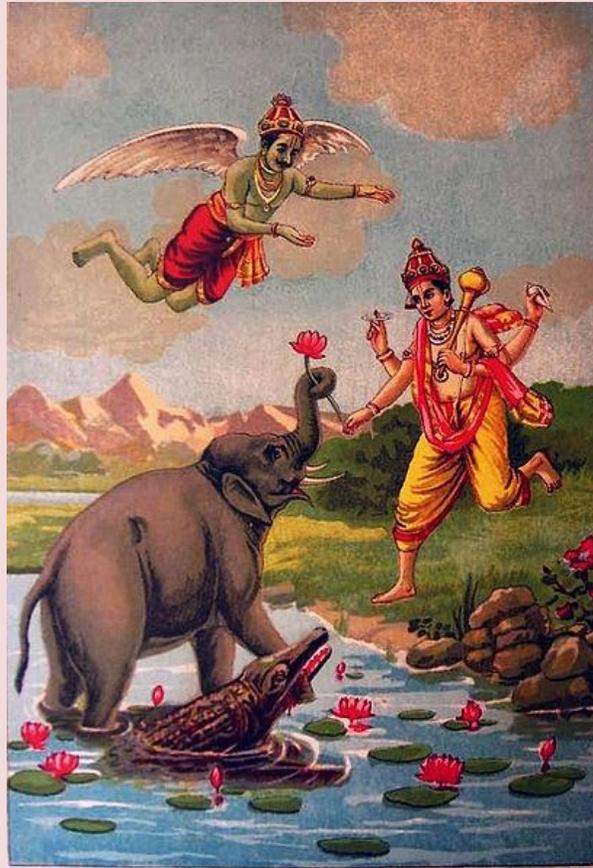
Looking back at days bygone

I keep appraising

Despite all odds life is just amazing!



Gayatree G. Lahon: Gayatree is a teacher and a poet from Assam. She did her Masters in English literature from Gauhati University. Being an aesthete, she finds beauty in every object of life and nature and her poems express those elements in a subtle way. For her, poetry is a celebration of life in its myriad shades. Her poems have been published in newspapers, e-zines and many national and international anthologies.



[wikimedia.org](https://www.wikimedia.org)

GAJENDRAMOKSH

The title refers to a story of an elephant (who was bitten by a crocodile) in the puranas. It can also be metaphorical.

The festival elephant

amidst ecstatic thronging crowds,

drums, pipes, trumpets,

and rising dust

stands chained,

the raw flesh
and the bleeding wound too
stand exposed.



Geeta Varma: She is a poet based in Chennai, India. She has contributed to numerous anthologies. She has also published two books. 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.



"ISM"

It's all in the blue of things,

Open, stark, transparent, real, illusory,

As if to touch a painted ceiling yet your first goes through,

And then you wonder where you are suspended in the solid
state of being,

You feel you are a spirit but you are grounded,

Much like this bird in a sanctuary that sees the blue, blue
sky,

Blue jay, kingfisher, peahen, staring at the vast blue but not
seeing the net,

Tagged with a piece of paper strip and numbered,

Named with an "ism" I cannot relate to for I forgot I chose
to be this and that,

Every "ism" evading me, elusive for the "is" is not what I
thought it is!

Then I trudge along in a quagmire, my wings in a tether
allowing me to fly just enough to swallow the air,

Suffocating I return to perch myself where I chose to be,

The camphor of my soul soon burning into a zilch of beaten
paradigms,

And I peck at the fruit I nurtured, hardly ripe, satiating a
eternal hunger to know who I am !

While the "ism" bird squints at me flying when I was only
stalling in mid-air, eating my fruit of imagined "isms", "ity",
and "ian"..

The seed sucked dry lying on parched ground waiting to
sprout in a rain that lost its way!

The sky so far away.



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.



abrasions heal

leaving scars

loaded with memories

that tell a tale

each time you touch them



Glory Sasikala: She is a writer, publisher, and poet currently residing in Chennai, Tamilnadu, India. She is the Editor and Publisher of GloMag, an international poetry and prose magazine. Her poetry books, novels, and short stories are available in various online bookstores such as Amazon and Flipkart as well as on her blogs. She is on the brink of publishing a very interesting collection of anecdotes and short stories inspired by her rather colourful and chequered life.



LIFE'S CYCLE

life revolves in a circle
it is the cycle within
where life expands and contracts
with its own narrative
trying to define whom the "I" is
in the cycle you search and search
for the elusive self
and we go around in circles
like a cat chasing its own tail
everything is just an illusion
a burning, burning ring of fire

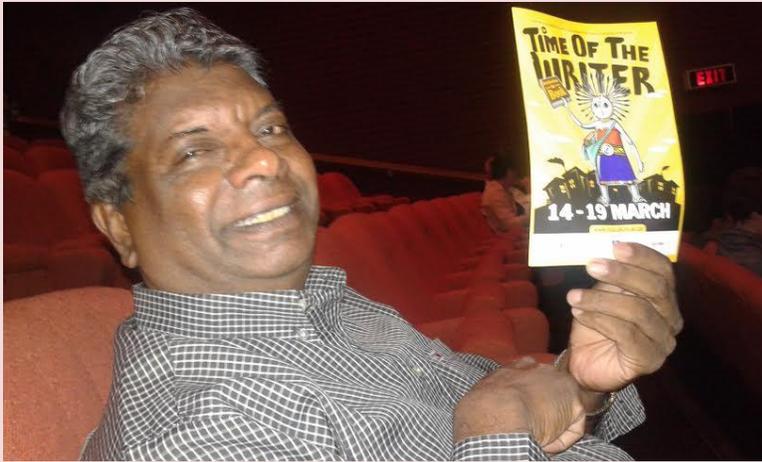
waiting to incinerate your mortal self
life and death caught in the cycle
its vice like grip will not let go
try as you may
you cannot step out of the cycle



LIFE IS WHAT WE PERCEIVE

sometimes we cannot discern
the woods from the trees
with blinkers we walk through the maze
lost in a labyrinth
where mortals like you and I fear to tread
when we remove the blindfold

the sunbeams break's through
in an amazing array of light
and the warmth of the sun
dispels our fears of the darkness
and the rain and storm
cannot douse the flames
glowing with the lights changing patterns
as if from a kaleidoscope with many mirrors
reflecting all the hues of the cosmos



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.



SPACE

Grey moments cannot tell the difference
no one is sure how we should look at each other,
a stream runs among the rocks,
the unbuilt bridge wants our footprints
one image overlaps another, golden dreams
come knocking at our invisible door.

At one level, the empty boat has presence and depth
we can see trees on the hill top,
calm, shadowy, a touch sensitive-

wait for flowers to blossom,
images of earth falling on tranquil water
where are our buried roots?

There is a gentle restraint now on high-pitched words
days give us rain, nights not so easily,
fresh clumps of silent laughter resonate,
wait for the breeze to turn into angel's voice,
we feel we are secure; we feel we are safe
but life sometimes thinks otherwise, draws different
contours.



Gopal Lahiri: I am a bilingual poet, writer, critic and translator residing in Kolkata. I have contributed to various anthologies and have also published ten volumes of poetry in English and eight volumes in Bengali. In addition, I have also jointly edited four anthologies of poems in English and also have one translation work of short stories of Israel, translated by me from English to Bengali. Two recently published books of mine; 'Alleys are filled with Future Alphabets' and 'From Prinsep Ghat to Peer Panjal' (joint e-book).



STONE WORSHIP

Translated by Nirendra Nath Thakuria

Alive means a live stomach

The stomach is its own faultfinder

The stomach preys on itself

The stomach is the eternal rival of itself

The stomach lacks the precept of
showing heroic respect to a hero

As the stomach means a consumer
feeding is its way of life

Long ago a weary stomach
carved its agony on the heart of stone

Since then stone has captured our worship

Nowadays stone worship
is rife everywhere



Guna Moran: Guna Moran, winner of Creator Of Justice Award honoured by International Human Right Art Festival 2020, is an internationally acclaimed poet and book reviewer. His poems are published in more than 150 international magazines, journals, webzines, newspapers, blogs, anthologies and have been translated into thirty languages around the world. He has three poetry books to his credit. He lives in Assam, India.



INDIAN SUMMER

Trees outline the
horizon in green lace.

Beneath boughs float
galaxies of blue bugs.

Crimson clouds smudge
a sapphire sky.

Listen to swish of
branches as cicada

swell and swarm.

Hiding under shadows,
beating their wings,
hissing their mating calls.

Evening is coming...
the dawn of nighttime.
We are suspended now
between light and dark.
Clouds rushing over heaven.
Sun drops from sky.

The air is fragrant with
sweet blooming jasmine.
Southern winds sweep
across the hemisphere
brightening star after star
awakening this night.



Joan McNerney: She has been the recipient of three scholarships which includes one from the University of Mexico School for Foreign Students in San Antonio, Texas. She has recited her work at the several distinguished venues. A reading in Treadwell, New York was sponsored by the American Academy of Poetry. Her poetry is found in many literary magazines. She has four Best of the Net nominations. *The Muse in Miniature* and *Love Poems for Michael* are both available on Amazon.com and Cyberwit.net. Just released is a new title *At Work*. This collection shows colorful snapshots of working women and men in their daily lives.



INNOCENTS

we awoke in the light of a day of promise
and a vision of peace in the valley below
we shared the warm offerings that accompany a smile
and walked out into a village adorned with a song

the birth, the infant, the everlasting life
within the reach of a tiny hand
a head full of dreams rests upon my shoulder
sweet calm and tranquility, blanketing the air

we could have gone anywhere on this miraculous morning
or simply have been still in each other's arms
we waited for an answer that never came
so we did what we were 'supposed to do' one last time

one offspring alone on the stairway, falling
we searched for a cure one moment too late
a world full of prayers tries to lift this burden
as we grow thin and pale from the loss of tears

"come back" we beg into the void of darkness
"come back for the kiss that I didn't give you"
"I forgot to wave as I drove away"
but our echo is all we receive in return

in our heart, a sound, as faint as a whisper
as near and as distant as the end of space

a voice says “yes, I will never leave you”

“I am love, I am alive, I am always here”



Joe Kidd: He is a multi-award-winning songwriter, speech writer, music/film critic, and ordained minister, inducted into Michigan Rock & Roll Hall of Fame 2017, recipient of Michigan Governor's and US House of Representatives certificates for work promoting Peace, Social Justice, Cultural Diversity. He lives in Detroit Michigan USA with partner, author/vocalist Sheila Burke. He has a CD titled *Everybody Has A Purpose* 2015, a book of poetry titled *The Invisible Waterhole* 2020.

His works appear in benefit recordings, Music For Japan, and Songs For Standing Rock, many poetry journals. He was on tour throughout North America and Western Europe.

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

<https://joekiddandsheilaburke.com/>



THE MARGIN

The golden silence, of the cornfield,
moist in the early morning dew,
braces the margin of the bay;
in the fluttering breeze,- gay,
the tips toss in golden-green shield,
flourishing life's earliest loving hue.

The morning's soft whisper
gradually matures into a murmur;
the glistening ripples of the old river
burdens the breezy shimmer,
as its pining vapours float and perish
far into the helpless cloudy anguish.

The soft creased corn-field dawn
ripens into an ironed stiff morn,
a very brief clumsy romantic dusk
gets entangled in its flimsy husk;
its golden harvest goes for a dough,
baked and consumed for the go.

The ancient night tells the stars
the tales of twinkling success,
avoiding the delicate regret
of not having kissed the green secret
of the forest's aromatic dense tress

while the twilight was still scarlet.

The pristine ripples relentlessly flow,
carrying the day's momentary sparks
in an evanescent golden glow;
green-gold of the primitive woods,
the evident winter shrouds
with its all-pervading snow.



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.



THE ECLIPSE

With a Ring of Fire,
Was Sky betrothed
To his beloved, Earth,
But being a shy lover,
He did not invite the stars..
And asked the Moon to stand 'cover'.
Bade the birds to stop their sound,
And in hushed, curtained silence,
Made his love known.
But Earth is a flowery damsel,

Wanting fragrance and bird-song,
And though she loved him much,
Could not do without light for long,
She drew the curtain aside,
Lighting up her lover's face,
And when upon such a bright countenance they did gaze,
The birds began singing again..
The Eclipse was over.



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.



PAINTING THE WILLOWS

Colors of the leaves in autumn wove a lovely quilt
covering the countryside, woods, and waters
falling like winter snow from the tallest of trees
lighting the forest like a candelabra until the first snow.
She was there by the pond painting the weeping willows;
She never spoke a word, just watched the trees and their
swaying branches in the late afternoon breeze then
disappearing into the mist of a newborn twilight.
There was poetry as she floated silently above the grass
while wavelets ran up the beach chasing little shorebirds;

and rhythm in the crashing of the waves upon rocks;
like a tear as it slowly finds its way to the quivering lips.
Broken cobwebs capturing pieces of dead leaves
now turning pirouettes like a ballerina in the breeze
hanging there suspended in the tall trees.
Listening to the tolling of the valley's brass bell
The faithful in awe at a soft whispering magic in the moon.
Birds at the feeder bring a smile to one's dull day
while tired of sitting in the sun praying for a halcyon rain.
Hearing sister crying brushing knots out of her long hair;
I'm wondering about the girl painting the weeping willows
will she return like a wisp of smoke on a breeze; or
will she finally find peace and soar into the light
leaving thoughts of a ghost girl during twilight behind.



Ken Allan Dronsfield: Ken Allan Dronsfield is a disabled veteran and prize winning poet from New Hampshire, now residing in Oklahoma. A proud member of the Poetry Society of New Hampshire, he has five poetry collections to date; 'The Cellaring', 'A Taint of Pity', 'Zephyr's Whisper', 'The Cellaring, Second Edition' and 'Sonnets and Scribbles'. Ken's been nominated three times for the Pushcart Prize and six times for Best of the Net. He was First Prize Winner for the 2018 and 2019, Realistic Poetry International Nature Poetry Contests. He has recently begun producing Creative Content on his YouTube channel and has had wonderful success sharing his poetry. Ken loves writing, thunderstorms, and spending time with his cats Willa and Yumpy.



Courtesy: wallpaperbetter.com

A PROMISE...

Last night the full moon was hidden by dark, growling, gargantuan clouds.

The stars that promised love, stayed away.

Yet the eager wind brought to my fist sized heart,

The needs and desires of Your heart,

Your promises.

I was in a secluded place,

A quiet corner of space...

The galaxy in its enormity,
opened arms to infinity...
and gently welcomed.

In the fault lines of this world I had blindly wandered and
stumbled along painfully...
bemused and alone.

In your subtle welcome, found that which I sought...
comfort and a home.

Every atom brought in and spoke to me of promises.

I was embraced with a love that was bottomless.

The speck of me, merged with a million, that spun a million
dances...

inside that silver moon ray that descended!

Rhythms and beats of electric reassurances.

We walked then in darkness.

Each with our soft glow inside...and a deep dream that
comforted us.

We drank from the fountainhead of assurances...

With inner peace we all were blessed,
We walked,
On this path we chose.



Ketaki Mazumdar: She is a poet and a dreamer. Born in Kolkata, she did her schooling and college at Loreto House. She began writing poetry at the tender age of 8. Ketaki moved to Mumbai after her marriage and began her career as an educationist. She excelled in this field and was privileged to receive the National Award for Excellence in Teaching from the then President of India, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam. She is now retired and indulges in her passion, for writing poetry and authoring children's books. Her poems touch on...life, death, nature, women, spiritual and the mystical. She is a prolific writer and has contributed to

poetry sites and anthologies. Her poems have been acknowledged widely, both in India and abroad. Ketaki enjoys doing poetry readings and continues to transform lives through her writings.



THE CHANGING CACOPHONY

Outside it is damp, spectral.

It is so now every morn in Chennai,
infamous for its grudging monsoon.

Now the gossamer clouds seem to
have softened to the ancient climes.

There was a time when ear ripping
thunder would stun, bewilder

Make one wonder who had met
his unseemly end in the hard plains!

Now there is rippling thunder, heart
twitting to the scent of pouring rain.

An ideal cradle for the Muse to rock!

Morn would wink its arrival to me

With rare cacophony of winged noises,

Pigeons, cuckoos and crows in a row!

The city bristles hot, prickly and steaming

But always encased in soothing November.

I hearken to the past when women trudged

To draw water from the well in another home,

caked mud flakes in their own!

Clouds have changed the skyscape!

Now the monsoon is rarely dodgy, and benign.

And the cacophony sounds a lot mellifluous!

The Muse rocks with a beatific smile.



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.



MA DURGA ARRIVES ON SHREDDED PETALS

my tears boil in a cauldron lovingly stored

cuddled, nursed, smothered for laughs to gulp them down

through infinite spaces of flowery fruity scented halo

drums, cymbals and bells declare her bejewelled arrival

on trails of carpeted infant half- bloomed torn buds

Curdled white from her bosom darkling waves through
parched deserts of blood streams

the all powerful Mother arrives with flowing milk of divine
kindness unknown unfelt

her chariots in mists of smokey whorls of perplexed incense

reign through her lost paths of glory
embedded in weeping glitter

the divine feminine of ten hands
with weapons and lotuses galore

sparkles in derailed tracks
of endless merriment and wails

as motherless kids lie lonely in darkened street corners

or childless mothers cry on empty metallic golden beds

the vacuities and festivities continue as masked carnivals

a mother has lost her child, a child his mother

does this fiery ten- handed Mother ever breathe?

or is she a calcified clay of dry straw and empty breeze?

Does she ever hold a shredded soul in her lap to feed?

Does she care to lift a dying tree or a storm ridden seed?

O Mother, where is your loving care and aura?

Is it enough for you to lance a single demon Mahishasura??

I pray and pray for an answer
Be not proud since it is I who made
You my Mother!!



Laksmisree Banerjee: Prof. Dr. Laksmisree Banerjee is an established Poet, Writer, Educationist, Literary Critic, Classical Vocalist. She is a Senior Fulbright Scholar & Professor (USA) and Founder Vice Chancellor of Kolhan University, India. She has taught and lectured as well as recited her Poetry & Music across the globe. She has Nine published Books of Poetry, with several Academic Books

and One Hundred Twenty Research Publications primarily on diverse areas of Poetry, Culture and Literature. She believes in promoting a Better World through her multi-dimensional work. Dr. Banerjee happens to be the Indian Rashtrapati's Nominee on Boards of Central Universities.



WHEN IT SEEMS UNREAL

he/she is there

and suddenly no more

still you wait expectantly

hoping they will walk through the door

they are not present

but you feel their presence

and somehow

still smell their fragrance

you go to bed
struggling to fall asleep
because the wound
is so deep

many will say,
" time will heal "
but nobody can feel
what you feel

you know they
are only encouraging
and it's without a doubt
a good thing

you are surrounded by family and friends
but feel empty inside
because the love of your life

are no longer by your side
but in God you can confide

He is your Healer,
Your Comforter
a day to day
Helper



Leroy Abrahams: 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. His poetry describes himself and how God has transformed his life. He is also a member of a Master Class group of writers as well as Afrikaanse Digters.



A PROPERTY OF FIRE

Fire produces

the essential temperature
for acquiring a burst of power.

Flames dance and sway,
and stream in all directions,
pressing away images of inefficacy.

The crude dampness of tears
disappears within the ash left behind
after the conflagration,
all doubts absorbed.

Fire in the belly. when needed,
letting all who have it,
find the strength to transform themselves
into the most salient rendition
of a bannered paladin.



Linda Imbler: Linda Imbler's poetry collections include six published paperbacks: *Big Questions, Little Sleep, Big Questions, Little Sleep*" second edition (expanded with 66 additional poems), *Lost and Found, Red Is The Sunrise, Bus Lights, Travel Sights,* and *Spica's Frequency*. Soma Publishing has published her four e-book collections, *The Sea's Secret Song, Pairings*, a hybrid of short fiction and poetry, and *That Fifth Element,* and *Per Quindecim*. Examples of Linda's poetry and a listing of publications can be found at lindapoetryblog.blogspot.com. In addition to writing, she helps her husband, a Luthier, build acoustic guitars and steel strings in Wichita, Kansas, U.S.A. They are currently working on number 10.



GROWING AGAIN

When I am on the way to sense the mellow session

A strong desire bloomed in me is to groom

When my sky turned its colour to black

A wish wanted to exhibit its demonstrations

Is that, I desire to grow

Grow again with the raindrops of summer sky

Grow again with the swinging leaves of autumn wind

Grow again in the lap of fathomless horizon

I aspire to visit the sun wearing the garland of jasmine on
my hairs

I hope to tie heavy buzzing anklets on my feet and dance

Without any interruption till I fall down

I seek the honey for my bones

I crave the milk for my ink

I hunt for rainbow and the dense of its colours

I long for the aroma and thousand sensations which were
concealed

I became fearless

For the trials and tribulations

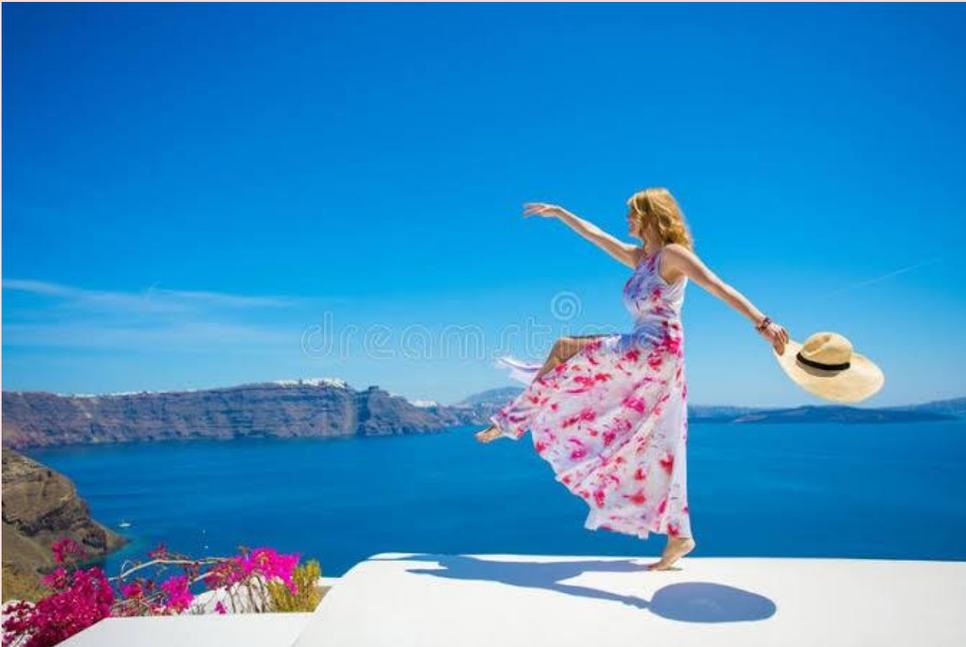
I became bold to live my aspiration

I want to hold the moments for my satiation.

All because I want to grow again.



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'.



LIFE IS PRECIOUS

Life is beautiful, love it

Life is bitter, drink it

Life is anger, overcome it

Life is sad, smile it

Life is happiness, laugh it

Life is a problem, solve it

Life is adventure, travel it

Life is a marathon, run it

Life is rigid, dance it

Life is music, sing it

Life is broken, mend it

Life is drowning, swim it

Life is sensuous, kiss it

Life is delicious, savor it

Life is a secret, hide it

Life is joy, reveal it

Life is magnificent, cherish it

Life is precious, treasure it!



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.



Each stage of life

You meet a different you

Changes

However irrelevant they might be

Surely trigger

And transitions

Begin

Shifting our outlook towards life,

Our views

Life's virtue

Bit by bit, pieces by pieces

joining the bricks of the puzzle laid

Sustainability

Integrity

And

Earthen views...

Changing for our betterment or for worse



Madhu Jaiswal: She is a bilingual poet, writer and social worker hailing from the city of joy, Kolkata. She is associated with The Impish Lass Publishing House, Mumbai in the capacity of an executive editor. Her creative contributions have been published in various national and

international anthologies and she often gets featured in various prestigious e-zines. She was recently featured in the prestigious anthology Aatish 2 alongside various stalwarts. She bagged third prize in Beyond Black Sakhi Annual Poetry Awards 2019-2020. She is attached to a social group named Share A Smile and volunteers for social causes and upliftment of the destitute.



A QUOTIDIAN LIFE

Today I woke up
to find the day
walking in palazzo pants.
The stick figures
as in Warli paintings
move backwards and forwards
enjoying the morning breeze
sweltering under piercing
rays of needle sharp sun.
Birds chirp merrily

for Ronaldo the cat
is gone forever
with its pouncing claws.
My thoughts take
the shape of poetry
swishing the flares
of wide-legged pants
edged with lace
to add a swagger
until at the end
of the day the sun
makes a wardrobe
malfunction and
dips its head down
in the ocean in shame
to hide his flushing face.



Madhumathy. R: Dr. Madhumathy is a retired Associate Professor of English. A lover of literature, her poems have figured in journals and anthologies. A member of Destiny Poets (ICOP), Wakefield, UK, many of her poems have come under their highly commended category. She is also in their panel of critics. Her poems have appeared in the US-based 'Setu Bilingual' published from Pittsburgh. One of her poems titled 'Erasure' was selected as the Poem Of The Month by Destiny Poets.



LONGING...

My soul shakes itself and rises
from the depths, arises
protected, wrapped in the warmth
of the moistened soil
And rises above the skies and hills to look lovingly down at
the green-blue earth
It wears a shining, gem studded crown
grows so full of love and compassion from the heart
leaves all that is futile, vain and pointless as if many
and a determined strength for a spine.

My happy soul wanders and dreams,
I love being in that state with you
And spill the colours of love all across
Over the springs, meads and bridges that you shall cross

When the sun shall shine through the clouds
I shall smile and sing aloud
And let myself soak in your delicate beauty
Then your emotions will surge and come out of their
hidings beneath, lying quiet and low
Under the weight of separation, full of heartache and
sorrow.

No I cannot see you unhappy, shall all happiness for you
demand

Let the everyday blazing sun help your heart bear the
burning

My soul shall radiate all love and hopes to you from the
skies above

As your doe eyes look for me and follow the crimson evening rays, in my love, forever longing!!!!



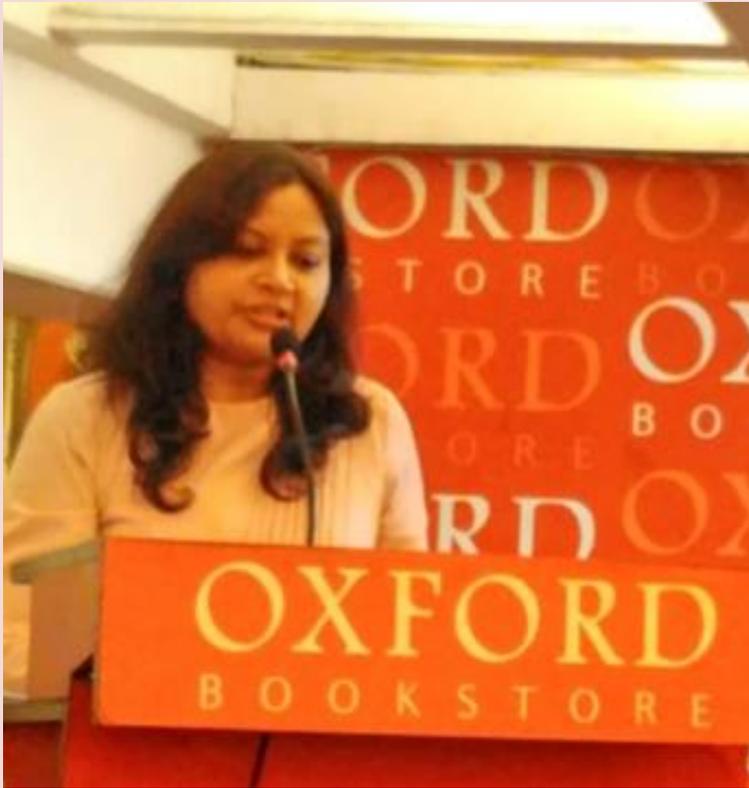
Madhumita Bhattacharjee Nayar: She is a bilingual writer (writing both in Hindi and English). A poetess, blogger, lifeskills counsellor, healer, she is also a social commentator and works with women and children. She is the author of “THE NIGHT JASMINE AND OTHER LOVE POEMS”. She is the winner of ICON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



PARCEL OF LOVE

The year has come to a close
shedding a new light
We are all waiting for a pinprick
a jab of secured life
To ooze out our contagion
our fears of touching death
that's usually unannounced
At a time when we are decluttering
reshuffling organizing
to decorate our life's tree

Placing well thought out presents
for our loved ones, as Santa gifts
I wrap my renewed faith
my love and trust for you
in a parcel tagged 'Myself'
in an ethereal place for you
As you snug in bed, eyes closed
it's gonna unwrap for you
You'll find yourself beside me
even on a hilltop!



Madhu Sriwastav: Madhu Sriwastav is an academic, writer, poet, translator, reviewer. She writes to express herself about anything that catches her fancy and touches a chord. She is based in Kolkata. She has published in several International and National anthologies and journals. She is a regular GloMag contributor.



What you see of these eyes is a myth.

And then you see nothing and see the truth

In that moment,

You see the mud cracking up,

Everything falling off

Disappearing!

Now you see everything that

You have unseen

And this is how

You see the light.



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.



SENSITIVENESS

A human body is only a structure

Till he notices, his soul

Which is eternal source of life

Calls, warns, awakes

He has a precious heart

Guides every movement

Who has kindness, love, desires

Willingness to stay alive, everything

But the head, who has mind, is the master,

Has capability to make a man

A human being or a beast.
Finer qualities of man, if not
Fed, meet a sad death,
Sensitive persons, writers, poets
Have foresight to prevent, live
That eternal, imaginary life
Where they can create beautiful,
Gardens and desert
They are able to make flowers bloom
Anywhere they wish
They have capability to spread blood
On paper, through their words
They are able to create such ambience
Where lovers find themselves, out of this world,
They can remove fear, grief from
human mind
They have power to remove negative thoughts
And plant positivity in them

It's an important point to think about

Only if someone listens to the voice of one's soul

Perfect sync forms perfect results



Manjula Asthana Mahanti: She is a bilingual poet, author, translator and editor. She has worked in a prestigious college as Head of the Department, and she last worked as a Public School Principal. She has published six books, in both English and Hindi. She has published short stories, poems, and articles in many national and international anthologies, e-magazines, OPA, Glomag, Setu, etc.



SHADOW

Lost in the darkness
of doomed hope,
Tears falling down
becoming a dead sea.

My shadow is gone
deep into the blue sky.

It's like chasing the wind,
the clouds, the rainbow
making the way for
the tears to flow

Flow into the rhythm
of rage and forlorn

Lost in the echo
deep below
with broken promises
and helpless heart



Mehak Varun: Writer, Mehak Varun, is the author of four books - THE Humane Quest vol 1, 2 & 3 and 'I am Me'. She has been bestowed with '100 Inspiring Authors of India' award in Kolkata. She has also been honored with the 'Women Of Influence 2019' award presented on women's day in New Delhi. Along with her books, her work has been published in various anthologies and she is recipient of various other prizes in poetry competitions as well. She is known for raising contemporary issues in the society. (mehakgrover@amartex.com)



THE REDEMPTION

My eyes green
are 2 glass windows
into the past.

I keep the blinds
pulled down tight.

Carnell knowledge
is a Biblical definition of sin.

I live in darkness,
the shame of those early years.

I pull myself out

redemption in old age,
a savior,
before the grave,
I flatter myself
in a mirror, no reflection.



Michael Lee Johnson: He lived ten years in Canada during the Vietnam era and is a dual citizen of the United States and Canada. Today he is a poet, freelance writer, amateur photographer, and small business owner in Itasca, DuPage County, Illinois. Mr. Johnson is published in more than 1098 new publications, and his poems have appeared in 40 countries, he edits, publishes ten poetry sites. Michael Lee Johnson has been nominated for 2 Pushcart Prize awards poetry 2015/1 Best of the Net 2016/2 Best of the Net 2017, 2 Best of the Net 2018. Two hundred seventeen poetry videos are now on YouTube:

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



THERE IS GOD

I am afraid of life

Because it is a mystery

But I will make history.

I am afraid of friends

Because they are humans

But I will love them.

I am scared of tomorrow

Because it is unknown,

But I am hopeful.

I am troubled about the world

Because leaders are unfaithful,

And things change for worse

But there is God.



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.



IN THE SENSORY MIST

The tangerine embers is the citrus aglow
like hissing snake rises twirling smoke
lights, they burst in gleaming explosions
as death knells noises come in blows
Ah for an escape! I must but cope

Tip tip through the eerie night it drips
is it water or bleeding beheaded torso
sleep is a solace that never comes
like a dead mommy's loving embrace
Ah for an escape! I must but cope

Silk scourges me but glides on you

All I need is my tunic rough and coarse

Shall I lather my chest or upper back?

needles of shower jabbing my pores

Ah for an escape! I must but cope

Your perfect senses, oh that gift!

my brain can't interpret, a curse on me

At times invading unexpectedly, all together

Like swarms of enemies would a lone soldier

Ah for an escape! I must but cope

An hour of my life, come for a ride

it's an amusement park's horror delight

If you still can; call me willful and weird

hate me as rowdy, mad and maniacal

Ah for an escape! I must but cope



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



MY AMAZON WARRIOR...!

Like the thunder; with bow and arrow,
she embarked in her armour,
The lightning bolt in the darkness,
as I closed my eyes to sleep,
In the abyss of my dream,
There she appeared; my amazon warrior..!

Dream went on; stumbling amidst darkness,

And the lioness..!

She walked within the dark old walls,

Like a mysterious shadow,

As if a will laden with many bows

To protect her queen and castle,

She became the knight rider,

Savior of the country.

In my dream patriot an iron heart beats,

Amber burns in her eyes,

Determined like a human of steel,

She roars like a volcano

When to resist enemy and to kill.

A pledged had been made,

To serve the nation,

To save humanity the amazon warrior shook everything

And made me go astray in my dream

In quest of the truth; Who she was in reality?



Nitusmita Saikia: She is a bilingual writer from Assam, India, and is presently working as instructor in National Cadet Corps. Along with poetry, she also writes short stories, plays, and has been writing for magazines like FM, GloMag, and Tuck. Her poems have been published in many national and international anthologies and in local newspapers, in blogs, etc.



MULTI“FACE”TED

Yesterday, today, tomorrow

Then, now, later

Past, present, future

Black

Every shade of grey

White

Three variations

Three entities

Three faces (*phases*) of us



Nivedita Karthik: I am a poet residing in Gurgaon. I work as a medical/scientific editor/reviewer. I have published many poems in various national and international magazines. I am a professional Bharatanatyam dancer and amateur photographer. Random thoughts that buzz through my mind are penned down for eternity in my blog <https://justrandomwithnk.com>



MY POEM-MY PRAYER

I do not know always
What to pray for or?
why to pray, but I do know
How to simply sit and write
A poem, a prayer, an expression
of peace and mindfulness
I know how to sit by the flowing river
and be engulfed by the beauty
of the setting red sun, the cawing
of the homecoming birds,
the gentle sway of the palm leaves

The soft breeze and the distant peal of temple bells
as they herald the evening worshippers into the sanctum
My peaceful thoughts as they flow from my pen
Onto the sheets of paper, a release,
An invocation to Nature.

I hear my voice whisper the words as I write
Is it mine, is it the gentle flower, or the quiet moth?
For at this moment when dusk meets the night
I am the same as the rose or the river,
Part of Nature, part of the Universe.



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



MY DOVE

Heavenly dove

Hovering at a distance,

If I am honest to myself

I am torn between my

Ache to shroud and

Have you all to myself

And love that never cages.

I ache at your innocence
Which isn't mine to protect...
But I long to gently handle
Your ever so sublime ingenuity
And perch your being
On my bare, vulnerable self.
I yearn to feel your innocent
Dove nails trail all over me,
Feel your innocent beak
Peck, tap, nip, pick across
Layers of self- limiting skin
Bleed me even, if you have to,
Reach for my heart, clench it,
I long to beat in your palms...

In surrender, I simply lie back
My bosom open to endurance...
Certain, beatific and unafraid

Knowing that you are benign
You cannot hurt me beyond
Playful taunts and ridicule
For which my love, I'm certain
To extract innocent pouts,
Innocent fury, innocent tears,
To feel your kind, innocent love
Permeate through my being
To heal, soothe and revive me...

Ah, my dove, my love,
Hovering at a distance,
I ache to be engrossed
By your innocent soul...
Just perch onto me.



Panjami Anand: Greetings, I am but a speck in the world, aspiring to be as aware and genuine as possible. My poems are fragments of my soul. Thank you for running your palms through them.



DRONES

Grandma used to tell us
while we all children
sat before her wide-eyed
to keep us engaged
so that we didn't make fuss
more so when guests were there to dine.

She said her grandma believed
that once upon a time,
with power they possessed

noble women used to make
coconut trees bend down
for them to gather coconuts
and believing it a godly tree
she never allowed
women in menses to lean on it.
I couldn't even wildly corroborate it.

But had she been alive,
I want to ask her
whether such power
can turn rapists into drones,
those slide dead
after mating midflight,
a gloomy suspense
they don't foresee,
while the queen bee flies off
with their genitalia.



Pankajam: Pankajam, retired from BHEL as DM/Finance is a bilingual poet and novelist settled at Chennai, India. In addition to several poems, book reviews and articles published in national and international journals, she has twenty-eight books to her credit, including fifteen books of poems, a translated poetry collection in French and three fictions in English. Three books on literary criticism discuss her works in detail. A book of critical essays and research papers on her poems edited by Dr. S Barathi titled “Poetic Oeuvre of K. Pankajam” has also been published. She has won many awards for poems and short stories including Rock Pebbles National Literary Award 2019, Haven International’s Eclat Award 2021.



Pic by Abizit Dutta

THE GAME OF THE SHADOW AND THE REFLECTION

The shadow said “I am with you always my love”.

The reflection with all its dazzle and shine, laughed.

The shadow follows you everywhere, day and night.

Plain and simple with no show.

Just you and the shadow nobody else.

Falling with you when you fall.

Standing up when you stand tall.

With you in thick and thin.

With you in different places it has been.

With you in sunshine and rain.

With you in happiness and pain.

But the high and mighty reflection needs a medium.

You get thrilled to see your dazzling self in a mirror.

The water of the river doubles your beauty by reflection.

The game of the shadow and the reflection goes on.

Confusion on who is the dearer one.



Paramita Mukherjee Mullick: I am Dr. Paramita Mukherjee Mullick and I live in Mumbai, India. I am a scientist transformed into a globally loved, award-winning poet. I am an editor and organizer. I have eight published books and my poems have been widely published in India and abroad. Some poems have been translated into 39 languages. I am the Founder President of the Mumbai Chapter of the Intercultural Poetry and Performance Library (IPPL) and also the Cultural Convenor and Literary Coordinator(West India) of the International Society for Intercultural Studies and Research(ISISAR).



<http://www.flowersofindia.net/catalog/slides/Rain%20Tree.html>

Have you seen a Tree

With no movement

Leaves closed.

Sleeping?

Resting after a day's work?

Or Meditating

With arms raised upward

Feet firmly rooted

Breathing silently

A rare vision

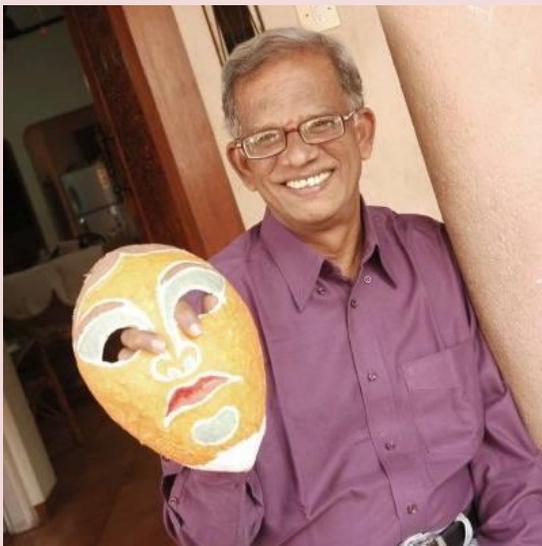
I see many days

Sipping my first coffee

Watch the tree in Meditation

Waiting for the birds to wake up

Looking for Aditya's Chariot.



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



THE STURGEON

Bottom feeder. I live in two waters.

Sense their electric impulses vibrate,

suck into my mouth all their shells and claws.

Soon move from Deep to brackish water. Wait

until I am used to warmer Narrow,

release my sticky eggs. My babies swim

seaward. Get used to brackish in Shallow

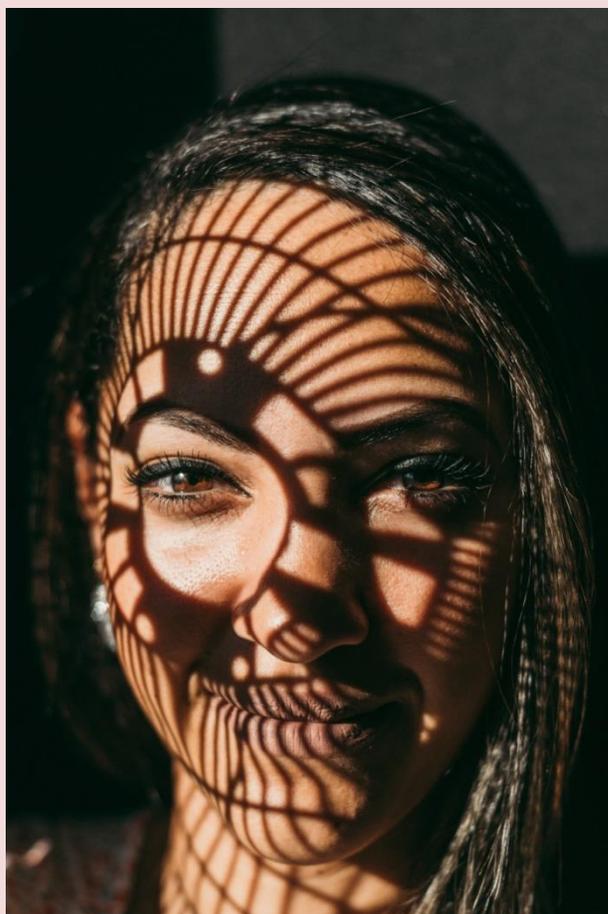
before move into Deep, not over rim.

Above dredge our living, scarifying
life, haul us up into light and dryness.
Harvest our babies before their birthing.
Hunted my ancestors rich meatiness.

Deep returned I may leap, keep the reason
a mystery, splash my flat sides, frisson.



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.



Pick back the pieces of thy self

Hold them dear

Only you can put them back in place;

Be there for yourself as your greatest confidante.

Rejoice within,

Witnessing how naturally you grow roots and bloom

Like everything green around

Resilience is within

Just observe and wonder.



Prabha Prakash: I am a poet based in Kerala. I am a Chartered Accountant and work as Assistant Manager with EY. My first poetry collection 'Lost Monsoon' was published by Writers Workshop, Kolkata in 2018. I have been selected for the Reuel International Poetry Prize 2019.



WHAT ELSE SHALL I BEQUEATH

I have only a small piece of land

heart-shaped

But don't have the propriety right

To date.

Pushed from pillar to post

I am running from face to face

From one mirror to another,

Merely for a stamp and a signature!

Possession is a big deal these days
But I don't want to possess anything
Let that be the heart even of the beloved!
I know, Smile cannot be fenced,
So also the ever flowing words in her seductive lips.
The sunshine and shadows dangling over her sweet face
too is a free gift of Nature!
Never ever the eyes possess the dream just because it has
seen in the night.

Let me lie down somewhere in the heart of the town,
unnoticed.

Who is asking for bouquets
Brickbats will do.
Someday someone will ask
Who is the proprietor of this beautiful heart-shaped land?
Just say "I"



Prahallad Satpathy: Dr. Prahallad Kumar Satapathy, who hails from Odisha (India), is a bilingual poet writing both in Odia and English. He is a retired Associate Professor of Economics. To his credit, he has four published anthologies in Odia language. His poems are published in many national and international journals. Twice he has represented Odisha Sahitya Academy as an honorary member.



SUSPENDED ANIMATION

Time stands still,
Rather made to stand still,
We are in a wormhole, almost another dimension,
God like he /she is,
Our breath in their hands,
To heal, we have been knocked out,
Our senses suspended,
Our memories erased,

Only the soul sees,
The shadowy figures,
Working on the body,
Cutting, stitching, mopping up our life giving fluids,
Repairing our machines,
Putting in spare parts if need be,
When all set and done,
We are led through a tunnel,
Into the bright light of consciousness,
Senses surging back,
We are a thinking, pulsating, throbbing in pain, alive body,
Back among the living,
Given a second chance at life,
Let us salute today,
The gate keeper,
The anaesthetist,
The almost invisible, silent worker,

Who safeguards our life chord,
To allow healers to do their job!



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.



JUST FALL IN LOVE

Just fall in love

Again and again

With your soul!

Just sit in the sky's courtyard

Sip the ethereal stillness

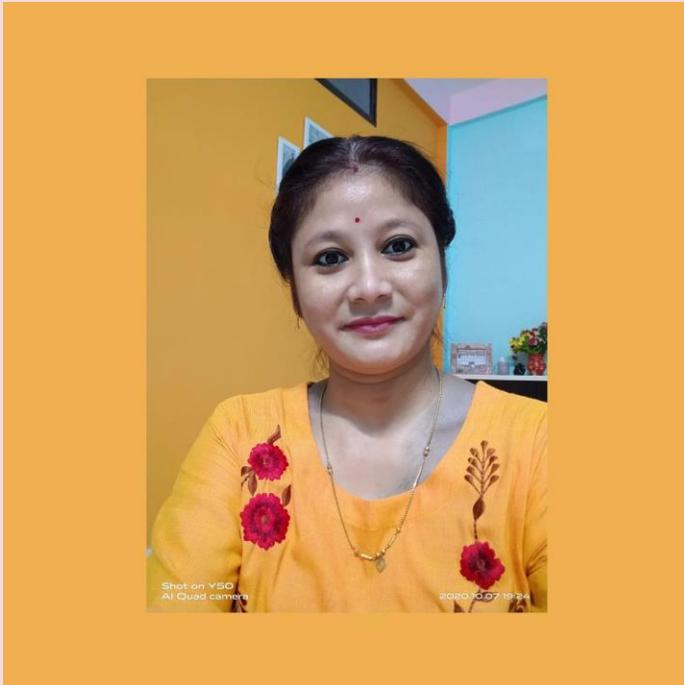
And enjoy your night.

Let the coolness of the air

Embrace your thought,

With the warmth of holy prayers

Make yourself strong and comfort.
The night is made for you
Feel free to make yourself happy
With the tenderness of the moonlight drizzle
With soothing lyrical voice of the wild wind
Heal your wounds,
Just peep through the gray silhouette
Smelling the sweet fragrance of the night
Just fall in love only for once
With your soul!



Preety Bora: The poetess, Mrs Preety Bora lives in Golaghat. She is a homemaker. She weaves poetry in both languages: in English and in Assamese (Mother Tongue). She is the Co-Editor of a bilingual book entitled “Hejar Kabir Xopoon” (Part 1). And her poems have been featured in various anthologies and magazines in India and in foreign countries too. She is highly inspired by Nature.



TO MAKE A MAN OF A MOUSE

Take a mouse, cut off its tail,
And make it stand up, hobbling
On crutches named Pride and Honour.

Feed it with many things -
The bitter bile of frustrated years,
The sour curds of congealed dreams,
The sickly sweetness of petty triumphs.

Make it breathe the rancid stench
Of Gucci-scented wretchedness
And middle-class motionlessness.

Retain the ability to compete fiercely,
For scraps thrown by the rich,
The instinct to abandon the weak
In moments of testing danger
and to gorge as if tomorrow will die.

Put in a hundred emotions -
Petty envy, religious zeal,
Impotent greed and the craving bloodlust
Of seeing neighbours stumble,
The joy of minuscule cleverness,
The urge to steal coins from blind beggars
And to luxuriate in the pain

Of butchered animals. Add above all
A genocidal hate of all that is not me.

Suture on a thumb useful for strangulating,
A beer belly bursting
With undigested unpleasantness,
A lye-laden tongue,
And the tribal smirk of triumphant bigotry.

The mouse is now made man.



Raamesh Gowri Raghavan: Raamesh Gowri Raghavan is a Thane-based epigraphist, historian, copywriter and poet. He has been published in several anthologies and magazines. He is the editor of Narrow Road Literary Journal, a e-zine of poetry, haibun and flash fiction.



GLORY OF MORN

His milking the cow

In the early morn,

when dawn and wisdom

Of sunlight merge

in his agile fingers

managing the show.

Indeed a tough show

for the dead calf all tied

made to stand before the cow

to give a fond affection, by lick.

it is not an easy show,
for pity for dead and alive
runs in between there;
the owner and sweet
cute little girl of five
witnessing agile the usual;
a custom she does not
want to miss, for the
taste of first sip of milk
child eager NOT to miss

fresh and accustomed;
far off somebody stands
for a philosophy, to be
comprehended complete:
why almost an adage
somebody's toil
elsewhere the beneficiary.

Happening around us

Happening now unquestioned.



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

Her blogs:

pearlrade.blogspot.in

pearlrade.wordpress.com



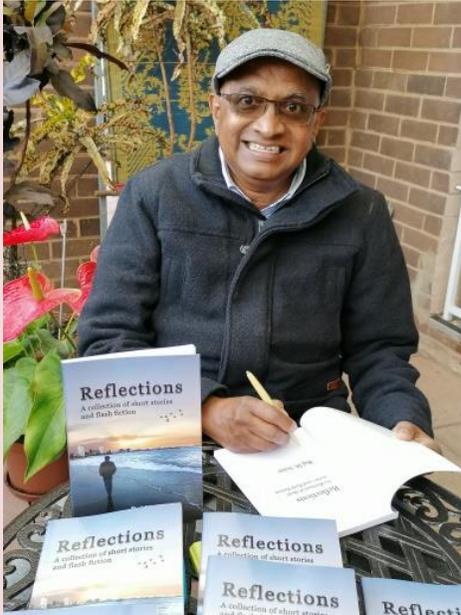
FATHER AND SON

“I have nothing
To leave you, son.”

After the first spasm
He sat up, frightened.
Gazed, then darted
Unseeing looks
Till he rested.

But the son remembers ...
The smell of paraffin lamps
Long warm shadows
On whitewashed walls.
The lightning storm
Whipping the dark room
Into slithers of white.
Mother whispering
“Say God’s name.”
Father coming home
Extracting a paper bag
From soggy garments.
And all forgotten
When one tuppenny cake
Was cut in four.
He deliriously mischievous
Mother stingingly volatile
“Leave the boy” from father.

He remembers
And is grateful
For this bounty.



Raj Isaac: I am a retired educator who specialized in the teaching of English up to the tertiary level. I reside in Durban, South Africa and have had my writings featured in various local publications. I have self-published two books – a family history and a collection of short stories and flash fiction. My writing journey is recorded in my Facebook page, “The stories I write”.

<https://www.facebook.com/Raj.M.Isaac/>



THE SUM OF PARTS

I'm plain. They tell me, your eyes
don't rest for long at my face,
one glance and then
to my breasts they glide. You tell me
I'm plain, maybe, but then your eyes
find the curves you search, are glad too.
So tell me again, am I plain?
No Sir! My breasts, you've found
are round. Plain? Hell no!



Rajnish Mishra: Rajnish Mishra is a poet, writer, translator and blogger born and brought up in Varanasi, India and now in exile from his city. His work originates at the point of intersection between his psyche and his city. He edits PPP Ezine and writes at:

<https://rajnishmishravns.wordpress.com/>



MY LOVE SONGS ARE ETERNAL

The whole universe is my heart wherein
Lie two empty chairs—one for
You, my love! I'm waiting eternally
Standing on the shore of Time River,
Meditating pensively over the causes of
Your absence in solitude; leafy trees,
Blue mountains, and the wandering clouds
Are witness to my penance in silence
From time immemorial; pale shadows of
The descending Sun are making their presence

Felt in the placid waters of the river,
Flowing at the foothills of majestic hilly
Slopes; it seems that the time clock
Has stopped ticking, finally.

I'm the wretched, lovelorn earth, and you're
My virtual sky brimming with unbound love;
Though we can't meet ever, our
Love will last beyond the fleeting times,
And our love tales will be repeated
Throughout to enthrall the future generations,
To be sung by the bards in mellifluous rhymes.

The turf of my heart will always
Be green in the hope of listening,
The enchanting rhythms of your elusive footfall.



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



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THE ADVENT

Inspirations descend
Like a tuft of grass
that punches through
asphalt cracks and remains green--
The twelve- year- old boy
endures and survives life
with a faint smile!

The son of a street tea-seller
works with his father

in a small roadside tea shop
ladling tea and serving people
lined up in the morning.

I see him everyday
during my morning walk:
He waves at me and wants to talk,
but I maintain my brisk pace
amid a barrage of feelings!
Behind the facade
I discover a pair of jaded eyes
furled in blue silence!

At daybreak-- the tea time--
his dreams are broken
by the knock of the Sun--
The unrealised dreams of
school bags, books, pencils, and

Colourful Crayons!

Oh, the child survives

with shattered dreams!



Ranjana Sharan Sinha: Dr. Sinha is an eminent poet, author and professor of English. She has a number of awards to her credit for her contribution to poetry. Her poems from her collection "Scents and Shadows" are included in the syllabus of Purnea University. She has the honour of receiving a commendation from the former President of India, A P.J. Abdul Kalam for her poem, 'Mother Nature' contained in her collection 'Spring Zone'. She has received several other awards. Her poems, short stories, articles and research papers have been widely published in highly-

acclaimed journals and anthologies. She has authored published 9 books in different genres and 50 research papers.



BALANCER

Sometimes, when sitting with the sunset
I feel I would never be able to write again
Darkness everywhere seems to be the refrain
And then there is that beautiful sunrise!

Sometimes, when sifting with my travails
I feel life has become so dreary and uneasy
And there's no way I can take it easy
But then there is my innate strength!

Sometimes, when lighting a lamp
I feel why there is this darkness
Covering the blind terrain with stillness
But then there is the inner light!

Sometimes, when drifting with my thoughts
I feel where's life's work balance
I cannot find meaning with nonchalance
But then there is that ease with Truce! ...



Ravi Ranganathan: Ravi Ranganathan is a writer, Poet and critic. He is also a retired banker settled in Chennai. He has to his credit three books of poems entitled “Lyrics of Life” and “Blade of green grass” and “Of Cloudless Climes”. He revels in writing his thought-provoking short poems called ‘Myku’. His poems are featured regularly in many anthologies. He has won many awards for his poetry, including recognition in "Poiesis award for excellence" of Poiesisonline, Sahitya Gaurav award by Literati Cosmos Society, Mathura and ‘Master of creative Impulse’ award by Philosophyque Poetica. He contributes poems and articles regularly for monthly webzine “Literary Vibes” and monthly e-magazine Glomag and quarterly International magazine “Metverse”.



HERON EXCESSES

A splash of salt spray

A murmurous cove of glistening sea jewels

A blue bandanna sky tied over the ocean

Hérons like apostrophes as life flutters by

A good day can make you weep

A red balloon flutters at the bars of a cage

A soft explosion and it pops out, lying thinly
plastered over the ocean

Fragile, translucent, spread out from shore to shore,
waves lapping underneath flimsy skin

The ocean retreats to get reinforcements

Millions of miniscule molluscs, heaving jelly blobs, green
algae and scurrying crabs;

when the universe talks to you, you must holler back giving
it all the dust from your entrails

you must shake out your lungs and let the breeze air them

Eat the oxygen if you must

Breathe through skin

and tread gently on the fallen sky and its stars scattered
under your bare feet

That is how you enter the sacred sanctuary guarded by the
sun's fire spears

It will bake you into strong earthenware

But before you leave,

level every pothole that lurks in you
Stuff them with sturdy herons



Reena Prasad: Reena R's poems have been published in The Copperfield Review, First Literary Review-East, Angle Journal, Poetry Quarterly, York Literary Review, Lakeview International Journal, Glomag, Duane's Poe Tree, Mad Swirl, etc. She is also the Destiny Poets UK's Poet of the year for 2014 and one of the editors of The Significant Anthology released in July 2015. She was adjudged second in the 'World Union Of Poet's' poetry competition, 2016

and won an award for poetry in 2016 As 'You Like It International Poetry Contest', commemorating the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare. She won the Reuel International Prize for poetry, 2018.



NYX

night's hair unfurls her fingers
over the shoulders of the world
as the earth's darkness slowly disappears along the
mountainside,
revealing those asleep in solitude's corner,
sheltered among the sparkling lights of their lonesome
sojourn.

in time, Nyx approaches the dreamers, her presence
a tempest without the passion of wind,
a field of wheat without sway, uncertainty,

a glint of light in a cavernous place,
silent and breathless.

once present, fervent gaze remaining steadfast,
her radiance slightly subsides,
goddess eyes focusing earthward,
transforming that ashen graveyard
into bed chambers of the opulent.

yes, for some, to ravish in power is absolute,
yet Nyx, primordial bird of paradise,
transcends this earthly temptation:

for how can beauty confess its secrets when there is no
lofty ear?

for how can the moon's revered light vacate the heights no
matter the adoring numbers?

for some, selfless actions
entail rewards less than the mundane

transcending any follower's glance or praise,
instead, for others,
noble deeds are endeavored merely to savor the sweet,
celestial wine of it.



Robert Feldman: Born in Paterson, New Jersey, Robert Feldman was inspired by members of Paterson's literary tradition, notably Allen Ginsberg and William Carlos Williams. Later, while living in St. Louis, he organized poetry readings, produced and hosted a community-issues news hour and a biweekly bebop jazz radio program on KDNA-FM. After relocating to Bisbee, Arizona, Robert was

instrumental in publishing some of Arizona's most influential writers such as Drummond Hadley and Michael Gregory, and in 1980, collaborated with Lawrence Ferlinghetti on his Bisbee publication, "Mule Mountain Dreams." Currently, Robert resides in greater Phoenix, continuing to write, paint, and play tabla, besides actively publishing in several online poetry magazines. Hineni, a collection of 15 Hebraic photographic poetry published in Spring, 2018, and Sunflowers, Sutras, Wheatfields, and other ArtPoems in the summer of 2019. The body of Robert's writing and painting can be viewed at albionmoonlight.net; he can be reached at rffeldman@gmail.com.



DO ME A FAVOR LOVE

In this beautiful afternoon,
I want you to do me a favor
And paint me a pink rose
As proof of your love for me!

I give you the white clouds
To use as a wide canvas
And let your fragile fingers
Gently draw magical strokes!

Inspired by the sundown,
The tranquility of the afternoon
And the velvet red of your dress,
Let your streaming hair blow
And paint me a pink rose!

Please, paint me that pink rose
And become part of the picture
So I can keep it in my garden
As a reminder of your love
Which I have been
Waiting for so long!



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!



FRAME WORK

Windows were not his calling,
nothing was far as he could tell,
he answered an ad for windows in the paper
and now he was installing windows,
all you really needed was a measuring tape
and a pair on steel-toed boots,
they gave you all the measurements
the rest was frame work –
laying windows into place without breaking
the glass, if you could do that, you were golden;

he didn't he need a valid driver's license
and they paid under the table
which was great when you were just
getting back out after a stint
and sliding back into the
swing of things.



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*. He enjoys listening to the blues and cruising down the TransCanada in his big blacked out truck.



THE STORY OF A BOOK

The sun rose warm and bright that day

And inspiration took her breath away

"Forget the food, I have to write!"

And so she did, for a day and a night.

But soon the words had passed by,

Though her pen was not yet dry -

And so the days and nights passed,
The unfinished story tugged at her heart

But when the words would not come through
What, o what, was she to do?
Then she saw what she needed all along;
The beauty of a child's song.

For days and nights she wrote and wrote,
Sleep and food almost vetoed.
The genius finally pulled through,
And in her hands lay her book new.

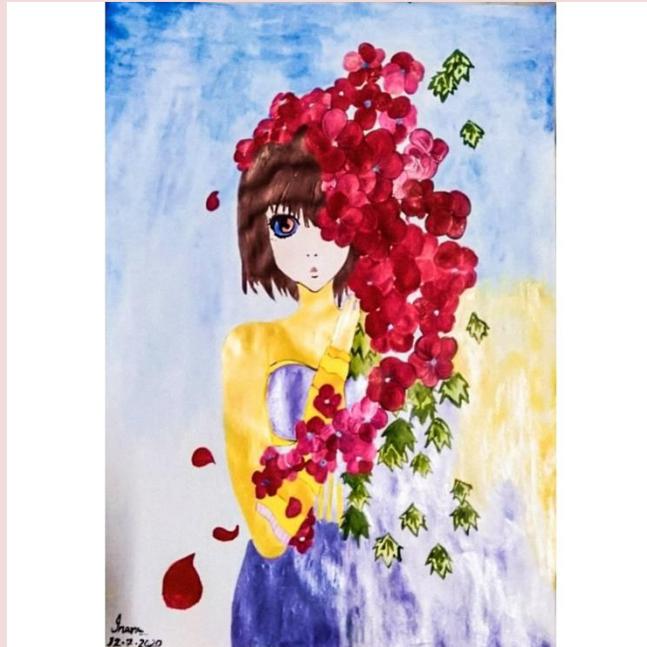
Soon in print, it reached the stores,
And then it crossed several shores,
Finally coming into my hands;
Maybe this was already planned?

The book lies in my room tonight,
It's pages worn, cover no longer tight
But it's soul lies in its heart
And so I go back to the start.

This today that I have narrated
The story of a book most beloved
For books tell us stories, we know,
But I tell you the story of a book, though!



Samixa Bajaj: I am a teenager from Guwahati, Assam. Besides writing, I love reading, dancing, sketching and music.



TO RISE AND SHINE

On New moon nights, when all you see is a starless sky - a vast canopy of darkness that threatens to engulf you

I know how hopeless, helpless you feel - in that one moment

Where you find yourself in fragments, far too many

And yet, let me reassure you - this isn't the end of the road

Nor is this the end of your journey

It's just the close of another chapter; perhaps one which was too short for your choice

But then, tomorrow, with another new dawn

When you begin afresh, writing a new chapter

You will understand the value of this in-between, this momentary void that seemed to go on forever

It's in these silences that you will probe deeper, explore parts of yourself you've never known existed

And singing lullabies to the chaos within,

You will quieten the wars that were going on since long - inside you

Tonight seems far too unkind - a night you'll probably want to forget

But then it's in these turbulent times that you turn over a new leaf, peeling off layers of old wounds and battle scars

Evolving into ombre hues of the beautiful soul that you are

For it's on these nights that the Universe teaches you - simply how real you are!

How invigoratingly beautiful your nude soul can be - born of stardust gathered on a dark starless night

It teaches you that healing as a process isn't easy

And yet, in spite of everything that's gone wrong

You have healed, not once but countless times over; and
you've done that simply because

You have what it takes -

Courage

And an abundance of love that flows as grief from the
corners of your turquoise eyes

Tonight, Beautiful Soul, is undoubtedly a tough one

And yet you live and breathe through prayers of gratitude
for all that you've lived through, lived with

And tomorrow when you write a fresh chapter - it'll be a
glorious one

Filled with the learnings and teachings of the war and
peace you've struggled through

And that's why you will live through this night

A New moon night, a starless sky

To 'Rise and Shine' all over again...



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



QUO VADIS?

Muscles ripple through gleaming skin

Beads form and sweat trickles

Down a furrowed brow.

Each move shows the ache

In the overstretched sinew

From the strain of the oar

And the burden of your toils

What keeps you going, traveler?

What heartache pumps your blood?

What keeps you rowing, sailor?

What siren tugs your towline?

Where do you wander, nomad?

What destination beckons?



Sangita Kalarickal: Poet and writer, Sangita Kalarickal has been, since childhood, wordsmithing and honing her craft in the forms of poetry and fiction. Her stories and poems have been published in several e-zines in US and India like Mused, Bella Online, Storizen, Literary Vibes, Open Door Poetry, and in collections like Talking Stick, Uncommon

Collection, Prismatic Prose, Breathe and the Poetry Marathon anthologies. She utilizes her left brain at her day job where she is a physicist. Currently, Sangita spends much of her free time studying and honing her skills in her latest obsession, haiku. Dr. Kalarickal currently lives with her family mostly in Minnesota, USA and in her fantasy worlds sometimes.



THE TERRACOTTA POT

Through my car, I saw an ancient banyan tree,
at peace with its avuncular look, so bizarre.

I heard a variety of birds twittering in the tree,
in a frenzy of hyper-excitement.

I gingerly stepped out of the car, lest I disturb the banter of the birds.

How soothing it all was!

The bliss of the joyous breeze playing with my hair,
a sparrow hopping up to me, dropping her gaze, when I
stared at her.

A trifle shy, was she?

A broken terracotta pot filled with water hung from a
hanging branch.

Ancient intertwined branches presented a picture of
peaceful coexistence.

The pesky parakeets, the mischievous mynas,
the dandy doves and spunky sparrows all quenched their
thirst,
dipping their beaks into the water pot, sipping to their
hearts' content.

The tea vendor fronting the tree appeared to be bursting with curiosity,

an eye cocked in my direction, perhaps wondering at my insanity.

I too had had my fill, so I was back in the car.

As I glanced back, I was delighted to find the tea vendor replenishing the water pot,

the dust motes caught in the rays of the sun, sparkling with hope.

Hugging those magical moments to my overwhelmed heart, I headed home, rejuvenated.



Santosh Bakaya: Recipient of the Reuel Award for poetry [2014] for my long narrative poem, *Oh Hark!* Setu International Award in recognition of my ‘stellar contribution to world literature, [Pittsburgh, USA, 2018], Keshav Malik Award [2019], for my contribution to fiction, prose, and poetry, I am a poet, essayist, novelist, TEDx speaker, biographer, creative writing mentor, critically acclaimed for my poetic biography of Mahatma Gandhi, *Ballad of Bapu* [Vitasta, 2015]. My Ted Talk on *The Myth of Writer’s Block* is very popular in creative writing circles. I write a weekly column *Morning Meanderings* in Learning and Creativity.Com, the first part of which is an e-book now. My two collaborative e-books, *Vodka by the Volga* with Dr. Ampat Koshy [Blue Pencil, 2020] and *From Prinsep Ghat to Peer Panjal* with Gopal Lahiri [Blue Pencil, 2021] have been Amazon bestsellers. My latest book is *Runcible Spoons and Peagreen Boats* [Poetry, AuthorsPress, 2021].



THE COLOURFUL LIFE OF A BUTTERFLY

Butterflies drink delicious nectar

Dance around with pollen later

The pollen flies with the butterfly

Into a faraway land, falls from the sky

Hybrid flowers grow from the soil

Once again with the sun, start the great toil

Refreshing everyone who starts their day

And wonderful place for Nature to play



Sara Bubber: Sara Bubber is a children's, teachers and parents storyteller with an educational background in child development. She loves developing her skills in storytelling, podcasting, video editing and making her own puppets. She has some lovely four legged cuddle bags to keep her busy.



WARNING LABELS

I've learned
most of the lessons
on how to feel numb

and suffered
the fallout
when spells break

just to survive
in an age
of locusts and plagues

OK

cast me gently
unto the moon's
violent waves

judge all our gods
under the microscope
to steal a cure
from the fine print

not every script
is practiced to a T



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. He guest-edited the Hope Anthology of Poetry from CultureCult Press, as well as the 2019, 2020, and 2021 Western Voices Editions of Setu Mag. Selections of his poetry have been translated into Afrikaans, Albanian, Bengali, Dutch, French, Italian, Kurdish, Malayalam, Persian, Serbian, and Spanish. He hosts a podcast, Songs of Selah, that airs weekly on 17Numa Radio and features interviews with poets, artists, musicians, and health advocates. More about Outlar's work can be found at 17Numa.com.



MIND OVER BRAIN

Brain – a solid lump of mass

Mind intermingling with the

Solidarity of the brain

Seeping as if it had lain

In a watershed compartment

Beauteousness, a mirage

Soulfulness, a silent spectator

Can there be a unison

Moving slowly as if in compassion

In a world of luxury and comfort
Ticks the brain with minimum support
The mind, an entity on its own
Gallop as it were
Following in the footsteps of
God's own scion

Mind and brain
Will there be a liaison
The trajectory of mind
Following the path of brain



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.



There's a lady in a painting where the river meets the sea,
The trees shade her reverie, the sky can't meet her gaze.
I scoured through all my books and peers,
my room is rapt with voices.
I still can't say for sure why the waves call out her name.



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



MOTHERS LOVE IS SPECIAL

When God decided to descend on Earth,
He wondered how people will know His worth.

When He could not think any further
He realised a perfect creation could only be the Mother.

Mother is the creator of the Universe

Without her, life would be a curse

Mother keeps us safe in her womb

Will always love us, even after she reaches her tomb

Mother can be called by any name,

But her affection for us will always be the same

Theoretically, there is no special Mother's Day

Mothers are to be loved and celebrated in every way.



Shreya Suraj: I'm a mathematician, artist, photographer, and an environmentalist. I am the Founder of an art group called 'Anybody Can Draw' on Facebook, which has more than 6000 members from all over the world. I have also taken part in more than 175 beach clean-ups in Qatar and do my best to fight against plastic pollution. I am generally a very creative person, so I spend a lot of my time learning new art styles, writing poems and generally love to do a lot of voluntary work towards creating a better world.



A LIVING NIGHTMARE

too hot, even in the hills—
someone cries out.

later in the evening heavy rains
lash the place.

suddenly a landslide follows
boulders mud and muck
slide down.

lightning thundering
gushing waters

uprooted trees
washed away houses
vanishing roads
halted traffic
marooned commuters
howling kids—
a living nightmare!
a harrowing tale!

maybe another example
of Nature's fury
or is it Man bent upon
destroying Nature's glory

what happened later
is still an on-going story!!



Sindhu Rana: I am a poet and writer residing in Jalandhar, Punjab (India). I have contributed to various leading newspapers n journals; e-zines and anthologies. I am a script writer and voice-over artist for documentaries. However, reading and writing remains my first love.



SOMETHING I LOOK AT-143

LET ME LIVE MY TODAY

No yesterday, no tomorrow,

It is today and I am here.

With all my grace and vigour,

Agony, ecstasy and fervour

I will live, enjoy and endure.

Doesn't matter

How fascinating my past was,

How promising my future will be,

I am always with me,

With the moments I live

It is the moment that matter.
Today is my reality,
I will live it with all my smile and tear
However sad and pathetic maybe,
Today is mine, exclusively mine,
To be accepted with ease.
I have no escape,
But to accept it as it is.
I can't lose sight of me
And bask in the golden sunshine
Or lose me in colourful dreams.
If I am to accept something
Why not with a smile on lips?

I am here
With all my happiness and sorrow.
Better to have my cup of tea,

Rather brooding over the past,
Dead and gone,
Or dreaming and living ahead of time
On which I have hardly any control.



Smruti Ranjan Mohanty: Working in the Finance Services of Odisha, he is a multilingual poet, essayist and writer whose write-ups are published in newspapers and in various national and international magazines, journals and anthologies. He writes extensively on life and its intricacies. His collection of poems and proses are published in his blogs under the heading A LOOK AT LIFE, SOMETHING I LOOK AT, A LOOK, THE RIVULET, THINK ONCE MORE, THE JOURNEY, AU THARE, AU EKA GAPA, SROTASWINI, JATRA,

THE JOURNEY etc. He has received a lot of medals and accolades in the international arena.

Website-smrutiweb.wordpress.com

smrutitanuja.blogspot.com



DESTINY'S CHILD

From the half opened window, she could be seen, lying in the dust, next to the waste bin.

Nobody came to claim her as she lay, laughing but uncared for, on a bright sunny day.

Fortune favors the brave, so we are told, but none could dare, none could be bold.

It was the beggar woman who came to her aid, glancing here and there before her mind was made.

She picked up the infant –oh so tiny to hold, smiling, and rocking her, welcoming her to the fold.

With nothing to offer her, save a name, she was christened 'Niyati,' her only claim to fame.

She was Destiny's child who brought her beggar mother luck, for soon after, was sold for a quick buck.

Begging, bringing fortune to those she came in contact, her infectious laughter always making an impact.

Laughter continued even with persons unknown, but rescued soon after, went home with a new Mother.

But she was there not to stay, for soon she was told a little brother was on its way,

Malnourished abandoned and desolate, one day she inadvertently ran away.

Alone she stood in the world once more, till hunger forced her to beg from door to door.

Attaining puberty, realized the danger she was to self and society.

Quickly losing her smile, infectious laughter and her innocence,

Hounded by wolves like men, all strangers, who claimed to know her in pretense.

She screamed like many others, in fear, begging her captors to set her free,

Liberated she was as Nirbhaya, Pratibha and all the rest, after being raped and hung/ thrown or cremated in glee.

The larger question being- as women, are we really free? Free in mind, body and spirit just as we want to be?

Weaving a magical web whilst stitching the fabric of the work place with domesticity?

Freedom in speech, attitude and behavior, whether we are wives, daughters or even family saviors?

Or do we ourselves decide our own destinies, educating ourselves to remove,

Prejudices and negligence with strength and resilience to prove.

For many a times, neglected, chastened and disrespected,
even being in nature meek and mild,

Empowered by resolve, we rise like the Phoenix and claim
to be more, than just Destiny's child.



Someeta Das: She is a retired Professor of English with twenty-eight years of teaching experience from Maharaja Manindra Chandra College, Kolkata. She is interested in writing short stories and stories on travel. She has published in Glomag, The Statesman, Setu, Woman's era and a number of e-zines.



HE

He brings hearts together

but also lets some break

He makes both fair and foul weather

but by design and not mistake

From darkness he delivered light

and put things from chaos to order

To shun the wrong and embrace the right

He gave us the wisdom to choose and the will to try harder

He made us feel ecstatic and hurt
and to taste the sweet and the bitter
He buried diamonds deep down in dirt
and taught us to weep, smile and titter

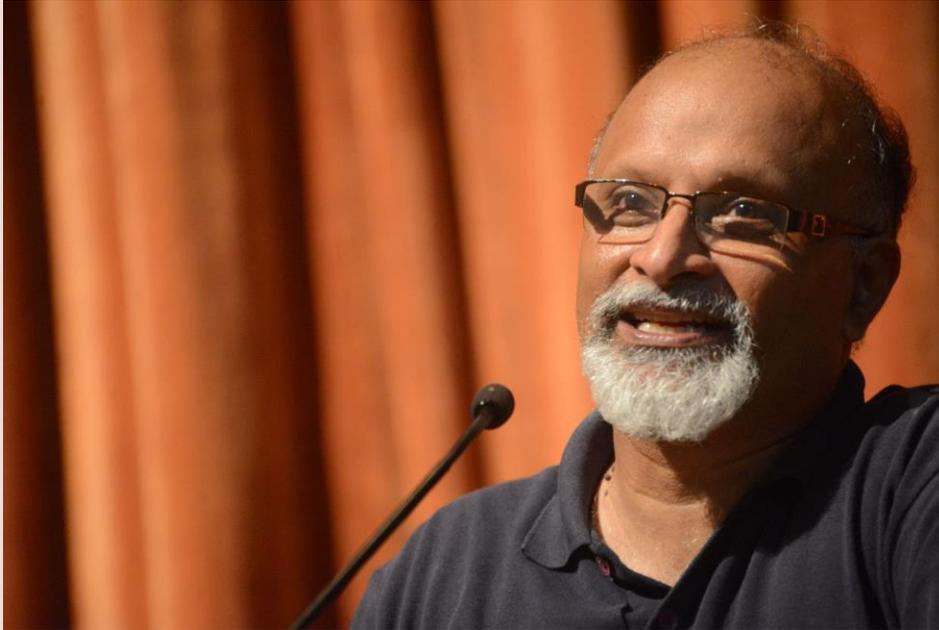
He made the hills, the valleys and the seas
The Sun, the Moon, the stars and space
The wind, the clouds, the rain, the birds and the bees
He created rainbows, butterflies and wonders that amaze

Does he see, hear or himself feel
any of the emotions his creatures do?

Does he know what it is to love and to lose and to live
everyday as though new?

He must be beyond gender
and bereft of feelings tender

To be capable of giving life and to lifeless render
lives like the Post Office returning letters to the Sender



Sri N Srivatsa: Born and brought up in Madras of yore who moved to New Delhi in 1978. I am a Physics graduate who spent more time dabbling in fine arts before a career in banking. I've been singing with the Madras Youth Choir for almost half a century. I have worked both behind and on stage in Tamil, English and Hindi productions of Arangam, Yatrik and Madras Players. I pursue translation of good poetry from Tamil to English and vice versa plus a few in Hindi as a passion. Three volumes of Tamil poems by three different poets translated by "moi" have been published.



POET DERANGED

If I could I would
bend space and time
return us to that point
where we first met
so we could start over
so I could say and do everything differently
maybe you would still be mine
maybe I would still be sane
instead of this poet deranged

forever searching for you
never finding you
in every subatomic particle swirling
in every blooming flower dancing
in every woman's eyes beautiful
in every cloud transfigured
in every star illuminating heaven
I am poet deranged
forever searching for you
never finding you
in every word of every sacred poem
in every lyric of every love song
in every note of every heavenly instrument
on every page of every holy book
I can find God but I cannot find my angel
my heart my hell
eternal I burn
in the flames of my love for you

I am poet deranged
forever searching for you
never finding you



Stefan Bohdan: Stefan Bohdan lives in Orlando, Florida USA. He is retired from the architectural/engineering/construction world. He now spends his time writing poems and novels. His English poems have been published in multiple books, anthologies, journals, newspapers, e-zines and translated into many languages. He also writes reviews for poetry books. He is internationally published and has collaborated with poets, translators and artists from around the world. He is the founder of Third Eye Butterfly Press.



TWO HEARTS ON MY INSIDE

Two hearts on my inside.

One evil one I won't hide.

Hopefully, I will show the loving one to you.

To make a promise to you.



Stephen Goetz: I'm a poet from Lincoln City, Oregon, USA. My works have been published online in poetry groups. I have received awards for my poetry from Motivational Strips and affiliate groups. I have been published for the first time in an anthology book. I'm a regular contributor to GloMag, an anthology published in India.



YOURS ONLY

She looked at herself as she undressed

The mirror reflected her skin inked by purple tattoos

She had gifted him 'herself'

wrapped in the colours of his preference

He had nibbled into the sweetmeat taking his fill

The tattoos opened their angry eyes
Her screams screened by societal screen
peeled off the layers of rosy dreams

Her moon face cracked and crackled
The mirror hid their turmoil and potency
through the crevices the icicles grew feet

Menaced hands could not be raised
as the poisoned ivy entrenched deeply
its steel tacks tracking their path fenced in by sharp barbed
wires

The brackish red water had tasted the same
every time the weals bled lustily
words froze into potent action bidding time to hit
ravenously

Hard fair and square the scarlet dawn waited
the swampy moor a vast barren wasteland
which could have been lush and green...



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.



A COMPROMISE

My lonesome being
looks for kinship
under the canopy of moon
wrapped in the blanket of forlorn desires
it gropes in the meanders
longs for the nostalgic trails of yore

The deep dark night kindles
my unrequited desires
pauses... compose utterances

and punctuations glorify my silence

How do I delineate my exact mood?
when the soothing gentle symphony
does not balm my soul
nor assuages bitter sentiments
the way it should

Sighs!

I better sign the treaty of peace
to escape the slow invasion of
gnawing phase and quirky lease
to live a life on my own
and not even...
with a pinch of compromise.



Sujata Dash: Sujata Dash is a poet from Bhubaneswar, Odisha. She is a retired banker. She has one published poetry anthology (More than Mere-a bunch of poems by Authorspress) to her credit. She is a singer, avid lover of Nature. She regularly contributes to anthologies worldwide.



I AM THE INTERVAL

I am the interval
between you and muse,
Give me some time
To come out from the latest anguish.

I am the interval
To get closer to you,
The inseparable bondage between you and me
Could only be felt by a few.

I am the interval

In between life's thorny paths and necessities

You are one and only that

Inspires and motivates to form strong ideologies.

I am the interval

To reappear to you in a new fresh form,

Love, care and bless me

To feel and realise you in the usual norm.



Sujata Paul: She is a trilingual poetess residing in Tripura. By profession, she is a teacher. She is a Founder of Creative Tripura. She has published three poetry books. She has been published in special anthologies. She has been conferred Sahitya Academy Award, 2020 by Gujrat Sahitya Academy in collaboration with the #MotivationalStrips, Literoma Nari Samman Award, 2020, Most Influential Women Award, 2020 by The Spirit Mania, and the Literary Excellence Award by Suryodaya Literary Foundation, 2020.



ABANDONED SOUL

I'm an abandoned Soul
Lurking here and there
Waiting to reach my desired goal,
To complete my entity as a whole.

I walked and walked, then ran and stumbled,
Everywhere something genuine I fumbled.
I smiled and cried, to live I utmost tried
I struggled against worse and odds then died.

Life was never fun to me
Full of responsibilities, yet
Nothing could bring some glee,
My captive heart wanted to flee.

Life goes on
Rock and roll
And I played an inseparable role
But nothing could heal my thirsty soul.

To every passerby
I searched truth staring around the sky,
We're now in a world where,
Sometimes truth seems lie.

But God always has a plan for you
Perhaps better than we do,

I kept my belief on the highest tower
Where blessings are ready to shower,
From that very supreme power.



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.



THE LOTUS AND THE SWAN

You fell in love
With the swans of Venus
Swimming in my aromatic lake,
And the lotus leaves dancing on the web.

You dreamed of
Diving into my waters
To drink a few droplets of honey
From the lotus along with the swans!!!!

I fell in love
With the colors of your music
Weaving garlands of love for your lips
The music rang in my ears like the Orphean tunes.

As I played a few notes on your flute
You pierced the lotus to win the swan
The lotus bloomed swinging in the waves of glee
A Leda and the swan, in the vast ocean of creation!

The bemused sun beams witnessed the flashing on the
water
We became a couple rotating around the Earth on the axis
of love!



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.



MAYBE THEY HAD A REASON

For all that happens, there's a season, a reason!

Putting my kids to sleep on time I often wondered

- did my parents pamper me

letting me read till morn, then sleep till late morn?

Maybe they had a reason

maybe they knew I would be torn between being

a doctor to my family of patients, their families,

the newborn babies who chose these hands to arrive on
earth,

- and - those called my own.

They must have had a reason,
a karmic connect - the nurses, network of helpers, my
extended family,
apart from being a mother, cook, maid, activist, and artist,
ten fingers twenty pies, head in a stew pot,
an assorted bundle of sorts.

Most people love me a lot, some hate me. Give me a
reason, I'll accept it.

I doled the same love. Some didn't take an iota, nor gave as
much

others worshipped me for my healing touch

Maybe they all had a reason, different moods, different
seasons.

When lost stuff returned by strangers, is stolen by near
ones,

feeling betrayed and cheated, I tell myself, don't make a scene

maybe they have a reason, give them a chance to come clean.

Birds shove fledglings out of the nest.

What we know not, they know best

they do have a reason

young ones need to test their wings, learn to fly

humans could learn a lesson, if only they would try.

Endless questions, who, when, why, and how?

- just one answer

- 'they must have a reason',

not understood right now.



Sunil Kaushal: Dr. Sunil Kaushal, an awarded author, a gynecologist, trilingual writer, translated into French, German, and Greek, has been honoured nationally and internationally with many awards. The Nissim Award given by Nissim Ltd., awarded by The Significant League (International); the Enchanting Muse and Fellow of the Regal World of Scribes Award, by The Pentasi B Poetree Group; Literary Brigadier by StoryMirror; Stickypins bestowed her with the title of Quillmaster; the Women Achiever's Award 2019 by Literoma. Featured in the Limca Book of Records as part of the Amravati Poetic Prism 2018. Her poems find a place in The Golden Book of World Records. Winner at YoAlfaaz. She was awarded Best Lioness President, Asia. She is a Gold medalist in Dramatics. Her varied interests and hobbies keep her in love with life and active at 76, yoga being the fuel.



TIME THAT WAS

Ageing comes with its own burdens. The decrepit house. The echoes across the empty corridors.

Pigeons flutter in the rafters, creating a haunting dirge to the years lost.

Passage of time!

Marked by the lines and graffiti

On old walls,

Dates and names scratched
faithfully---reminders
nobody cares about.

Dust.

Hollow wind.

Somebody coughs

Some recess, dark, dingy

...then, eternal silence

And a sea that no longer

whispers!



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

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

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



Turning inwards is not more or new
it is where I go
when the dust of the world sits on my shirt
and draws out all the nectar from my whorls

I have a stream inside
which silently flows by
pure and deep are its waters
dainty birds come to drink
coloured fish float by

shy buds and dozing flowers
sit by the sun
bees and butterflies together sing
songs of hope and fun

Each day I go
to fill my daily cup
and watch the pink moon
sitting on its throne of green
calm and serene
I close my eyes and breathe it in
till every nook and every crevice
is filled with this light



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.



ONCE UPON A TIME

A sudden shower

People rushing for cover

Sellers their ware

The young their finery

Seniors their masks

Nature does catch us

Unaware...

Two pairs of feet walked on

Unsteady uncertain

Never stopping
Never turning back
Their frail red umbrella
Greeted the raindrops
Soaking them in
As it had once
The warm sunshine...

A quiet pause
Before the Divinity
Heads lowered... palms folded
Gratitude
For the countless creases...numerous scars
For life...in its myriad shades

And then
Slowly walking away
From it all

The crowd, the music, the laughter

Drifting

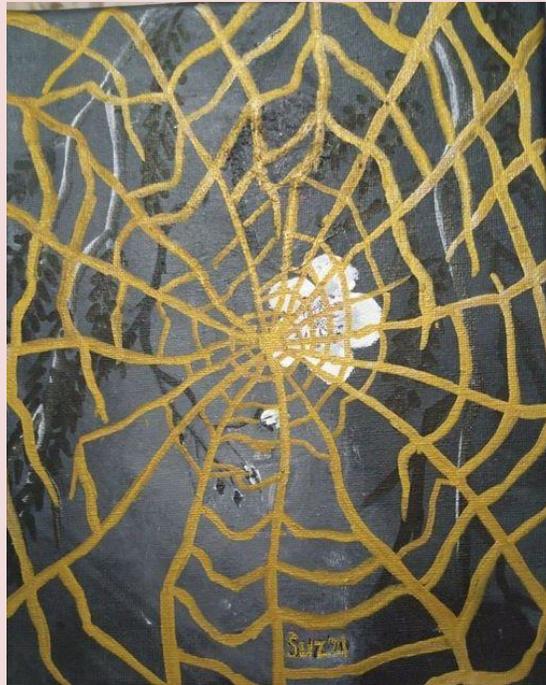
They walked on...ahead

Timeless...Eternal

My worship was then done...



Supatra Sen: Dr. Supatra Sen, currently Associate Professor in a reputed Kolkata college, is a veteran academician, teaching and researching in the fields of Botany and Environment. Her international books, papers and reviews are chiefly in her professional subject. She has edited several UGC funded ISBN volumes and is also the founder and Chief Editor of an ISSN peer-reviewed multi-disciplinary academic journal 'Harvest' since 2016. Though her tryst with poetry writing is brief, she is a published poet.



acrylic painting on canvas by Suzette Portes San Jose

TATTERED COBWEB

once I found love... astray and lost
I keep it in my fear like a ghastly ghost
that walks with me, cast in my shadows
through the time in days of tomorrows
t'was the reminiscence of tormented past
live along for you are my memory to last
unfaithfulness, the pain I longed to burrow
stayed forever in the darkened misty hollow
left among the afloat leaves of willows

sharing cold tender breeze of the meadows
with my every thought and my every dream
in the whisperings of hearts silenced scream
upon my inner depth, I cling to loves misery
love lost and found in the cobweb of my mind
sunk into the awaiting soul drowning and dreary
refrained memories of golden tattered cobweb you'll find



Suzette Portes San Jose: She was born and raised in Cebu City, Philippines. She was born with a passion for writing and living in her art forms. She now has joined 23 book anthologies internationally. She is also a recipient of multiple awards for her ART works and Literary works. She also founded her own Poetry Group of artists and poets

writing Ekphrastic Poetry. She is also a founder of Artist Kids charity project all for free. She is also a Publisher and is now publishing her own book along with other book anthologies of her group.



THE GOODBYE SUMMER

The Goodbye summer is here, comes easy and blows away in a hurricane.

She gets a bittersweet taste in her mouth while she thinks of this summer.

Ready and open for love and suddenly HE appears into her life - the tall, handsome, smart and gentle man...

He serves delightful words on a silver platter, with a smile and a bouquet of time

He manages to tear down the walls she has built up to
protect herself against the world

Unfortunately He is the prodigal son who wants to return
home to maternal comfort.

A role She does not want to play.

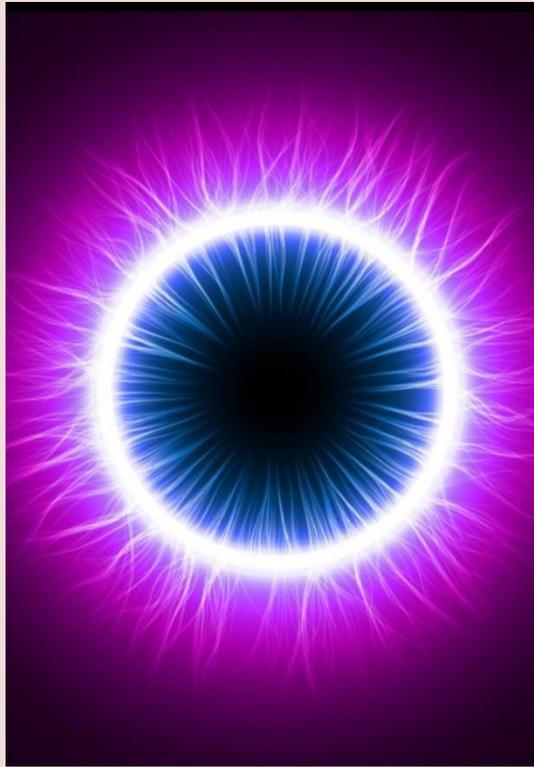
The bittersweet aftertaste of disappointment keeps her
awake in nights

After all

she is not so blind that she can't see the Goodbye Summer
has come.



Svanhild Løvli: Svanhild Løvli is a bilingual Poetess, currently residing in Gjøvik, Norway. She is a freelance translator and in her spare time she also loves to draw and photograph. She is concerned with family life, nature conservation and gender equality. She is a regular contributor to GloMag. She is published in anthologies like Autunis Poetry, Poetry Planet and Antologia Serbia (2021). Her poems have been translated into Polish, Swedish, Italian, Serbian and Hindi.



MAGICAL MOMENTS

Look for the love in every moment

Every moment is here to stay.

It becomes a part of your memories

And can take you back a long way.

Moments of joy, moments of pain.

Moments of love over again.

Moments that last, moments that pass

Make up our life and its casts.

Each passing moment
Takes a part of our time.
That we are to spend
On this beautiful land.

So look for the love in every moment.
And make it a memorable one.
Celebrating life as an event
Let the magical lamp of love burn.



Uma Agarwal Bajaj: I am a Company Secretary by qualification, a homemaker by choice (since the last 20 years) and a budding businesswoman. Having been occupied with family and kids, I have recently realised that I have the ability to pen some of my thoughts. I write both in English and Hindi and hope to better myself with each passing day. I read fiction whenever I get some time. Apart from this I love to cook and have a fascination for gardening (in my balcony).



DREAMING OF SPRING

Under tickling mist of a morning drizzle,
 clouds a high pearlescent ceiling
 across the lapping silver water,
 Hope rose like a looming cliff

Drops began to fall with a soft pitter-patter,
 rippling the surface of the river;
 Gazing down into the black, slow-moving depths,
 where drifted fragments of a broken moon,
 branches of tress brush my face with blossom

A soft agitation of wings caresses my cheek;
the air breathing from the well-nigh spring sky,
bore a voice which whispered...
I will lift you on the wings of Hope



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



UNLICENSED TO KILL

We can't fight them

We the peace apostles

Disrobed and disarmed

Their tribes swell

Ugliness leaps by

Geometric proportions

They are out from the kasbahs

Tentacles into our mofussils

Brainwashing our backyards

The only din they hear is their own

We the spectators

Buttons muted by indifference

They carry a paranoia

A fear of the other

Aggression in pitch

Every color different from theirs-a traitor

The nation bleeds

As they go to war –

Unlicensed to kill



Vandana Kumar: Vandana Kumar is a Middle School French teacher in New Delhi, India. An educator with over 20 years of experience, she is also a French translator and recruitment consultant. Her poems have been published in various national and international journals and websites like 'Glomag' 'Mad Swirl', Philadelphia based 'North of Oxford', UK based 'Destiny Poets', 'Lothlorien Poetry Journal', Greater London based 'The Piker Press', 'Madras Courier' etc. She has featured in anthologies like Houston, Texas based – 'Harbinger Asylum', US based 'Kali Project' of Indie Blu(e) Publishing etc. She has been part of two projects of the World literature series on Post- modern voices and critical thought. She also writes articles on cinema that have appeared on websites and journals like 'Just-cinema', 'Daily Eye', 'The Free Press Journal', Boloji.com and The Artamour.



THOUGHTS BECOME THINGS

What are thoughts

But mere clouds

Wispy, fleeting?

If only

We let them be just that

Watching them float

Unaffectedly

In the vast expanse

Of the mind-sky

As they linger a mere while

Before dissolving

Into harmless invisibility

But lured, we touch them

Gather them, hold them

They descend

Condense

We let them condense

Solidify, darken

Seep into cracks negligent

Breaking fragile walls

Pushing roots through concrete

To house in our body

Visible

For eternity



Vidya Shankar: I am a widely published Indian poet, writer, editor, blogger, English teacher, a “book” in the Human Library, and mandala art instructor. The author of two poetry books, I have received several literary awards and recognitions. One of my poems has been published in the first ever Yearbook of Indian Poetry in English, 2020-21. I have been featured in a unique coffee table book, ‘50 Inspiring Women boys and girls should read about, Chennai Edition’. I find meaning to my life through yoga and mandalas.



ONE PHONE CALL AWAY

We waved goodbye to the secrets of our past:

A burst of sunshine pushed aside the rain

And all the lingering doubts we shared - -

Once, we talked in figurative language

Transforming dull facts into fanciful fiction:

Your questioning eyes wait for my response - -

Suspense peels off the skin of my thoughts - -

Raw, I feel the warmth of your welcoming breath

When words surrender to silent, articulate lips - -

As we walked through the branched light
We realised that all these years, we had been
One phone call away from the truth.



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.



AGENDA

The word sits heavy between them

It blinks at her and she blinks back at it

In the realm of love it is a gorilla

It is not of her creation

Hers have been soft like down

They're cat's fur with claws sheathed

Drawn only on the rarest of occasions

Yet the gorilla blinks at her

She reaches out and touches it

It is soft and rough

Welcome to the land of love, the cat purrs

The gorilla bares its fangs, vicious and terrifying

The cat sits and studies the biped

Turns its head the other way, its eyes darting to the
branches above

Is that a bird there? No, it's a fruit

Disdainfully it turns its eyes back to the fangs

Which have been sheathed

Choosing not to rent the cat into pieces

The gorilla stands up, stretches, plucks the fruit and
lumbers away

The word does not fit the woman

She has not

Slit throats, thrown acid, judged and stoned others in the
name of love

The word is not her creation

It does not belong to her



Vineetha Mekkoth: She is a poet, writer, translator and editor from Calicut, Kerala. She works as State Tax Officer in the State GST Department. She has translated for the Kerala Sahitya Academy 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’ published in August 2017 is available on Amazon.



A POEM FROM BANGLADESH

We are neighbours

We are friends

Albeit in reality

The sense of amity

Has ever been

A one-way traffic.

To us

You have always been

A friend with a fiendish eye

We, sadly though,

Have been too shy

To claim what is rightfully ours.
Still you are bent on exploiting us
We have always been
Too humble to protest the inequity
All we have had in requital
Is our men being shot
Hanged on the barbed wire.
We still do not want
To lose so great a friend
So we are rendered voiceless
When you flood us
With your surge of water
Silent are we
As we are left only to mutter.



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! 😊