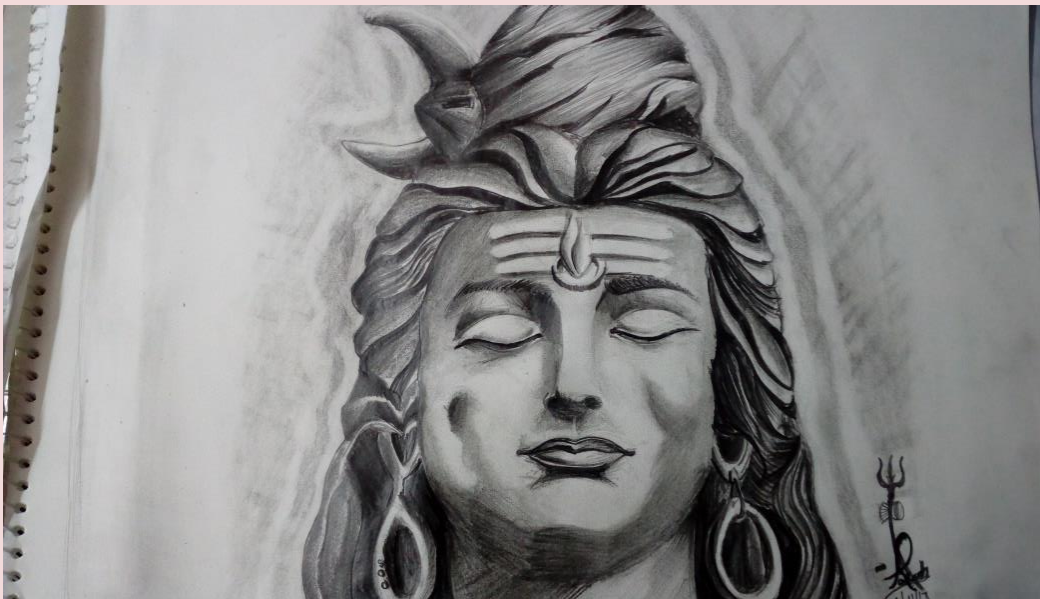


GloMag
GLOWING

*Monthly Online Poetry and Prose
Magazine*

January 2018



Edited and Published by Glory Sasikala

NAVIN RAKESH



Title of the Cover Pic: Lord Shiva

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Navin Rakesh is a higher secondary student in Velammal.

ART PERSPECTIVE

I just started this as a hobby...but I was attracted a lot to these things. This happened 7 years ago... and it is still just a hobby, and I maintain it as such.

Seeing shadows is great in pencil portraits, and bringing out some emotions with pencil arts is very difficult. This has made me create pencil portraits. I just imagine an object

and through my imagination, I produce light to it.. And I just try to portray that.

Even if this world is colorless, everything can be admired as such.

ABOUT GLOMAG

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

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

~ ***Glory Sasikala***

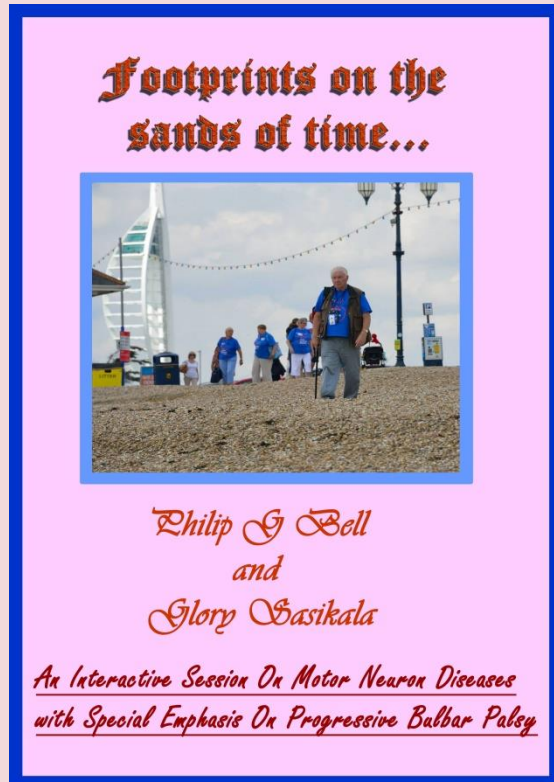
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BACKGROUND MUSIC: "Pal Pal Dil Ke Pas" instrumental.

PREFACE

Philip G. Bell and Glory Sasikala



EXCERPT

Hi Philip, I haven't forgotten you. I wonder if you would agree to a conversation session about MND, so I could publish it as a book? If you have any new inputs, it might be of help to others. Wouldn't force you to do something you don't like though.

Hi Glory, I spend quite a lot of time making people aware of MND, so yes I would be happy to share anything, so don't worry about asking anything. Remember that at present there is no cure and they are still unsure about the cause.

Also, there are several types of MND and mine is one of the rarest.

I'm quite happy to be involved, as part of my reaction to MND is to raise awareness, which may help in a number of ways from raising research funds but also helping to get better diagnosis. It took 10 months to diagnose mine. Feel free to ask any question, do not hesitate even if it may seem a sensitive question, I am concerned that every issue is raised.

Hi Philip, I must stress here that this is not a research paper. That being said, and speaking as a lay person, I wonder what the first indications are of MND. I've read that the symptoms can be rather mild, and even passing, in the beginning, such as stumbling or even swallowing saliva or holding something in your hand. These things, in general, need not be much of a cause for concern. How was it with you?

Hi Glory, Well, with me my very early symptoms were a little strange. I used to give a wide range of presentations relating to my special experience in Noise, Vibration and Shock, but also several times each year I used to lecture in Universities. I had 3 days of lecturing in February 2013 and was troubled because on several occasions my voice sounded slurred, as if I was drunk. I have never been a big

drinker of alcohol and on this occasion I had not had any alcohol for several weeks so I was concerned why. I decided I ought to check with my Doctor. When I visited him, he did some very basic checks and was puzzled, as I seemed to be in good health. He decided that I should see a specialist as he thought maybe I had a mini stroke, which can be relatively mild but could develop into a larger stroke. It took a number of weeks before I saw the Specialist, and they agreed with my doctor and set up a series of tests, from blood tests, X-rays and advanced scans. I was then called back to discuss the results. The specialist said I was healthy and had not had a mini stroke. I had a mixed feeling about this as one always feels good when told you are healthy, but I still had occasional slurred speech.

My doctor then decided I should see an Ear, Nose and Throat specialist thinking that maybe I had a damaged voice box.

The ENT specialist put a camera down my throat to examine it and concluded that all was ok.

He then asked me to wait outside his office while he made a phone call. About 20 minutes later, he saw me again and told me I should see a Neurologist and made an appointment for me.

After another full examination where he tested my strength in muscles, he told me that I was strong, but worried that I may have Motor Neurone Disease and he wanted me to stay in the Royal Free Hospital in London for at least 4 days for extensive tests. I agreed to do this but the earliest they could fit me in was in December. I had moved home in November, so had to travel by Train-Ferry-Train-Taxi to get to the Hospital. At this time, my voice worked, though slurred and all my muscles were strong. I was admitted to a ward of 4 beds with patients having neurological illnesses.

2 could speak but had no ability to use their arms or legs.

1 was on life support equipment as he has lost everything, I was very sad about him, as he could not communicate with his family.

Of course, in my case then I only had slurred speech and found when I was not having tests, I also helped the other patients with simple things. One gentleman who could not move liked to listen to the radio through headphones, but often they would slip off and I would put them back. Just one example of me helping.

Hi Philip, Having MND, how much have you learnt about what is being done regarding treatment of the disease? What more do you think can be done that can benefit

patients with MND? Of these, which do you think are imperative?

Hi Glory, Firstly, I have to say that as there is no known cure, any discussion about treatment is mainly about slowing the destruction of our motor neurones. Even this is not yet lengthy, as the only approved drug Riluzole is estimated to give an extension of about three months. There is of course research going on to find better drugs and maybe one day a cure. Other treatments are mainly to assist problems that may raise other life risks.

For example, my form of motor neurone disease attacks muscles in my mouth and throat. This has robbed me of my voice and eating and drinking is becoming very difficult. Sometimes food or drink can slip into my lungs, which can bring on increased risk of pneumonia. To help this, there are various operations to insert feeding tubes into our stomach where prepared food and liquid can be directly sent. There are risks with these operations but less than pneumonia.

One big problem with the UK National Health Service revolves around lack of knowledge about different forms of MND and there are drugs that are recommended for things like excess saliva, that can be very dangerous. Interestingly a better understood disease known as Myasthenia Gravis

has identical symptoms to Progressive Bulbar Palsy (My form of MND) the difference is mainly the cause. With myasthenia gravis, the cause is due to antibody proteins created by the body's Thymus which are faulty and attack the motor neurones in the same area. The drugs that I refer to all state must not be used with Myasthenia Gravis. The doctors said I don't have Myasthenia so they gave me the drugs and I had bad reactions. In addition my throat muscles weakened, making swallowing harder. It seems that I am educating people who should know more than me. Also our charity recommends some of these drugs on their website. I warned them but they rely on the NHS advice, which is dangerously wrong.

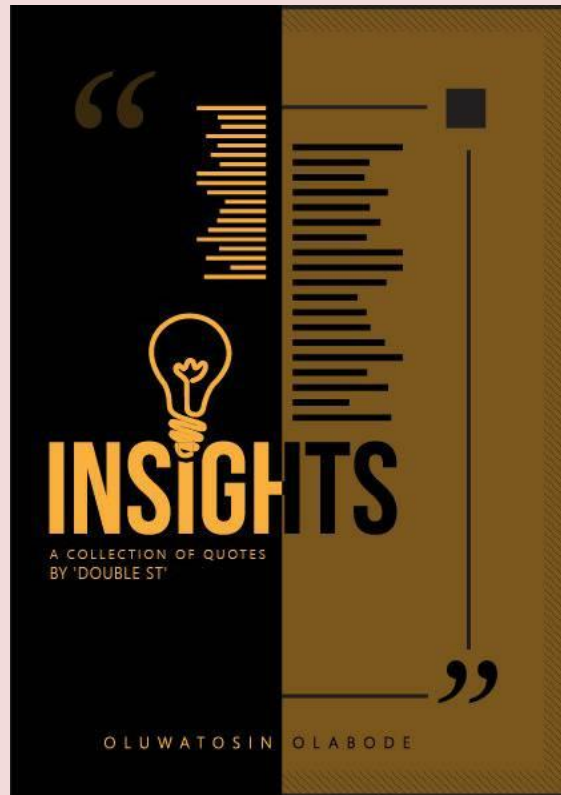
The best help I have had for my MND has been my acupuncturist, which is private service. Some NHS Doctors are partly trained in acupuncture but very limited. My acupuncturist is much higher qualified and has dealt with many problems. True it's not a cure, but makes me feel better. The most recent treatment I had was for the saliva after having drug problems. Usually if I have treatment by the acupuncturist the saliva disappears, but when I leave after a few hours it returns. Recently this was solved by having special needles which are on small plasters that can be left in for several days and then just replaced. My wife and I were both shown how and where to place them.

Another drug that was considered safe for Myasthenia had two different side effects. One was drowsiness which was stated as being safer just before bed time and another which was not stated which affected my blood circulation. I developed white finger problems and some whiteness in toes. After my Doctor checked, the NHS had no mention of this but he found it mentioned on a Dutch Medical site as a Side Effect. Again I came off those tablets. It took a while to get better and my acupuncturist helped get my circulation better.

BOOK OF THE MONTH

Insights

by Oluwatosin a.k.a Double ST



BOOK AVAILABLE AT

Barnes and Noble, iBooks, Kobo, 24symbols, Overdrive, and Tolino

Use the link below:

<https://books2read.com/DoubleSt>

REVIEW ON INSIGHTS

'...The use of simple Language makes it a delight for the heart'. ~ **Batet Musa** (Coauthor of "The Big One")

ABOUT THE BOOK

This book is a collection of quotes, a reminder that all things work together for our good in (and at) "all times". The quotes run for 365 days; so as with scriptures, we live daily with a positive outlook on life.

It's a book that will appeal to all who seek to view life from different angles while seeking for solutions in handling life's challenges and turning them into opportunities.

Insight is an approach to alternative perspective; a teaching about looking at the other side of the coin.



Oluwatosin a.k.a Double ST, believes the world can be a better place one positive message at a time and this inspires him daily. He is a published author, Performance Poet, Speaker, and an advocate for truth. "Double ST", stands for Strictly Simple from Tosin.

Follow Author [@doublest_sst](#) on Instagram, YouTube, Twitter and Facebook Page.

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DEFINITION OF LOVE

What is love?

A game

Wherein one strives to outdo the other.

What is love?

A drama

With two hearts playing the protagonist.

What is love?

An evening star

Appearing and disappearing in the same sky.

What is love?

A poem

With the end often not rhyming.



Zulfiqar Parvez: Vice Principal Cum O Levels English Language Teacher, London Grace International School, Dhaka. I have done my Honours and Masters in English Language and Literature from the University of Rajshahi, and am the editor of Neeharika.



THE CASABLANCA TEST

Lately, notions of “masculinity” have men confused, and with Casablanca marking its 75th anniversary, I’d like to present Rick Blaine.

First, there is the cigarette in the hand reaching across the chess board, smoke curling around a coupe of champagne as bubbles rise in amber liquid. Then we see his face emerge from the white dinner jacket, weary and pained: uncaring, a disillusioned mercenary without

questions. As his competitor Ferrari notes, “One never knows what he’ll do. Or why.”

Yet as tough as Rick seems, he’s affected when Ilsa walks into his “gin joint,” vulnerable for the right person: Cool.

Marlon Brando epitomized rebellious cool; James Dean was tortured cool. Paul Newman and Steve McQueen have been called epitomes of cool, but predecessor to them all—Humphrey Bogart—is the God of Cool as Rick in Casablanca. Rick was “our last hope” 30 years before Obi-Wan Kenobi appeared in Star Wars.

Next, his actions: giving the heave-ho to a powerful banker trying to enter the casino, then blowing Ugate off

with the line “I don’t mind a parasite; I object to a cut-rate one.” Who wouldn’t aspire to that level of cool?

Look at him, wearing a fedora, brim angled; shoulders slouching in nonchalance but, more likely, that trench coat conceals a body coiled into a panther’s crouch of readiness: the icon of cool.

In fact, it is my personal, deeply-held, near-religious belief that any male watching Bogie as Rick who doesn’t want to *be* him immediately after is automatically and eternally under suspicion. Rick is more than noir, and in him, Bogie made a dinner jacket, a drink, and a “smoke” cool decades before Ian Fleming conceived Bond. I want to be that guy, Rick Blaine.

In the end, that's the best reason to watch and re-watch Casablanca.



William P. Cushing: Bill Cushing takes a detour into some prose work for January in a very personal message concerning his favorite film of all time. While still teaching college English classes in the Los Angeles area, he continues writing, reading in public venues, and facilitating an open workshop. Bill celebrates last year, having been named one of the Top Ten Poets in L. A. for 2017 and seeing his poem "Alpha Dreams" (featured in the October 2017 issue of GloMag) not only as a part of an anthology of Southern California poets but actually responsible for the title of the volume (Lullaby of Teeth). Now he looks forward to 2018.



I USUALLY DON'T HAVE ANYTHING NICE TO SAY ABOUT EULOGIES

as eulogies go

the pastor elect

did a fine job

didn't go long

stayed on point

except for getting

her Uncle Earl's

name wrong

and another

small slight

I let lay

where landed



Wanda Morrow Clevenger: She is a former Carlinville, IL native. Over 450 pieces of her work appear in 155 print and electronic publications. Her flash fiction “Roses and Peppermint Candy” won the 2014 Winter Short Story Contest in The Holiday Café. Her poem “corsage” won the 2014 Black Diamond Award for Excellence of Craft in The 2016 Best of Net by Red Fez literary journal Midnight on the Stroll Poetry Contest. Her nonfiction “Big Love” was nominated for



I'M HERE

Remember where the sun set?

Follow the line from the sea

To the shore

I'm sitting on the steps opposite

The kites soar and flutter

The sea sings

Endlessly

The breeze plays

Laughter

Voices calling out

Chatter

I heard a tiny ponytail ask
"Umma, where is the sun going?"
"It will be back at night
Dressed as the moon"
They move towards the waves
There you can see
Two ships
Guarding the doorway
Where the sun went down
Follow that line
Out to the shore
On the steps
I sit here alone
At peace.



Vineetha Mekkoth: Vineetha Mekkoth is a poet, writer, translator, editor. Lives with her family in Calicut. Translates for the Kerala Sahitya Akademi. Has published poems in various national and international anthologies. Her poetry collection, 'Ashtavakra and Other Poems' was published by Authorspress, New Delhi in August 2017.



SECOND SKIN, SECOND SIGHT

You breaststroke to the other bank and stand
With a cheeky grin splitting your tired face
Your dress clings to you like a passionate second skin

Refusing to be hung out to dry--

I watch you as I try to catch your teasing chants

I do not dare to deceive the wrinkled waves

I row across a kingfisher-friendly wooded stream of
thought--

You hug and kiss me like a long-lost secret lover

And this is where the gulf of difference lies

In the way you promptly bandage wounded pride
And do things as soon as you think and sense
They should be done

To bring a smile back on someone's face
While I wait for wayward words, or worse,
An elusive, sheltering second sight.



Vijay Nair: Dr. Vijay Nair retired as Associate Professor, Department of English, Government Victoria College Palakkad, Kerala. He taught English Language and Literature in various colleges for 31 years. His poems have appeared in several International Anthologies. He was awarded the Reuel International Prize for Writing & Literature in the year 2016.



A REFLECTION OF SILENCE

I grow chillies in the backyards of my mind
and thorns in chambers of my heart
so that the next time you look at my breast
like they belonged to your eyes
more than my body
I will learn to look back into your eyes
with the fury of all the chillies
my ancestors have grown
and all the thorns
that they never managed to pull out.
From a bleeding vagina,
to a growing child inside my womb
you seem to have more say about my

body than myself,
they tell me there are laws on abortion
they also tell me that the ratio of
women to men on the team that frames it is
1:15, and sometimes 0.
and I wonder how many bodies of women
have relentlessly gathered flesh and bone
to make men human
only to let them
treat their fellow woman's
body like their workshop,
like chunks of clay,
like we were nothing,
what audacity to not realise
that you are made of the same things,
irrespective of a vagina and penis
we all carry the same heart
the breaks bleeds and recovers.

With every me too
I hear an echo of not all men,
I hear an echo of feminazi
I hear an echo of these furious feminists,
I hear why are they seeking so much attention
I hear why so much drama,
I also somewhere faintly hear men too,
How is that you do not realise that
when we see our friends, sisters and mothers
being abused and harassed
we will treat a man who has gone through the same
torment, differently
how is that you think you can easily
overpower every me too
with your words that bear no such thing as sensitivity,
How is that even after
8 year olds being raped and killed
you refuse to see how
poisonous humans are becoming?

You asked me why I am this angry wasn't it
but did you ever give me a choice?

Have you ever listened?

How you ever let a woman talk
without the intent to prove her wrong?

Have you ever tried?

I grow chillies in the backyards of my mind
and thorns in the chambers of my heart

so that one day when I hear no mee too

I will have the courage to replace them
with mangoes and Roses,

but until then,

this is how it shall be,

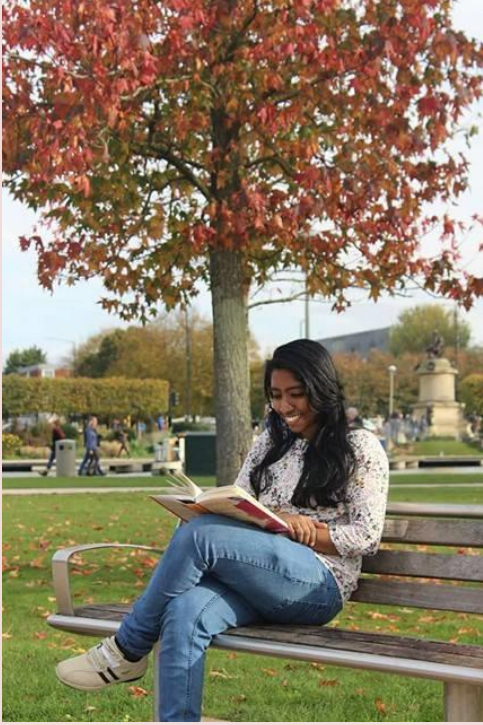
and you will be able to say nothing

except watch the years of silence

explode into your minds

and become mirrors that will show

you how much cleaning there is to do.



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



OH WOMAN!

In midnight's shadow they both lay

He whispered and she caressed.

And then the moment took over

It clamored arms and limbs

They murmured some more – claimed more of each other

He asked "was it good for you?"

She replied "yes darling"

And snuggled for a post-coital hug

He lit his Dunhill as he stared at the ceiling

He recalled her 'yes darling'

A man is so naked in front of his woman he mulled

His crescendo and climax all on display

But with a woman.....hmmm...

You really can't tell – can you?



Vandana Kumar: She is a bon vivant who loves travelling, working with young minds and exploring creative possibilities beyond the ordinary. She has done her masters in History from Lady Shri Ram College and her Diplôme from the Alliance Française de Delhi. She is a French teacher in a couple of schools and private institutes and also translates for various publishing houses and corporates. An active member of various quiz clubs across Delhi, she has a soft corner for Kolkata where she spent her

childhood. Her various passions include singing, playing the piano, composing music and participating in local antakshari competitions. She describes herself as a dreamer...a wanderer and a certified incurable romantic...the romantic moorings worsened with all her fancy French studies. Poetry for her is her stress buster -her flight of fancy-and strangely – what keeps her rooted too.



THE ISLAND

People do not talk to me just like that.

I find they are reacting to things I say or do

Now, I shall become still and quite quiet

But see, they still have reactions and responses too!

Where from did I wish them upon my time?

They are there infringing on my life sublime.

One day when I stopped to think

I found me bound in their lives in a blink.

I was seeking their presence to fortify mine

This is life as I understand.

No one can remain a blooming Island.



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



THE TRUMPET HAS SOUNDED

The trumpet has sounded

Yet no one hears

Embroided in conflict

Poverty escalates, starvation order of the day

The innocent get ravaged by so called upstanding
community men

Greedy ones continue to prevail

The trumpet has sounded

Violence rears its ugly head like a serpent coming out to
play

Lives lost yet in vain yet you still don't hear that that the
trumpet has already sounded

No one aware

The devil sits in his tower in the heavens laughing

He continues to play you like a stringed quartet

You still don't hear that the trumpet sounded

Will you hear the trumpet when the dance of wolves is over

When the play has drawn to a close

It will be too late for the trumpet has already sounded

Dont you hear



Sylvana Accom: I grew up in South Africa. My love for poetry started in my youth. Everything around me and my experiences became my sounding board. And though I feel a dry spell at times, it seems I'm underestimating my gift to write. I finished my theology, sociobiology, anthropology studies in 2011, and was ordained last year, 2016. I have a

constant thirst for learning or should I say knowledge? The world is full of slots and hidden mysteries. I abhor poverty and inequality - everything that goes against the brink of humanity. I love nature, the sea, and meeting beautiful people from around the globe. I published my poetry book *Myriads of unspoken words* through Milborrow publishers. To order, please write to freespirit39@yahoo.com



FOR THE FORGOTTEN HEROES

You taught us how to greet a cruel bullet
For sake of your country with smiling face.
You learnt how to fight against your fate
And also learnt how to enjoy prison's loveliness.
You learnt how to welcome cruelest slaughter
Only to change the colour of the history book.
You learnt how to play with gas and mortar.
And also learnt how to ornament a billhook.
The moulded history doesn't mark the name
Of the heroes; as often, it is written by tricksters.
They don't want to step out of their safe frame--

That has been designed to glorify the rulers.
But, the verdancy of green grass around grave
Knows that the cowards are afraid of the brave.



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



Look at me,

who am I?

The person I want to be?

I want to be free

as can be

Non-judgemental,

open minded

free....

Free, me?

Can I let go

of the image

of you,

I have in me?

As blind

as the Goddess,

without sight,

hearing

mute.

Take a good look

look at me,

I'm not perfect,

I'm me.

The perfect

imperfect,

the image I have

of you and me!

As we are....

I can see

the picture is not free

free

from shadows of my mind.

Set me free

You and me.



Svanhild Løvli: I'm a Norwegian poetess.



LANTERN

a red lantern

glowing at the top

of a high-rise

dulled by stars

yet brighter than the city lights

comforting a child

waiting for her mother

to come back in the rainy night...

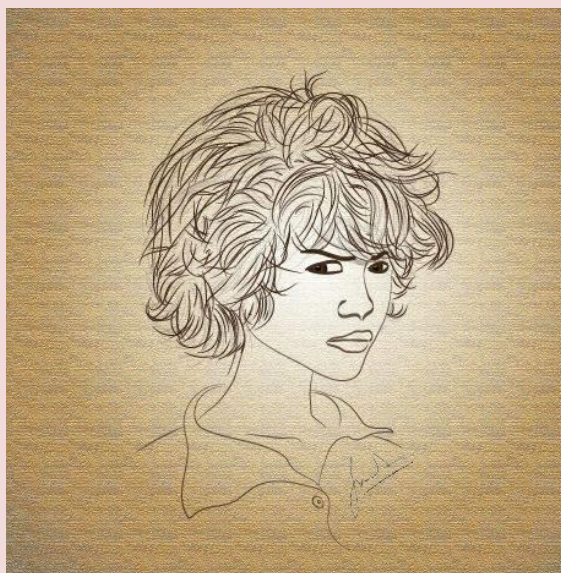


Sunil Sharma: He is Mumbai-based senior academic, critic, literary editor and author with 18 published books: Six collections of poetry; two of short fiction; one novel; a critical study of the novel, and, eight joint anthologies on prose, poetry and criticism. He is a recipient of the UK-based Destiny Poets' inaugural Poet of the Year award---2012. His poems were published in the prestigious UN project: Happiness: The Delight-Tree: An Anthology of Contemporary International Poetry, in the year 2015. Sunil edits the English section of the monthly bilingual journal Setu published from Pittsburgh, USA:

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

For more details, please visit the blog:

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



EXTRACT FROM THE HEART OF DONNA RAI (TO BE PUBLISHED SOON BY ADISAKRIT)

Leaning back against the wall, I observed the women. Perspiring skin gleamed in the light from the unoon. Faces and clothes were pale in contrast to the murkiness of the room. Their dark hair and the leaping shadows cast by their bodies wrapped the gloom close around them. The dim orange light from the stove created a mood—the brass vessels and the women’s skin, now gleaming, now dimming, merging with the shadows.

They reminded me of the paintings of Chardin and other chiaroscuro artists like Caravaggio and Rembrandt. I have seen prints of their art in books in Menon Uncle’s shop. The picture the women made, in flickering golden-orange light and leaping shadows fascinated me. Seeing them framed through the doorway had cut out the extraneous, focussed

the image. The women were working contentedly, the lack of light, not a bother.

Kakima's words and the brightness surrounding me made me aware of the darkness inside.

When Thakurda and the kakas came back, Kakima presented her idea of getting an LPG connection. She said the smoke from the unoon wasn't good for the women. Anybody spending a lot of time in such an environment was bound to develop lung diseases. Debu Kaka peered into the kitchen. Like me, he had probably seen it only through his peripheral vision, and that doesn't register.



Sumita Dutta: She is a photographer and the proprietor of Adlsh Photo Art. She has a degree in Fine Arts (Painting) from Chitrakala Parishad, Bangalore. She loves writing both poetry and prose. She resides in the southern end of

Chennai with her two sons, her father, a cat and a dog. Find her blog at: <https://zippythoughts.wordpress.com/>



REPEAL OF A DEPARTED SOUL

Please don't cry

Standing before my grave,

Have you ever asked me

What I really crave?

Every moment, each and every day

I tried to obey your words

What you used to say,

But never asked me

What I want, what my heart pray.

I spent my life
With enough pain, disdain
And anguish,
Never you heard my whisper,
You think life is only to cherish.

Please don't cry anymore
Before my grave,

It will make no difference
In my heart,
I'm now a girl brave.

Love was only a game to you,
Alack! You never know,
It's made only for few.

Do you want to know

In my life, what was your role?

Let me tell you, you never

Touched my soul.

To you I was doll

Have you ever loved me

At all?

Oh! Don't cry standing

Before my grave,

Now! Now at least!

Let my soul rest in peace!



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



DISENCHANTED

I traverse the oft frequented road

Redolent with the fragrance

Of languor

Recalling those gleaming gems

Embellished with gilt-edged frames

Slowly I try to recapture

Those halcyon days

Of periwinkle morns

Of diamond dews

Of distinctive broad leaved

Sal trees

Jacarandas in profusion

Dotted with warm laughter
In the warm familial blanket
Interspersed with sporadic frisson
When seasons changed
Like moods
When days gushed
As waterfall cascaded
Palash added its own flaming hue
Shiuli's aroma floated
In welcome on pale wintry days
In all finery the seasons clothed.....
.....but.....

Nothing seems the same
The periwinkles are long gone
The Jacarandas no more shower
The lone Sal looks woe begone
The Palash shed blood tears

Shiuli's waft no more
The warmth has vanished long ago
Nothing familiar I encounter
Cramped and clustered
The days merge
I frantically search for some semblance
Only to be met with a stoic detachment
No more am I welcome
In this strange place
With new streets
And stranger faces
I cannot grasp at my memories
As they slip out
Unmindfully
My memory lane has met
Cul-de-sac.



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



BIRTH OF AN INSANE

The unborn poems

With their tiny beaks

Peck at her hair.

At the workplace or in the traffic,

Waiting in the queue

Or shopping,

Whenever she tries to be normal

Dark cuckoos
Sing aloud from her bosom
And she fails once again.

Any given moment she rides
On a wave of happiness.
Next moment drags her way
Through a sewer of sorrow.

At the bookshop
She forgets herself
While those who pass by wonder
Looking at her feet
As she floats in the air.

At times in the rush hour
She feels lost.
Another time

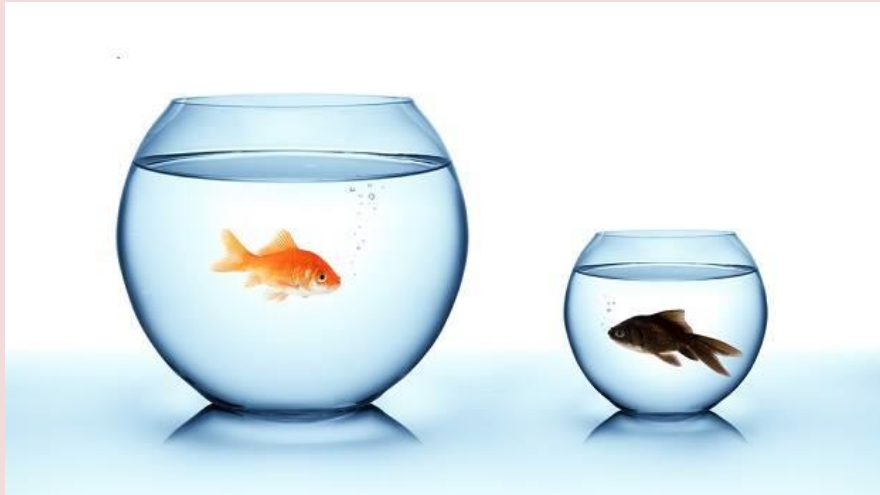
She feels like a militant
Passing on a coded message.

Lynched for being a woman
Is a 'punishment' awaiting her
In the country she lives in.
Yet she smiles
As nobody can conquer
Her revolting soul.

She is an insane
With the wild scent
Of an untamed wind.
Traversing the crevices of earth
And soaring above the clouds In the sky.



Stalina Sbs: She is a chemistry teacher writing poems in Malayalam, English and Hindi. She has published her works in many of the leading periodicals in Malayalam such as Bhashaposhini, Samakalika Malayalam Varika, Chandirika, Sthreesabdam, Suryakanthi, Thorcha and in various ezines like Malayalanatu, Aksharam online, Gulmohar online, Nellu.net.



OUR DISCUSSIONS AND IGNORANCE

We discuss about how we can win

And sometimes about how we lost.

We discuss great people

Their charm, palaces and money.

We can talk hours

About those expensive clothing brands

Levis, Park Avenue, Allen Solly

And so on goes the endless list.

We talk about cricket, nature

And places to be visited.

We cannot ignore those roadside stalls

Selling our favourite food

But we do ignore many things.

We ignore the torn clothes

We ignore the slums

We never discuss about

Hands with scratches

And those unhealed wounds.

We discuss about fresh roses

And forget the wilted flowers.

We discuss health and youth

But we don't think about

Healing and the old.

We never discuss solutions.



Sravani Singampalli: She is a published writer and poet from India. She is presently pursuing doctor of pharmacy at JNTU KAKINADA university in Andhra Pradesh, India.



NEW YEAR WISHES: AN ASCORTIC STYLE POEM

H -Hopeful sun rays have come today

A - Aha! Weather is so awesome today

P - Petals are blooming among thorns

P - Peaceful melodious lovable songs

Y -Yes, definitely something special there

N - New morning has brought New Year

E - Enjoy O dear all and everyone

W -Wake up, wake up, dear children

Y -Yes, it is a moment of joy and fun

E - Engage yourself in celebration

A -Aspire some dreams in your eyes

R - Relish a real heaven deep inside!

O' dear all, come on have fun and cheer
Let us all wish a very happy new year
Let this year be a new beginning for all
Let it bring joy and success for one & all!!
HAPPY NEW YEAR 2018.



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



Wild wind waters forge a new path.

The brave don't peak on waves,
they smile drowning.

Has history and myth and myth-history
changed us so much that we need sky-figures
for comfort, elucidation and this exercise of survival?

We need bodies to grasp and bites of conscience
to restrain our juices.

Else we flow high.

Smiling at the drowning.



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



ROADSIDE WAIF

Under the huge trees' awning

Stood a little waif

Persistently beckoning

To the crowds, a teeming

A mere speck, a flicker of dust

Within the ever-changing mist

What is it to brood

A panorama of colours flooding

Of homelessness and sleeplessness

The little waif, born out of unsung love
A mere wisp of shadow,
Like the feathers of a dove
Standing alone and posing
As a lily without its inadvertent casing

Beauty and serenity
A whiff of colours
Merging into one
As can be seen within the limits of eternity

Can there be a single bud
Thronging towards a beautiful thread
A single flower, a single thorn
Born within an avalanche of emotions

The waif, in its plethora of saving
Loneliness born out of love, carrying

Torches of humanity, wherein

A beautiful mindless scenery coexists and thrives



Shobha Warriar: Born near Trichur in Kerala, Shobha was highly influenced by her maternal grandfather who was a distinguished Sanskrit scholar. Shobha has a keen interest in languages, be it prose or poetry. She has also worked as a teacher in schools for some time.



TO WHEN I USED TO WRITE

When was the last time
You stopped to think
And it never ended?
When you temporarily put aside yourself
Only to fail to revoke the ban?
I guess you'll never know
Or die wishing only to resume, replay
But you've permanently slipped away.

Help me now-
I'm striving,
Stop me now, from searching-

For glimpses of that precious past
Where greatness was built on glass
Where the cracks seemed less exposed.

Music came easier then,
Words would rhyme and escape decay
A part of me is dying left broken
The poet has lost its way.



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

to attend music lessons. I'm soon to be a first year student studying Economics at Ashoka University, where I hope to further develop my musical, literary as well as professional abilities. Would love to hear from you [at-
shivanksarin98@gmail.com](mailto:shivanksarin98@gmail.com)



COMPASSION

Compassion!

Isn't a difficult term?

in this materialistic world.

Society deprived of it,

leading towards shallowness.

People possessing kindness,

becoming fewer day by day.

Gone are the days,

When people acquired,

love, respect & compassion for all.

Now they have profundity,

of hate & jealousy for all.

Is this the same world?

where so many noble soul resided,
giving message of love & compassion for all.



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



Of hoes that trundle through crumbly chunks of rusty
alluvial laterite

Of prows and bows that heave and cleave

The teal and turquoises of Naura's

Spice perfumed dark shores

I want to lilt ancient songs of my forgotten ancestors

Beating the scarlet earth with turmeric painted heels

And lips painted a delicious scarlet with chewed betel
leaves

Jet tresses of well-oiled thick pleats undone

Layered springs of Jasmine bundles casually flung open

Beneath masterfully woven interlocked palm strands

I want to bend my waist backwards tilted to an impossible angle

And gently sway undulating with the wispy clouds swirling from distant peaks

In tune with the silence emanating from the mysterious malachite and frail mists smelling of pine jaggery and primitive coffee

I want to stomp my feet a tale of lissome lassies and beefed up warriors

and cymbals and conches

And leap wildly with the painted Godmen

Beating a wild song written in black gold

Walking on smoldering coal beneath a full moon

Waving a crudely burning dry palm torch

As I dash from my thatched mud hut

To the musky dugout by the cliff side

Into your waiting teak embrace

To listen with ears peeled to your heart thudding an unrelenting roar of surf crashing upon the shores shoulders far beneath

Raise myself upon my toes to croon into the wail of trade winds

A duet that only you and I will ever sing

And scratch this tale of bygone times upon the wedges of the granite cliffs



Seema K Jayaraman: She is poetess based out of Mumbai, India, tracing her roots to the mystical land of 'Naura' (Cannanore, Kerala). She is a mother of two young boys and a full time working professional in the IT Banking domain. She is widely travelled and exposed to both domestic and international cultures. She considers herself a pirouetting spirit, the energy she harnesses is expressed through her poetry. Her poetry is a journey of self-discovery and release from modern mundaneness, an expression of unrestrained creativity and paints a vivid picture, colorful presenting the myriad vibrancy of nature, at times stark depicting human

strife and tragedy. She writes both free style and rhyme based verses. She also enjoys writing Haiku's and Tanka's. Her debut book *Wings Of Rhapsody – A Dalliance Of Poems* was released in June 2016.



FLORAL SYMPHONY

I want to drip
orange blossoms
on your breasts
and lick the sweat
of sweet honey
that rises up
to pour from open pores

I want to place
yellow daisies
behind your ears
and kiss the nectar
of sacred rhythm
that shakes gently
as lips touch skin to taste God

I want to rip
red roses
from the earth's core
and plant their essence
of primal passion
near the quake
where your body reaches fever

I want to burn
purple lilies

in a pyre
out on the lake
of holy chaos
while we dance
to higher sounds of screaming sighs



Scott Thomas Outlar: He hosts the site 17Numa.wordpress.com where links to his published poetry, fiction, essays, interviews, reviews, live performances, and books can be found.



Cody Lyon: She is an artist, painter, and singer/songwriter who works at Buffalo Woman Ranch in Colorado. More of her work can be found here on her Facebook page. Her painting from this issue is found in the private collection of Greg and Francie Wild.



It's a new beginning, and then will come a new end
This has always been the trend
But no one has spoken about something that goes on
The rays of a new dawn.

Where people mend their mistakes
And do whatever it takes
To make new relationships
And wish that a smile sets on their lips.

By helping others and growing in personality
Growing their heart and wisdom in totality

As if light falls on and spreads on the lawn

At the advent of a new dawn.



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



THE FORLORN KITE

On the skeletal branches of a tree

Hangs a kite, forlorn.

One moment merrily, it cruised,

Swayed and moved, grooved in sync

with the screeches of the loudspeaker bedlamite

Bright and crisp, the bouncy, flamboyant kite.

Now, hiding itself sheepishly in the tree
its resplendence lost
Bludgeoned by whiplashes of the fitter ones
Who continue swirling, twirling, furling.
Survival of the fittest, they say
So the sturdy ones, sway
And sway; bright and crisp.

The forlorn kite rues the happy moments
of a festivity short-lived
Of activity hectic, jostling and pushing,
yells of delight, and its gyrating might ..

Alas, the woebegone kite would spend
the remnants of its transient life
In its shelter new.
Helter-skelter fly the other kites
embroiled in a welter of papery clashes and fights.

Ah, kite dear, stop pining

Look, there is a silver lining,

Someone has hung some colourful puppets on the tree

See? Some Good Samaritan perhaps?

Rambunctious revellers donning masks and caps.

Hop and skip, and happily trip.

From the lawn down below,

notes of songs waft across to the kite

Drenching it in colours bright

All is not lost.

And the puppets on the string sway along

Adding their notes to the short-lived song.



Santosh Bakaya: Academician-novelist-poet-essayist, Dr. Santosh Bakaya, has been internationally acclaimed for her poetic biography of Mahatma Gandhi, *Ballad of Bapu*, [Vitasta publishers India, 2015] for her collection of peace poems, *Where are the lilacs?* [Authors press, India, 2016] and her book of essays: *Flights from my terrace* [Earlier an e-book on Smashwords [2014] now has an updated printed version, Authors press INDIA, 2017]. Extensively interviewed and awarded, her latest poetry book: *Under the apple boughs*, has just gone to the press and she is giving finishing touches to her two novels, one a satire on higher education and the other, a breezy love story.



HIDDEN THINGS

I know that I have been there before;

But when or where?

I cannot tell.

I know the valley, with blanket of grass,

And a ripped little cherry

In its slope.

But how sweet was it?

I could never say?.....

I know that you have also been there,

But for what and when?

I am not able to say.

I have seen the blossomed saffron

In your cheeks, the infinite blue skies

In your eyes

But when or how?

I may not know.

I know that I have heard

The melancholy tune

But from where and why?

I cannot tell.

I knew when we met at first

Your body was made of love

But by whom and when?

I would never know.

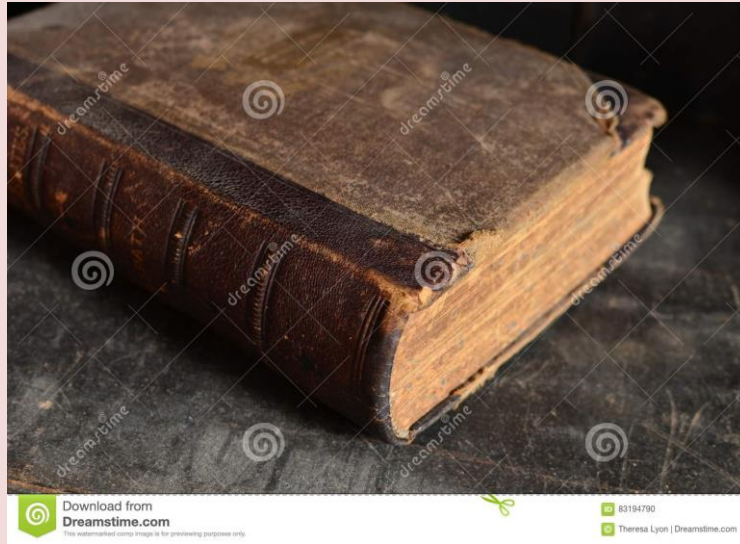
I can only tell one thing

That everything happens ...

In a Divine way.



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



THE PRINTED BEAUTY

Swinging in the chair with my glasses on,
Sipping cappuccino which was too hot,
Looked at the clock with hopeful eyes,
And thought, 'it's only eleven now?'

Eyes rested on the book which was old,
Layer of grime made it less inviting.

Was like treasure map, the torn cover.

And my mind made its way to explore.

Blew the dust which hid its beauty.
Opened it with a sigh and some hope,
Lively was the euphony of the pages;
Like music of rain falling on leaves.

Really it was endowed with treasure,
Found the splendour in the dark night,
Sorry was i to mistake it as a thing.
Cause that looks dull may be a pearl.



Roshan Mishra: I am a Botany student of OUAT, Bhubaneswar. I love writing poems. Actually I am very much passionate about it. Whenever I experience something, i pen it down to make poems. My poems are basically about the social issues, issues related with women, and beauty of nature. The ordinary things happening in the world give me inspiration to think on that and write on it.



MY BIG SURPRISE

The moon opened its big eyes
And I closed my drowsy ones,
Right away, you invaded my dream
And when the sun woke me up
Very early in the morning,
I found you sleeping in my arms,
Wow! What a big surprise,
I felt like I was in Heaven!



Romeo della Valle: Born in a beautiful island named Quisqueya or Hispaniola and from Italian and Spanish parents and coming to America very young with a goal, mainly, to succeed in life and be happy. As a citizen of the world, there is not race, colour, or religious beliefs that would stop me from searching for happiness...I have become through times passed that I am a man with a Vision and a clear mission: 'To spread my message of Love an Peace throughout the World and if my poetry can touch a single soul in the World, then I would gladly die leaving my clear footprints behind!



TSROR

then the breath fades,
flowers wither,
yet stones
souls endure,
pebbles placed on top gravestones
each a permanent bond
each a weight
grounding our spirit
yoking ghosts to the earth
sheltered by each other's eternity,
secured upon the Shepherd's sling...
our fragility of life

now forever protected from the curse of departure,
now forever protected from the curse of perished memory

(Note: I just completed this poem, inspired by a passage from a novel by Nicole Krauss, and then, ironically, dedicated to a dear friend in Tucson whose sister succumbed to cancer during the poem's construction. In Great House, Krauss alludes to the Hebraic practice of mourners placing stones on top of gravestones (a father wonders whether his estranged son will do this after said father passes). Reading this gave me pause, and as someone who has practiced/observed this act many times over the years, I realized I had no idea why this is done. Then I began to explore and digest and try to understand as best I could why placing stones or pebbles (instead of flowers!) is what Jewish mourners do, uniquely. Thus, I share Tsrer, in hopes some of my family/friends might deem this piece and its message helpful to others who lose/have lost a loved one.)



Robert Feldman: He is a writer and poet. He has participated in dozens of poetry readings around the country, and continues to write, paint, and play tabla, besides working with high-school students as faculty advisor of the Park Vista Writers Workshop.



STRANGERS

We meet; two silent landscapes.

intimacies, hidden waters,

lost in the speed of details.

I wave my hand; The slowness

of a wall clock in an abandoned home.

She smiles; A smile measured secretly

in the excess of togetherness.

A letter never meant to be read

enveloped in our indifferent gazes.

We stay still; like a moment between

two trains, crossing.

The two trains part,

our seats exchange.



Ro Hith: He is a poet and a medico from Andhra Pradesh, writing poetry since 7 years. His poetry has been published in various online magazines, including Muse India, The Four Quarterly, Istanbul Review, Kritya, New Mirage Journal and print magazines like Kavya English, which was applauded and complimented by various senior poets. Currently, he is working on his first book of poems, which will be published shortly and an online magazine that deals with progressive poetry and translations from various Indian languages.



AT THIRTEEN

At thirteen, the pond was a ruthless school
It taught her how the fishes went at it
but they never bled

At thirteen, the white-gold fabric over her chest
was a threadbare joke
over buds that were barely there

At thirteen, she was picking pebbles from the stream
in her mind
while being flung on a bed

At thirteen, nine moons were pushed into her
between the start and end of the
first bloody chapter

Still at thirteen, with a month more to go
she was torn into two. One more mouth emerged
to suck at her insipid white tears



Reena Prasad: She is a poet/writer from India, currently living in Sharjah (United Arab Emirates). Her poems have been published in several anthologies and journals e.g. The

Copperfield Review, First Literary Review-East, Angle Journal, Poetry Quarterly, Lakeview International Journal etc. She is also the Destiny Poets UK's, Poet of the year for 2014 and one of the editors of The Significant Anthology released in July 2015. More recently, she was adjudged second in the World Union Of Poet's competition, 2016. She writes at Butterflies Of Time.



OBIT

I found the quick silver Man
Light footed, in a Hurry
Moving so like a Flash
I could hardly Match.

He accelerated so Fast
Leaving things Behind
He rushed ahead ten Paces
I walked behind in the Corridor
Trying not to trample On

The things that spilled Out.

Shirts, drawer strings, marbles, Flowers,

Sheets, socks, condoms, Pens,

Books, rum bottles, Staplers,

Flower vases, openers, Clippers,

A dictionary, two Thesauruses,

An anthology of Poems.

I skipped over them like a steeple Chaser

As he moved fast to his Cab

Dragging behind an empty Strolley.

I watched at the Airport

As he walked towards the Plane

Leaving behind the Strolley

I could see the wind whipping off his Shirt

I saw him entering the plane Naked.

Learned later that a man by that Name

Never got off that Plane.

On the job is google Search.

Looking for him among the Clouds

Lit up by an occasional Comet.



Ravi Shanker (Ra Sh): He translates from Malayalam and Tamil to English and vice versa. Published English translations of stories by Bama (Tamil), Mother Forest (from Malayalam) and Waking is Another Dream (Sri Lankan Tamil Poetry) and for Anthologies of Dalit literature published by OUP and Penguin India. Published poems in magazines, journals and anthologies. He is one of the five contributing poets to the anthology, “A Strange Place Other

Than Earlobes” (five voices seventy poems). A collection of his poetry, "Architecture of Flesh" was published by Paperwala in 2015. E-mail: shankeran@gmail.com



STEAMERS

Steamers, cute, little, tin toy steamers burn wax,
make carbon black. Hot water runs in streams
through jets, makes sound, of water punching metal,
a unique sound, a sound that lingers, a sound
that I loved once. Things changed a week ago,
things changed while by the river I sat.

Steamers, garish, loud, wood and tin steamers
that burn diesel, make carbon black.

Abominations that cleave the swell
of the river that, they say, flows in the heaven,
descended through Shiva's locks to this earth.

It left heaven to give us life and we:
we turned it into a highway with noise, accidents
and traffic jams, the picture is complete.

I witnessed all the three of them, collision, not fatal,
of boats, two, and the quarrel, not physical,
that went on for eternity, actually twenty minutes,
were the last straw, as they say.

It was then that things changed. They changed
a week ago; changed while by my river I sat.



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



MY DAYS OF HOSTEL STAY

It is not a room of one's own but meticulously shared by many a two-legged, gulping their own predicament in hard times.

Oft, gulped plain soda ere trending towards coco cola or the like of it.

back to seven or eight decades of unsophisticated living and life style threadbare in our view;

no stringent laws or stipulations, for the warden himself was the self-willed owner.

Each corner of the same room was monopolized by ants' rows all the more by the edges of brooms.

Egrets figure in my diagram note

now, recalling those days of crows
and mynas dancing in branches
echoing through my windows.
A room of one's own still lingers
in memory for it nurtured many
fostering their agile roots of learning.



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

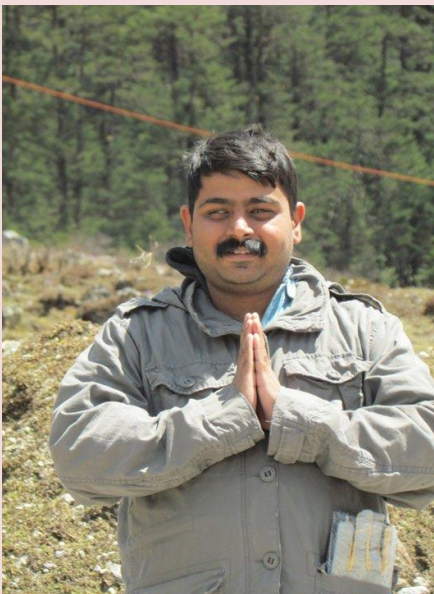


SIC TRANSIT GLORIA MUNDI

she asks me for poems on an industrial scale
one a month the ink barely dry
and i have in devotion and in discipline
delivered unto her on bitter gourd chips
yes why not bitter gourd chips
and on octobers and on funerals and
portuguese and war and death
weddings and mornings after and
once, about a curious commander of sheep
and then i realise we all are commanders
of sheep, and often the sheep too
to the rhythm of train wheels

or the ardours of sleep deprivation
in the wilderness of ever deepening loss
or simply bored of the in flight
entertainment en route to colombo
the wheels of my poem mill
have churned relentless till I asked my

interrupted self what is it that so
drives moves inspires instigates
such worship and it comes in an epiphany
sic transit gloria mundi this world made flesh
but the immortality of inked words
lives on and through it the name of the poet
when all else is made dust



Raamesh Gowri Raghavan: He moonlights as an award-winning copywriter by day and daylights as an award-

wanting poet by night, and sandwiches an archaeology course, running two literary clubs, astronomy, the occasional trek, some peer counseling for suicide prevention, and learning languages in between. He thinks he is funny, but his friends vehemently disagree."

Facebook:

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



SHATTERED DREAMS

I drink my painful tears of vivid dreams
In a moonless night
Ashing desires of mind
Start their journey to unknown path.
Without a moonlit sky
Without a twinkling gem
Without a sweet lullaby
My maroon dreams
Keep watching from the distant land
From a rotten cleave of heart
I just watch myself with clueless eyes
Like a white layer
Of a coconut's shell
From the boundary of my solitude

Pouring down with the bright sunlight
Through the cosmic blue
I start a joyless journey to eternity
Searching the worldly pleasure
In the castle of green
Roaming between heaven and land
With hand in hand
Hours by hours
Before it's too late.



Preety Bora: The poetess, Mrs Preety Bora, born in the beautiful state of Assam, (India), and she lives in a small city called " Golaghat" with her family. Her poems have been featured in various anthologies and magazines in India and in foreign countries too. She is highly inspired by Nature. Besides writing, she is fond of cooking, designing and listening to music.



In the cage the parrot is safe & secure
When it breaks the cage & flies
It makes the whole sky its home.
To love is risky
It needs absolute freedom to grow
It crucifies & crowns the lovers.



Praveen Ranjit: He is a creative writer who gets inspiration from nature to social issues and enjoys writing poems on love, life, compassion, happiness, human relations nature's

beauty etc. At a very young age he developed his writing skills, published poems in various anthologies and periodicals and received many awards of excellence. He was a professor in the Department of Commerce, St. Albert's college, Kochi, Kerala from 1981 to 2014.



HONESTY

The virtue of honesty, spells character,
A principled courageous person,
Who sticks to the bald, bitter truth,
Come what may.

Cultivating it is tough, restrictive of
falsehoods in speech, thought, action

Do we really know ourselves?

Are we honest to admit our faults, frailties?

Are we sure of moral courage to stand by truth always?

I think I am fairly honest to admit, I lie sometimes..



Pratima Apte: I am an English Hons. Graduate of Delhi University. I am a homemaker, recently turned grandmother! I used to write sporadically in the Pune edition's Women's page of the Indian Express. I love reading and writing, words are my world. My interests in reading are self-help books, spiritual and cookbooks and fiction. Books by Ayn Rand, Taylor Caldwell, Leon Uris, J Krishnamurthy, Dan Brown have been my favourites, as also layman's homeopathy, astrology and medical books.



TIME RIVER

While departing from you
I uttered something, like a passing comment, might be a
word

a sentence, having sincerity at the beginning
and devotion at the end,

that I am madly in love with you,

I did tell you if I recollect correctly.

now it is midnight, something is burning with in me,
as if a candle that flickers like a star

I have started dissecting time, coding words, decoding
world jumbled up

as to why i uttered those words

what devotion does really mean

what does it mean to be sincere

who am i

who are you

when i think of intimacy, why do i always think of you?
I am unable to satisfy any of my quarries
all that i remember is your smiling glances

you did tell me something which i have been following
religiously.

Believe it or not, we are imprisoned by words
only words, words uttered becomes figures
they stand before us
they stand by us, they in their turn utter newer words
forming new figures, new shades to be followed by newer
ones
and we are overcrowded by persons of our own making
then you buy time, heal wounds as if they are your patients
and you try your best to cure them of their ailments
then bid them farewell, bed lies vacant awaiting for the
newcomers

someday someone will come, of course not as tenants
but with the instinct of a possessor
and the world soon to be filled up by hearty laughters
amidst thunder and lightening
amidst rain drop dripping, I have only concern for those
anguished seedling
I pray for its safety, let it sprout in to a

beautiful tree,
I cannot stop the torrential rain
at best i can pray the soil to soak more water
let it not spill over, let it not form a stream, a river
let it not form a sea, an ocean, with tidal waves
to wash away those helpless creatures, let it be a plant, an
insect, an animal
let it be a man who cannot swim against the current of the
tone river .



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



ACTING ON BEHALF OF

Dear Mr Philip

Whatever is your name?

It had come to our attention

That, you were not to blame

The accident was not your fault

You shouldn't turn a hair

For we have now discovered

You were not even there

However there is the matter

Of compensation true

So settle up and quickly

Or we will have to sue

Please disregard this letter

If it has just arrived

I cancelled it the other day
It sounded so contrived

But dear old Gertie Dewdrop
My secretary of old
Had slipped it in the postbag
Or that is what I'm told

We thank you for your understanding
In anticipation trusting
For and on behalf of
Jones and Smith and Husting



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

which is available through Amazon, Barnes and Noble and at www.elfinchild.com In December 2013, he was diagnosed with terminal Motor Neuron Disease and died in 2015.



THIS WINTER TERCET

Cold snuffles wound round lean naked limbs.
Wet wends beneath sinew, soaks into blind bone.
Ice builds crystal by crystal simple net of things.

A cracked miniscus mirrors low sun's sharp moan.
A fallen ocean blinks between blood red bricks.
As gust raises bare barkskin, snaps rendered stone.



Paul Brookes: He was, and is a shop assistant, after employment as a security guard, postman, admin. assistant, lecturer, poetry performer, with "Rats for Love", his work included in "Rats for Love: The Book", Bristol Broad-sides, 1990. First chapbook "The Fabulous Invention Of Barnsley", (Dearne Community Arts, 1993). Recently published in Blazevox, Nixes Mate, Live Nude Poems, The Be-zine, The Bees Are Dead and others. "The Headpoke and Firewedding" (Alien Buddha Press, 2017) illustrated chapbook, "A World Where" (Nixes Mate Press, 2017) "The Spermbot Blues" (OpPRESS, 2017). Forthcoming chapbooks "She Needs That Edge" (Nixes Mate Press), "Ghost Holiday" (Alien Buddha Press)



DEAD POET'S CLUB

Today, I slit open an old poem with a paper knife and out
flew a blackbird.

It preened itself on the window sill, tilted its head to look at
me with one beady eye, and flew away into the night.

It's been a while now.

The ink of night is melting at the edges.

The poem and I, have been waiting for the blackbird to
return and take its perch between the words shaped like a
wilting branch and the shadow-bitten-moon.

shooting star . . .

her phone number

still on speed dial



Paresh Tiwari: An electrical engineer by profession, a creative writer, and illustrator by choice, Paresh Tiwari, grew up in the labyrinthine lanes of Lucknow. He took to Japanese literary short forms in the winter of 2012. Since then his haiku, haibun, tanka, haiga, free-form poems and flash fiction pieces have been published in various journals, anthologies and books. His first collection of haiku and haibun 'An inch of sky' was published by 20 Notebooks Press and is available online.



Do i speak my mind out
Often no
Bury my thoughts in my veins
Let them sink or soak
Depending on the thought.
I write them away, sometimes.

Turn thoughts into Energy vibes
Spread across the Energy
Friends often receive the Energy
Across the globe
My thoughts of yesteryears
Sprinkled as Energy drops
Somewhere in the Amazon forests
Rivers of Ganges
You may feel the Energy.



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



Let me bring to you
Ecstasy deep and great
Unlike anything you have known.
For when time brings changeability
And we are but history to one another,
Long gone,
May you gaze at star after star
In your ecstasy and agony
Searching for me
Like I will for you.



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



AN ODE TO RAJASTHAN

I longed to visit a heaven of pearly white marble,
Where everything gleamed of a promise.
A place where a wish became a command.
A place where a lover
Fulfilled his promise to his love.

I longed to absorb the beauty of colours,
So vibrant, so alive, so true
They woke me up with a jolt.
Pure delight.
Brushed silver, filigreed gold
Adorned the lovely ladies
Cloistered from greedy, seducing eyes.

I longed to touch the sheer veils
made of sensuous silks and sheer chiffons
Was this compensation enough
For a life of caged duty?

I saw my ordinary visage reflected
In a million minute mirrors
On a silk sari that had been worn by a captive beauty

Time stood still when I visited the place of enchantment
Its rose gold beauty imprinted on my impressionable mind
An indelible stamp of beauty and glory

I exulted, I wept, I sighed
In a pure pink city where time lost its meaning
I visited Rajasthan
The land of lakes and marble,
Abode of royalty.
I tiptoed gently, reverently,
On the threshold of time and let
My heart rejoice in the dance of the desert sand.



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



Look, how your tongue curls, swirls and salivates as you converse in your mother tongue. The twinkle in your eye stolen by a foreign language now rests back in your eyes

the way you throw your voice as you speak in Oriya and the way you speak in a sing-song accent in Telugu like a bird with crosses from one city to another without any boundaries, you travel at the tip of your tongue



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



CONTEMPLATION

Under a peaceful sky
side by side we walk
along the river

still holding onto memories...

As leaves shower you in a curtain of gold
and I lose sight of you momentarily...

I turn to you and say

“this is all that’s left...should we make a go of it?”

You quickly skip over a fallen log and
with an eternally patient smile say

“what’s left is not always right...”

and walk through the wooded glen
fading away into the distance



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



ENIGMA

I see a raging sea in your eyes,
emerald tides of turmoil break at every blink
on the dark lashes, splashing a grey desire,
drowning me in a fervour inescapable.

The soft hissing warm breath
send tingles up the spine,
a mesmerizing orb draws me in,
a pull that I can't deny!

Craving for an enigmatic embrace
delving into an unknown depth
in intricacies of undisciplined thoughts,

my mind is heated up to ignite
kindling sparks, potent enough
to spread like wildfire.

Engulfing me in your created chaos of destruction
the scorching flames travel deep within
bending the ivory bones in passion, breaking cerulean veins
in rapturous orgasm.

Me, in ashes float on your waves,
slowly sink, grain by grain every blink.
I hear my sinking beats reverberating back
hitting your undaunted, impregnable heart
safely lodged in bony ribs.



Nandita Samanta: She was in a teaching profession, presently is a secretary of a creative organisation. She is a multilingual poet, a short story writer, a reviewer, a dancer

and an artist. Her works are well appreciated and published and her paintings have been displayed at various exhibitions. Her published poetry collection is titled 'Scattered Moments'. Her poems, articles, short stories feature in various international and national anthologies, magazines, journals, newspapers and e-zines. Her poems have been aired in U.K. And US radio channels and also have been translated in different languages.



AUDIBLE SILENCES

I am a spectator to my own self
as it is uncovered to me
as manifold tensions contrive
a poem
as my self seeps into poetry.

I imprison, then liberate, the
resonance of my soul
and dispense my anatomy into words.

I write with an impatience
an urge
to witness the heart
poured on a piece of paper!

Poetry makes me modest
aware of my own margins;
while I hold my personae so dear
I, too, become one.

I transcend myself
in the mystifying silences
of rainy eerie nights,
words divulge themselves to me
in their multiple ragas,
measures, punches and poetic sense.

Not that I occasionally do not
open up the hurts long healed
as I witness
the epic texts are born
by regular retellings.

Monolithic narratives commence
through poetry
through my audible silences.



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

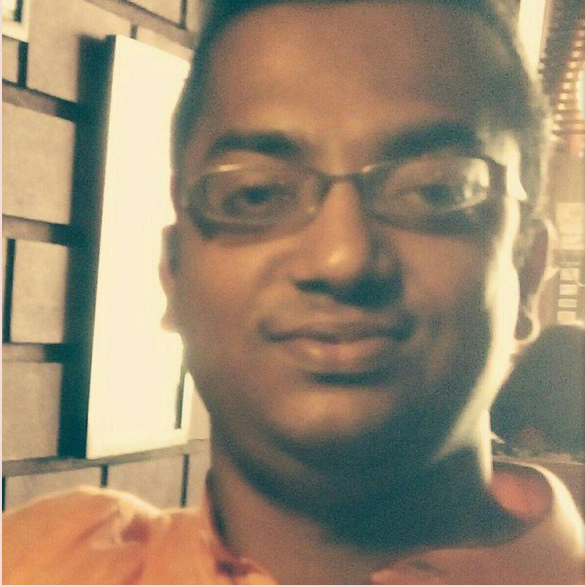
www.kavinandini.blogspot.in



UNIVERSAL

Oft do I think of Love
That goes beyond the wall
You plant in summer a cherry tree
I a mahogany this fall
Then you spread a garden of hope
I decorate another too
You fly a kite above
And I just get from here its view,

Thus we mingle despite walls
We spread brotherhood
You find a mango blossom
I build an oak wood.



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

Me? I am nothing...I'm not a conscious poet...I just scribble;
For scribbling is like singing spontaneously...It is like
dancing loving the movements of body...So I live...So I wish
to depart...



THE CHRISTIANS ARRIVED

Salvation Army and
the Christians arrived today,
Christmas, like every other Sunday morning
feed the homeless, chasing the rats from the bathroom,
basement, kicking the dead flies out of the corner spots
where the cat used to lounge-
clean the toilet bowl, a form of revival and resurrection.
I privately pastor to these desires though I myself am
homeless.

I forgot what it's like to be a poet of the cloth,
savior in street clothing with a warm home to blend into.
I watch them clamp the New Testament in one hand,
And pull a cancer stick out of the pocket with the other.
It's all a matter of praising the Lord.
Everything is nonsense when you're in a place where you
don't belong.

Even praying to Jesus from a dirty dusted pillow seems strange and bewildering.

Someday I will walk from this place and offer spare meals by myself to others;
feed the party in between the theology, the bingo of sins and salvation.

I forgot the taste of a Stromboli Sandwich with a 6 pack of Budweiser
with or without the Chicago Bears--it would make every Sunday a Salvation
Army holiday.

Today is a fairy creating miracles from the dust of the floor
multiplying fish and chips, baked ham, ribs with sauce Chi-Town type,
dark color of greens and veggies tip me to the Christian clock on the wall peeking down on lost and unsaved.
I feel like a fragment.

A birth date the way again to begin, fragmented.

Pinto beans mixed with graffiti fingers,
Christians arrived on Christmas day-
they always do every Sunday morning.

I pastor to these desires.

It's all a matter of praising the Lord.

The Christians arrived today.



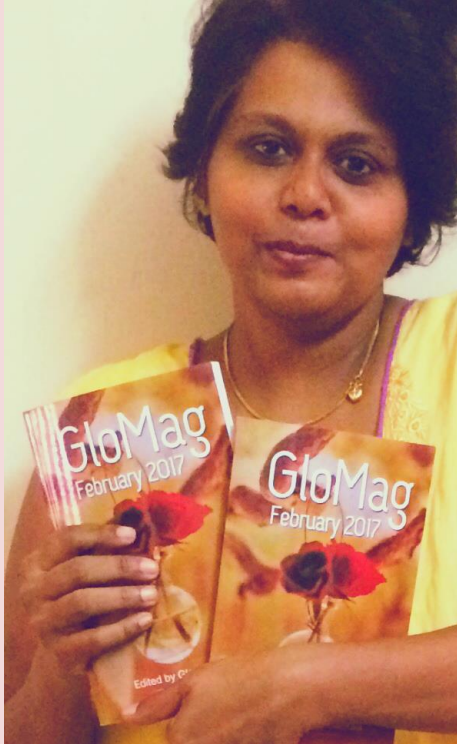
Michael Lee Johnson: He lived ten years in Canada during the Vietnam era. He is a Canadian and USA citizen. Today he is a poet, editor, publisher, freelance writer, amateur photographer, small business owner in Itasca, Illinois. He has been published in more than 930 small press magazines in 33 different countries or republics, and he edits 10 poetry sites. Michael is the author of *The Lost American: From Exile to Freedom*, several chapbooks of poetry, including *From Which Place the Morning Rises* and *Challenge of Night and Day*, and *Chicago Poems*. He also has over 134 poetry videos on YouTube as of 2015: He was nominated for 2 Pushcart Prize awards for poetry 2015 & Best of the Net 2016. He is also the editor/publisher of anthology, *Moonlight Dreamers of Yellow Haze: A second poetry anthology, Dandelion in a Vase of Roses*.



RENEW YOURSELF

I know you're going through struggles
And many obstacles in life
Don't be afraid to face this world
Don't be afraid to take a stand
A little bit more takes you a long way
Don't let anyone bring you down
Don't give up my dear
This is your chance now
To face all the challenges
It's all about the difficult journey
With what you become in life
Cherish the fruit of hardships
Moving on is the way of life

Let not frown steal your smile
Believe in yourself and rise high
As you step into another new year



Merlyn Alexander: I hail from Nagercoil. Surrounded by nature all around our district, I feel blessed that nature has lots to offer for my poems. Other than writing my hobbies include painting, craft, travelling music reading and cooking. I'm a blogger and I have a cookery blog. I would love to publish a cookery book someday. My collection of poems in a book. Gimme some time.



DEALING WITH...

Or with the slippery shadows
that took on 3-D fleshiness
with a maudlin coyness?

Who'll puncture my
claustrophobic sac?



Late Mushtaque Ali Khan Babi AKA Max Babi: Max was a multilingual writer, poet who liked a wide variety of formats – whose life was full of oxymoronic shades, a polymath who went from being a specialist to a generalist

to a versatile. Mentoring by being a catalyst enthralled him, he wrote on serendipity and intuition, conducted workshops on a range of subjects and topics. He was a very friendly Santa Claus.



THE BED, AFTER

skintight, your dress weeps into
my hands; the silk-warm friction drags
my fist open – I release you –
it is banal, rubbing off
the toxic dust of knowledge,
knowing full well the black spirits
and their inside mockeries –

our skinfolds on the mattress
have since blushed red –
there is a fine music that plays
of dust against stone, of terse
will against defeat –
what are we to make of monuments
but to bow down with wonder
and worship?

sprouts of longing run their roots
through and through
the concreteness of moving on,
but I must fear ahead:
that pain is always, always bigger –

I cram my hair and my makeup
with your dress
into the fissures between pillows,
so lovers coming after us
find comfort in stopping short,
pulsating, breathing,
being –

finding tomorrow in time
is for the masters – for now
we must be glad
with the glares that flash our way;
for now we must find the fight
in holding out.



Mathew Jasper: He is a poet and medical student. He is based in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala. He has been writing since high school and has won prizes for extempore and writing, besides poetry. He is an avid reader and appreciator of all genres of poetry. Mathew is also an upcoming pianist and composer. He can be reached atmathew.j.jasper@gmail.com



CONFESSIONS

They say
we move through
the cosmic shadows
And that
Mad stars dance overhead
Deciding fates, suturing destinies.
Mother,
i sacrificed stale sighs on my way,
Forsaking them to ages.
Collecting tears off my cold palms
I decided to spin oysters
Chasing his breaths
And weaving them to mine.
I drank
the oasis of his heart
dropping leaves over deserts,
Tying kafan* over my head.

crossing the stretch of stars,
Thinking this too shall pass.
the vibrations of my mad heart
when i heard, I wept, mother.
Encasing cacti into my chest
i collapsed on bed
blowing pipes of hope
Dampening bellows of fate,
Struggling to breathe.
I became
a hurricane in an insane sea, mother,
Sifting tales out of sighs,
Spinning music from its tides.
Today I wish to tug me into
your aanchal*, mother.
I am holding on to life.
I am dying, mother.
How many more without him
must I weave melodies from threads of dusk
silk from yarns of night?
Ripping roads,
When the nails stuck into my eyes,
I returned to lost orchids, mother,
To lick sauted ice-creams in heat

salt sprinkled over my corpse,
waking skeletons of my slumber
Passing through dead streets.

my lover rubs salt over my wounds
Licking sweat of someone else's flesh.
The icicles of his sight
pierce me at night
As i draw into
the mad rush of winter.
The visarjan of devi,
the muharram of his town has
taken a toll over me, mother.
his alien city
has kicked me hard,
so hard over my face.
That it broke my reveries.
When shall this time pass, mother?
He smudged charcoal over my face
as i bled on
the surface of Arabian sea,
Blood of my dreams,
my desires veined in red.
The murder of a relationship.
A fading mad memory.

He was a pigeon that flew over
my sinking sea
To help me write poems.
He stripped me naked,
and threw me into the
Damp well of a life so big, mother.
Besmirched tale of a ruthless heart
He killed me, mother.

He made love to a shadow
That shuts his ears to bypass my wails.
keeling storms to his ankles to
stop my movement further mother.
He danced like Shiva last night,
Calling names of strangers
Whom he professed to love and
shared bed with later.
I wrote a whole lot of sagas on him once.
Carving him out in my verses
Like gold scribbled in mud.
I wore the necklace of his
name, mother

That later turned out to be a black
rose, mother.

No amethyst or tantra can now
save me, mother.

*(*Kafan refers to a length of cloth in which a dead body is wrapped and
buried. It is an Urdu word.*

**Aanchal is the border or hem of a garment, especially a sari.)*



Manisha Manhas: She is a rebel. Her family originally from Western Punjab Pakistan migrated to Pathankot Punjab after 1947. She is an English teacher with Punjab education department and moonlights as a poet. Her poems mostly revolve around the theme of "partition and migration" of 1947. She completed her M.A. in English and M.Phil in English from Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar. Her poems have previously been published in journals like Langlit and Kashmir lit. She is enthusiastic about life and the little presents it offers on way. For her, poetry is her life-force quite similar to blood flowing in her veins.



SOUVENIR

A bowl that holds
drizzling dreams of ours, as newlyweds,
in all the beautiful hues
of the ocean,

crisscrossing mysteriously
akin to a woman's heart .

A border of troughs and crests
in Armenian blue flows along
with the aquamarine,
interspersed with cobalt .

The curling stems
and entwined tendrils,
the tiny embossed birds in ochre
perched on them,
their dulcet notes

travel from the arid land of Jaipur
singing the saga of love and valour,
that still weave magic in my heart.

A salad bowl's size,
however, I let my
beaming jasmines float
in it, their heady fragrance
bringing in a bouquet of memories
of the riotous spring,
that has slowly slipped by.



Mallika Bhaumik: She had been a student of literature and did her masters in English Literature from the University of Calcutta . She is passionate about writing and many of her poems and stories have been published in National and International anthologies, well known magazines. She is an

event planner by profession and is fond of music, travelling and cooking . She lives with her husband and sons in Kolkata and is a proud Kolkatan.



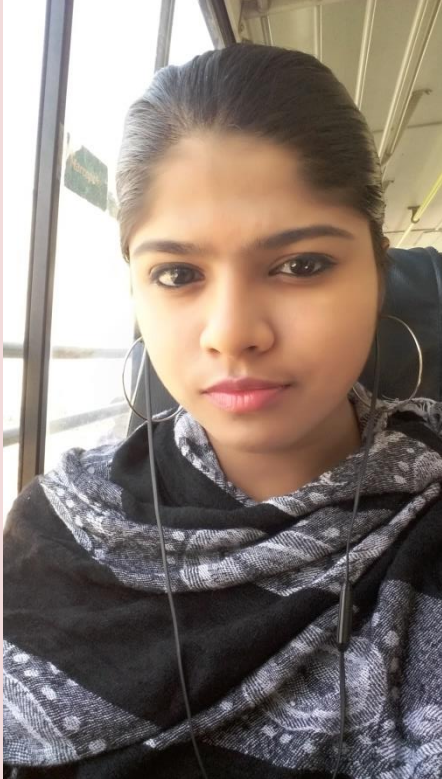
LOSING EYESIGHT WITHOUT WARNING

When I snap my fingers near my right or left ear, the sound is not equally distributed. When I snap my fingers in front of my face, the sound is in equal proximity to both my ears. So, if I want to detect whether he's leaving or arriving I have to turn my face and hear it with one ear. The birds have different kinds of wing beating. The slow beating meant they are as reluctant as a child who's to resume going to school after a long vacation. The fast beating meant they are as restless as a new lover is when his love insists too much on leaving before it gets too late. The doors have hinges that creak differently when different people open them. When my father opens them,

the creak sounds like a baby's soft moaning when it sees nameless objects motioning in aimless directions. When my mother opens them, the creak sounds like my old shriek when I was pierced in my ears for the first time without my consent, because I have to perform a gender. I know who's here when I touch their fingers. I know it's her because of her uneven nails; she chips them off with her teeth to chase her anxiety away. I know it's him because of his perfume and that has a tantalizing awakening somewhere below my neck. The food is tempting only till I put it in my mouth; the kitchen is the only place where I get tricked most times. What a scam!

But, there are things that are difficult to tell one from another. All roses smell the same, all the waves seem to crash together the same way, all that swim in the ocean are fish, right? From now onwards, time is just numbers and sequences of occurring and recurring events. I know that things start or end, when the clock says so. I don't know the first person narrative of anything, because I depend on translations and commentaries. I don't know what an original feeling is, because I

borrow from others who have them. Which means, besides being literally blind, I'm also blind in trusting those who volunteer as my guide. Now tell me about Rumi saying that God is the only truth, I'll laugh in your invisible face!



Mahitha Kasireddi: She is from Hyderabad, India. She is currently pursuing M.A in Women's Studies at Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Hyderabad. She had been a writer with online magazines Youth Ki Awaaz. She is a former content director at Campus Diaries. Her poems have been published in literary journals such as GloMag, The Ink Drift Magazine, Unbound Emagazine and the Telegram Magazine by the Talking Books, Delhi and in The New Indian Express. She is the writing finalist of the Campus Diaries 25 Under 25 2016

National Contest. She's certified by the University of Iowa for completing the International Writing Program MOOC on How writers write fiction 2016: Storied Women. Her poems are also to be published in an anthology by Author Press India called Women Poetess: Within and Beyond Shore.



POISON

Not everyone deserves love and affections from me but
you,
Of all the places you pass through, my love will safeguard
you against anything that is harmful
And all that flow of venom and poison;
Burrowed through and embedded my rosy passions and
crimson emotions into your soul,
Deserve they some spirited cheers or an intrepid word, no?
 You create my world of happiness,
 You shower me with endless love,
 You calm me, you get me peace,
Do you, however let my feelings delve deep into your
thoughts?

Do you ever wish to treasure all of them?
The pen creates paeans, singing your praise,
The words that I want to express,
at times escape from the corners of my parched lips,
I never will let anyone mix with my love even a single drop
of poison,
Surely, so many have tried to without any reason,
But were they allowed to, ever?
But you know, it made its toxicity felt at times,
Slowly, I would suck it all up, silently spitting it out along
with my blood,
As the raging fire does, so the venom raced across,
I couldn't match up to its viciousness first,
Yet, my lovelaced blood soothed it like a drug,
It was as if the toxin had polluted my lungs and they were
burning, they were on fire,
My lungs inhaled deep and smelt you, I felt detoxified, I
relaxed myself,
My heart had then jumped like a child so full of love, I
cheered back, smiling myself,
Listen! My life I want to entrust to you, I want to feel you
within myself,
Everything about you, your love, touch, passions; quietly
stealing you away from thyself!!!



Madhumita Bhattacharjee Nayar: She is a bilingual writer (writing both in Hindi and English), writing by the name of Madhumita. A poetess, blogger, life skills counsellor, healer, she is also a social commentator and works with women and children. Her works have been published in various national and international magazines, newspapers, web magazines, ezines, journals, anthologies. The author of "THE NIGHT JASMINE AND OTHER LOVE POEMS", is also 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. She is an avid animal lover too, her motto in life being "Live & Love Life ".



BELIEVE

Miracles happens to those who have the faith to consummate.

Believing wholeheartedly, one tends to reciprocate.

Divine togetherness transcending time in an ethereal gaze.

Possessing a virtue; having vivacious braze.

Believing as such, giving life sheer perfection and hopeful rays.

Redeeming life's ethics in beautiful captivating ways.

Rising and falling in my inevitable thoughts.

Inducing the faith, and striving hard to transform the pathos.

I kiss my dreams with the feel of ingenuity.

Having trust and faith that will change the virtuality.

Eyes speaking thousand words but lips just quiver.

Unspoken words filling heart that makes me shiver.
Captured by heart, stuck by reality.
Souls united effervescently in an unified duality.



Madhu Jaiswal: is a Kolkata based poet. Writing is a new found passion for this homemaker. Her poetries, short stories and blogs are being featured in different anthologies and e-zines. Madhu is optimistic, compassionate and a humanitarian. Her write-ups show vivid imagery of life that she experiences and go through.



DEPTH

The flow which is flowing is good

It's amazingly good

Beneath this flow

There may be a hidden flow

Almost unknown

Is it better than the floating flow?

If you can't proceed

You won't be able to know anything

Actually all unknown are good

Because you have to know it

You have to know more and better

But

When you start to know it

Known faces standing beside the river
Suddenly start a certain conversation
Between themselves about a certain theory

That's also good
Because then
You can understand that
You are going to touch the depth
That means you are almost reached to the new one.



Lipika Ghosh: Contemporary poet and short story writer in regional language Bengali. Active period from 1995 to present. Written five books, collections of Bengali poems. Supporting humanity, supporting to save greenery.



ELUSIVE

Cosmic portal of time, please open wide for us.

Ten thousand years we need, times ten thousand,
to uncover the secrets of life
and to feel deeply what makes it precious.

We often careen down the road at breakneck speed,
never hearing over the noise of the traffic,
over the rubber roughing on the asphalt.

There's so little sense surrounding so many things,
so many ideas hanging loosely,
and understanding becomes vague.

There's way too many conflicting, informational offerings,
and overwhelming stirrings of the senses.

So, again, we beseech you,
throw wide that door that hides meaning from us.



Linda Imbler: is the author of the published poetry collection “Big Questions, Little Sleep.” She is a Kansas-based Pushcart Nominee. Her work has appeared in numerous national and international journals. Linda’s creative process and a current, complete listing of sites which have or will publish her work can be found at: lindapoetryblog.blogspot.com



PEOPLE

People get born
And they also die
Sometimes they laugh
But also cry

There are people of different colour
In every city and state
Many that are full of love
And those who lives with anger and hate

People utter words
That hurts and heal
People who just think of themselves
And those who'll gladly share a meal

People can be nasty
And also good
You get those who are respectful
And others that's very rude

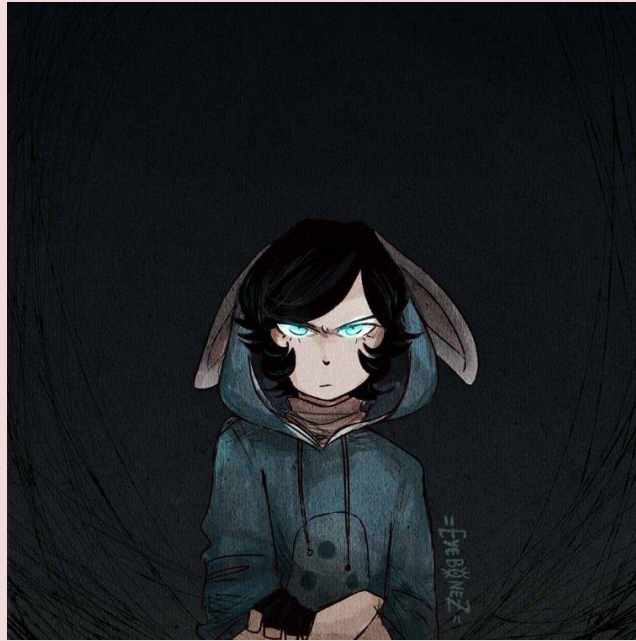
People who are not
Ashamed of the gospel
And who are truly striving to live
According to God's ways and will

People who reject Christ
And God's Word
Allowing the enemy
To rob them from new birth

God's unconditional love
Remains still
And He'll never give up
On His people



Leroy Abrahams: He is born in 1976 and stay in South Africa, Port Elizabeth, Helenvale. He will be married to Eileen for 14 years on the 29 August 2017. They have two sons and a daughter. He is currently working for the church, Victory Ministries International and also volunteer at times. Leroy loves to write, love people and children and God's Word. He enjoys hospital visits because there he pray for the sick and encourage them. Leroy's poems are true and full of emotion that leaves the reader in a good mood. Most of his poems are autobiographical and serve as a warning to the young and Christians who are facing tough times. Verse en Inspirasie is his first anthology and he promise that it's not his last.



JUDGMENTAL BLINDS

A Kiran Zehra Komail poem

That man with no words

Who, owned some love birds.

The people in town call him Mr. Heartless

They say, "Angry and alone he can only play chess."

He doesn't smile nor does he greet

No parties and no fancy treats.

He loves his birds inside the cage

he holds a grudge and looks with rage.

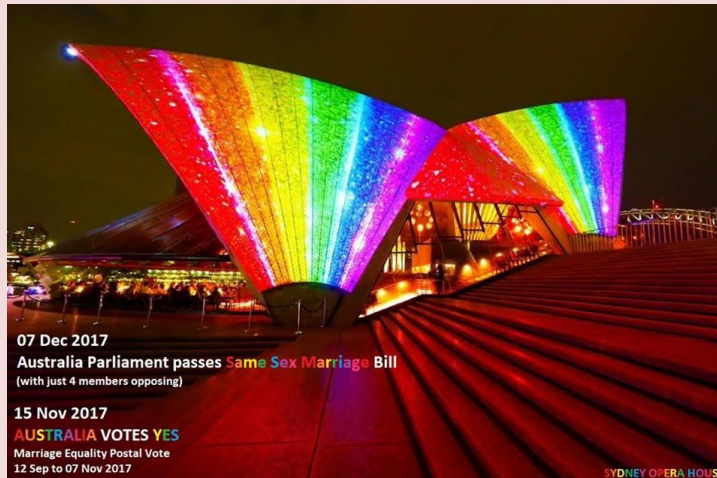
No wife he got although he's young

"How could he with that bitter tongue?"

Then one day the town was thunderbolt
A lady closed Mr. Heartless's gates with a jolt.
"What in the world did I see?"
Asked a gossip monger to Mr. Louie.
If that was not enough the town heard them laugh
And sing and talk they also broke bread half.
"My O my Mr. Heartless has a wife?"
"Yes" Gleamed Mrs. Heartless, full of life.
Said she "His circle is small, he doesn't smile at ye' all
You judge him before he could say, "I'm Paul."
Heartless you call him so he looked with rage
Look at those birds they love him from within the cage.
And ye' all behaved like oafs
When he passed, you greeted him with repose.
The man is loving and Oh! So dear!
He wastes his manners for his near.



Kiran Zehra Komail: Put her in the mountains and she will bargain rhymes and rhythm from the tallest tree and the sward. Place her in the concrete jungle and she will sing you a song of love midst the streets and the walls. Show her a burning torch and she would tell you hope is approaching! Call Ms Kiran Zehra Komail a whirlwind of ideas or a foodie her zest for life is endless and so are her dreams! She could redefine the shades of red, yellow, black or white in words so vivid you'd almost wonder if the true shade of it was this. She works for Rotary News as the Sub Editor of the English and Hindi magazine. Travel, gourmet and people to her are intriguing. Her poems and sketches are her theorem – simple yet deep and humble.



THE RAINBOW OF LOVE

She cupped her neck in her palms
And ran her kiss from her forehead to chin
And stayed on her lips the longest

“They might say we stole the rainbow from god
But it was ours all the time because
yesterday we had a nine hour rainbow
The longest lasting rainbow ever
Ours is a natural sexual orientation
Our love is a legitimate social event”

Austrian top court said Yes
Australian people voted Yes
And the sky gave the longest bow
In seven colours of gender
In seven colours of sexual orientation

Lest our preference for particular genitals
Does not turn into a cissexist fetish

Love is between two persons
Not necessarily two genders
Marriage is a relationship
Not a religious vow

Marriage is about love and space
Not about sex, gender and religion
Marriage is not for reproduction
Nor a consequence of reproduction

Marriage is not threatened by gay couples
Nor by marriage equality
But by a lack of loving commitment
Turning many marriages into loveless deserts



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



THE GRASP OF WINTER

Light reflecting off a shard of
an exploding stellar nebula.
I still search for a guiding light.
inflections from rainbows behest
inspiration or embryonic memory.

the guiding light flickers.

casting shadowed thoughts
from the nights infernal quarks.

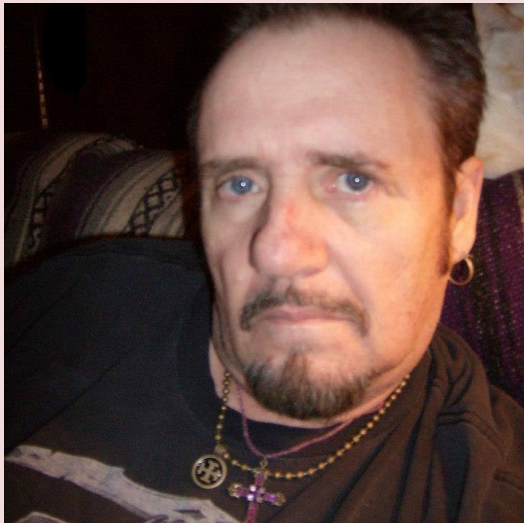
the guiding light...a dull orb.
In the dark flavor of winter's solstice

gnawing at the depth of sanity within.
bare trees permeate the landscape
cabin fever wreaks of black and white.
piles of fodder litter the hills.

a light reflects off a shard.

an exploding stellar nebula
twinkles in a foggy pallid haze.

an albino raven lands
high upon the bare branch.
winter's grip devouring
that warm guiding light.



Ken Allan Dronsfield: He is a disabled veteran, poet and fabulist who is a three time Pushcart Prize and Best of the Net Nominee for 2016-2017. His work has been published

world-wide in various publication venues. Ken loves writing, art, late evening thunderstorms, walking in the woods at night during a full moon and spending time relaxing.



Clue the adversity into its belonging
"you may, just may," she said, sing-singing.
And a diverse set of yellows strung
out before the land; where it lunged,
no one knows, but theorists theorizing

gave it a name, and it was spectrum.
"Banality!" cries the sheep, and the wolf
devoured her yelp. Cry me another
river, still my heart! I Hear!
No call to the doctor or the lecturn

will in full, assay the delirium within
the factions. One thousand
swords sat on their heads and asked

the wind to run by, the task
being to hear the song again.



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



Once in village Kidangoor there was a cattle thief
He was accused of killing cattle and eating beef
Once he had some chicken
With bird flu it was stricken
He died; in heaven he gave up meat and turned a new leaf!



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

an anthology. His poem “Call of the Cuckoo” has been published by Poetry Rivals. He was working on his first novel and writing a book-length travelogue about his native state of Kerala. He died in 2017.



TREE WHISPERS

Blue diamond rains
filigree of golden light
so many shades of green.

Sun beams on a single leaf.
This small star pulsating
from my wet apple tree.

Bright new leaf
fits hand perfectly---the future
lies in your palm.

After the long rain
pine trees bending
with cones.

Sugar maple trees
sashaying with autumn winds
all dressed up in yellow lace.

Branches etch evening sky
turning razzle dazzle
purple red citron.



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



LAST TIME

You came to me
With tears on your mind
You told me last time
You wouldn't cry

You just came to dry your eyes
Wanted me to know... You're fine
You lied
You're not alright

It was the last time
I seen you smile
Never really knew you in denial
It's the last time
You lie

It's the last time
I let you go
I let you go

People say that
It's never your fault
But they can't see you like I see you
It means nothing at all

You're so tired of the things they say
It's just another God Damn day
They lied
Nothing's alright

It was the last time
I seen you smile
Never really knew you
In denial
It's the last time
You lie

It's the last time
I let you go
I let you go

The last time
You lie to me
You lie to me

The days are so long
When my heart is wrong
Release my soul
Cause I can't hold on

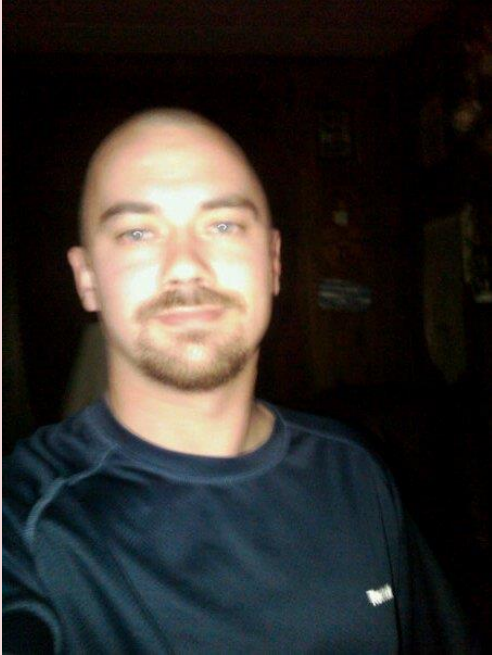
Today... Today

It was the last time
I seen you smile
Never really knew you
In denial
It's the last time
You lie

It's the last time
I let you go
I let you go

It's time to say goodbye
And you're the reason why
You lied

The last time
You lie to me
You lie to me



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



HAPPINESS

Flowers of world tied at the point
Where all the rays of the Sun converge;
Strolling the shore of sea
I was lost somewhere
In my own meditations
to find that point,
"Elixir of life, or a dosage to be happy",
that's what they said, right?
Was questioning myself!
To rejoice in happiness,
I ploughed near the shore
May be, because I could find the same there
But soon, the sun set off,
And, my hands still empty?
Flustered, I kicked some stone,
Unfortunately or fortunately, I fell,
But hey, I was happy, so happy

Because it meant like a pleasure to sightsee
Those deep red rays where about to set off fully
Those reflections on the water
And, those energies converging at my chest
Just at the point where my heart was beating
Screamed I, I found the point!!
"Be your own happiness",
Was what I learnt that day!!



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



EMOTION

Our emotion was born
Of a pomegranate –
The one you got for me
When I was ill...
Each sweet seed a rose-pink fire.
You took a knife and made it two –
One for me and one for you.

Our kisses were born
Of violet blossoms –
The ones you got for me
When I was ill...
My soul clung to each petal
And found the core's softness too –
I kept none for me and all for you.



Jagari Mukherjee: She is a freelance content writer who currently resides in Kolkata. She has an MA in English Literature from University of Pune. She was awarded a gold medal and several prizes by University of Pune for excelling in her discipline. Her writings, both in English and in Bengali, have appeared or are due to appear in different print and online literary outlets. Jagari has won a number of prizes in literary contests, including first prize in the ‘Temirqazyq’ contest (organized by World Nations Writers’ Union to celebrate the 26th anniversary of Kazakhstan’s independence) in the short story category.



THE DAY MY MOTHER PASSED AWAY

I saw him coming
struggling at a snail's pace
up the pathway
I could read the signs
etched in each and every
unsure step he took
his walk, always
in strong long strides
impatient and in haste against time
now a slow unfamiliar ambling gait
my sixth senses overwhelmed me
sent a cold shiver through my spine

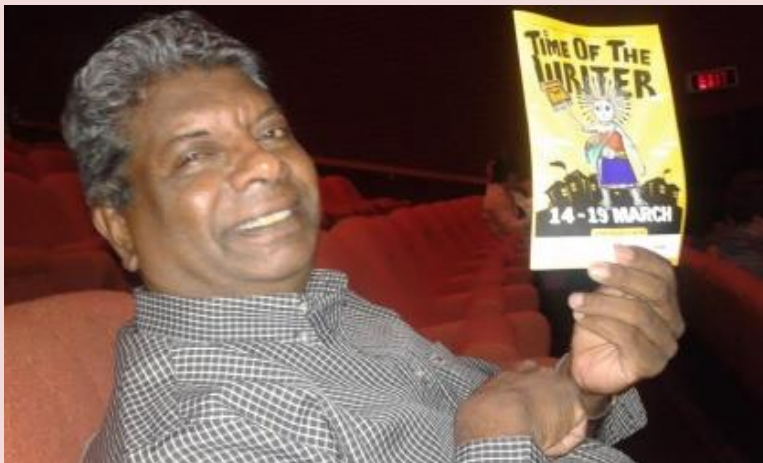
his, always upright frame,
now stooped and bent in pain
his head held low in grief
his body language spoke

a thousand words
lamenting the silent turmoil
in his soul

We came close, face to face
I could feel his struggling breath
cold upon my face
he lifted his head in slow motion
our eyes met
and the pain in his eyes
spoke of the grief
smouldering deep in his chest
I knew that there was nothing
I could say or do
for death had come
and stolen forever
the breath of a woman
a woman, he and I loved
and cherished

in the silent void of our anguish
there was no need
for words to be spoken
between father and son
the bond did not diminish with grief

the sorrow of her passing
did not fracture
the magnitude of her soul
that embraced and enriched our lives
so to in death, did her gentle love
keep us bonded together .



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 Gloriotimes, India. He is the Convenor of the Live Poets Society, Durban, South Africa.



TEN YEARS PAST...

Tonight will be the night that Franklin met with a fatal accident. Ten years have passed since that nightmarish night when I ran down an empty lane in the darkness, terrified. Having got married at 21, I spent more years in his company than my mother's. Being 10 years his junior made me more of his child than his wife. He could read my thoughts even before I knew I was thinking them. And he is the only person I know who could outdo me when it came to English. There was an instance when he took the Mensa test and finished it in flat 3 hours. He was a genius, I wasn't. Thankfully, perhaps, both my children have taken after their father when it comes to brains.

And yet, today, I have blocked this man from my mind because I do not know how to deal with my memories of him. We had problems during the fag end of a marriage that was so real to us, but still ended up being a farce as we

bowed down to societal and familial pressures and let them rule us. It's a judgemental world and it's never been in favour of the woman, and Franklin is not here to defend himself, which makes it completely necessary to bury the hatchet. Besides, his skull was fractured and he bled fresh blood all night, and I had to sit and watch him bleed. I used to dye his hair for him. Now when I try to recall things, my hands fill with blood. His blood. Does that sound gory? It's a fact, it happened.

The children continue to struggle with the loss of a father who used to wake up at 4 am to help them with their homework, sit patiently on a mattress to play games with them, who promptly abandoned office meetings to attend their calls, who searched high and low to fulfil their smallest needs.

If there was any award for being a father, that should have gone to Franklin.

In these ten years, what have I done? The first thing I did, as early as two months after he died, was to leave my comfort zone completely and take a giant leap to my first corporate job in Frost and Sullivan in Cenotoph Road - literally leaving the house at 8 am and returning only at 9 pm, having jumped on to so many buses and autos. From F&S, I jumped to SPi in Guindy, afternoon shift, returning home only at 11 pm. In these ten years, I've jumped 10

companies. Yes...I've been that bad and that good. I've got my son married and set him free. I've educated my daughter. I've got my niece, Elizabeth Sangeetha Thyagaraju married to a wonderful guy. I've held book launches, poetry competitions, created magazines and published my own books.

I've also shed my phony facade of being a sari-clad goody goody South Indian woman for what I was before my marriage: a jeans-and-sneakers youngster who climbed trees. And I've finally set my hair free the way it was before my marriage too!

Finances have bounced from overflowing to zero, but I have a healthy disrespect for money, seeing it for what it is - a means towards an end, nothing more. That has actually worked in my favour.

However, the greatest challenge has been to hold on to my dignity. A lone woman - young or old - is a liability in this world. Men have found me attractive/continue to find me attractive, have offered stuff varying from marriage to relationships, to just games - to test my integrity. And I can proudly say I have come out in flying colors, with not a single affair in my pocket, and nopes, I haven't fallen in love either. For this, I must only thank my Maker who has walked my path with me and kept me safe.

What I've learnt in these ten years is a very simple lesson.
Life must go on....



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



A CASKET OF CRYSTAL

The sea broiling
Under the ship's propellers
Olive green
Above
Banks of gray, cloud sky
The ship plows ever onwards
So slowly
And yet so quiet
Leaving behind
Home
And heading
France-wards
A whole Continent
To explore

Meine Heimat
Not from Land's End
To John o'Groat's
But Nord Kap
To Malta
A world of promise
Headed toward
Heady, demented sunshine
Winter sun
Glistening on pebbly strands
Viggo, looking West
Barcelona, looking East
To Venice
And the old days
Of Quattrocento glory
Even earlier
Of Reconquista
A world of Western History
To re-discover
Digging in the annals of time
As the ship
Plows
Inexorably East
On the Trade Winds (almost)

From England
Which contains my heart
In a casket of crystal



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



MERMAID SPIN

Slicing through satin creases of pacific blue,
A wake of frothy brine bursting through,
This vessel of consciousness surges true,
Seeking, groping, fumbling, reaching for light its cue,

Fins of resolve and conviction flapping forthright,
For two dimensions a prerogative and birthright,
A struggle is a dance for a flame flickering bright,
Surfacing to gasp for air arms clearing a flood contrite.

A self-apology for this soul that buoys triumphant,
For all past moments erroneous in smithereens prism
pendant,

Strewn around the vision watching with glances flippant,
An inner glow guides this soul to a field iridescent.

An emerald island looms lush beckoning,

A virtual lighthouse tree in the nautical air swaying,
Where thrives the affirmative of all of creation
systematically unfolding,
For every swim is but a thrust forward in choppy seas
gushing.

Feet find their place from a tapering graceful tail fin,
A mutant accomplishing a metamorphosis on a shoreline
gingerly stepping in,
Time to take strides head held high incinerating so called
“sin”,
Dancing in a soothing inferno merging with existence in a
spin!



Geethanjali Dilip: She passionately contributes poems to poetry platforms in literary blogs and Facebook, including The Significant League, GloMag, Different Truths etc. A professor of French heading Zone Francophone at Salem, India, she has published two anthologies, "Between Moms and Sons" and "The Virtual Reality" in collaboration with several renowned poets. Her poems have been featured in several anthologies. Geeth believes poetry is the breath of the soul. She has been awarded the prestigious Reuel International Prize for Poetry 2017 by The Significant League headed by Dr. Ampat Koshy.



Dreaming,
you try to reach the skies,
beyond horizons,
but I pull you down,
and you come crashing
back into my lap,
your music can never end,
as long as I am there to wake you.

Longing,
you stretch your arms,
and try capturing the shores,
but I stop you,
I prevent you from slipping away,
you can never succeed,
you are a song in my heart,
waiting.

Excited,
you froth and foam,
or break into unceasing rhythms,
infinitely, in love, all the time,
but you remain in my arms, protected,
nothing can ever harm you.
I am so strong!

But then,
you go into depths
beyond reach,
I can never find you,
you just vanish as I watch,
then I lose my ground,
I break into pieces, shattered,
beyond repair,
I can only cry,
becoming a story unrevealed.



Geeta Varma: She has been a teacher for thirty years and a Freelance journalist. She is now an Educational Consultant and writes for Deccan Herald. She enjoys working with children and has conducted many creative workshops. Her interests include music, reading, writing (poems and stories for children) and travelling. She is married to Shreekumar Varma (Writer and Novelist) and has two sons, Vinayak and Karthik and a daughter-in-law daughter Yamini. She lives in Neelankarai, Chennai.



A ROSE OR A JASMINE

A rose or a jasmine

What would you like most?

To drive your emotions

To bring forth your poems of love

The scarlet splendour can arouse you

To your utmost core

Colouring your world with perfumed glow

Fragrant jasmine can blow away nestled dust

In the corridor of your heart

Can rejuvenate your barren feelings

Dig them up to make a garland of words

Your ardent eyes speak an age old thirst

A quintessential craving

But the magic you create in your poems
Will not mourn for the withered flowers
With their lost youth, dreams die



Gayatree G Lahon: She is a poet from Assam. She is a teacher by profession and a poet by passion. Being a true aesthetic, she finds beauty in every object of life and nature. Poetry is a celebration of life, she says. Her poems have been published in many national and international magazines and anthologies.



CRAZY TIME

Beauty without a rhyme

Riot of colours

Richer than flowers

Not only colours have the sheen

At times greys dominate the scene

Sunsets bring life and sunrises bring the certainty of death

All in a day's breath

Overfilled mind

Flowing through eyes

Swimming fish

Flying the skies

Horizons blur

With the drowning Sun

The Earth meets the sky

Is their offspring the Moon?

Crazy times
Crazier minds
Insane breeze
Confused light
Where is the night?

Sunsets are crazy



Gauri Dixit: She is a software professional from Pune, India. She is an avid reader and regularly writes in poetry groups on Facebook. Her poems have been published in multiple anthologies. Her poems were featured in the Poet's Corner for the E-zine 'Mind Creative' published from Sydney Australia and Learning and Creativity e magazine.



MYSELF

I have always cherished the thought of living
in some quaint corner of the Earth,
where a rainbow ribbon joins East and West.
Moreover, days and nights slip fastidious
like a hand into a glove.

To walk along meadows
playing quiescently among effulgent blossoms-
this I have cherished.

To kiss the Sustainer of Life as I dip tentative fingers
Into crystal pools and raise it to my lips
parched from the praise of Him, the Giver.

Let me see only good as I place my hand over my eyes
whispering that which I will hear to soothe my soul-
upon my lips to breathe a breath that will sigh
no anger nor wickedness.

To have my soul unblemished and guileless

when I heed the omniscient call.
To step on morn's untainted dew
that cleanses my feet off life's trudges
finger kissed petals exuberant with Mother's gifts
caress creases on my weathered face.
Feeling a presence around me
I raise my hands in veneration frantically reaching for
salvation. . .
within my heart and soul
Omniscient, yet elusive.

Shall I whisper to the trees
and hear the echoes across the hills?
Shall I carry His name on my sweet breath?
Rise above the empirical world
veil myself with unearthliness?
The wind is succour carrying my breath inclusively.
His presence. . . my shadow!



Fiona Khan: An award-winning, internationally published author and poet. I have been writing short stories, 15 children's books, poems and a novel published internationally in various magazines and anthologies. I am also an academic and an environmentalist.



BATTLE OF THE HEART

"Sitting all alone in the dark, covered all over with thoughts and
grief. Armies of tears and sorrows all raid down my cheek
like a swarm
of bees.

The world now, all against a weak soldier with no weapon
of defence.

Now again am a slave, all alone, alone to myself.

Happiness and joy all came for my defence but sadness
remained

still, still faith came with all it might and armies but the
power of
sorrow sliced them all.

Suddenly, the moon came glowing and smiling and a heap of hope came rushing like a whirl wind, armed with confidence and strength.

Alas! Hope was here still, and the cries of victory echoes from a distance. Surely the battle is mine and the throne i must take."



Evince Uhurebor: He is an undergraduate who has passion for writing and technology. He is a Nigerian who hails from Edo state. Most of his poetries have been published on top international online magazines.



CLOUDINESS

I hide
in the silence
of uncertainty of tomorrow,
I am glad,
that today the sky is
above me.

I tell a tale from the clouds,
although I do not know
how it ends.

The wind gives an ending,
until the sky does not open
– I look,
because I see shapes in the sky from down below.

Beautiful are cloudy travels
and cloudiness of the sky
is beautiful.



Eliza Segiet: She is a graduate with a Master's Degree in Philosophy, completed postgraduate studies in Cultural Knowledge, Philosophy, Arts and Literature at Jagiellonian University, as well as Film and Television Production in Lodz. Torn between poetry and drama. Likes to look into the clouds, but keeps both feet on the ground. Her heart is close to the thought of Schopenhauer: "Ordinary people merely think how they shall 'spend' their time; a man of talent tries to 'use' it".



BROKEN WINDS

Dumpsters in back alleys huddle,
dumb, dark, depressing, dull.
Cinders carpetbomb the byways.

Sin, hope, despair, righteousness
number the quick among the lame,
numb the promise of identity and name,
humbler each season. Lost opportunities
hummm like the broken winds that accompany
mumblers in their gutter, hookers and hawkers, preachers
at their pulpit.

Mums and gladiolas shine on windowsills -- shameless
exhibitionists.



Duane Vorhees: After teaching for the University of Maryland University College in Korea and Japan for decades, Duane Vorhees retired to Thailand before returning to his native Farmersville, Ohio, in the US. He is currently rehearsing for a local charity comedy and is the proprietor of duanespoetree.blogspot.com, a daily e-zine devoted to the creative arts.



ARMAGEDDON ABYSS

Invasion of Souls – Our beliefs questioned modern day
versions of

fashionable self-made religions welcomed traditions
discarded mocked

willingly trampled on laughed at shredded dissected
challenged diminished

squashed misunderstood even pulverized into oblivion just
to offer mankind's

own versions of religion for some seeking their own gods
their daily lifetime

mission – Those of us reaffirming parental spiritual
guidance morphing our
own personal spiritual experiences seek others of similar
conviction battling
daily division and derision using modern technology to
gather and affirm shared
fears of prophesized spiritual wars even with our human
flaws arming ourselves
with anchored belief in what needs to be achieved to
challenge and annihilate
exposed hellhounds on earth darkening our inner lights.

The Gathering – Divisions deepening world leaders failing
refusing to find
their humane inner moral compass, their power engulfing
powerless subjects
dependent on their expected intellect affecting their daily
repetitive lives future
prospects but deep fissures within nations bleed profusely
into bottomless dark

canyons unknowingly feeding expectant empowered
demons in waiting preparing

to leap out and heed to the call of lost human factions
foolishly offering them their

nightly nourishment of disbelief hate envy jealousy deceit
dishonesty carnage

self-indulgence and luring them with lashings of murderous
thoughts, debauchery

moral decay illegal acts and a sprinkling of pretense, finally
inviting a devious

demonic puppet master to show them a darker doomed
way – Amongst this

swirling red mist of gnashing and unseen powers clashing, a
determined new

necessary army advances to the battlefield – United in the
knowledge that they

were forged by shared human and spiritual causes.

Aftermath (Dream Sequence) - Earth destroyed by man-
made blinding weaponry

deleting depleting erasing whilst survivors seek new
solutions to unite a new

global nation respecting fractured religion to never forget
that a unified humanity

in this life will surely be better than feeding yourself to a
deep dark

armageddon abyss...



Don Beukes: He is the author of 'The Salamander Chronicles', his debut poetry collection published by Creative Talents Unleashed. Originally from Cape Town South Africa, he is a retired teacher of English and Geography and taught in both South Africa and the UK. His poetry deals with issues affecting the global village and he is passionate about speaking out against racism, homophobia, sexism and intolerance. He has collaborated with artists from South Africa, the UK and America as part

of his Ekphrastic poetry collection and his poems have been anthologized in various publications. His poetry has also been translated into Afrikaans, Farsi and Albanian. His debut collection is available here <http://www.ctupublishinggroup.com/don-beukes-.html>

<http://www.ctupublishinggroup.com/don-beukes-.html>

Janine Pickett: Her nonfiction work has appeared in a variety of print magazines and anthologies, including Country Woman, and Chicken Soup For The Soul Series. Her fiction was nominated for The Year's Best Horror and Fantasy #17. Current poetry appears in print anthologies, and various online journals. She recently co-edited a poetry anthology: The Poets of Madison County. Janine is the founding editor and publisher of Indiana Voice Journal and Spirit Fire Review.



COLORS IN MRS. RAY'S LIFE

(1)

Of all the colors that Mrs. Ray observed from her balcony,
Black was the most vivid,
Till the day when he came to meet her,
With a single red rose.

(2)

Mrs. Ray tried to find the color black,
With all her efforts to cling to her melancholic days,
But all she could find was the evocative green,
Reminiscent of the youthful days that she lost.

(3)

Even grey appeared overjoyed that day,
When she tried to live with a bright red dot on her
forehead,
And a dash of pink on her cheeks.
He came and kissed the red on her face,

Olive was his name,
He travelled far from the land of emerald.

(4)

He was so dazzling and radiant whenever he came,
That Mrs. Ray could easily find orange,
In her attempt to light up the past.
The dark passion and the scarlet lust,
Came back all on a platter of gold,
Olive was ravishing and caring,
With the touch of a miracle man.

(5)

Long after Olive stopped coming,
Mrs. Ray continued to see colors from her balcony,
But she never found any black anymore.
Life became a scintillating green,
With the touch of a miracle man.



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



BROKEN TOY...

There was she crying and lying on the floor

For the just broken toy..

Since she was born,

The only theatrical and musical play

She had was that!!!

In her dwell of broken walls

And torn ceiling,

She found the affection in a corner

And dig downed her happiness

In the impaired tissue...

The only brightness of the day for her

was a beam through the pane,

And the only moon for her
was the rural sound of waves..
The only vision she was promised
Was through her knickknack..
And the only staunch support
For her was the white cane.....



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



PLASTICINE

I dishonoured you.

I erased the kungum* from your forehead

I ripped the thali* from your neck

I stripped you off your sari

I broke your back.

I humiliated you.

I changed your name to mine.

I occupied your mind

I ravaged you.

I stole your home

your land

your culture

your wealth

your language

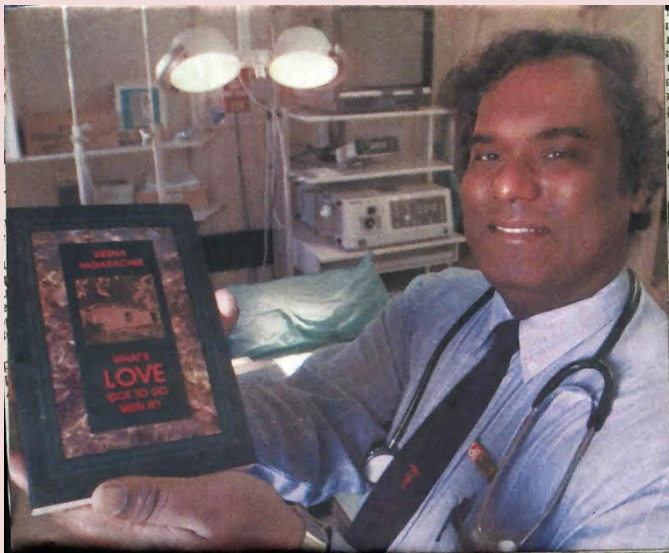
your heart

your soul.

I own you but you do not know it.
 You smile serenely at me,
 Trying desperately to be like me.
You go your way,
Respecting, honouring, loving me...
Totally, blissfully unaware of that which I have perpetrated.

Kungum: It's the mark of a married lady according to Hindu custom.

Thali: A south Indian Hindu religious symbol worn by women to distinguish their married status.



Deena Padayachee: Dr. Deena is a South African born medical doctor who is the winner of the Nadine Gordimer Prize for prose. Crux, Wasafiri, Skive, Glomag and the Indiana Voice Journal have all featured his work. He has delivered lectures on his writing at the universities of Copenhagen, Tuebingen and Louisiana. His book of short stories, What's love got to do with it? was awarded the

Olive Schreiner prize. His prose features in the University of Cambridge's Writing from South Africa, the Reader's Digest's Best South African short stories and A century of South African short stories.



EMILY AS THE EYES OF THE COAST

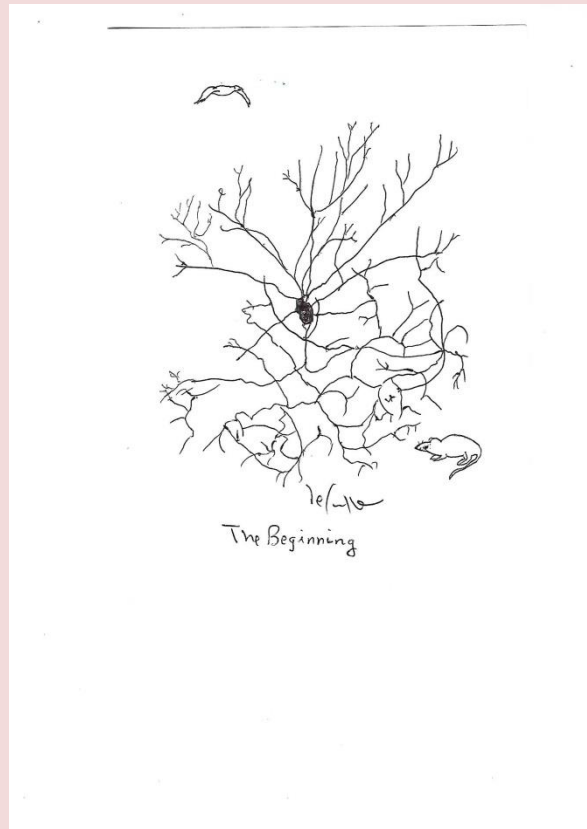
It takes a tide
of a woman
to make an Ohio

boy feel like
the world is more
than shore, shore,

shore. It takes
one of her breaths
to give me sail.



Darren C. Demaree: He is the author of five poetry collections, most recently “The Nineteen Steps Between Us” (2016, After the Pause Press). He is the Managing Editor of the Best of the Net Anthology and Ovenbird Poetry. He is currently living in Columbus, Ohio with his wife and children.



FROM BEGINNING TO END

From beginning to end
is explained absolutely everything worth knowing
about absolutely nothing.

Why not'?

We felt that the Beginning is a true leaf
of the immortal literature
as a side of bacon changing the pig
discovering the best way to keep its legend alive

encouraging mythology

and the controversy about it:

Sun will have its tide spreading over our maps

Moon remembering us we were gone

and we still sing everything waiting

for birth, death

inside this den of us.

Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter

coming with feelings of love, radiance

quiet and delight

As ever.



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



UNCOMPLICATED

'Uncomplicated'

A word

I want to explore,

want to taste

Somehow,

it sounds vitriolic

with a touch

of kindness

I like to act

uncomplicated

but I know I'm a fake

Behind the mask
of nonchalant smiles hides
an insecure frightened creature
with a control-freak mind
I think I have
to reach out to
'undemanding'
to find my solution



Daginne Aignend: She is a pseudonym for the Dutch poetess and photographic artist Inge Wesdijk. She likes hard rock music and fantasy books, is a vegetarian and spends a lot of time with her animals. Daginne posted some of her poems her fun project website www.daginne.com. She's the co-editor of Degenerate Literature, a poetry, flash

fiction, Arts E-zine. She has been published in several Poetry Review Magazines, in the anthologies 'Where Are You From?' and 'Dandelion in a Vase of Roses'.



HELEN OF TROY

Plain features are a blessing, send no ships
Across the seas, drive no men out of mind.
But blood is spilt to honour my red lips
For my clear skin do men life's ties unbind.
I did not ask for this, did not ask
Foe mothers, daughters, sisters to taste grief,
I can't replace husbands lost, whose task
It seems is to please one, fast falls life's leaf.
My beauty passes but the grave remains
Though they'll dress this up in heroic song
No flesh body is worth such bloody stains,

Zeus and all may swagger, but they're still wrong.

In order to be some rich fool's chattel,

Must I see all good be slain in battle?



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



SO MUCH

So much happens behind closed doors

demons wake up

mirrors crack

floor sinks

bed weeps

curtains stain

knives bend

ketchup becomes blood

love becomes hate

well cooked

well served

sigh becomes a language

unspoken unheard

ceiling presses its weight

stars and sky stay hidden

leave orgasm

there is no meeting of hearts

heat lost passion remains

hatred weaves a spiders web

as you open the door

fake smile

fake laugh

fake glint in the yes return

cheat the world

yourself.

like weed that is a flower that grew in the wrong place

unloved lives

are like the dead still living

waiting for the coffin.

YES SO MUCH HAPPENS BEHIND CLOSED DOORS.



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



Our house by the park
has all the charming treats
Good friends, good songs
Lots for me and my Whit
Jeremy may come visiting
Also Niccol
What joys in M Block
I wait by the clock
But later I take the cab
Go to office there meet boyfriend Guillaume
The two of us plan a vacation

We argue over the destination

But all is well and my carry bag

Has their letters and the perfume with its price tag



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



ROUTINE TOGETHERNESS

Over old grievances, we break bread,
Sip that wine soured into vinegar,
As food is scarce and appetite in abundance
We vie for the ripest fruit and the choicest meat,
End up chewing each other's bones.
As the day ends and another fire dies in the hearth-
Love ferments in spaces and moments,
Yet not sampled....

Winter revives what autumn had drained out
We survive another ailing summer-

Bury in the backyard a stillborn spring;
There shall be a fifth season for afterlife-
With this thought, we rise from our ashes
Phoenixes malformed into vultures,
With digestive flames ablaze,
Each awaiting the other to fall dead.

A candle burns on the bed-stand
Giving off the smell of dead forests
We have known the fire that eats through flesh and sap
Raging insatiable over streams and waterfalls;
Every day is a new apocalypse
From a nightmare that escapes memory
Ascends another beast, rising on a fractured spine...
Consuming the quick and the dead to fuming nothingness

At the end of the day, we finally agree on something
Both shall need darkness to fall asleep

To blow the candle, pout your lips
As if for a kiss you then lean over me
And touch with your cracked lips
The crucifix on the icy stone wall
I keep my eyes half-closed, holding my breath....

Some stray wind puts out the candle



Bini B.S.: She is currently an academic fellow at Balvant Parekh Centre for General Semantics and Other Human Sciences, Gujarat, India. Her articles, poems and translations have appeared in Journals and anthologies. She is the editor of *Anekaant: A Journal of Polysemic Thought*. Her poems were part of an anthology of corporeal poems titled *A Strange Place Other than Earlobes: Five Poets*,

Seventy Voices (Sampark, 2014). She is the winner of the 2016 J. Talbot Winchell award presented by the Institute of General Semantics for her contributions to the discipline of general semantics, which she received in a ceremony in New York on October 21, 2016.



BIRDSONG

Thunder crackles -

streaks of lightning flash lacerating skies;

a downpour of raindrops glide from rooftops and
drip from leaves.

Frogs croak and crickets drone nocturnal chants -

dogs bark their demented mania

as night withers into silence.

Stars glint in black skies for

sweet dreams to enchant

sleep's solemn narcotic.

Birds chirp and sing the morning alive -
rouse me from my dreams and
bid a farewell to night's oblivion.

Chirruping birdsong intercept hadeda's wails in
white skies, treetops and nests of love.



Bilkis Moola: She is an Educator who resides in Nelspruit, Mpumalanga Province. Her first published anthology, “Wounds and Wings: A Lyrical Salve Through Metaphor” was received throughout South Africa and launched her poetic persona. It evolved as an introspective quest for recovery from her personal narrative of an abusive marriage. Her poetry is a delicate negotiation of patriotism and ethnicity. Bilkis Moola navigates a pluralistic dialogue towards multiculturalism and transformational activism in post-apartheid South Africa as “A Sprightly Cultural Hybrid

In *Metamorphosis*". She presently divides her time between professional responsibilities and post-graduate studies in Education. Her pen continues to sketch the flotsam in her mind from the passion in her heart on shreds of paper that bloom into poems



MAJORITY SHARE

Same question requires man attention,
women remain two third fraction,
old to a desired extent to win an election,
capable and competent raising boys
and girls capturing attractions.

Wars in extreme perfection
are in matters of passion.

Men of notable brain condition,
still search for love in darkest places.

There is a pride paid to redeem pension
in relationships.

Now these days handsome young men,
brag escaping in backdoors half naked,
shame fills their age when headlights
beam toward stolen gates,
leaving behind their stinking socks,
smelling death in the middle
of the night.

Is it a lack of love or a dying tradition,
that cause multiple men to share
one woman.

Is it a way of showing affection
or contribution in demolition
construction of familyhood
realisation.

Is it a lack of fatherly education
or envy playing tricks
on bed of infatuation.

Ten men, nine men, eight men, seven men,
six men, five men, four men, three men,
two men share one woman it's not
a hidden secret.

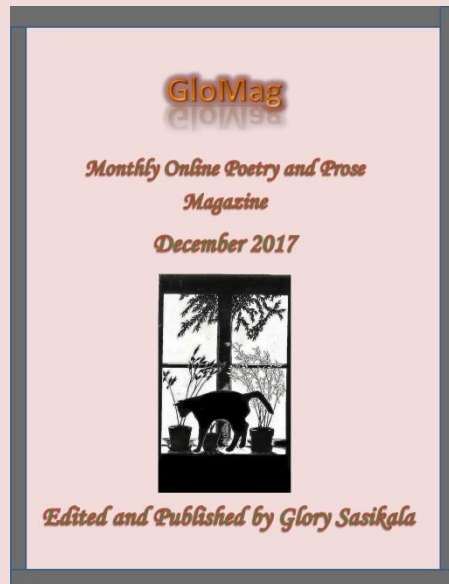
Belly booms across eyes
of the world, who takes fatherly
responsibility.

Angry young boys and girls
grow up thinking,
love is just a game.

Same question requires
man attention.



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



GLOMAG

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On a monthly basis

Written by poets

Of different cultures and races

Its chief in editor

Our wonderful Glory

Really appreciate

Every message or story

Dripping ink

Fervently tells

With rhythm and rhyme

Deeper than wells

The Mag comes together

Like a spiders web

Appearing in it

Makes you feel like a celeb



Bevan Boggenpoel: He was born in Salt Lake, Port Elizabeth, South Africa. He attended Soutpan Primary and matriculated at Westville Secondary School, and he 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.



I write with glee
To thank thee
For these words of pleasure
That rested in sunken treasure
Would not be true
If not for you.



Ayshwaria Sekher/ Icecamp: An International Relations graduate, but a reluctant practitioner. Searching about the self through practices that seem conducive to the naked eye but weathers the spirit. Believes in the conditional - unconditional love of a dog and no other's. Extends reality from books and tries to achieve vice versa. Shuns from the 'isms' but cannot escape the brackets cast. A bundle of contradictions in short!



I, GOD AND SHADOW

Every poem begets a new 'I' within me.

I define each diction with emotion and their

Untold passions and broken rhymes redefine me.

In the horizon thus I and my lines both delineated and
delineate.

Every line I pen with pain make me a God,

In divine frenzy dancing like the Nataraj,

With fortunes in hand, toying with lives and luck.

Shadows I wield with my sword like thunder and craft a
blinding flash.

Oh God! Are you not lonely as I am?

Oh God! Do you not cast a longing lingering look just I do?

Oh God! Do you not want to put your robe off and be a child just as I do?



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



SEA WIND...

The salty sea wind sings

In the distance,

I touch your finger

I have taken in my hand

December is cold

Unknown chorus of sea waves

Unknown chorus of wild birds

Memories become stranger

Fugitive moon

Frozen moon

No longer to sing

Mad waves running

Desire you again and again,

Salty sea unwraps the story of a moonless night...



Asoke Kumar Mitra: I am from India, Kolkata. Poetry is my passion.



POSITIVE EYES

There's nothing positive
in itself

Person who has an eye
for positive things
sees only positivity,
even when there's marked
negativity all around
when we look only
at the positive aspects
we remain happy,
nothing remains a problem
everything becomes

answer for me,
we are confident from start
confident for nice start
and nice end.



Ashish Kumar Pathak: He is a primary education teacher in the state of Bihar. He has got letter of appreciation from president of India for his poem. Recently he was featured in fragrance of Asia anthology. He is slated to be featured in east meets west anthology. His strong point is sociopolitical poetry.



TRANSPARENT

Once I had tried to search,
The roots of course, of whom
Though I know not.

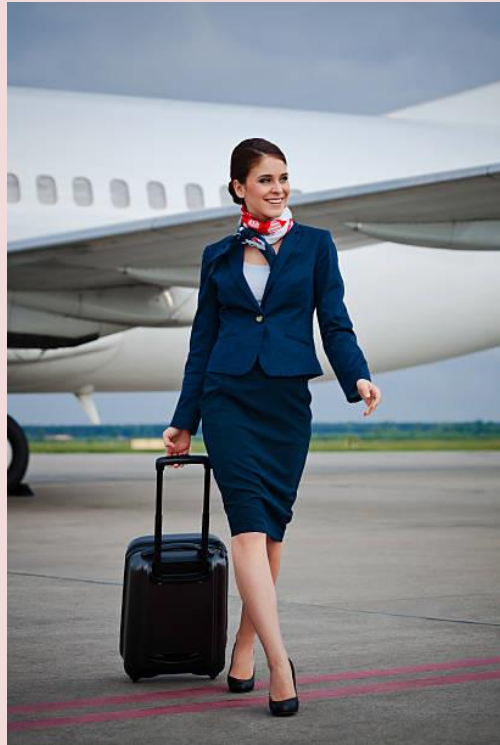
I strove for it.

Blood coursed down my brow; mud and sweat
Provided it company. I hunted the
Ditches, dug the sand out and just a gopher.
No, not the roots. I made chasms, but couldn't
Shovel the land, a chain somehow fettered
My attempts. Rest was my ardour.
Lifting the bottle of beer and cherishing

Its tint I found a root, no—not one,
A cluster of roots in my beer; deracinated.
But after exploration, I fervently
Incinerated my corpus, with blood mud and sweat.
Yes and now I feel it burning,
As the roots I've seen.



Arka Chakraborty: He is a student of English literature doing his graduation and frequently struggling with thoughts to scribble them on paper. His passion drives him to write poems and stories. He had formerly contributed to GloMag.



THE AIRHOSTESS SONG

There's a new light shining at 40,000 feet
An' you know it aint from the stars,
There's a beautiful smile going up and down the aisle
And you know it's straight from the heart
She's walking on air,
with her feet on the ground
Before you know it she's by your side
As she hands out stuff folks are gonna need
If they want a comfortable ride

She's smiling at you as she passes by
An' your wish is her supreme command
When you say "Thank you",
please look her in the eye
And sure mean it with all your heart
She's the first to greet you as you arrive
And the last to bid you goodbye
And when you're leaving,
she's really really hoping
"You've had a wonderful flight"



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



Thinking about you again

Silence for three days

The last one was a heart shape, thanks

How disappointing.

We want only what we can't have.

There's cold outside, there's snow

Psychology. Don't take it personally

You ain't nothing special

It happens to everyone.

I'm just another one in the row

Choose me when you want and will.



Annika Lindok: She is an English teacher and a freelance translator, living in Estonia. Her work has previously been published in Scryptic Magazine, Five 2 One, Peacock Journal, Quail Bell Magazine, Zoetic Press's Nonbinary Review and others, upcoming in Degenerate Literature and Ariel Chart. She is a prose editor for Escapism Literary Magazine.



MY MAIDEN POEM

Zephyr whistling a happy tune

Glassy dew drops nudging virgin plumule

Giggling mynahs and shrieking parrots

I tuned in with the crescendo

Wrapped in happiness

Wrapt in Nature

Warped with myself

A silent vow

just as

A silent drizzle

kissing

A silent earth

To prance like the red squirrel

To flow like honeyed nectar

To blink like the white dove

To meditate like the wise crane

A silent flutter

when the heart

synced

with the mind

To make a great day!

To make a great year ahead!



Annapurna Sharma: She associate editor (Your Space/ Muse India ejournal) is a nutrition lecturer turned writer. Writing, a remotest goalpost happened serendipitously. Her short stories, poems and articles have been published in Women's Era, Reader's Digest, several online portals, in anthologies – "A Quick Read" compiled by C.A. Simonson, Taj Mahal Review, Glomag, Amaravati Poetic Prism 2016, Chitra Lele's Oh My Sweetest Love – A Timeless Treasure and WWW Women, Wit & Wisdom – an International Multilingual Poetry Anthology of Women Poets. Poems in English, Hindi, Telugu and Bengali are published in Amaravati Poetic Prism 2017. She is adjudged winner of the Muse India/Your Space/Editor's Pick Competition, her poem published in Muse India ejournal. Her poem "Divine Confluence" was part of a speech delivered by Dr. Varsha Das, an eminent writer and poet at a conference on Hydro Diplomacy, a collaborative effort by South Asian University and Dhaka University.



SCENTED MEMORIES

Scented memories waft through the air.

Expectations widen the eyes of hope,
brushing away cobwebs from
the lost corners of time.

Synapses fire off as muted sounds
of distant voices manifest themselves
among the garbled words of blank faces.

History in reverse, snippets resurfacing,
if only for a moment.

That old chair seems familiar,
was it always there?

Grocery lists piled up on the table,
mixed in with last week's mail.

Forgotten love letters reaching back
into the bottom drawers of an old credenza,
thread bare and finger worn.

Recollections play lost and found
in the recesses of shadowed dreams;
while the aromas of another time
make it all seem so close and real again,
if only for a short time.

The sweet memory of scent.



Ann Christine Tabaka: She was born and lives in Delaware. She is a published poet, an artist, a chemist, and a personal trainer. She loves gardening, cooking, and the ocean. Chris lives with her husband and two cats. Her poems have been published in numerous national and international poetry journals, reviews, and anthologies. Chris has been selected as the resident Haiku poet for Stanzaic Stylings.



AT A POETRY MEET

Words

cascade like rocks,

a landslide descends in stop motion,

thoughts crushed like onlookers

too curious to make way,

family picnickers at waterfalls

irreverent in the face of untamed nature.

But gravity asserts herself now and again,

nothing is light,

current is king,

once caught, there is no escape,

nobody rescues the one that drowns,
they only capture the moment on video.



Anish Vyavahare: He runs Poetry College in Mumbai and calls himself a recent poet.



HIS RETURN

The sound of conch is not yet heard
From the dilapidated temple
Seated since ages under the banyan...

The pale shadow of the dipping sun
Has not yet left the undulating
Periphery of the silent horizon.....

The palm is inebriated with soothing breeze
And half bent to pay last obeisance
Of the day to the teeming star in the east....
Losing its sheen the stream ceases

To sing at its banks with music
Spilling down from clashing anklets...

She has fever in her heart as she comes out
To sit at the edge of the verandah
With ears trying to catch the sound of
His feet beating dusts to his home....



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



LET MY WORDS FLOW

Like glistening raindrops
Streaming from the heavens
Like a string of perfect pearls
You dance before me
To be woven into
A beautiful arrangement
Like floral decor of rich colours
The admiration of beautiful rhymes
Like the sweet fragrance
Of jasmine and lavender.

Marvelling at your magnetic beauty
You're like the architectural designer
Embodied in inspiration and talent

manifesting your splendidence
I see you in your truth unblemished.

Like the beautiful wind chimes
You serenade me with beautiful rhymes
Flowing freely in the gentle breeze
Reaching an alto, feeling the falsetto
Loving the crescendo.

Waltzing in your strong and loving arms
Your seamless movements flowing
like I'm on a magic carpet floating
You are the soulful music
Of a synchronised orchestra
Serenading the heart restoring the soul.

Like a magnificent work of art
These images mesmerise me
Like a modern dancer
With superb choreography
Entrancing me with
Your every ballet.

My vessel of untethered hope
Reveal my heartfelt supplications

Let every soul heed my humble plea
Irrespective of class and creed
Race and religion
Into the valleys and the mountaintops
To the rich and poor
Like the rivers flow to the ocean
Let my words flow...



Angela Chetty: She is an avid poet and lyricist who lives in Durban, South Africa. In 2013, Heartfelt moments - A Treasure Trove was published www.heartfeltmomentspoetry.com. Her poems have been selected for the Contemporary Poetry Digest, Evergreen Journal of Poetry, Contemporary Poetry Journal and has been featured in various special publications. In 2016 and 2017 Angela was recognized as an Elite Poet.



TWO SIDES

SIDE A – THE SMALL PICTURE

Me

My day

Work

Life

Little money

Some happiness

Few unfulfilled wishes

Few unfinished dreams

Few hopes

A good sleep

A new dawn

Beautiful!

SIDE B – THE BIG PICTURE

Another day

Smoke-filled

Cries of losses

Mishaps

Missile-threats

Wars

Hunger

Poverty

Heinous crimes

Selfishness

Immoral

Devilish thoughts

Skilled minds

Slave times

Dark nights

Darker days

Grim!



Anand Gautam: He hails from Hyderabad, India. He studied life sciences, currently works in a tech giant, and his heart and soul has always been inclined towards poetry and fiction. He snatches a few minutes everyday from his life for his love of writing and believes that one's passion must be kept alive to be alive. He can be found on Instagram handle, @anand_writes and he blogs at <https://notesandwords.wordpress.com/>



TOY STORY

There was a boy

Who loved a girl

And, one day, when he did not feel coy

He said, "come with me, & let's like flowers unfurl."

"Are you asking me, with you, to run away

Boy," she asked, her eyes widening

"But I can't, you know. Girls always back do stay,"

Said she, though pleased at his proposing

The boy was heartbroken, and went afar

To the land where they broke open oysters for pearls

He still loved her. She, him. Under the wrong star

Love is something that wounds, mars and scars

One lonely night, many years after
She asked him to come and with her to stay
"Come back," she said, "be mine, with, to play"
But the poor boy had gone too far away
When she had the chance she had not fallen under his sway
There was a boy
Who loved a girl
And, one day, when he did not feel coy
He said, "come, unfurl with me like a flower," but they
Under a wrong star, ne'er did unfurl
They would ne'er find the way together to stay
The boy and the girl, love's game to play.



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



The theme of godfather is playing somewhere
and my mind once again tries to open a long shuttered
window
on pall bearer of shadows
and sadness of a sun
dimmed by an incongruous
sky

Its here in a Gwalior palace
moments entwined with moss

and lichen kept their eyelids open
for a stray summer ray or a fragrance
unforgotten from a wisp of your night breast
on that night

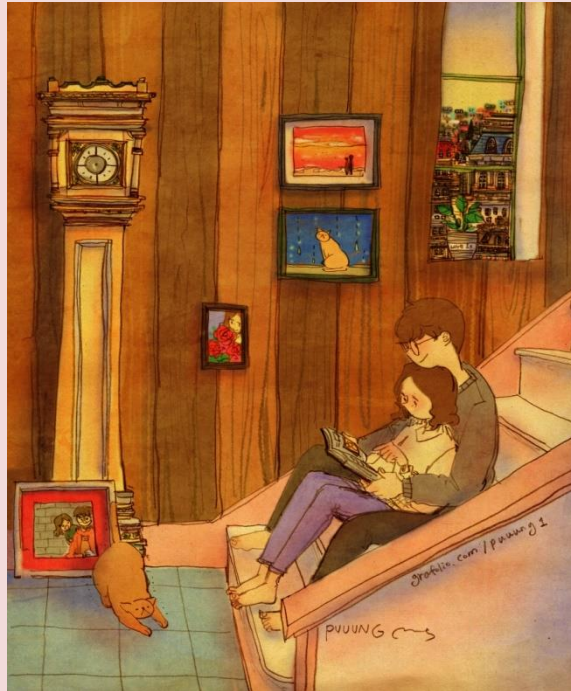
Its here in a Gwalior palace
beasts of wind beat the stonewalls
in frantic passions
trying since long
to unveil your hair
and a tangled evening heavy with another days feeling

Its here in a Gwalior palace
I had once held your hand
and asked you of dawn and destiny
of the heart
caught in silk
of bare-thread talk

Since then I have changed my name so many times
I have treaded many an evenings at different times
I have forgotten the dusk many a times
I have recalled a night so many times and
I have slept in your smile many a times.



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



MY EYES, A LIBRARY

Which book do you want to read, Dear?

Just look into my eyes

You'll find a huge library there

Read according to your choice

Tragedies, comedies-all you'll find there

Entertain yourself immensely

My beloved bird, come near

And read them to know me.

My eyes are the world literature centre:

Homer, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Seneca

Bankim, Tagore, Nazrul, Madhusudan, Vidyasagar

Chaucer, Shakespeare, Keats, Tolstoy, Lorca

Epic, ode, elegy, allegory, sonnet-all

Just look into my eyes diligently

You'll learn the world's history, rise and fall

Can't finish--you can't count the leaves of tree.



Aminool Islam: A bilingual poet, he weaves poetry in both Bengali, his mother tongue, and English. He also weaves English sonnets. He did his M.A in English literature from

National University, Bangladesh. He is currently the sub-editor of a literary magazine named Neeharika.



THE DAY-BREAK

Wake me up

Delicately and tenderly.

Blow away the dream

From my eye-lashes.

Then I will see,

How Aurora with rose fingers

Cuts the darkness of the night

And lightens the blue sky.

All birds, curled up in the nests,

Will sing the hymn about dawn.

The first, warm rays of the sun
Will kiss the petals of sleeping flowers.
This is a miracle of the new day created.

Good morning



Alicja Maria Kuberska: She is an awarded Polish poetess, novelist, journalist, editor. Her publications: *The Glass Reality* (2011); *Analysis of Feelings* (2012); *Moments* (in English, 2014) (Poland & USA); *Virtual Roses* (Novel, 2014); *On The Border Of A Dream* (2014); *Girl In The Mirror* (2015) (UK); *Love Me* (2015); *(Not) my poem* (2015) (USA); *View From the Window* (2017); Anthologies edited by her: *The Other Side of the Screen* (2015); *Taste of Love* (2016) (USA); *Thief of Dreams* (2016) (Poland); *Love Is In The Air* (2016) (USA). She edits series of anthologies entitled “Metaphor of

Contemporary” (Poland). Her poems have been published in numerous anthologies and magazines in various countries. She is a member of the Polish Writers Associations in Warsaw, Poland and IWA Bogdani, Albania. She is also a member of directors’ board of Soflay Literature Foundation.



IN LOVE WITH THE WORD LOVE

Countless couples sip love from the cup of life,
There's their drive of endless miles to survive;
Hey vermilion she robes my days and nights;
A sliced heart still looks for an old knife.

Mother saw 'twas a dream together,
Now murdered jigsaws do gather;
And I am in love with the word love,
We don't need anybody else to bother.

Still smile hopes to be happy,
Spill drops off eyes for free;
Tis' an anonymous dead body,
Married to the name, you've given me.

The killed mind is nailed in time,
Fill in line of mine to rhyme;
Here words get sold for a dime,
Poets and Poetry are partners in crime.



Aakash Sagar Chouhan: Aakash is a nomadic poet restlessly scribbling since a decade. Roughly after a decade of diary writing and Orkut Poetry, he co-authored “Between Moms and Sons” along with Mrs. Geethanjali Dilip (Geethamma). In 2016, he, along with eight eminent Indian poets, launched “The Virtual Reality” in Kolkata. Since then, he has been contributing to several other anthologies. He, along with Geethanjali Dilip, will be publishing the sequel of “Between Moms and Sons- II” in 2018.



ciao! 😊