

GloMag

GLOMAG

*Monthly Online Poetry and Prose
Magazine*

November 2018



Edited and Published by Glory Sasikala

SUZETTE PORTES SAN JOSE



Title of the Cover Pic: Immortality

Publications

Published my own books, 'The Dawning' and 'Isle of Words and Colors'

About The Artist

Life was never easy, a bed of roses with thorns that I laid my body. My sorrows and pains that I endured. My poetry is my best friend and there was no span of time. It is like the blood that has flown in my veins. But writing online was 2010 when my husband died. I then started to write on groups and so as the painting.

Sometimes the flow of words comes through in visions and I drift into this world of my own and convene the emotions

from within. Time never ceased to make a difference in every creation that brings color to the world. So I let my brushes dance into the kaleidoscope of colors as I whisper the words of my heart. Just close your eyes as I bring you into the core of my poetry.

Art Perspective

POETRY... speaks of many things, about everything we hold on and step upon in life, in dreams... in visions... and imaginations...maybe blindly with eyes but not from the inner self...the ACCEPTANCE of not what only eyes and mind understand...but what's BEYOND the unseen... and BEYOND the unspoken...the PASSION of poetry may not be understood by many... but UNDERSTOOD by silent heart and soul...usually it is a poet's passion left unheard... unspoken...undone...BETWEEN LIFE'S.....DREAMS...REALITY AND FANTASY..."

POEMS, are poet's own self... visions and sight, feelings and every emotion... it is not a mere printed word that defies concern and consideration...poetry has its own life too...it is the connection that binds the words and the writer... its forms, style, and construction create the wholeness of its being, its life on itself... this brings the readers to embrace your world...immerse and emerge deep within the core of the poet's thoughts...touch every sense that adheres to the

visualization to conceal the profoundness in every meaning of the poem...THE HEART AND SOUL OF THE POET.

WORDS IN POETRY AND ARTS... are the reality unseen...embedded into some to feel and realize the meaning prompted in visions...thoughts commune through the essence and spark of one's heart to another heart...from one's soul to another soul...FROM ME TO YOU

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: Instrumental of Christmas carol, 'Silver Bells'.

BOOK OF THE MONTH

Just Breathe

by

Ann Christine Tabaka

Ann Christine Tabaka
Christine's seventh poetry book
Just Breathe - a book of micro-poems is now in print.
Her newest book published by Cyberwit.net is available at:

 CYBERWIT 



**(all 8 of her books are available on Amazon and at the Hockessin Book Shelf)*
Christine is a Pushcart Prize in Poetry nominee and award winning poet.
Her poems have appeared in numerous National and International Literary Journals. You can follow her on Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook.

 #christinetabaka
 @TabakaChris



Book Available At

Cyberwit

<https://www.cyberwit.net/publications/1091>

Amazon

[https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/938812507X/ref=dbs a def rwt bibl vppi i0](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/938812507X/ref=dbs_a_def_rwt_bibl_vppi_i0)



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

I was nominated for the 2017 Pushcart Prize in Poetry, have been internationally published, and have won poetry awards from numerous publications. I was born in, and now live in Delaware, USA. I love gardening and cooking. I live with my husband and three cats. I started writing poems when I was 14, and I am now closing in on 68. I only started to share my poems publicly 2 years ago. Since then my style and voice have changed dramatically. I am still inspired by nature and emotions, but I look at them in a deeper way now. I try to paint pictures with my words. That is important to me since I was a visual arts major when I was younger, and the visual is still the pillar of my work.

REVIEWS

“We use the word “gifted” so often we forget its real meaning, “having exceptional talent” Ann Christine Tabaka exemplifies, rich, exceptional talent.

Philip Butera, poet & author

Ann Christine Tabaka’s latest poetry collection JUST BREATHE leaves no doubt in the readers’ mind that she is a supreme poetic genius. Her poems are remarkable for splendid imagination and intense feeling. This is quite visible in the following extraordinary lines:

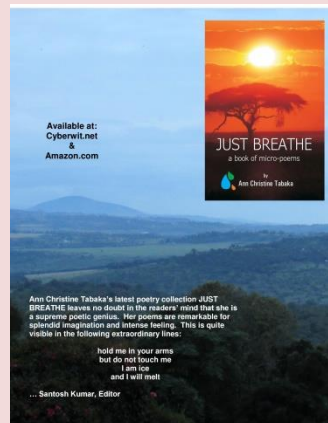
hold me in your arms

but do not touch me

I am ice

and I will melt

Santosh Kumar, Editor



THESE ARE A FEW OF MY FAVORITE THINGS

Shreekumar Varma: He is a poet, novelist, playwright residing in Chennai, India. He is a full-time writer. He has contributed to various anthologies. He has received the R. K. Narayan Award for Creative Writing. His novel 'Kipling's Daughter' will be launched on December 10, 2018.



Name: Shreekumar Varma

Occupation: Writer

Books/e-Books: Paperbook

Favorite book: The current one I enjoy

Favorite movie: I love movies

Favorite song: I love music

Favorite Hobby: Writing and dreaming

Favorite color: Blue, when it's not white or brown

Favorite sport: Depends on what I'm watching/ playing

Favorite food: South Indian/Italian

Life philosophy: I am what I am, every moment

One liner describing you: I represent my contrary sign,
Pisces

Favorite holiday destination: Himalayas

Favorite quote: A quote a day

Birthday: March 4

Sign off message: Life is you. You exist because of your
loved ones.

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ONE MORE CANDLE FOR THE ROAD

Is there any price of light?

In a social mart called as life,

Everything wrong gets auctioned here;

But everybody walks in to buy their rights.

Love is a solitary lamp here,

Burning inside walls damp not near;

This body is an abode,

Let's light one more candle for the road.



Aakash Sagar Chouhan: Aakash is a nomadic poet from Rourkela, Odisha, India. He co-authored “Between Moms and Sons” along with Mrs. Geethanjali Dilip (Geethamma). He also teamed up with eight eminent Indian Poets and launched “The Virtual Reality” in Kolkata.



SOUNDS ASSAIL ME

The sky glares at my form

beneath

the

stars

i let the wind fondle my hair

as he gossips away of his ex-lovers, the shrubs

(although i know he loves them more)

if blackness was a song, i wish i could play it

but violins have feelings too

I am the veil of the moon

I am Light

Her darkness I hide in scratches of pen

I slither soundlessly among hives and chirps (aviaries, if you know what I mean)

But the words, oh the words

they will not let me go, they are Loud

Like the roars of a tumultuous ocean

Like the fury of a thunder struck sky

Like the silence of Love and the silence of Death

They are loud

I am the Ballad of the Bat Orchid

I am the Ballad of all things dark

And here I am to stay

Here I am to stray



Abhirami Nair: She is a budding poet and a student of class 10. Words have always intrigued her, and poetry, a window to her soul. She spends all her free time trying to metaphorically interpret occurrences (worldly and unwordly) and explain them in beautiful words. She writes poetry on her blog, purplepanache.wordpress.com.



PAINTING YOU

I will be painting you below
the curious moon next to
a pallet of mixed emotions
with a brush full of feeling
The truth is I am a sad tear
and not a colour of rainbow
in your eyes all the colours
dance all over your canvas
I see the smile of yours truly
similar and the arrival of the
summer sunrise and feel the

thirst of your lips from the rain
Make me your model for a second
catch me with your will for an hour
my soul and eyes must be awake
to feel your touch like an angel kiss
And I will colour your moisture
lips with a rare leaf from autumn
with your hair, I will draw the running
horses around your scent forever



Ahmad Al-Khatat: He was born in Baghdad. From Iraq, he came to Canada at the age of 10, the same age when he wrote his very first poem back in the year 2000. He also has been published in several press publications and anthologies all over the world. And he currently studies at the Concordia University in Montreal. He recently has published his two chapbooks 'The Bleeding Heart Poet' and 'Love On The War's Frontline' with Alien Buddha Press. It is available for sale on Amazon. Most of his new and old poems are also available on his official page Bleeding Heart Poet Copyright on Facebook.



FALL

I can see
people at the foot of the mountain
and those at its top
they have other desires and thoughts
a whole mountain
of incomprehension separates them

I notice
almost everyone wants to go higher
- over the borders of forest and fields
and climbs the rocks

and if it works

- lean the ladder against the clouds

lose sight of Earth

and be the only winner of this race

people forget that

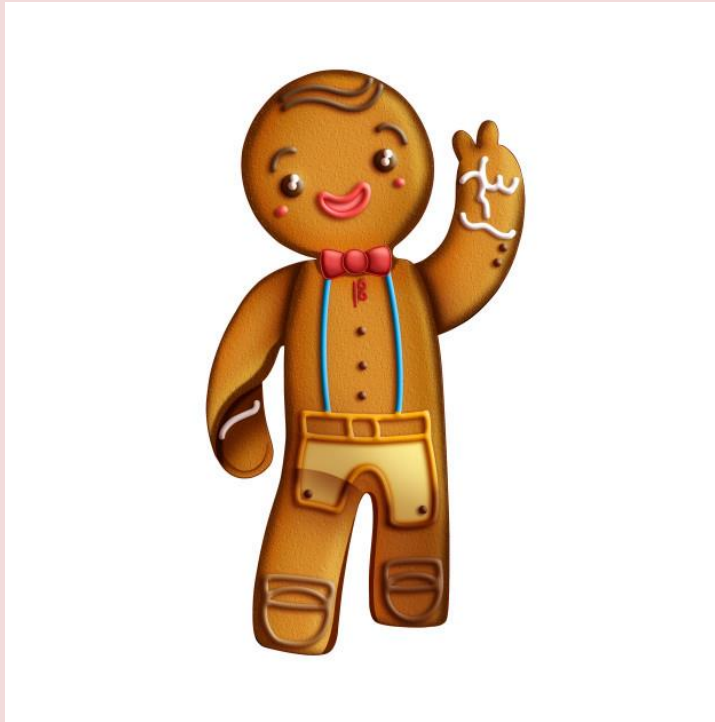
falls from the summit

take place in loneliness

and are very painful



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

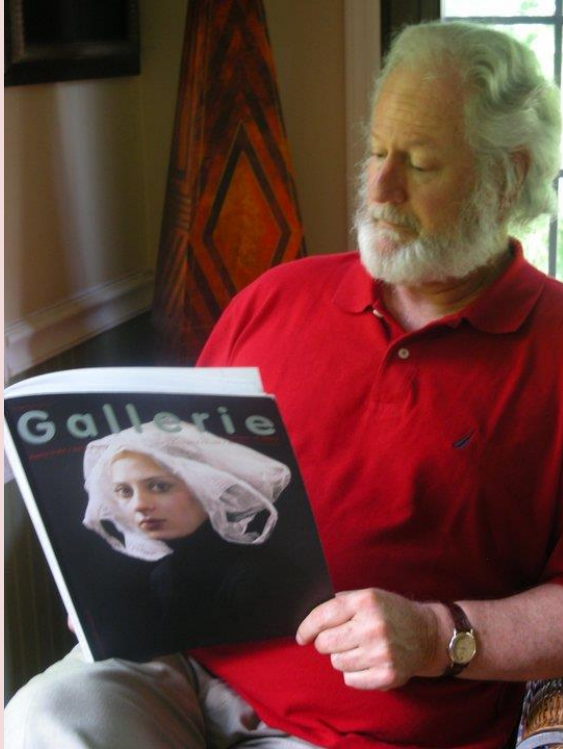


BEAUTIFUL BOY

(For the Gingerbread Boy)

Beautiful gingerbread boy cracking
Oh, snap! causing the girls to rise
& sway as though dancing, only
not dancing but sociologically
invading my Kuiper Belt of flesh
that releases everything time has
to offer, time involving a stainless
steel oven & two sons on the run.

Don't let me down—not this time
or forever—don't let me down.



Alan Britt: In August 2015, Alan Britt was invited by the Ecuadorian House of Culture Benjamín Carrión in Quito, Ecuador as part of the first cultural exchange of poets between Ecuador and the United States. In 2013, he served as judge for the The Bitter Oleander Press Library of Poetry Book Award. His interview at The Library of Congress for The Poet and the Poem aired on Pacifica Radio, January 2013. He has published 15 books of poetry, his latest being *Violin Smoke* (Translated into Hungarian by Paul Sohar and published in Romania: 2015). He teaches English/Creative Writing at Towson University.



AUTUMN

For the strange camaraderie
I have with autumn,
I see myself in the hush
of the prolonged evenings,
in the unmourned falling of dry leaves,
in the sudden dip in the feel of air,
in each moment that extends
beyond its finite time frame,
as is the way with it,
hinting of a long winter.
I live it quite in the way

I wished to live you.

I am autumn, as autumn is me,
as we could have been like,
with the gathered wisdom
of the seasons left behind,
baring each other reflectively.



Amanita Sen: Her first book 'Candle In My Dream' was published from Writer's Wokshop. Her poems have got published in more than 10 anthologies and various journals in her country and abroad.



PANDEMONIUM

Love child

Not begotten

Out of love

Profane love!

Love profane?

Making love

Not love

Ends with

Ejaculation!

Love ends?

Man dogged

Dog manned

Both make love

No difference?

If so, where?

Bastard!

Who bastard?

Manner bastard

Deed bastard

Bastard not bastard

Bastard not born!



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



ADIEU

The post Puja mornings

The nip in the air,

A wane in the chirp of birds,

Slumbering daylight,

Are evocative.

Change is in the offing!

The Kadam flower tree was flush during August;

The remnants of blossoms hang sluggishly

Take a pallid tinge.

A dissentious Mayna couple had nestled on the elbow of
the chimney pipe,

Every morning they chirped, avian coqueties
galore.

Familiarity breeds fondness,

An intuitive bonding,

The passion to never let go!

But Alas!

Last week they were nowhere in sight

Wonder whether the endemic birds packed off to
Kailashdham

With Devi Durga!

A pang of loss lingers

As does the sigh,

At the sight of the withering milky catkins

By the river!



Amita Ray: She is a retired associate professor of English and Vice Principal of a College in Howrah, West Bengal. She resides in Kolkata and is a published translator as well as a short story writer. An academic of varied interests she has been in the teaching profession for thirty eight years. She takes an active interest in working with the child development unit of an N.G.O. based in Kolkata and is associated with other social organisations at present.



You had told me
You had told me
In a summer of stealth
Of birds that sat on
Electric poles who
Left as evening approached
I thought of the rain
To whom I must always turn
And of the left luggage counter once

I stored some stray

Thoughts of



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.



Mistress, now that I'm dying

May I drop those possessives I wrongly used to use,

Calling you me, I, my and mine

Far off, the laden clouds are crying

Here, barren, they hang in the air, undefined

Mistress, now that there's nothing

to look forward to or back at, divine -

the kestrel or curlew calling -

can I unburden the basket from my head on land

from which the crabs escape, to holes, to shore, sideways

scuttering past my feet, no longer in demand.

Mistress, now that my flowers seem faded

The gifts seem jaded

The words, unrefined

The long walks in the hot sun only leading to fever

Will the shadows that lengthen not spell its demise

The demise of something that is not a reprise?

Mistress, when time is ending

Hearts beat slower

and life

There is only the blink of an eye

between breaths taken

and in sleep's horizon

where unfurls from its dank curls death like a black snake
unwinding

Mistress, the conch is blowing

in the dreams of the arms of night

and on the bed a figure restless tossing

is being dreamt of in that dream of despite

Hope for the nomad, and chocolate for the children

The lady of flowers, the door to the home

All that has shrunk to the space of a box

Mistress, that lies mostly unused and locked

Mistress, now that I'm dying

May I drop those possessives I wrongly used to use,

Calling you me, I, my and mine

Far off, the laden clouds are crying

Here, barren, in the air, undefined



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.



THANKSGIVING

It was all the spells in an order
Like an unseen hand one could tell
That led us through all the problems
And ensued that all is well

For the kind of grace and glory
Can we ever be so worthy
We shall strive to be better as we pray
As we move on in life each day

We shall fend off the evil for ever
In your love so that's so rich and pure
For all our woes and sorrow
Give us the strength to endure

For the wisdom to skin the shadows
Of doubts that mocks the morals
When yours is the being of the hallowed
It tends to pass all the tests

Thank you o lord, thank you o lord
Thank you for all the lovely days
Its like a dream come true
For all that we know
Its your blessings that's seen us thru



Anand Abraham Pillay: He is a writer, singer, dancer, artist, and athlete. He is a retired Senior Executive from AAI Mumbai Airport. He loves to cook, loves adventure and loves travelling, and is a naturalist.



FLYING

I sit on the bench
looking at the steel birds
I am all packed
excited
yet a corner of my mind
traverses through
the smiles
and fears
Would be gone
in a few minutes
to start a new life
at a new place

alien to me

The grass looks greener

on the other side

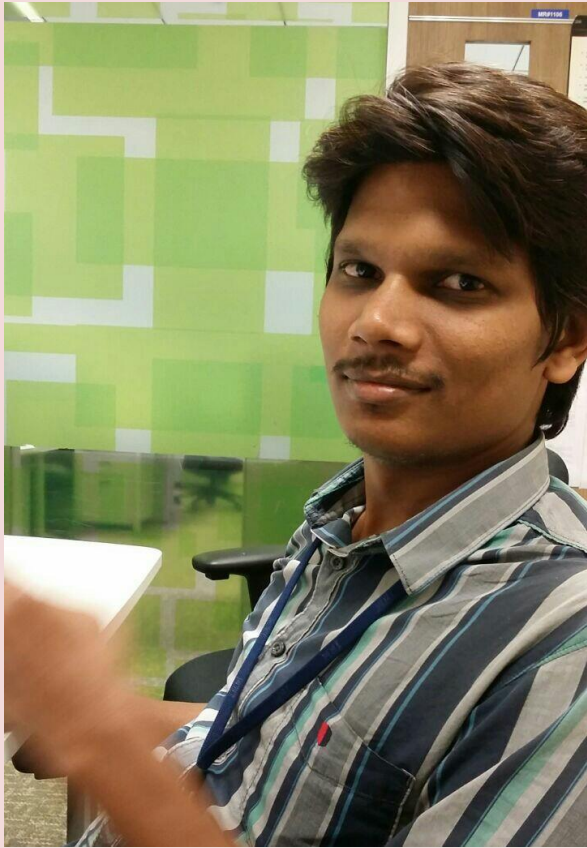
But is it really

or just a perception?

The hardest part of this travel

is going through this

tumultuous time.



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/>



YOUR HAPPINESS

Who you are, your unadulterated feelings
Your real happiness lies within your control
you choose your attitude and mindset
The power of your verve remains within you
Don't allow anyone or anything to recalibrate
The compass of your veritable self.

Your happiness has no price tag
It's the envy of the affluent and renowned
who have no joy despite their extravagant
lifestyle and all the wealth they possess
Your happiness is not a token to be ransomed
It cannot be traded for platinum or gold
True happiness is as rare as precious gemstones
Being truly happy means you have peace
In your precious heart and soul.

Stay true to who you are
Don't defer your happiness to a later state
Sacrificing yourself due to life's circumstances
For the sake of the happiness of others
Doesn't make you a saint or martyr
There are no trophies to be awarded
Deviating your true happiness
Is robbing yourself of the joys of life
Projection and rationalisation only
betrays your inner truth and makes you
The victim of your own mentality
Search your heart and you know the veracity.

Your calm peaceful disposition
should not be selfishly shattered
by the inconsiderate behaviours of individuals
who create drama fuelled by lies
as they watch you being overwhelmed
with anxiety and flooded with sadness
They acquire a psychotic sense of satisfaction
Be not troubled by the thoughts of others
For they possess their own notions
As you have a right to your happiness.

Don't adopt excuses to infringe
the truth of your heart and soul
Let peace be your aspiration in life
Watch the shadows of hurt flow
like a river washing away your sorrow.

Let your countenance glow
With happiness in your heart
Celebrate the euphoria of life's blessings
As the music dances in your soul
Let it shine in your ecstatic spirit



Angela Chetty: I am a poet residing in Durban, South Africa. I work as a consultant. I have contributed to various anthologies. I have also published a poetry anthology. Two poems were selected in September 2018 by International Poetry as the TOP100 poems for 2018.



STRANGE

Strange is the way you start to
Look at me when spring comes
When the sky is clear and cotton
Clouds make magnificent forms

Strange is the way you sing a
Song when fresh buds open up
To release soothing fragrance and
Make the early birds in glee to hop

Strange is the way you dance
Your knitted hair swinging free
Across your back as you move in
Rhythm with the sound of a tree

Strange is the way you walk to
The garden with a majestic gait
Hiding behind thick bushes I wish
Your fate should merge into my fate

Strange is the way you knock
On my door at the fresh dawn
Undressed, you fall into my bed
And make love till the day is gone



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.



https://www.boerfontein.com/?avada_portfolio=nocellara-cottage-gallery

TOTEM

Horse is my totem.

He rides,

I walk.

Mountains fold over

to shelter us,

bowing to honor our presence,

we climb.

Shadowed pathways,
lead ever upward.
Nothing between us
but a great expanse of being.

Open fields greet as truth
gallops onward into tomorrow.
Windblown mane, thundering
rhythm of mud spattered hooves.

One are we, yet distinct. There
is no day or night, just timeless
trails. Ancient wisdom carries
us to the final measure.

I am horse, horse is me.
Our tribe is strong.



Ann Christine Tabaka: She has been nominated for the Pushcart Prize in Poetry, has been internationally published, and won poetry awards from numerous publications. She lives in Delaware, USA. She loves gardening and cooking. Chris lives with her husband and three cats. Her most recent credits are: Pomona Valley Review; Ariel Chart, Page & Spine, West Texas Literary Review, Oddball Magazine, The Paragon Journal, The Stray Branch, Trigger Fish Critical Review, Foliate Oak Review, Better Than Starbucks!, Anapest Journal, Mused, Apricity Magazine, The Write Launch, The Stray Branch, Scryptic Magazine, Ann Arbor Review, The McKinley Review.

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



THUNDER AND LIGHTNING

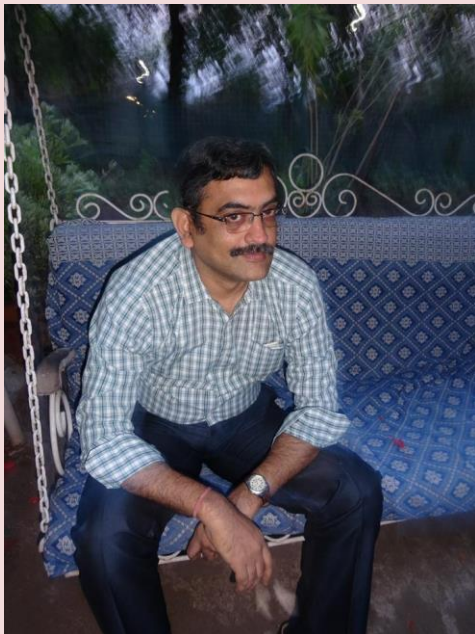
Vasanthi Swetha

I don't know who decided
to use
the verb 'strike' for thunder,
I think thunder hounds,
like a dying language
wishing to reinvent the tongue.

ANURAG MATHUR

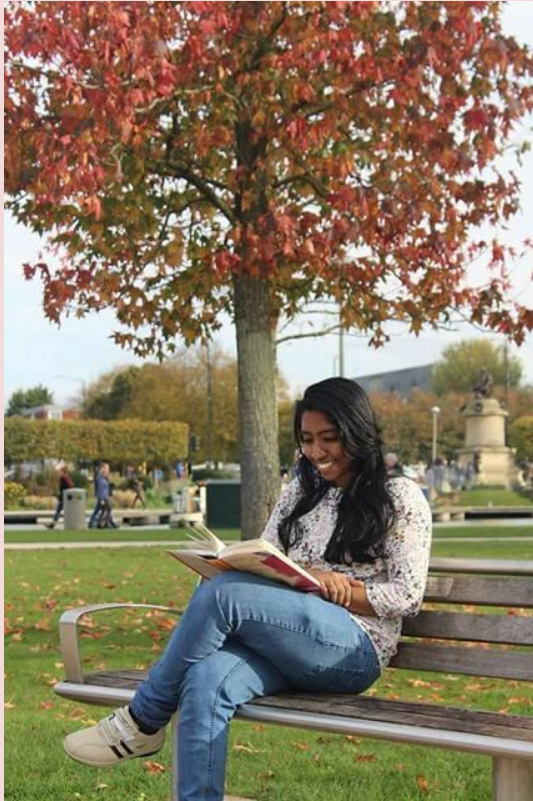
THIS IS THUNDER TOO
Lightning strikes,

Thunder does not
Thunder simply rolls around,
Growling, menacing, warning,
Booming, crashing but never striking,
If you like, it will hound
Thunder is about spaces unbound
Thunder is about rolling greens
About the hope of rain it brings



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.



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.



YOU CAN'T FLY A PLANE BUT YOU CAN'T SIT PLAIN EITHER

Once, a Chinese garlic farmer dreamt of flying an aeroplane. He had enough money and mood to make the dream come true, but Farmer's dream of flying an aeroplane didn't pan out, because fly by wire was entirely different from driving by tyre in the friction-full fields. So he decided to build one instead.

The full-scale and fully passionate replica of the Airbus A320 built by farmer Zhu Yue is now fully finished and is permanently taxied on a short piece of tarmac in the wheat-garlic fields in China. Zhu has invested his savings of more than 374,000\$ into the dream project that began with a toy model of an Airbus 320 so systematically shrunken to one-eighteenth its original size. With that initial toy model, he measured dimensions, studied online photos and made daily mistakes but came out winner at

last by crafting the plane so passionately. He used tonnes of resolve and not less than 60 tonnes of steel to craft that plane. Five fellow aircraft enthusiasts cum dream drawers cum labourers have just helped speed the project along.

The homemade Airbus will never ever fly or will not be flying anytime soon, but his dream already has wings. Zhu has decided to turn it into a diner. He so happily elaborates "we will put down a red carpet so every person who comes to eat will feel like a head of state." But we are mesmerized by such a beautiful state of head, which has turned a garlic farmer into an engineer. Such is a modern love for pursuing dreams and passion.



Ashish K Pathak: I am a middle school teacher posted in munger district of Bihar province in India. My forte is sociopolitical writing with the use of simple words.



Faded Blues...

The salty autumn sea wind

Sings at the distance,

Blind seagull cries

I remember you, your tears

Chorus of blind birds

My old loneliness

Behind the darkness of dust and rain

Memories whisper to rainbows

Barren frozen moon

Naked shadows in silence

Daydreams, a fantasy

Raven's wings in infinite ecstasy

You cannot escape, memories often fade

Sharing of dreams

As often I desired you,,,



Asoke Kumar Mitra: I am a poet residing in Kolkata, India. I am a retired journalist. I have contributed to various anthologies published in India and abroad. My poems are translated into Italian, French, Persian, Hebrew, Malay and Mandarin languages.



PARADISE LOST AND GAINED

In the moonlit dim an angel was flying across the sky
Through scudding cloudlets playing hide and seek
With the night air. The flapping sound quivered and
Awoke the drowsy owls in the obscure branches and
The wise bird bowed in silence while the angel passed.

The angel moved over the graveyard by the river bank.
The placid water calm like eyes of the dove made ripples
With joy as the angel kissed it. Its halo made numerous
Stars in the dark while the silent tombs where the anxious
souls

Are waiting patiently shivered and whispered to each other
'No,not yet, it's not the Call'. Gliding over the misty
morning

The angel's wings touched the temple bell proclaiming the
dawn.

The angel then made a circular motion, looked upward with
a sigh

And then glanced downward hesitantly. He saw one waiting
for one,

Twisting in pain and the angel's tears mixed with morning
dew and...

The old grandmother came out smiling and shouting.

The conch shells carried the cry-'it was a baby now'.



Avik Kumar Maiti: 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.



Your consent

They say.

They ask your consent

Not to value it

Individually,

But to align it

With their decision.



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



LET'S ALL HOLD OUR TONGUES

Good citizens let our words

Be circumspect

So that gentle egos

Will never feel wrecked

We won't say 'slum',

But: 'High rise'.

We won't say 'poor'

But: 'Cash deprived'

And not 'fffffat'!

How callous!

But metabolism challenged,

With a diet-less-balanced'

And let's never challenge

Students such as

We may rightly think of

As slackers and drudges

But say: 'Kids you're unique,

Our love's unconditional,

Each of you is great

And especially special'

We mustn't say 'worst kid'

But just 'less best';

We mustn't say: 'Kids
Sweat hard for your test!'

Let's tell kids
Who think school's an arse:
'Hey you're all born equal
You can reach for the stars

Let's choke back our truth
And no opinion escape
Or we may be sued
For 'emotional rape'

So let's be corrrrect.
Let's all hold our tongues,
Clamped in a vice
Between our fingers and thumbs...



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



GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

i'm vulnerable and weak, looking like a freak. a wreck daily on show, taking your every blow.

you've buried my beauty, through your cruelty. what was I thinking? thought you were so amazing.

all the while you are scum, just the biggest bum. you don't deserve a woman like me, a wife who gave you the heavens and sea.

now i'm just a withered flower, suffering under your powerless power. hitting on me thinking it'll make you a man, shoving me around just because you can.

well i've got news for you, you are like spoiled stew. you've lost your colour and flavour, and with it also your power.

you have a low self-esteem, being in control is your long lost dream. you need counselling and a new perspective, your proving yourself a man is no longer effective.



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



A SECRET

Do I have to say it all now,
What brought my life into pieces.
Some chuckle over my patience
never knowing all was peace less,
they never mind to name me useless
although they will never know what lies
in my deep conscience.

Life enemies were created under strive,
bread for breakfast tears on my eyes,
long days uncouneted few ribs for my soul.

Like a mother and son we still attached
to journeys that life is worth.

Now I have to say it to a child whom in my
womb has slept in meaningless peace,
I will not say it all now 'cause it will destroy
rather than uplift.

Some truth will remain for someday....



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.



THROUGH THE SHADOWS

He radiates a light that filters through shadows -
shadows lift in his presence suspending darkness
in his tokens of love -
swathes of colour blossom in flowers
perfumed by him.

Light sprinkles in his smile -
his eyes twinkle and melody
drips from his words.

His love is a gesture of grace
streaming liquid's dance with pebbles.

This world is neither true nor fair -
darkness pervades humanity's essence
dejected from hope
crestfallen in quagmires of turmoil

Through the shadows -
his light ignites a beacon
where love suspends darkness -
flickers of radiance sieve through the clouds
for her heart's music.



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.



Images of World War I. . . before and after



WAR TO END

This year marks the centenary of the 20th century's first "modern war," one that proved a strange mix for both history and humanity.

World War I began with Romantic notions, fueled by glorified images of battle displayed in statues and paintings. Chauvinism in Europe's youth convinced them of the "justice" of their cause, no matter their nation. Parades became the order of the day. Eager recruits marched off seeking glory and honor in battles mixing cavalry and infantry with tanks and aircraft for a contradictory blend of

old and new. Ironically, battles were for inches despite its moniker of “world” war. The “Great War” became a true “bridge” between centuries, even introducing WMDs through chemical warfare.

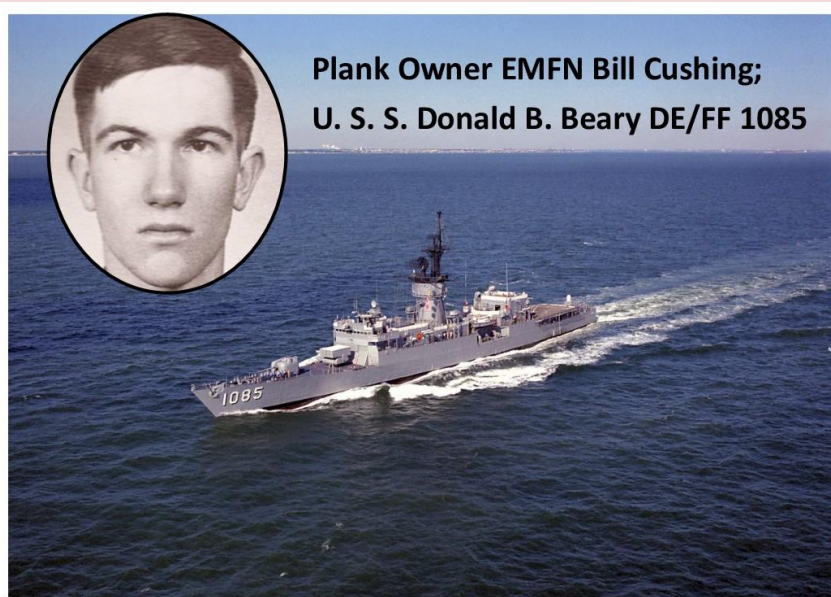
Perhaps its greatest irony is that World War I began as a political pipe-dream to end warfare. After the 1800s, known by some historians as “the century of wars,” governments believed the treaty system—whereby nations locked arms with others in defense of future attacks—would make war so repellent it would never happen again.

The idea’s flaw revealed itself after a Bosnian shot Archduke Ferdinand in Sarajevo, leading to the war (the stock answer to the test question “what started World War I?”).

However, how did this pull an entire continent into a multi-year atrocity of such magnitude? After all, Austro-Hungary empire only became a major political player from its merger, and Sarajevo’s high point was being called the “Jerusalem of Europe,” another ironic touch since that name combines yarah (to cast) with shalom (peace).

The original hasn’t seen much peace. How could its knockoff expect better results?

Once these minor continental players declared war on each other, no nation could stand aside: all of them were interconnected in a web of paperwork. Rather than preventing war, treaties ended up dragging everyone into one. What H. G. Wells' called the "war to end all wars" proved such a rousing success it led to more, even gorier war.



Plank Owner EMFN Bill Cushing;
U. S. S. Donald B. Beary DE/FF 1085

Bill Cushing: Born into a military family, Bill Cushing (whose picture is from very long ago) now lives, writes, and teaches in Glendale, California. Long a history buff with a perhaps-oddly critical eye, his writing for this issue is in honor of the 100th anniversary of the original Armistice Day and condenses one of Bill's personal interpretations of the event.



MY UNTOLD WORLD

I am on the Golden Throne

I am in the darkened prison

I am the master of my Empire

The hopeful world is at a distance

But the frosty gate can vibrate

With a single flute of life

Dress becomes the sentry at the gate
Nude heart alone
puts steps

And travels an untold world

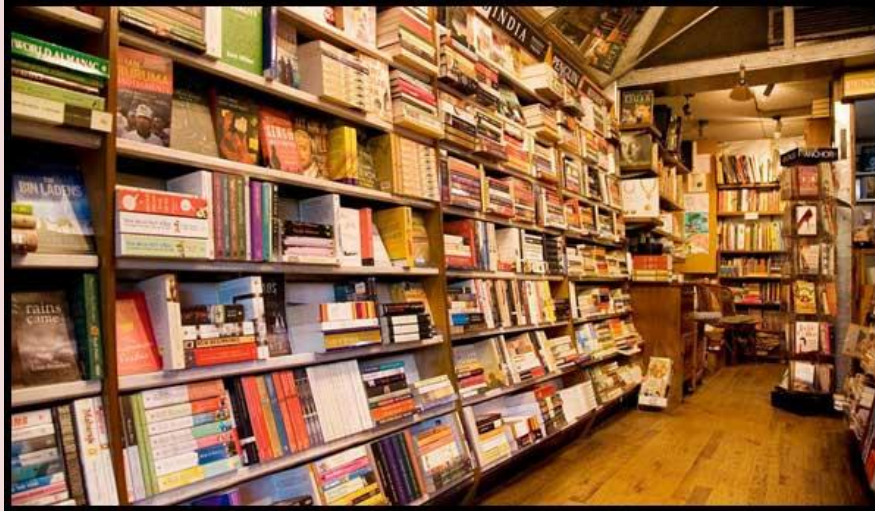
Some meeting of love hold there
Heart takes the smell of Heart
Times becomes paralyzed outside the door

Suddenly, worldliness rings the bell
Sigh puts on the dress and recedes
Hiding the footprints from others

In the deepest moments of loneliness
I can take a heartfelt look
At my untold Melodious World.



Bipul Chandra Das: I reside in a village, Sualkuchi of Assam, India. Being a poet, I like to read good poems.



Hard to find a book of poems
in a bookshop
you go in circles
try to find
but no nothing in sight
then
approach helpdesk
he takes you
to the shelf -
drama/theatre
from somewhere
pulls a book of poems

title of the book is

HARD TO FIND



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



AS RICH AS CROESUS

“Count no man happy until he is dead.”

These words honked in my head as absurd sound

No dainty flattery had Solon said

Its heavy truth would soon enough be found.

My cup was full, my treasury supplied

No, gorged, with gold, I was a happy man

I thought, my smiling crowned with King’s pride.

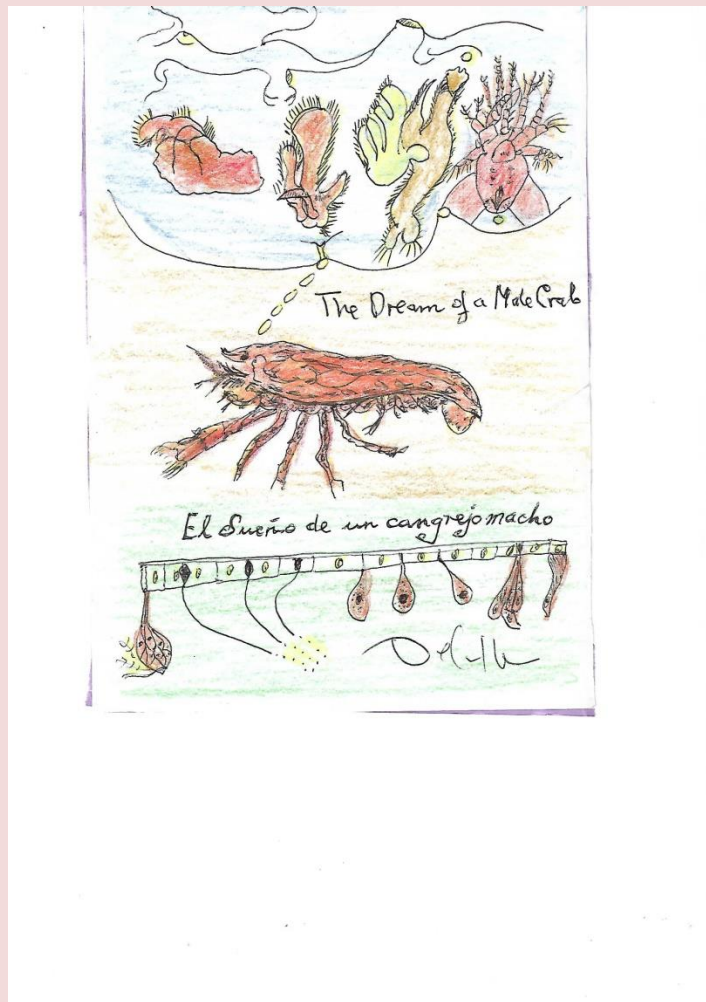
Solon was right, Atys my son was slain

His glory fleeting fell into the grave

Then fell my kingdom, broken was my reign
From King of Lydia to Persia's slave.
All earthly leaves shall fade and take their flight
The only gift that lasts is heaven's light.



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.



THE DREAM OF A MALE CRAB

River is an instrument
Passed from water to water
Rather than an eating stand.
We are the talk of the town
From compass points
In the circle of Life

That encloses us all.
Crabs folk in North America
And Europe, in Japan
In Africa, in Russia, in India
Where natural scientists
Asking for our first Love.

Dish of Crabs:

Here in we have reprinted
A number of pieces
Contained with it.
It is because of the extreme
Importance of our existence
That we have chosen
To do this caprice.
But these excerpts
Are not enough:
The rivers themselves
Must be experienced

It is my feeling, my dream
That the Fishers Wo/Men
Will open many rivers
For any other Fisher
In a simple exercise
Of to be eating very good.



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



CITY DEER #23

such drama in the flora i love it when they eat our flowers i
love that leave one flower



Darren C. Demaree: He is the author of nine poetry collections, most recently “Bombing the Thinker”, which was published by Backlash Press. He is the recipient of a 2018 Ohio Arts Council Individual Excellence Award, the Louis Bogan Award from Trio House Press, and the Nancy Dew Taylor Award from Emrys Journal. 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.



WRINKLED RIVER

I have seen her glassy skin, shimmering with the baubles of
the sun

Seen her body bouncing with the kisses of the rain

She used to run with the vehement of her youth

inpatient to make love with the edge old ocean

I sat beside her many times gazing at her swirls,

I have seen her silky curves expressing the stories of life,
woven on her dunes through the times

I have seen her flow through the crevice of the earth

Like a silent spectator of all the reflections of the mortal
souls

Changing their covers and colours time to time

But that was long ago

Long before I left her in the search of the treasure trove of
life

I wondered through the tunnels of time,

Collecting useless bits of silver I forgot about her

Even The last flakes of her memories got berifted from my
mind

And time dribbled silently between us

Until one day when I went back to her with my weak limbs
and shaggy shoulders

I saw her flowing still as before but her shimmers wizened
like an old skin

She was lying pinned with a hole in the heart

A hole without a single thread of life

Arraying the emptiness of tomorrow

I stood still gazing at her bygone beauty and her wrinkled surge

I yearned for her gushing flow of life rendering hope to the people beside

Yearned for her limitless life force blooming the trees nurturing the Buds Which echoed on her silent waves and sway back.



Debjani Mukherjee: She is a MBA in applied management with a mind lay bared to soak up every occurrence around her and pour it down on paper. She is a sensitive soul to feel and understand the world and captivate it into her words.



'MACHO-MEN'

These villains tried to prove that they were men,
These monsters who were not men,
The Alexanders, the Caesars, the Genghis Khans,
the Napoleons, the Mussolinis, the Hitlers.

Through the strength of others
they tried to assert their 'manhood'.

But they were not men.

They were not human beings.

They orchestrated the mass murder
of countless human beings.

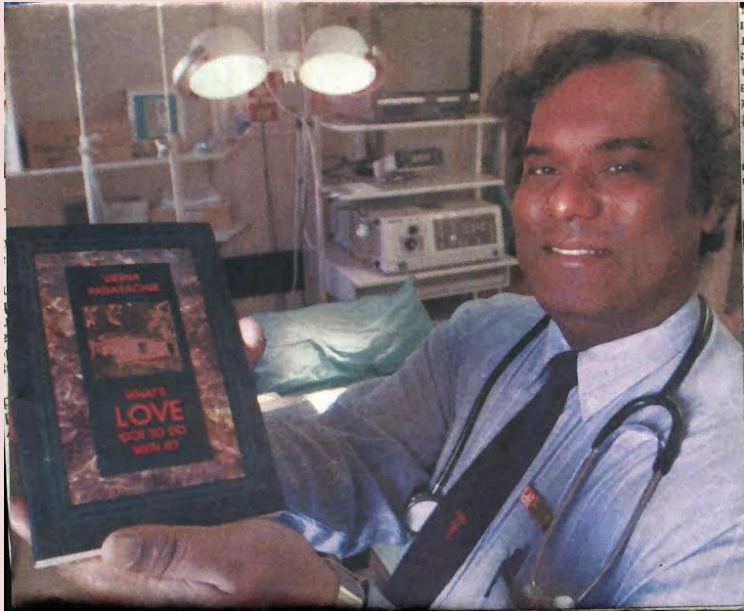
These criminals elucidated the satanic in their acolytes.

The fiends glorified their atrocities.

The sycophants celebrated their stealing,
their pillaging, their murders.

But these were not macho-men.

These were demons.



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



OF SILK AND SKIN

I speak of skin

and you start removing me

from myself

Layer by layer

Peel by peel

The silk

The satin

The inhibition

And the scream

You scrape and it bleeds

And you dig deeper

To find me

The way you want to

The way you want me to

I spread myself and let it unfold

You'll never realize within

Each time you sin

My heart goes

a tad more bold



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.



INSIDE THE SHELL

The whirlwind

The hailstorm

The tornado

All within the four walls

Within the darkness of the room

If you look at it from outside

You won't see a thing

You won't feel a thing

The calm demeanour outside

The stony silence

Is just a masquerade

To shield the inner room

A room without a door

Where you would

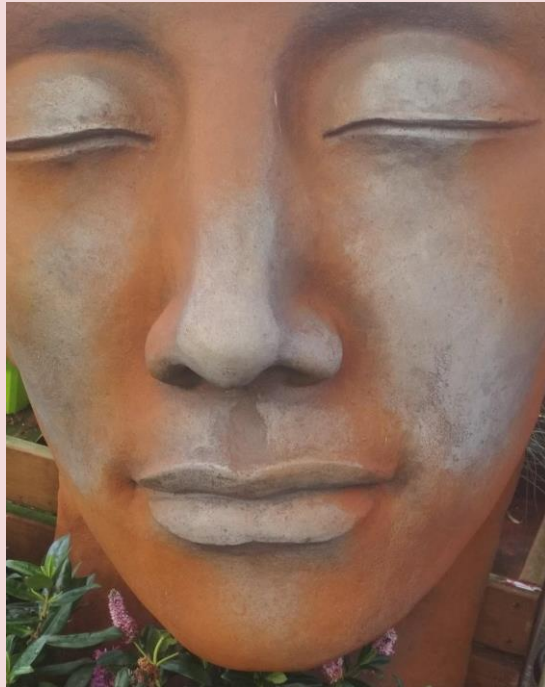
Never get an access

Unless you love to

Stay within



Dipankar Sarkar: Poetry is my passion, but I do not write regularly. Sometimes, words just flow out of nowhere and completely inundate me, force me to live an experience of writing. That's poetry for me. I work as the Chief Content Officer of iDreamCareer.com, India's largest career counselling organisation.



(pic by Don Beukes)

Vision X

Dream Sequence – It started as a mere supersonic click gradually accelerating into a strange unknown continuous grind that seemed to reach the furthest horizons of a species not even yet born into existence not even yet written about growing louder as strange flickering flashes of bright flares lit up the darkening skies of a world which once was – Now hurtling out of orbit whilst endless subterranean cavities sucked in the sour soil which remained barren after decades of nuclear warfare ended what was once known as the blue planet now covered in toxic choking stifling layers of alien gases destined to terminate irradiate separate divide delete irradiate...

Visions of You – Your existence revealed to me in various Sessions allowing a rare glimpse of what you once were – Each one a harrowing testimony of your failing humanity As you longed for total power over each other ignoring Those who were weak as discarded rotten fodder to be Flushed down the sewers of decay caused by your insatiable

Need to invade conquer usurp divide control, deplete. How You infected others with your bitter rhetoric baptizing Yourself as the new leaders elected having dominion over Your cursed minions who have long since pined for your Kind to control them, change them. Others just watched – Willing witnesses to the end of everything, the end of you.

New Dawn – Come, look down on what you have destroyed.

Your blue oceans now black frozen tar. Your atmosphere so toxic it depleted the planets and stars in your galaxy. Your

flora and fauna forever scorched, evaporated now look around you,

as you join the chosen few, the last of your kind of the world you left

behind – Enter here to your new destiny your true existence...



Don Beukes: He is a bilingual South African British writer and the author of 'The Salamander Chronicles' (Creative Talents Unleashed) and 'Icarus Rising - Volume 1' (Alien Buddha Press). His poetry has been anthologized in numerous collections and translated into Afrikaans, French, Farsi and Albanian. He was nominated for the Pushcart Poetry Prize in 2016 and the Best of the Net in 2017 by Roxana Nastase, editor of Scarlet Leaf Review for his trilogy 'Esorfo Ygolirt/Trilogy of Rose'. His debut South African publication is due in August 2018 in a unique anthology with three prominent South African poets.



GRACE MEANS “GIFTS RECEIVED AT CHRIST’S EXPENSE”

Sunday morning parkbirds must share their madrigals
with Father Godfrey and his sideshow miracles.

With eloquent pleas for the change of the simple,
Godfrey begins forging his chains for the crippled;
on cue, “Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance,”
he intones like a judge delivering sentence;
the people reach deep in their pockets for Jesus

to surrender pieces of silver to Croesus;
and then at last it comes, the laying on of hands;
the blind go crazy to watch the legless stand.

And stand one does!

A hobbler confesses and throws away his crutch.

Weekly, Godfrey dons his habit of religion.

This Assisi coos his sermon to his pigeons,
who flock from their coops to seek out their new Gideon.



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.



RESPECT

For you

it's just a stepping stone from everyday life,

not just verbal games,

fun.

Promises

she believes in naively.

Unnecessarily

you have made an obedient puppet out of her.

You know that

in a woman thirsty for love

one is not allowed

to ignite hope by passion

Limits of decency,
do not require courage
☒ but respect for the other.



Eliza Segiet: She is graduated 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. Author's poem 'Questions' was the Publication of the Month (August 2017) and the International Publication of the Year (2017) in Spillwords Press. Author's works can be found in anthologies and literary magazines worldwide.



Love's many lies

As many

As there are eyes

How does one evade

Those wooing songs

When they sound

Sweet as honey

Even if one knows that they are as insincere

As the sound of money

Love's many lies
As many
As there are birds in the skies

My undoing
The flighty praise
Damn this body
Melting with your gaze

Love's many lies
As many
As the anguished cries

If I close my eyes
Will you go away
With your brand of love
Leaving me to a clear loveless day

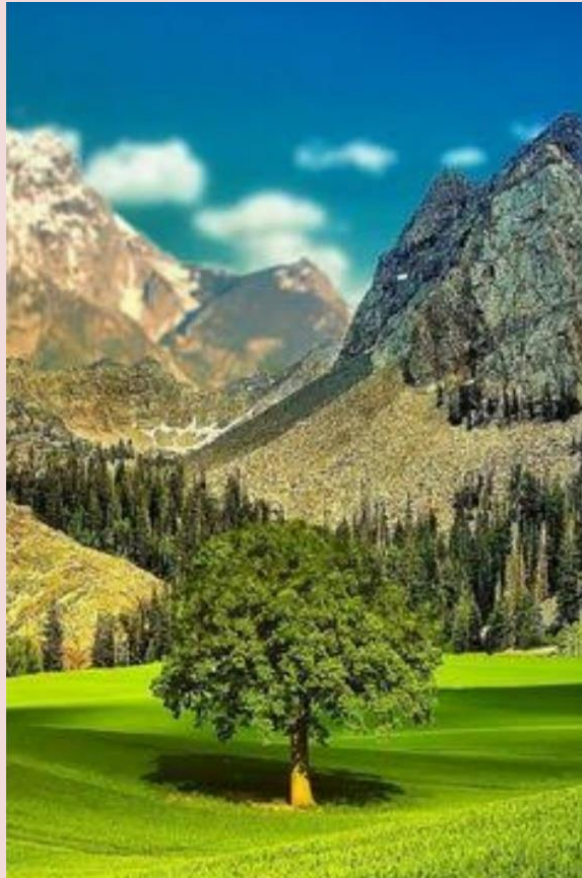
Love's many lies

As many

As the moments in which love dies



Gauri Dixit: A software professional from Pune (India), Gauri writes English poetry. Her poems have been featured in multiple Indian and international anthologies. She is a regular contributor to many poetry pages and e-zines of repute such as Destiny Poets UK, Duane's Poetree, Glomag, Kubili Cafe, Learning & Creativity, Mind Creative, Spillwords and Stanzaic Stylings. She recently won the 'Reuel International Prize for the Most Promising Poet - 2018'. Her first poetry book 'In my skin, I find freedom' was recently released. She loves reading, photography and traveling.



HOW CAN I TELL YOU

How can I tell you in words

When the azure sky wears silvery crown

How my eyes savour the moonlight drizzle

How can I tell you in words

In the silence of the dead night

What music echoes in my ears

How can I tell you in words

What I feel when trees stare at me

with beautiful green smiles
How can I tell you in words
How the river, alive in the dark night
flows resounding sorrowful rhymes
How can I tell you in words
How life spells heavenly beauty
on a newborn's face
How can I tell you in words
How the eyes of starved children burn
How can I tell you in words
How the bare branches wait eagerly
for the advent of spring
I can only tell you
What I see with my soul's eyes
is beyond the realm of words
and enchanting diction..



Gayatree G. Lahon: Gayatree is a teacher and a poet from the beautiful state of Assam. Poetry is a passion for her. Being a nature lover, she finds solace in the lap of nature and draws inspiration to pen down her thoughts. Her poems have been published in many anthologies and magazines, in India and foreign countries too.



<https://www.lightrocket.com/clauderenault/galleries>

A tattered old sari

Dreams on a hook

Fluttering in the wind

A tattered old sari

Fluttering in the wind

Dreams on a hook

Fluttering in the wind

Dreams on a hook

A tattered old sari

II

The temple lamps have been lit

I go around the fragrant semi-dark shrine

I can sense someone following me

I turn a little

She is almost touching me

“Will you give me that?”

She is staring at the prasadam in my hand

“Haven’t eaten anything today”

Everyone calls her ‘Hare Rama’

They ridicule her

She chants till evening

For a meal and a few coins-

Her work,

Wears the same sari every day

Wet in the morning, dry by day

It sticks to her, old and faded

I look at her face as I give it to her

There is pain in her dull eyes

“No one wanted me to chant today.”

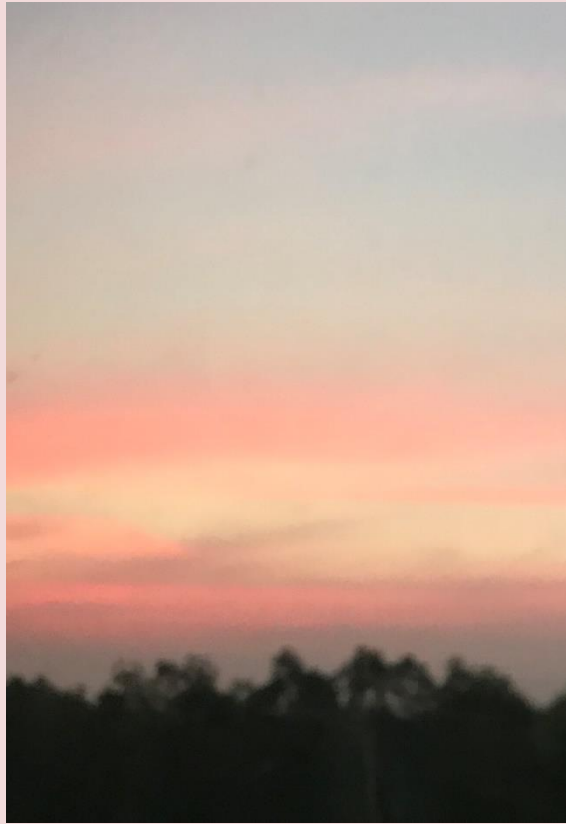
How does she survive, manage?!

I want to ask her,

But she has disappeared into the darkness.



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.



(pic by Geethanjali Dilip)

CURTAIN FALL

Time drags feet dipped in red soil,

That floated up from autumn rains in a game of seasonal
toil,

The blue sky turning mauve with fatigue foil,

Although it expands endlessly to end in night's cozy coil.

Tyre marks of the sky highway pilot winged souls,

Fleeing from monsters of a matinee intimidated by trolls,

As they fold their wings in silhouettes of tree folds,
Leaving their twilight tunes in clouds where ride ancient
souls.

My eyes drink the saffron threads, streaks of a dozing sun,
Even if I try I cannot overlook the mundane pun,
Dusk is that gentle moment I could never shun,
Where the day's deeds do the last lap of the mad run.

Time stretches its greedy arms embracing an orb golden,
To be the first to view a new star born wanton,
And dark takes over the stage as curtains drop sullen,
The show is over but a new act scripts itself time smitten.



Geethanjali Dilip: I am a poet residing in Salem, India. I work as French Teacher. I have contributed to various anthologies. I have also published two poetry anthologies. I am the recipient of the Reuel International Poetry Award 2017.



LAST LAUGH

when did love dissolve into jealousy
or was it always there
perfectly camouflaged as love?

love gives access -
and you need that to destroy
'cause information is fodder.

in your twisted little mind, you're the good
i'm the bad.

in your twisted little mind,
bad that happens to me
proves that evil will lose
good that happens to you
proves that good will win.

since nowhere is it taught
to judge others and hold parameters
I wonder whom do you worship
in that twisted little mind of yours?

how do you explain the bad things
that happen to you
and the good things that happen to me
i wonder?
as the world coming to an end?

the lava in your brain has smoldered long enough

has it not?

jealousy will not be contained!

jealousy will kill

it's time for action now

it's time to kill

but have you ever known evil to win over goodness?

so guess who's going to have the last laugh?



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.



POVERTY

(Did you know that the worldwide food shortage that threatens up to five hundred million children could be alleviated at the cost of only one day, only one day, of modern warfare?" - Peter Ustinov)

Peasants starve

To feed the obesity of the rich

they toil in the fields

in the burning heat of day

they plough, they sow

they reap the yields

rich and abundant from the land

predestined for the granaries of the rich

the fruits of their labour
never shared, never rewarded

under nourished bodies
offers no sanctuary to life
death's arrogant hand
feeds like a parasite
infringes their right to live
their children cry their future dies
in bloated bodies perished and ravaged
by manmade malnutrition and diseases.

poverty! an ominous dark shadow
an ever present omen
visits decaying homes
trespasses, tramples on helpless lives
no mercy shown, no mercy given
either for young or old

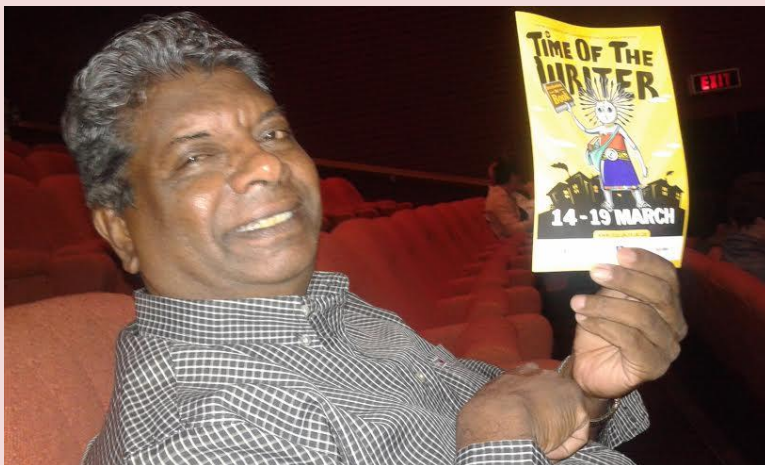
children barely able to walk to stand
ravished by poverty's ugly hand

they starve, they die
while the rich debate their fate
they deliberate about protection
for their intellectual property rights
whilst third world children die

avaricious plunderers the west
the custodians of wealth,
science and technology
and their fellow conspirator
the World Bank, and the IMF
powerful, unscrupulous loan sharks
dictates and imposes on
all third world nations
how they should be enslaved

by inflexible capitalist greed
the corrupt,
exploiting hands of the west
careless about the people's

poverty and misery
they don't care whether
they live, starve and die.



Gonapragasen Naicker Aka Danny: He is an Indian born, and brought up in South Africa. He has been fascinated by, and writing poetry since his early boyhood. He has performed his poetry at various forums, including the Poetry Africa Festival, the Mauritian Writers' Association, and Glorioustimes, India. He is the Convenor of the Live Poets Society, Durban, South Africa.



BLIND WITH YOUR SIGHT

I am searching
With my white cane
In the dense forest
Of your mind
Where your cruel poisoned
Fangs spread unseen,
Searching still always
For the extinguished sun,
The sand hidden rains,
The exhausted storm,

The beheaded lightning.

I am searching in you

In vain.

Í am searching in you,

Fumbling at the sleeves

Of your mind,

Waiting in the faded twilight

With you

For the lost kingdom,

And your knights

Who protected our dreams,

The demolished value

Of your coins

Rust in the rear bone box

Untouched,

I sit at the bank

Of your dream river

As an unwelcome guest,
With the fish - rod
Putting your own promise as bite
And casting the string onto the middle
Of your mind.

Where I could only feel
Only a killed warrior
Buried deep in your
Succeeded kingdom of
Your own mind...

I am searching, unseen still.
Gripping tightly the Faith
That tied us once
As one.

I, still search for you, dear Poem....
With my white pure cane
Of my concern, dear Poem...



Haneefa C.A.: I would like to be a poet. I work as an English Teacher (HSST) Government Higher Secondary School, Kattilangadi, Tanur, Malappuram, Kerala, India. I have not published my poems till the date, but post them in my FB account.



HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS

Healthy human Relationships

Are building blocks of

A meaningful society----

Family, Friends, Professional, Social.

In modern times

It is becoming a rarity.

Durability of inter-personal relationships--

Casual, serious, Lifelong---

Depends on nurturing

From both sides.

For a lifelong, continuous

Healthy, Meaningful relationship---

Mutual trust, respect, understanding--

Are the foundation.

Connect, bonding and vibes

Play a vital part

In sustaining.

One has to invest

Time, energy and effort

For lifetime relationship.

Not just similarities

But inspire of differences---

Meaningful human Relationships

Are built.



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



FISH (IN RESPONSE TO AS)

To mingle your breath with mine,
I come bearing dreams of the Rhine...
Of thirteen years ago a tale --
You bent the time and I set sail.
Today I am your guest,
And you offer me food and rest --
A fish and a leaf that she had sent...
To me you served, generously spent.
We breathe the same atoms free
As I brew up a lazy tea.

To mask the smell of fish I consume
Curiously strong Altoids, and assume
That when you give me a fish...
It is your version of a kiss.



Jagari Mukherjee: She is a writer from Kolkata, India. She has an MA in English Literature from the University of Pune, and was awarded a gold medal and several prizes by the University for excelling in her discipline. Her writings, both poetry and prose, have appeared in several newspapers, magazines, anthologies, and blogs. Her first book, a collection of poems entitled *Blue Rose*, was published in May 2017 by Bhashalipi. She is a Best of the Net 2018 nominee, a Bear River alumna, and the winner of the Rabindranath Tagore Literary Prize 2018 (book review).



LIGHT

Peeping through lucarne
I was there
Gazing for those meadows
which have their own light
With multiple reflections,
Blissful it was
Serene it has been
To perform such hard work,
Those sparkles in the light
Beneath dusty clouds
Murmur their own story

Which would be embraced by this loquacious world one
day for sure,

The hard work will pave

The way for light to enter

And escape the dark cobwebs of ignorance and anguish

Movement from illiteracy to literacy

Amalgamation of culture and society

Engrossed inside the beauty and lustre

Of that 'interference' of light!



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



THE LOVE SONG, I'M LIVING RIGHT NOW

She is mine

we're trapped in time

so much in love

tear in my eye

she is safe

in my arms

my loving grace

and I thank God for all the mistakes
that led to her
she is pure
my world for sure
and I'm never ever gonna let her go
the only woman that I'll ever know
she loves me with all her soul
she is the woman I grow old...with
so now...

I'm writing the love song
I'm living right now
I'm caressing her body
as we cuddle on the couch
I can't believe we figured it out
true love only comes to you once
so I'm writing the love song
that I'm living right now

Oh baby

I'm writing the love song
that I'm living...right now.

Hey baby

I love you

I know right now where I wanna be forever
in your arms

so close together

we've been through it all

nothing will ever sever

our bond so strong

we will never go wrong

and just to prove it

I'm writing this love song.

I'm writing the love song

I'm living right now

I'm caressing her body
as we cuddle on the couch
I can't believe we figured it out
true love only comes to you once
so I'm writing the love song
that I'm living right now
Oh baby
I'm writing the love song
that I'm living...right now.

When I first laid eyes on you
baby I knew
that I was in this forever
you and me together
changes in the weather
won't matter to us
forever watching our children grow up
forever soulmates baby I promise

I can never get enough
of us.

I'm writing the love song
I'm living right now
I'm caressing her body
as we cuddle on the couch
I can't believe we figured it out
true love only comes to you once
so I'm writing the love song
that I'm living right now
Oh baby
I'm writing the love song
that I'm living...right now.

I always said I didn't need to write a love song
but I wrote one right now.



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.



FROM A CHILD

Rain is my best friend when

I just want to sing songs.

Happily it plays on my red umbrella

Softly it kisses a blue flower

Listen to it tippy tap on top of my roof.

I like rain. It is splashy and cool.



Joan McNerney: Her poetry has been included in numerous literary magazines such as Seven Circle Press, Dinner with the Muse, etc. Her latest title is *Having Lunch with the Sky* and she has four e-books. She has been nominated four times for Best of the Net.



Seven sedges beneath the torn moon,
miles away a road run through.
One takes by blade of leaf.
The other taken, corn and wheat.

A moments frow, the bend of reed,
the everlasting rill to the sop hills meet;
A copse, out from, the light of all the run-off.



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



MIGRATORY BLUES

I am a bird flying

I wonder of death

I hear whistling in trees

I see a snowflake fall

I want warm weather

I am just a bird flying

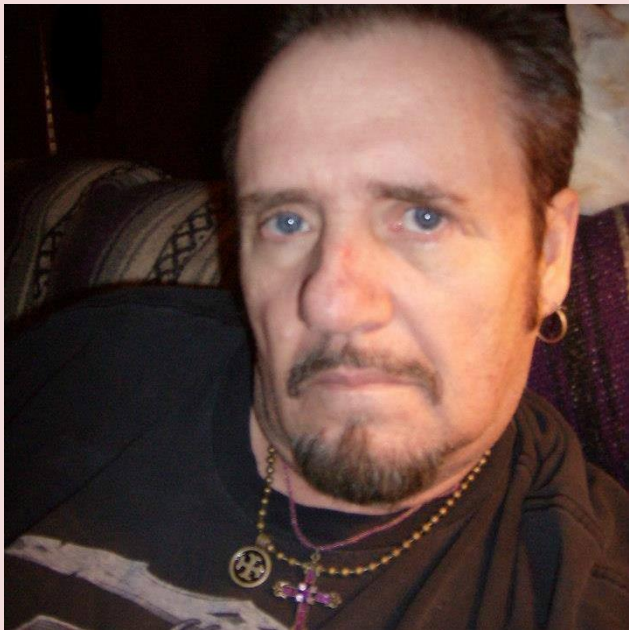
I pretend to walk

I feel love

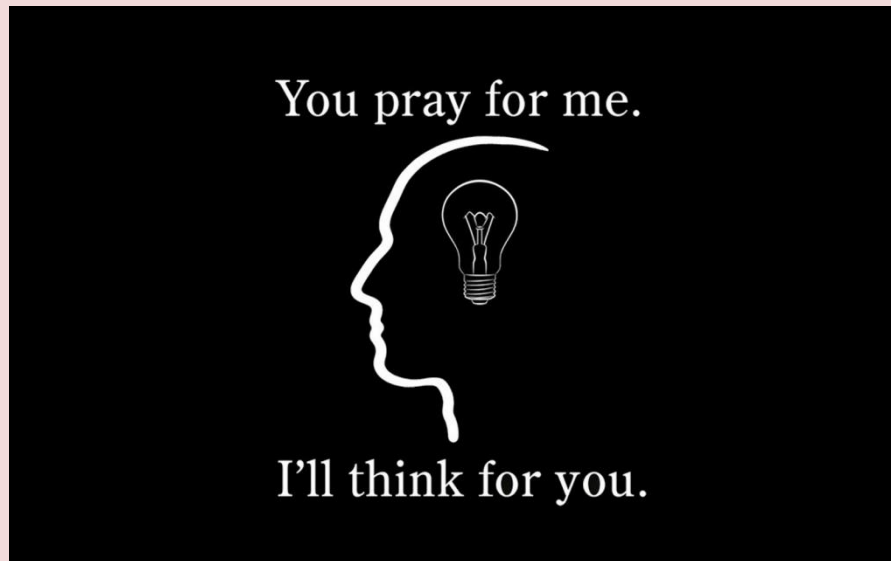
I touch cheek to cheek

I worry about the flight south

I cry leaving here until spring
I am a bird flying
I understand life is fleeting
I know love is pure
I dream of walking through life
I try to stay through the winter
I hide beneath my wing
I am a bird off to warm days.



Ken Allan Dronsfield: I am a Poet and reside in Seminole USA. I am disabled and write full-time. I have contributed and have been a co-editor for various anthologies. I have two published poetry collections.



ATHEISM AND RELIGION

To a believer or a religious person, I would ask, "Is it the sacred text, the tradition, the orthodoxy, the rituals that's your god or religion? Or is it a set of values? Christianity is claimed to be a religion based on love, Islam on fraternity, Buddhism on compassion, and Hinduism on sanatana dharma (cosmic or eternal order/duties or a way of living based on a code of ethics). If it's the former, I would be sorry because maybe we're so superficial in our pursuit that we don't know the purpose of our pursuit. We might as well accept the United States Declaration of Independence drafted by Thomas Jefferson as our holy book. It gives us a sensible tangible thing to pursue in the words "We hold these truths to be sacred & undeniable: that all men are created equal & independent, that from that equal creation they derive rights inherent & inalienable, among which are

the preservation of life & liberty, & the pursuit of happiness."

Another holy book that can guide our lives sensibly is the Indian Constitution, the Article 51A of which says, "It shall be the duty of every citizen of India to promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India transcending religious, linguistic and regional or sectional diversities; to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women; to protect and improve the natural environment including forests, lakes, rivers and wild life, and to have compassion for living creatures; to develop scientific temper, humanism and the spirit of inquiry and reform."

If it's a set of values that you seek as a believer in your religion, then there's no difference between religions and between a good believer and a good atheist. Fraternity is not possible without love and compassion, and vice versa. If _sanatana dharma_ code of ethics or way of life is not based on love, compassion and fraternity, then it's not a sustainable way of life, nor a desirable code of ethics.

As Gandhi said, a good Hindu is a good Muslim is a good Christian. Gandhi demolished religions with that one sentence. Perhaps that's why he was killed. He was a threat to fanaticism and fundamentalism of religious politics.

The good values of our way of life do not need the book, rituals and traditions of religions. Conversely, it is the politics of religion that do not need those values but want to promote conflict and differences by harping on the book, rituals and traditions.

Scepticism, agnosticism and atheism are a part of the set of values that define our way of life - the universal religion of humanity.

Perhaps the Indian Constitution was a pioneer in its incorporation of the term "scientific temper" inspired by what Nehru said in his *Discovery of India*, "What is needed is the scientific approach, the adventurous and yet critical temper of science, the search for truth and new knowledge, the refusal to accept anything without testing and trial, the capacity to change previous conclusions in the face of new evidence, the reliance on observed fact and not on pre-conceived theory, the hard discipline of the mind—all this is necessary, not merely for the application of science but for life itself and the solution of its many problems."

According to Nehru, scientific temper is the opposite of the method of religion, because religion relies on emotion and intuition and is misapplied to everything in life, even to those things which are capable of intellectual inquiry and observation. Religions close the mind and produce

intolerance, credulity and superstition, emotionalism and irrationalism. The spread of scientific temper would shrink the domain of religion.

In articulating his theory of scientific temper, Nehru did a synthesis of Charles Darwin (Freedom of thought is best promoted by the gradual illumination of men's minds, which follows from the advance of science) and Karl Marx (Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people. The abolition of religion as the illusory happiness of the people is the demand for their real happiness).



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



YOU ARE A LITTLE PAINTER

a Kiran Zehra Komail poem

Liars we are

For we convince ourselves not to try;

To pick up a paint brush

And paint the sky.

But we did paint once a masterpiece,

Using every colour creating something unique.

We painted hills, seas, mountains and flowers

Or just simple lines, blocks and towers.

Colours on our fingers, clothes and everywhere

But we loved the mess and little did we care.

Yellow wasn't yellow it was coated with blue
Pink was coated with a black hue.
Nothing made sense, but it made us happy
We had no burdens or promises to carry.
Slowly the endemic of being rich followed suit
All of us engaged in the so-called happiness pursuit.
You drew around yourself a circle of black and white.
You decided "Oh I have bigger battles to fight."
The paint box rusted and your masterpiece withered
Things and fancies in your mind sang and slithered.
Dormant you made the artist inside of you
Tickle your desires there still may be left a spark of hue.
Chores will still remain, the critics will never die
Pull yourself out of reasoning... why, why, why?
There inside your body is a little artist's soul
That doesn't need orders or control.
What are you afraid of? You are already a mess
Try darling, this time again please care a little less.

Sing if you please or write a poetry
Enough of the drama, stop playing queen of tragedy.
Let out that hue box that lies cold and almost dead
Free that superhero caged in your head.
Paint one last time, again will you?
One little picture or may be few?



Kiran Zehra Komail: She is a poet living in Chennai, Tamilnadu, India. 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.



BIRTHDAY NIGHT

Stars in the sky above

Are the narrators of some story

Stories of hard, sites of love

Those that become memory

They are symbols of love, friendship or fate

Meanings so different for all

Oh! Now that I am late

To attend my sleep call

Thoughts such ponder always
In the deep dark blue night
My lovely also is busy always
Finding its way through these
Thoughts to catch my sight

I am thirteen year old
Eager to get answers to my thoughtful questions
Oh! This night, how awfully cold
And the clock skew twelve
It's my turn to become fourteen today
Now will the stars write the story of my birthday?



Lalantika Venkatraman: She is pursuing masters in counselling psychology in Bangalore from Christ college. She has been writing poems since almost 3-4 years now. She can write poems on the subject given to her. But it is essential for her to empathize with the emotions, feel it completely to write. She writes in both Hindi and English. Some of her hobbies are writing, listening to songs, whistling, dancing, and painting. She is an artist and into drawing since her childhood. It is also a medium used by her to express herself. She wishes her poems are a motivation for others to reflect about themselves. She believes strongly in loving and to love, all emerging from gratitude. She is a therapeutic clown too as that is something that has interested her recently.



I AM

I am

Not giving up

I'm planning

To step it up

I am

Not giving in

My aim

Is to win

I am

Not running away

I'm simply

Doing it God's way

I am taking

Jesus to the streets

I am worshipping God in church

Not only warming up the seats

I am not ashamed

To spread the Good News

Trusting that God can bring an end

To all kinds of abuse

I am continually
Crushing the enemy's head
That's a promise
Not a bet

I am not acting
Out of the flesh
Because I know
It will cause a mess

I am not depending for help
From Dick, Tom or Sam
Because all of my help
Comes from my God, the Great I Am



Leroy Abrahams: Leroy is a poet who lives in South Africa, Port Elizabeth, Helenvale. He is currently working for the church, Victory Ministries International and also volunteers and enjoys hospital visits because there he prays for the sick and encourages them. 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.



WHERE CHIEF ONCE STOOD

He is Sioux.

He came from an old place
where they taught him
to honor the land.

After his last breath,
he was a ghost and lingered,
having no place to go,
his old burial grounds torn.

And he stayed still
so the winds would come for him.

Let it blow.

Wait for early sun.

The elders had been delaying
until it would be light
enough to see his face.

Now he's been found,
and the ghost tribe will move on
from where Chief once stood.



Linda Imbler: Her poetry collections include “Big Questions, Little Sleep,” “Lost and Found,” “The Sea’s Secret Song,” and “Pairings,” a hybrid ebook of short fiction and poetry. She is a Kansas-based Pushcart Prize and Best of the Net Nominee. Linda’s poetry and a listing of publications can be found at lindaspotryblog.blogspot.com.



IT'S YOU

Suddenly when you swirled in my dreams

Flowers bloomed in my heart

Jubilant mood danced with the strings of watch

The stars in me brightened my day

Unexpectedly I waited for the Sun's ray

Slowly, then abruptly I opened the door

Which directs its route to the waterfall

The roaring breeze in my chest accepted you as my fate

You imprisoned my soul

You became my goal and core

The violent throbs and butterflies of my stomach
Silently roar—It's you
For whom I crawl.



Lopamudra Mishra: She is a native of Puri, now residing in Bhubaneswar Orissa. Her fascination for writing comes from her grandfather and her father from an early age. Writing for her is the powerful medium of expression. Her poems have been published in many magazines and anthologies. Her first book 'Rhyme Of Rain' was published in March 2017, her second book 'First Rain' in August 2017, and her third book 'Tingling Parables' in May 2018.



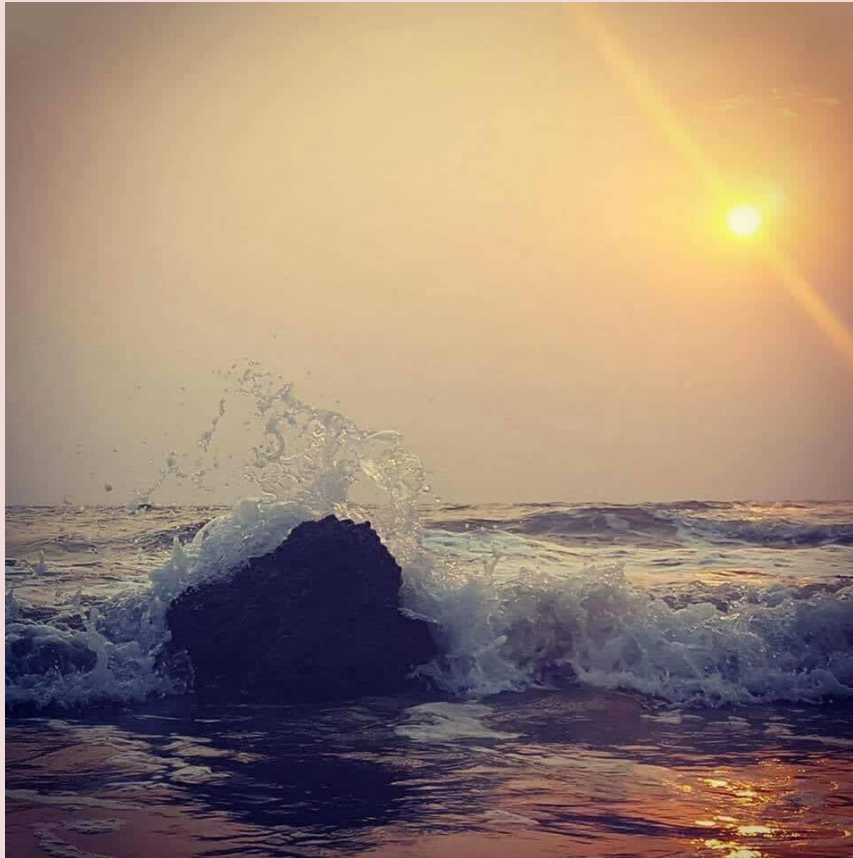
IN LOVE...

a long day it has been
warm and humid
piercing through
the thick coat of sunshine
a soft breeze fragrant and heavy
with traces of the moisture
and whiffs of jasmine
soothing my crazy nerves
calming the racing heart
trying to reach out to you

who left me stranded
on this island of a day
like a cork i absorb
still float in the air
and the water
without an anchor
the anchor of your love
that would hold me strong
stronger with every passing hour
every minute and second
trying to wade through the moments
lashed by the waves of my love
yet rooted in love
deeply in love



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



THE RHYTHM OF HEARTSTRINGS

She - "Why you keep sharing pictures of the rising sun, the sky and the vast ocean myriad times?"

He - "Don't you understand that they depict the limitlessness, the vastness, the surreal depth of emotions we share!!"

She - "O' yes the azure sky fills our persona with the amber colour of the rising sun in the horizon, but why the sun and the sea..?"

He - "The sun, ever consistent, burning bright, lightens and fills up our hearts with the warmth of deep bond and affection shared."

She - "That's forever persistent come what may!!"

He - "The vast ocean spread miles and miles showcasing the emotions that are conjoined, surging thousands of feet deep down, touching our heartstrings like none."

She - "And the sea waves rendering and emotivating a musical extravaganza, that's only ours to hear."



Madhu Jaiswal: She is a bilingual poet born and based in Kolkata. Writing is a passion for this homemaker. Her write-ups are published in various national and international anthologies and e-zines.



<https://www.revolvy.com/page/The-Bard-%28poem%29>

I AM NOT A DIGITAL WRITER

I'm not a digital age writer,
I belonged to the age of quills,
Scribed on birch barks.

I lived alone in the woods,
Wandered in search of writing material,
In the middle of a dense forest.

I'd pick a leaf now and then,
That fell off from the branches,
Every six to eight weeks.

Never struggled for writing prompts,
No dearth of inspiration,
Writers' Block is a new life-style disease.

Never knew of grammar,
Rules and order of writing,
Never knew of borders,
Separating land from land,
And land from sea,
Never used commas.

I never felt lost,
Never knew of dates and days.
Felt the changing seasons on my skin.

The changing colours,
Never knew their names.
Couldn't describe time and nature.
Never used adjectives,
Didn't have to exaggerate anything.

I believed,
The river which ran through my forest home,
Is the deepest body to hold that water,
Never knew where it originated from,
A mountain, a glacier, or a hot-spring,
Never thought of tracking its course!

If I wasn't happy with my writing,
I'd wash the leaf, dry it and rewrite.
Never knew what editing means.

I never knew of faith,
Of another one,

Dwelling in the endless sky.
May be because I lived alone,
And nobody introduced him to me.

I never saved them,
The dried leaves I picked up,
The barks I peeled,
Of the betulaceous trees.
The dried leaves flew away,
With the winds which brought merciless rains,
The birch bark was eaten away,
By tiny ant like creatures.

I didn't lock my writings,
They have a life time too.
I have no regrets,
I'm not a digital age writer.



Mahitha Kasireddi: She is from Hyderabad, India. She had been a writer with the online magazine 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.



ELIXIR OF LIFE

To scribe poems
over the skin of night

unfurl eyes,
hook days whose

each page is
to be filled in

with a verse afresh,
a tale anew

To evenings, tinge
them with fragrance

swirling through hair
like stars

beaming showers
inking ghazals

breaking off from sky
like almonds from trees

cupping into palms

drink thus,
this elixir of life.



Manisha Manhas: She is a rebel. 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. Her poems have previously been published in various journals. For her, poetry is her life-force quite similar to blood flowing in her veins.



DISCARDED

My fur was feathery, melting was my touch,

I smelled so nice, spongy sudsy me!

Carried everywhere, ubiquitous have been,

Snuggled in your arms, I trotted lands!

Squeezed in fear, pounded in anger,

Hugged in love and pain!

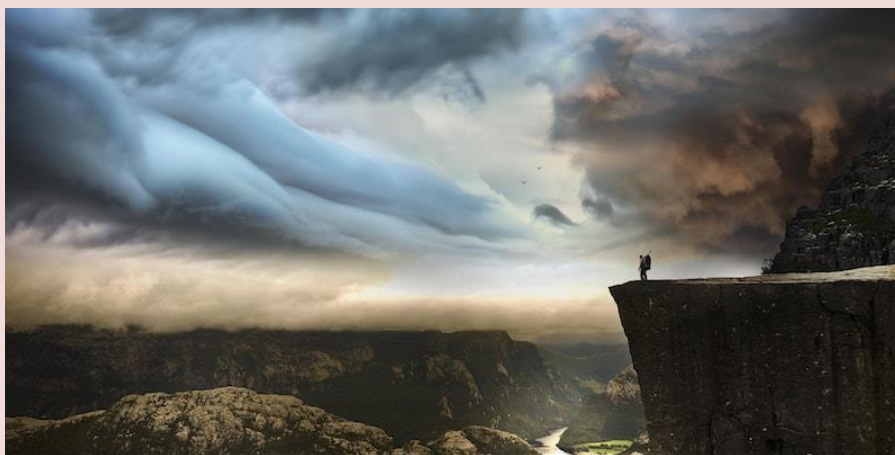
Changing seasons, swinging moods,

That's how my fur got mould!
You won't part whether day or night,
Now, I struggle to get in sight!
Our relation was so steady,
How can you forget your little Teddy!
Your palace adorns the luxurians,
Getting thrown away, is a neglected ghost!
Oh wait, now I am in a box at Goodwill,
Through me, still you score good deeds!
My touch so rough, my fur so moldy,
Shriveled, rotten, rugged me!
Yet hugged to the bosom,
My new mistress tucked a new eye for me!
I occupy her empty castle,
Together we gallop around!
Once discarded, I am home again,
“Droopy”, I even have a name,

Inanimate, inert, mass, just a thing,
I live without breathing!



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



[\(https://positivepsychologyprogram.com/introspection-self-reflection/\)](https://positivepsychologyprogram.com/introspection-self-reflection/)

THE MIND AND I

Rumi and Sufis often said trust your heart

but what about the mind, dear fellas -

the never-sleeping always blabbering

Big Sisterly mind of mine, with a knifey tongue?

Carpet-bombing my life, ruthlessly.

Trust one and the other trips you.

Trust the other one, and the hurt one

- tilts the floor.

I envy the teenagers who sleep it all off.



Late Mushtaque Ali Khan Babi AKA Max Babi: Max was a multilingual writer, poet who liked a wide variety of formats – whose life was full of oxymoronic shades, a polymath who went from being a specialist to a generalist to a versatelist. Mentoring by being a catalyst enthralled him, he wrote on serendipity and intuition, conducted workshops on a range of subjects and topics. He was a very friendly Santa Claus.



CHICAGO STREET PREACHER

Street preacher

server of the Word,

pamphlet whore, hand out

delivery boy,

fanatic of sidewalk vocals,

banjo strummer, seeker of coins,

crack cocaine and salvation within notes.

Camper on 47th from Ashland

to California promoting his
penniless life, gospel forever
Kingdom drifter here comes your reward.



Michael Lee Johnson: 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 various anthologies. He is the author of two books, and several chapbooks. 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.



AUSCHWITZ ROSE

There is a Rose at Auschwitz, in the briar,
a rose like Sharon's, lovely as her name.

The world forgot her, and is not the same.

I love her and would not forget desire,
but keep her memory exalted flame
to justify the thistles and the nettles.

On Auschwitz now the reddening sunset settles;
they sleep alike—diminutive and tall,
the innocent, the "surgeons."

Sleeping, all.

Red oxides of her blood, bright crimson petals,
if accidents of coloration, gall
my heart no less.

Amid thick weeds and muck
there lies a rose man's crackling lightning struck;
the only Rose I ever longed to pluck.
Soon I'll bid there and bid the world "Good Luck."



Michael R. Burch: His poems, translations, essays, articles and letters have appeared in TIME, USA Today, The Hindu, BBC Radio 3, Amnesty International's Words That Burn, Writer's Digest–The Year's Best Writing and hundreds of literary journals. His poems have been translated into twelve languages and set to music by the composers Mark Buller, Alexander Comitas and Seth Wright. He also edits www.thehypertexts.com and serves as the international poetry editor for Better Than Starbucks.



SPICES AND CURRIES

Like most Indians

I am fond of spices,

The smell of coriander, cardamom, turmeric, ginger, chilli flakes,

Is what invigorates me,

If there is no fragrance of spices

What is the use of an Indian home?

If there are no curries

What is the use of spices?

Without spices, I can't think of life,

Both within four walls and the ceiling,

And out of them,

At home, spices give me appetite,

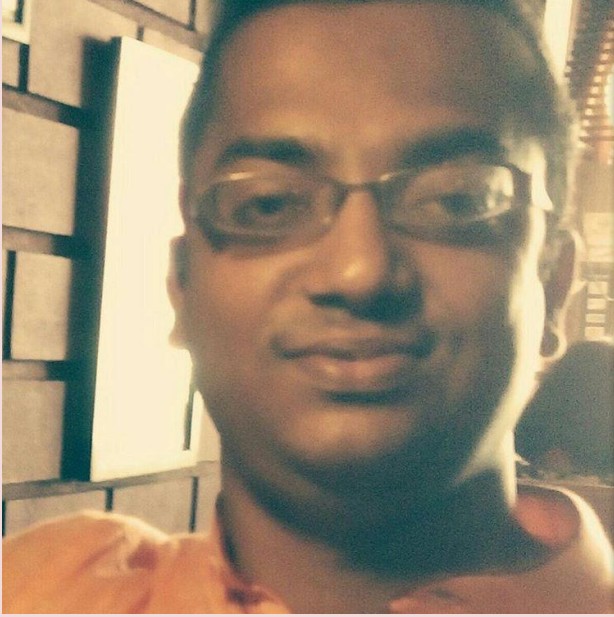
Out of home, they give me colors,

At home, they make me regional,

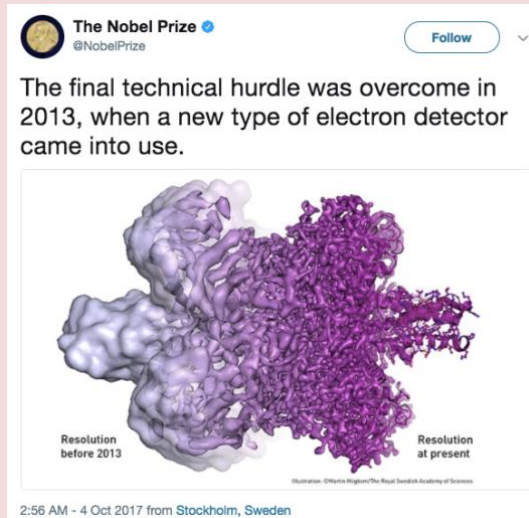
Out of home, they make me curious,

Like most Indians, I am fond of spices,

Their smell keep me young and vibrant.



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



THE MOLECULAR MACHINERY OF LIFE – REVEALED

Hurtling swiftly down the massive column

negatively charged superheroes

zig and zag along the way

homing in on their target...

In a flash they pass through it – and scatter away.

The monstrous screen lights up

and within the single flap of a hummingbird's wing

spews data millions of bytes a second

converted into conformations and configurations

rainbow-hued like a hypnotic mandala design.

The sample is a thing of beauty
delicate, miniscule and crystallized to perfection
This tiny speck – invisible to the naked eye –
remains forever frozen...a snapshot in time...
a fount of information raised to the power of infinity.

(Transmission electron microscopes use electron beams to analyze molecular structure. As this beam passes through a very thin sample, it interacts with the molecules in the material and thus casts an image of the structure onto a detector. This is then analyzed using software to find out the structure. However, biomaterials and the like are incompatible with the intensity of the electron beams and the other associated conditions. This is because the protective water covering burns off at this high temperature, thus destroying the molecular integrity. To solve this problem, cryo electron microscopy (what this poem describes) was used. Here, frozen samples are used along with slightly less intense electron beams to maintain sample integrity and obtain clear structural details.)



Nivedita Karthik: I am a poet residing in Chennai, India. I work as a Senior Quality Controller. My work has also been published in the journal of the Society of Classical Poets.



THE CHAMPA FLOWER

The Champa flower or magnolia is purity and beauty

Her perfume is heady and intoxicating

The perfume from these blooms are said to attract snakes

None can resist this hungry and sensual assault

The champa blooms, the colour of freshly made butter,

Vanilla cream or the creamy chiffon sari that sensuously

Drapes a beautiful maiden and adorns her long

Lustrous satin black locks like stars in an inky sky

The champa trees slip out of their silken dresses
And drop them on the floor of the forest
Where they lie, forgotten and unseen but their divine scent
evokes fragrant memories of interludes

Magnolias with their elusive fragrance and fragile beauty
Makes me wonder, are they the embodiment
of celestial beauties come down to earth
To shatter my senses and transport me to heaven.

But like everything that is beautiful and rare,
Champa, the tree of which is said to have its roots
In Heaven, blooms just for a short while,
Before it falls and gives herself up to mother Earth.



Padmini Rambhatla: I am a homemaker residing in Chennai, India. I work as an English teacher. I have contributed to a poetry group on Facebook. I dabble in art occasionally and love cooking a variety dishes for friends and family.



HAPPY CHILDREN'S DAY

When a child looks at me with wide, innocent eyes yet to be filled with life's experiences and tribulations, it reminds me of the adult responsibility of filling those eyes with sparkling glee. And for that, I must be responsible, organised, understanding, thoughtful, compassionate and kind.

Out of love for children, adults must be disciplined and organized enough to offer a reliable, structured life. May morals and good sense prevail for the same.

So when they look up to us, may they always see the best of their childhood.



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



SHARAD PURNIMA

Saw the Sun kissing Moon goodbye

Blushed Moon

Leaves of Trees blushing

My morning walk beautiful

Gold and Blue merging

Becoming One.

Remember the Purnima days at Taj

Foreign tourists with expensive cameras

Not enjoying the Moon

But their Cameras

Pictures for friends and family

Missing Life & Moon.



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



THE GARGOYLE

St. Thomas Cathedral, Mumbai

Over a frayed cloud
patching the edges of a cerulean sky,
you stretch out your neck
to taste the bleeding red of the winter dawn.
Hunched on the crumbling parapet
you leaf through realms of time,
sleep-walk through fallen empires,
lost generations
and children who faded away.

Those skeletal lumps on your back
hewn from a single slab of granite -
have you ever leapt into the void?
tasted the sweat on the neck of the old man
lost in a sea of gray dust?
Or talked in hushed voices to the unborn child
of the girl heavy with a dream?

Through these unfurling moments,
as the clock, older than time itself
trudges on its circular trajectory of life-death-life,
you puff the scarlet ember of the rising sun
overlooking the business of worlds.
A beggar clutching a silent dew-drop,
a mongrel licking the last star from a puddle.

You have through all the upheavals and sorrows,
wars and maybe even a few joys,
stayed suspended like a trishanku
between ether and soil,
between being and not being.

Have you never wished to snuff out the sun
in this cold ashtray of earth with a twist of your fingers?
Have you never wished to break the lattice
of your neon-tinted, howling eyes?
Have you never wanted to unleash,
to spread your wings, hunt and feed?



Paresh Tiwari: Poet, artist, and editor Paresh Tiwari has been widely published, especially in the sub-genre of Japanese poetry. A Pushcart Prize nominee, he has published two widely acclaimed collections of poetry. *Raindrops chasing Raindrops*, his latest collection of haibun was the recipient of the ‘Touchstone Distinguished Book Awards – 2017’.

Paresh is the serving haibun editor of the literary magazine *Narrow Road*, a tri-annual publication. He has read his works at various literature festivals, cafés, theatres, galleries and has conducted haibun workshops at venues across India in an attempt to dismantle the boundaries that keep the various forms of poetry and literature from sharing the same spaces.



MY FLAME

Flickers cold shadows over your skin,
Dances into your curves as a cloud
Passes over a valley its shadow dips
Towards the swerve of water,

The dark copse darkened by the sip
The sup of clear water that beckons
My tongue taste its brightnesses
That is the perfume in your curves.



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



A SPELL OF WET WEATHER

Take the spit of a single ant

Now don't argue and say you can't

Mix it well with elephant dripping

(When through his nose, the water he's sipping)

Stir it well and stir it twice

Sprinkle some sugar to make it nice

Dip your fingers and dip your toes

Touch each digit on your nose

Sit then stand and spin around

Lift both feet up off the ground

Hover there for just a while

Try to do with some style

This is the spell to make it rain

When its dry upon the plain

A wizard told me so it must be true

(But elephant dripping is just like glue!)



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



<http://www.1zoom.net/Nature/wallpaper/336627/z4559.6/>

THE NIGHT IS ASLEEP

I cover many a world at a time

I cover hemispheres

I cover light and darkness

I stare at statues

Statue becomes creatures

I stare at creatures

Creature becomes statues

Mother scales many a stair to reach me

The way I have had alighted from her womb to see the world

Mother is singing a song that I only understand

Mother is both silence and sound

Mother is both light and darkness

In between sleep and sleeplessness oscillates her world

I am chatting but know not with whom

Am I chatting with the night

Am I chatting with the mother

While Scenes are changing in t. v screen

Characters are changing

Even dialogues

Script has already been written

I am asked to enact only

But in life the script is unknown and

Unknowable

As it seems the night is asleep
But I have not sung the lullaby
I have not given her sleeping pill
Just I have covered a bed sheet and she herself is the blue
sky with twinkling stars
I have had her head under the pillow
I just addressed her as mother and she falls asleep

Night is like that

A few staircases of bones one has to scale to reach the
dizzy height

The height defines the consciousness

The distance of temple

From the deity

The distance of Man from faith

And the hidden prayer in between the silent lips and silent
eyelids!



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.



SOMEWHERE, SOMETIME

On a happy morning,

On a sad night.

On a romantic evening,

With the glimpses of light.

On a hot summer day,

On a sudden downpour,

On a thunderstorm of May,

On our amorous hour.

With the dances of blossoms

breeze ruffles the leaves,

Here comes the winter,
with our indelible moments.



Prमित Maity: He is a blogger, poet, music lover and sports management professional from Kolkata, India. He is an avid lover of literature, and had done Master's in Mass Communication from Jadavpur University, Kolkata. He had pursued Master's program in Sports Business from Indian Institute of Social Welfare and Business Management. Apart from writing, he is a student of Hindustani Classical Music, and plays Sitar.



Why is your back to me hey Guy Fawkes!

Is this a trick-o-treat of Halloween?

Bad mannered or so vain, your visage you want to hide?

Cannot look me in the eye, lest I unmask your real you?

No, nothing of the sort.

I am only protecting you from yourself.

Like the Phantom of your childhood comic,

No one looks the Ghost who walks in the eye...

I am more than the Men in Black

They were fending off aliens,

Who shall save you from your inner mutants?



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



BUTTERFLY KISS

While

Roaming in the moonlight

Talking with flowers & butterflies

One cute and sweet rose

Kissed my lips

Passed its honey

Into my heart

A divine melody

Tuned my breath

Me and my rose

Danced together

Flew sky -high

Weaved our own

Seventh heaven.



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.



NOVEMBER HUES

Cold November night returns again

Life vividly enjoys its charm

Silver moon peeps through the ivory mist

Churning the heaviness of mind!

Draping fresh droplets of dew

Cold winter morning dances with the sun

Tree tops are getting rich colourful wings

Vivid butterfly kisses the shiny rose buds.

Earth becomes fiery red

Scattering saffron hues

On the lands and rivers,

Flimsy autumn leaves gracefully falling
Around the path, still shining bright.
My hazy dreams are soaring higher and higher
Healing every corner of my heart
Uplifting the cold november mist
Upon the dusty brown hills.



Preety Bora: I am a poet residing in India, Assam, in a small city called "Golaghat". I have contributed to various anthologies and also edited one bilingual anthology of poems. Nature is my greatest inspiration. I love to paint my word amidst the beauty of nature.



THE CALM

The last reserves of courage had already been summoned for getting up at 5:00 am. So how was I to face the bathwater, chilled by last night's storm?

flower sellers

— *the city wakes up*

chirp by chirp

I emerge from the stale, conditioned air of my room to the rain-cooled dawn, all agog for the journey to Mangalagiri.

Lucky for me there were others to do the bargaining with the van driver, so I could busy myself with the unworldly business of taking in the sunrise, the gold shimmer of the past fields, the birds and their triple-barrel names, the high-tension lines in the distance, and the great gopuram looming into view.

lamp smoke

the audacious smell

of fresh hope

The coppery echoes of the temple bells, the mogra-scented headiness of the incense, the wide-eyed bhakti of the devoted, the craft of the ancient sculptor of the idol... one could almost believe again. The old prayers well up in the consciousness, but I steel myself again.

hill temple

the gravel path studded

with old chants

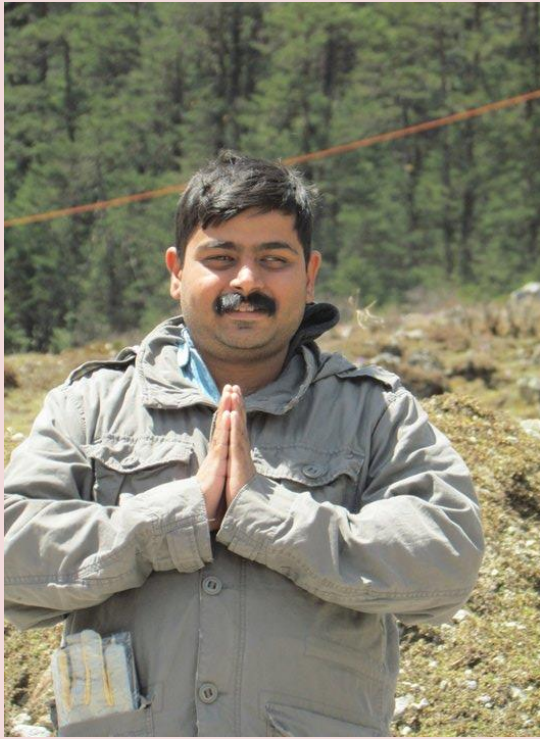
We reach the tiny cave shrine from where the base of dawn lifts over the endless green fields that will one day become the city of Amaravathi. I ignore the arrogant priest's order to buy offerings for the Lord, walking past him to the darshan, where in a frenzy, the devotees pour jaggery-

water into the gaping mouth of Narasimha. I decline the
teertham, whatever prasādam I had to get, I have probably
gotten.

return bus

the smell of roast coffee

rides ticketless



Raamesh Gowri Raghavan: I am a writer residing in Thane, India. I work as freelance copywriter. I have contributed to various anthologies. I have also published poems in many magazines and poetry anthologies. I was felicitated at Amaravati Poetic Prism 2016 for writing poems in 11 different languages.



WITHIN A PRISON OF FOUR WALLS

Me a convict within a
cell of four walls, all the
time watching and hearing me.

I am a listener of my own
Heartbeat, faster than sentinels;

Don't ask me how I landed there;
rounded up in streets by cops
along with others as unruly elements.

Other cases of criminals, not proven,
another cell, lathis and wailing of
shock treatments, pangs of brutal deaths.

A man at the corner has his own moorings:
This vast world, a shell for us,
our deeds or misdeeds.

Heaven or haven, we have to make
Visitor hours our time of bliss!
else, a doleful day of guilt and corrosion,

ruling our passions, also guiltless moments;
why his life? Why hypocrisy? Why
relentless move and meaningless clatter?

Besides, digging, watering, gardening
we have to dig into many a dark cells,
water our hardened, palsy smitten spaces

of discussions and dingy rooms, stuffed
with irate ruminations clear up fast.

Heaven or haven, we have to make.



Radhamani Sarma: I am a poet, short story writer, residing in Chennai, India. I am a retired professor of English. I have contributed to various anthologies. I have also published my own poetry collections. I am also a reviewer and critic, and have contributed critical essays on living writes, and am a blogger too.



CALL IT LIFE!

There are cities, and there are cities, like men
they aren't alike. I sing in praise of a city that's
mine. I like my cities small. The polis-
large- metro, megalopolis, whatever, insidious,
is lethal, a slow brain-fever. Men (and women)
young and old, children big and small,
are cursed alike, to live their lives, trapped
in what lifelong they've known and called: life.
They call it life!

They murder sky, eat stars with lights, don't
even know what's gone. Drugged they live their sleep-life
and call that curse a boon. Big cities, big machines,
suck men within, churn zombies out. They sleep
to wake, and rush through the day to sleep again,
to rush again the mad rush of adrenaline while steering
the wheel of life, through the venom of gases. They vomit
in drains that once were rivers. Their days are rootless
nameless nights, they're cursed to live alone
in crowds and unknown die, and then, alas,
to call it life!



Rajnish Mishra: He 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>.



CREATION

She is the Origin of all Species.

From every breath of hers is born the aves.

From every gait, the fauna.

every dip, the pisces.

gesture, the flora.

We make love in Island Galapagos and Lesbos.

I bury my nose in her hair and a mesh of knotted roots

Loop their serpent coils around me.

I graze her brow with my lips and a herd of musk deer

Leap like nascent bubbles in the forest glade.

I gaze deep into her eyes and a swarm of butterflies

Flit around her rainbow lashes.

I fence her scented tongue with my tongue and a mouthful
of

Soupy sea surges into me bringing fish and algae.

She hovers above me and

Covers me with her panting body

Like a flotilla of plankton.

Green scents envelop me and a

Rainforest engulfs us.

We wake up later in a bird's nest

A luminous egg between us.

She nestles close glowing like a touch sensitive sky

That trembles, sparks, emits light and chimes with the
wind.

(I am her chosen cell,
Sweet chromosome,
Pet corpuscle.
I erupt at her command.)

I put my ear to her burrow.
I hear the rabbits.



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.



ESCAPE ROUTE

We took the bus every Sunday. It took us away
There wasn't a destination
or any decisions. It simply fled

Leaving behind the oil black city
it plunged down the steep hillside
crossing the stretch where people
surreptitiously threw stuff

We held our breaths, knowing the wind
would bring it back, sullied
the very next moment
The dump mountain held more than just trash

The moment we passed it,
the gods and their city
abandoned us

We became tall like trees,
greener than grass
Pushing out all the corks,
we became possibilities

Everything
that only lovers can be



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.



CAT'S SLEEP

A cat's sleep simulates
the construction
of a massive railway-station.

It turns every gear
cog by cog, as
the lids fall slowly.

It lays brick upon brick
secreting sleep into eyes,
Like a slow wind had blown
into the half-built station -
And as a passenger,

waiting for a train that never comes

It slips into sleep.

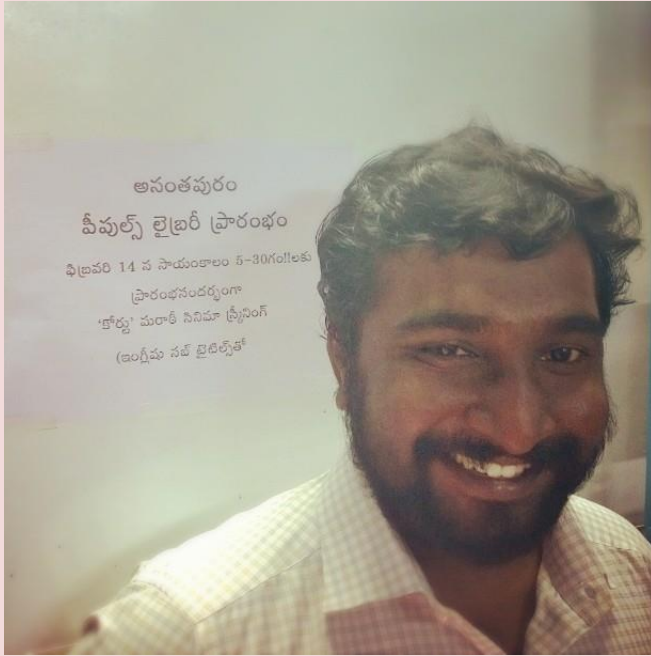
There is a dark room

in those closed eyes

where a man gropes the walls

his entire life

to switch on the light.



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, and has been acknowledged and complimented by various senior poets.



THE WATER OF LIFE

your Joy flows from your eyes
waterfall of rare sincerity
heartfelt sparks pour down on me
drenching my fire
kindling my love

your Joy flows from your lips
awakening seeds from exquisite ancient rivers
Haskalah showers rain down on me
washing my flames
burgeoning my dreams

your Love is the water of life
irrigating my thirsty soul
defining our Zohar
turning my universe so differently
water loving fire
fire loving water

love is a profound restlessness as it is a joy; how sweet it is
to trade hearts with you!



Robert Feldman: I am a writer and painter residing in Port St. Lucie, Florida. I own and operate a college test preparatory company. I have also published several poems and short stories in booklets, anthologies, and magazines, both hard copy and online.



HAIKU-1

Carving out

A slice of time

So I can deal with today!

Unsolved problems

That are saturating

My now afflicted soul!

Whether real

Or imaginary,

They are present!

But faith and hope

Never lost

When light is near!

Gone will be

The fear and pain,

Love will be reborn!



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



TWINS

We have born together
If not, one after the other
You have got in to the tender hands
I was suppressed to the underneath
You have got caressed by all the hands
I was just ignored by all others
You have passed all the milestones
I sat on a corner stone
Watching you, since you born
Sometimes reaching you at
A distance of a sigh,

Sometimes, atop at the infinite sky

One day I'll come close to you,

Beside your bed,

And slowly to your body;

Give up all your fears and worries

I'll let you relax, close your eyes

Let the other realize

That I was with you always

As I do with all the others,

Relax, Close your eyes



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), periodicals with a pen name as ‘Saleem Kattuchola’, and used to write English poems in International Magazines.



RAINBOW

I was depressed, nothing to write,
And on top of it,
The depressing downpour outside.
the dull grey sky, the rumble of thunder
And as the lightning flashed outside,
An idea flashed into my mind,
I picked up quill and parchment
And began to write,
And as I finished I saw, from the window

As the rain stopped, the very subject of my piece,
A beautiful, colourful, delightful RAINBOW...
Glimmering amongst the sun-kissed clouds,
In the bright blue sky.



Samixa Bajaj: She is a student of Class 8. She is an avid reader. Poem writing is a passion she dabbles in, in her free time. Her poems depend on her mood at the time. She is also interested in dance and drawing.



A PURPLE TALE

Listen, will tell a tale to thee.

Though all roads meet beneath the gulmohor tree

Still all gulmohors don't spread

Beauty of their vibrant red petals

Secretly some bleed & fight their own battles!

She preserves all her hue,

her pride, love & tenderness

For her Arjuna who will not love And honor her any less.

Who knows all her surrender,

her love are hidden in her

valor dauntless.

Oh! It's not just a game of color
But also colorlessness!
One has to find & understand
That hidden love in her purpleness!



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



RESILIENCE

A vicious storm unleashed its fury last night.

But in the famished farmer's hovel,
a tiny terracotta lamp burnt bright, snug in a crevice,
its wick sucking up on the last dregs of oil.

Relentless the gale, but the lamp burnt on, unflinching.

Huge, solid looking trees were uprooted,
petrified owls no longer hooted.

Chandeliers in spectacular buildings broke into shards.

The storm ripped off branches with malicious vigour,
lashing, thrashing, dashing, crashing against doors and
windows.

The heartbeats of the frail figure in the hovel almost
stopped.

On his tattered mat, he flopped, with a shuddering sigh
.Would the storm uproot his house ?

He trembled with every gust of wind,
frightened eyes darting around, pained.

Another tree had crashed to the ground,
another still another; Chaos and commotion reigned.

But the lamp with incredible gumption
burnt on, lighting his dingy hove.

Miraculously, the turbulence had been tamed

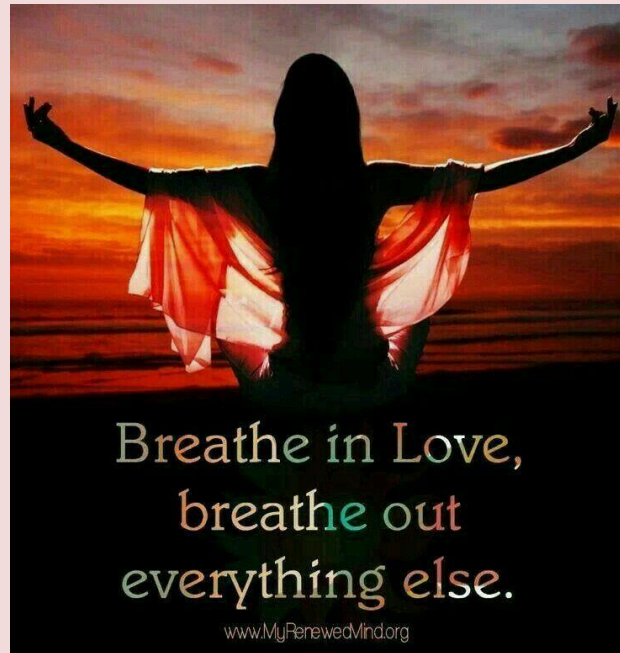
The East was in flames.

The tiny lamp had turned in for the night

Now, up above, a giant lamp burnt bright.



Santosh Bakaya: I am a poet-novelist-essayist residing in Jaipur, Rajasthan, India. I work as a teacher and have contributed to various anthologies, have written many novels and poetry anthologies, and a poetic biography of Mahatma Gandhi, Ballad of Bapu. Recently I delivered a Ted Talk on The Myth Of Writers' Block.



I BREATHE LOVE

The moment I breathe love

I feel heavenly in my heart

leaving no space for hatred!

The moment I breathe

love I feel your love creeping into my yearning heart, a pleasant feeling sprouts like a new green leaf loving me tender!

My life has been a pond of love where beautiful lotuses bloom shiny bright!

I don't let the flowers wither away in my heart, it gives fragrance to all around me!

The moment I breathe love, I feel I am a new person with a
heartful of love and care for my motherland and the world
in toto!

Let love conquer my life till

I am merged with the mother earth

Loving n beautiful

Kissing her tender bosom

Soft n loving!

Oh Divine mother

How beautiful thou art!



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



Shrieeeeek

I heard a squeak

I looked up to find someone

I looked for movement, but I found none

Then I saw it, I saw red

Covering itself with a leaf bed

Nibbling on mangoes as though a hare on a carrot

I saw a beautiful green parrot

I thought a few years down from now

We will have to look for greenery through snow

A snow of pollution and smoke

It'll be sad to see our green planet, suffering a heart stroke!



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.



TO LIVE IS THE RAREST THING

A lost friend, a missed love tale

Mind ships - never set a sail

Handshakes coloured in false smiles

Checklist boxes and an unsent mail

Hurried lunches, postponed chores,

Forgotten arts of bedtime lores,

A share here, a like there keeping scores

Dreams settled by user agreements and mores.

The rare joy of a friend's hug

Lost in a fading photo mug

Approval, love, even friendly nods now

Mere emoticons that smile and shrug

Let's lift up our head from that blue screen

Smile and frown for real at the kind and mean

There's more to life than an updated Jellybean

Let's live in the real world's real scene.

Ah! To live is the rarest thing they say,

An analog quip frozen in a digital bay

Let's live, even thrive beyond a selfie,

Than squander real beauty in pursuit of full HD.



Saranya Francis: She is a multilingual poet with published poems in English, Hindi and Tamil. She has to her credit two anthologies of poetry titled *Ambedo* and *Being Purple*. Her poetry has been widely published online. She is a dance and music enthusiast and a linguist. She is the recipient of the Bharat Award for Literature (2018), Rabindranath Tagore Award (2017), National Chanting Bards Award (2017). Saranya is the Secretary of ZAV Foundation, an NGO working for the cause of education and women empowerment. She is currently a freelance life skills trainer and also teaches in a satellite based education company.



TENDRIL

Yellow is the splash beyond the border of creation
where music gestates in waves of oscillating color

Illuminating the spark of burgeoning consciousness
as form takes shape behind eyes sealed shut

Magnetic is the shade of infrared energy during autumn
abuzz with the hiss of electric eels in motion

Night bleeds blue and black through scarlet-hued veins
with a feverish brush swirling primordial soup



Scott Thomas Outlar: He hosts the site 17Numa.com where links to his published poetry, fiction, essays, interviews, reviews, live events, and books can be found. His work has been nominated for the Pushcart Prize and Best of the Net. Selections of his poetry have been translated into Afrikaans, Albanian, Dutch, Italian, French, Persian, and Serbian. He has been a weekly contributor for the cultural newsletter *Dissident Voice* since 2014. His most recent book, *Abstract Visions of Light*, was released in 2018 through Alien Buddha Press.



Mysti Milwee: She is an International published synesthesia artist and poetess from Southside, Alabama. Her poetry has been published in Warriors With Wings-The Best of Contemporary Poetry; Hidden Constellation; Whispers Journal; PPP E-Zine (India). Her art was featured on the cover of GloMag Magazine (July 2018 Issue). Her poetry has been used in academic studies and ministries across the US and abroad. See her other awards and publications at www.mystismilwee.wordpress.com



The earthen lamp
Created with such love
Muddy slush spun
Magically into curved form
On the potters swift wheel
in the potters tender care

Tiny and frail, quickly hardened
In the high heat of the baking kiln
All of life's lessons quickly instilled
As a mini lamp valiantly
fending off all enveloping dark
Yet be so pleasing and to fit the palm

Meant to light up unlit corners
Of the mind and the landscape
Alas its fate was to crash into smithereens
By a careless arm that brushed its perch
Was it that this one probably missed
the potters blessings to forever last

Though so lovingly decorated
Like the Indian bride
draped and bedecked in splendour
Crimson lined with vermilion and white dots
So proudly displayed next to its matching pair
It's life and glory was to be short-lived

Same as the destiny that befalls
Many a beaming scarlet draped bride
Their eyes reveal the shattered bits of
Promises, dreams, love and pride

Lies that can no longer be masked by

The fanfare of her much celebrated wedding



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



HUMAN DESIRE

Human desire,
are like an octopus,
easy to grasp,
from all directions.

But sometimes,
badly entangled,
in its own wishes.



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.



ANASTASIA

I

We will explode

If not us, our remains

Hovering into the far reaches of space

The chorus of our despair

Muted by its vacuum

We will explode,

Our immutable ambitions

And delirious trepidations

Silenced- by a lack of song

We will explode,

History wiped out of memory
Dust settled into eternity, eternally
Forgotten.

II

Tempered ticking tricking time
Distressed division of the atoms
Within constraints, we optimise
A mental freedom from the shackles;
Sisyphus too, was once condemned
To repetitions
And like the rotations of a Vinyl CD
Found new meaning
In the same movement
Redefining music as the spaces
-those visceral empty places
Between silences.

III

Our thoughts our boulders

Streaming, fleeting and our free

Will that binds us

Making us question our glee.

Those floodgates they're open

The dams buzzing-electricity

Complacency giving rise to energy.

Idling in idle sounds we know

Weathering adversity, we will grow

And fighting the fizzling music, fiercely roar-

To be a rock,

And not to roll.



Shivank Sarin: Like chocolate sprinkles on dessert, poetry and music have added excitement and sweetness to my life. 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 a student studying Economics at Ashoka University. Would love to hear from you at-

shivanksarin98@gmail.com



<https://www.hinduwebsite.com/sanyasmeans.asp>

THE SAFFRON CLAD SANYASIN: WOES OF A MANGO TREE

My uncle, handsomeness spilling over his halo of
calmness

A personality of beauteousness

Majestic form, never dwindling

Sailing through manhood.

My uncle, Achu, that was his name

Seeking no fame

Doing only good unto others

In this fast changing world of trivialities

Malu, that was the girl he loved
Thinking of her as his beloved
Slenderness and beauteousness mingling
Into the perfect picture of womanhood.

Father of Malu, hairs nevertheless shrinking
As fast as eyes blinking
Knowing of this love
Berated Achu of scandalousness and inaneness.
Achu's journey into the future,
Struck a chord into Malu's heart
Initiating a spate of protests.

Malu, her slender body not withstanding
The scandalous rumours teeming with passion
Falling down, suppression entailing like a young
Banana plant struck by lightning.

Achu, journeying into the future
A saffron-clad sanyasin
Ashes on his body like white daylight
With a bowl in hand supplied by the
moon-lit night.

Malu, whose soul lay beneath a tree standing
As a cover, for hot tears unending.
A soul, whose passionate tears never blooming
Into the steadfast tree that is grown.

Swamy Achutananda, as he was called
Came abreast the love mango tree
Standing silently though no one could see
The bare soul that pounded beneath unendingly.

The lone sanyasin whose hands flickered,
A tree, whose beauty shuddered

At the very thought of seeing the lonesomeness
Of the tired sanyasin.

Arms gesticulating, leaves wavering
A slight movement, here and there,

For the sanyasin to stop,
So that sprinkling of sacred water
Could revive the beautousness of this lonely tree
Forever fulfilling
Purposefulness of the mundane life
Of the lonesome mango tree.



Shobha Warriar: Born near Trichur in Kerala, she did her schooling in Mumbai and Chennai. Shobha was highly influenced by her maternal grandfather who was a distinguished Sanskrit scholar. Shobha had a keen interest in languages, be it prose or poetry, from her school days. She has also worked as a teacher in schools for some time. Shobha's father, K. Ramakrishna Warriar, is a distinguished writer in Malayalam, and recipient of the Sahitya Akademi award for his contribution in Sanskrit. Shobha is married to an engineer and has one daughter.



Smoothsailing traffic pauses for a hiccup;
there's a rare politeness in the parting,
the giving way, each admitting that
Life lives in spurts.

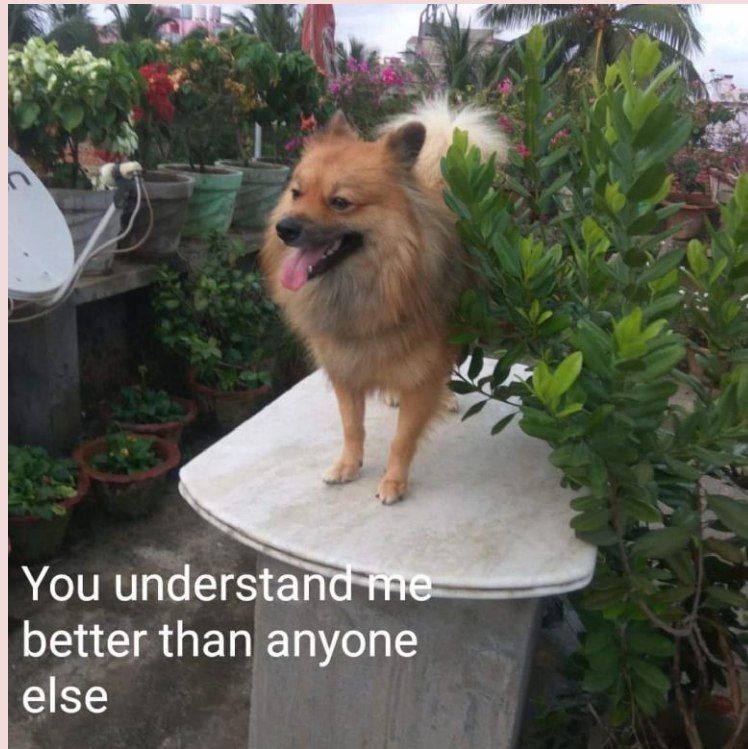
The whirlpool scream throbs the air,
so familiar it's become scary
on the high streets of everyday life.

Ambulance is movement,
Movement is life.

Cornerstone meditations
charge our breaking moments
and change our moral currents.



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



SOMETHING I LOOK AT

You love me

i love you too

our love is unconditional

we feel each other's feelings

we sense each other's needs

you are in me and i am in you

that is our love and bonding

nothing but pure love in between

i will be made a man
but you will remain a child forever
hardly affected by the change in time
for you nothing matters
it is love and love all the way
from your first breath to the last
your object of love is the same
your priorities never change with the
changing need of time and circumstances
whims and caprices
but i doubt whether my
love for you will be the same

you are true to yourself
always there for me
to sacrifice every bit you have
but man is a man

never full and complete

as you are

my priorities keep on changing

so is my definition of love

its language and chemistry

i cannot love you the same way

you love me

my rational mind and naked

self-interest come in the way

i do not want to be a man

with all my incompleteness,

limitations and rational reasonings

let me remain a child at heart

to reciprocate the feeling of

someone who really loves

to have the beauty of its love

in all its colours
to live and in love with it
forever



Smruti Ranjan Mohanty: He is a multilingual poet, essayist and writer. He is a published poet and writer and a featured poet of PENTASI B World Friendship Poetry. His writings include essays, short stories, poems and novels which are published in newspapers and in various national and international magazines, journals and anthologies. Working as Finance Officer in Govt of Odisha, he writes extensively on life, its beauty and intricacies which are widely acclaimed.



FAMILY: ARCOSTIC STYLE POEM

F- riends forever in every situation

A- ffectionate, caring and lovable relations

M- akes a house living home

I- nspires one another in all odds

L- ove and care beyond any extent

Y- es it is called as FAMILY!!!



Sonia Gupta: Dr.Sonia, a dentist by profession, is a well-known name in English and Hindi literature. She is an established author of four English & 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.



LUNATIC

Is that all?

Is that what I am?

Can this word be my identity?

Please

Don't diminish my existence

Not expect you to feel my pain

Just don't add to it

Don't cut off me

Don't treat me like outcaste

Don't give-up on me so soon

All I want, is your support

All I need, is your hands to hold

All I deserve, is your compassion

All I seek, is your love and kindness

Like I would have when you are unwell

Think again before you abandon me

Think again before you hurl a stone

Think again before you treat me cruelly

Think again before you call me lunatic



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



I LOSE MYSELF

When mist of my breathing

Precedes my being

A speck of fantasy spells life's rhythm

I simply close my eyes

To get the feel...and remain in sync

When the sprawling sky

Comes under wrath of dark clouds

The hovering shades

Impinge on blush of soothing moon

My heart skips a bit
Evokes solace of a different kind
My gaping demeanor
Takes refuge in the galaxy of peeping stars
For a gentle breather

When apparition
Hugs my horizon
I feel loose on my legs
Strands of freaky mane
Kissed by naughty strokes of breeze
Veil my face
My fingers caress contour gently
Intimidated by silence

A strange kind of quiver engulfs then
Courses down the lips

And I gradually lose myself
To become someone else's.



Sujata Dash: She is a banker by profession, a singer and poet by passion. She is an avid lover of nature and deeply spiritual as a person. She loves to travel. She has one published work to her credit. Her anthology of poetry “More than mere – a bunch of poems” by Authors Press says a lot about her admiration of nature and longing for the divine. She is a regular contributor to anthologies published nationwide. Most of her work is in English.



STILL A CHILD RESIDES IN ME

No more teen-twenty

Neither I want to be

But forgive me,

Still there a child resides in me

U can call it my immaturity

I smile even in my pain
Some can call me a girl insane,

But what I learnt from life
Happiness is a momentary thing
So let's make happy every moment
in every blink.

Often I dance with the mop-stick
Play a music and profusely sing a song.
Then think! Thank God none is there
To judge my right or wrong!
Then play another song.

Oh! There is doorbell
Ding dong!

I brush my hair and
pretend to be serious,
Then play another role
What I had been playing so long!



Sumana Bhattacharjee: She is a bilingual poetry writer from Kolkata(India). She born and brought up in a family of teachers. From her childhood she has a keen interest in music, poetry and drama. She has done honours in Bengali literature and Master Degree in English literature. She is a published author and her poems have been published in many national and international anthologies, blogs and magazines. She is a lifelong learner and lover of music and literature.



GHOSTS IN THE BRIDAL CHAMBER

The wedding night stilled.

Bride and groom

In their room at last

But not quite alone.

Ghosts of giggling friends lingered:

In ebullient petals airdropping off the fan

Instigated by an innocently turned on switch;

In a peculiar gasping and sighing chest of drawers

That disclosed an afternoon of recorded mischief...

The groom ignored his bride,

Prioritising a brisk search of the room.
An army of ballooned condoms marched
Past the disturbed counterpane,
A farting bladder ambushed under the coverlet,
And a rolling pin surprised between the pillows!
The grooms gaze flit to his bride's.
They puzzled at the pin and their friends,
And laughter sweetened the night.
The ghosts departed content.



Sumita Dutta: I am a publisher, poet, and novelist residing in Chennai, India. I work as a teacher, writer, digital designer, and publisher. I have contributed to various online sites and anthologies. I have also published a novel and contributed to three print anthologies. My publishing firm is three books old, having launched my debut novel *The Heart of Donna Rai*, Poet Geeta Varma's debut book of poetry *To My Violin*, and Sri Chinmoy Biswas's *An Overview of Spirituality*.



EPHEMERAL

That fleeting glint in your eye,
a calculated casual caress
the warm whiff of your breath
whispering to my flesh
awakens the nidus of desire, birth begotten
a scintilla sprouts in the crucible
of wanting. Crystalline hopes long forgotten
fanned to fire by winds of favour,
dance, drunk on the nuances of love
as you meld into me layer by layer.

Enchanted stars in eyes swirl,
fantasial flakes flutter, fragile and frail
melting memories lash and whirl
I grab time hungrily, aborted dreams rebirth-
of it - yet not- of this earth.

Squalls and gales seethe and blow
trying to boil the ocean
while my world grows and glows
lulled in the peace of your orb's cocoon
this ephemeral life let's live to the hilt
winter make way, spring's a calling soon.

Snowflakes ephemeral, beauteous, born to melt
frail, fragile, fleeting, teach me
in love and life, fail not to exult
meet to melt, embracing death
birthing over and over again
life's nectar sipped to the last breath.



Sunil Kaushal: Dr. Sunil Kaushal, gynaecologist, trilingual writer, published in a number of National, International anthologies and magazines, won many awards, writes haiku, micro-poetry and limericks also. Has been translated into French, German and Greek. Read her in Crumpled Voices, Feathers, Nature Poems, Forever a Lie, Bloodshot Eyes, Learning and creativity, Love – Divine Madness Vol.1&2, Episteme, Kafiyya, On Fire Cultural Movement, Impressions and Expressions, sunilkaushal44.blogspot.in. In October 2017 she was honoured at the Indian World Poetree Festival with The Enchanting Muse Award (International) and Fellow of the Regal World of Scribes(FRWS), by The Pentasi B Poetree Group.



EMERGING/FLEEING

In the fading light
when day is dying
and about to fuse with nascent night

and orange-bluish-dark colours intermix
in the horizon, outlined

then new songs are born
at that hour fluid.

If not caught and
captured in words

dripping with
the hues of the
merged realities
of the soft vault,
they can run away
like the sullen kids
bored and
angry with authority!



Sunil Sharma: He is Mumbai-based senior academic, critic, literary editor and author with 19 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, and, one joint poetry collection. He is a recipient of the UK-based Destiny Poets' inaugural Poet of the Year award---2012. Sunil edits the English section of the monthly bilingual journal Setu published from Pittsburgh, USA.



RED!!

Red as blood

In the sindoor

In the passions

you arouse

making me colour

Red

The colour of my skin –

Branded like cattle
Slashed and hooved
To herd

Red

My tinkling bangles
shining like my smile -
You wipe
like blood-stains
off Lady Macbeth's hands

Red

The colour
When
After decades
I show my Durga face!!



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



JUST AS THE WATER FALLS

when the world weeps, tears are gathered
into the clouds, are moistly clustered

too heavy to keep, the sky does whine
on thirsty ground, heavens divine

drops showering, kissing each way
from the leaves to the waters to lay

through the ripples... it flows
on striking rays... it glows

along with current comes rushing
among the rocks gone crushing

it whispers.. murmurs... and moaning
in search of stillness...in fear...gnawing

goes on... wandering through, to the far end
looks on heaven... was a sigh, to send

a heartthrob for a long water fall
dripping through to a waiting stall

amidst and among the waters deep
awakens the soul that's long been at sleep

in silence with no ripples ever heard
deafened with only eyes that stared

stunted waters down from a reef
holds the surging stillness in disbelief

from wailing tears, drops of water that fall
in life, a heart and soul, still standing tall



Suzette Portes San Jose: She has a Bachelor of Science in Commerce from University of San Carlos Cebu City, Philippines. She was born with a passion for writing and living in her art forms. She started writing online in 2013. She now has joined 15 book anthologies from 2015 to

2018. Each of her poems is written with her painting as visuals and are now appearing internationally namely in the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, India, and the Philippines.



THE WIND

She stares at the evening sky,
the darkest evening ever.

The Wind rages merciless
over naked outcrops.

Raindrops kisses

Mother Earth who

drinks -

thirsty like a bee drinking nectar.

Shiny pearls of rain.

Unredeemed memories float away,
away with the mist
and disappear into eternity.

The Wind gradually decreases...
and soon the sky is blue.

All she hears is the breeze
whispering silently:

"life will be better now"



Svanhild Løvli: I'm a Norwegian poetess.



OLD COMPANION

Far from the walls of an abandoned castle,
A lonely horse searches smells
Of his old master.

The emptiness of his saddle
Doesn't want to befriend a new knight.

With his bleeding legs and tired eyes
He pretends to be happy.

The jasmine scented field in a moonlit night
Invites him to graze.

The rocking platform on a beautiful deck

Allures him for an enjoyable voyage through sea.

An easy slope provokes him to climb

On the peak of a new mountain.

A swarm of overoptimistic hopes inspires him to

Invade another new ground.

But, his rolling down tear drops

Don't want a new start with a new companion.

Because, there is something under flaccid skin,

That makes each passionate heart

Long only for the old.



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



PLAYING SAFE

From where she sat

She could get a glimpse of them both

Equidistant

Disparate loves

One who kept her cockles warm....

Took her to the shores

On proverbial shoulders

The other –

The forbidden

The tempest

The brute love maker

Threw her in the midst of a storm

Kept her unsure

Rendered her vulnerable

If she truly let go

In a choice defining world

How few truly hold on to orgasmic

Rapturous love

How many really choose?

What they yearn deep inside

As a million loves get butchered daily

In 'playing safe' mode



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



SHADOW

My shadow is my divine sister

Every time walks with me

Sometimes hidden

Sometimes visible

But dancing, playing, screaming with me in every situation
of my life

My companion encourages me, day and night

To get my goals

And fly to touch the seventh sky of success
She gives energetic boost to my wings by praising words
Somewhere hidden in me
My loving sister
My shadow
My 'me'
Where I hold my own hands
In the form of divine!!



Varsha Saran: She is a homemaker but a bilingual poetess and a story writer by her passion, her many poems and stories have been published in different international Anthologies, ezines, magazines and newspapers. She won many awards in writing.



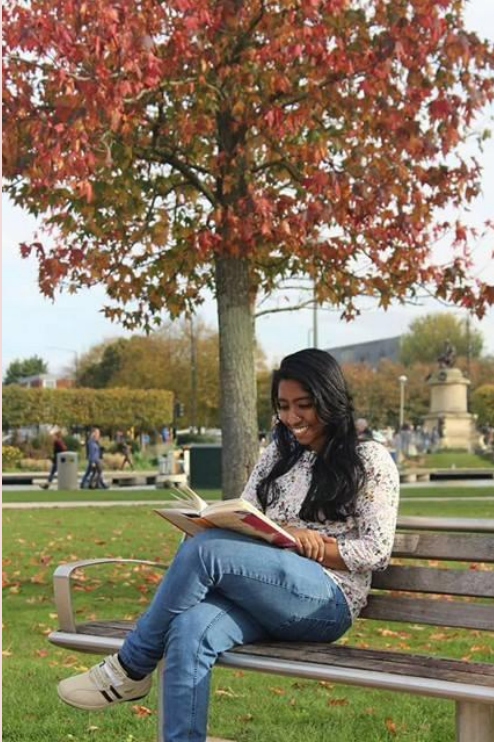
<https://unsplash.com/search/photos/girl-alone>

Someone once told me
it all comes down to being able to breathe
the next minute,
I hadn't realised then that
they had meant
when people choose to leave
you don't ask them to stay,
you leave as quickly as possible
so that you don't stay frozen
long after they are gone,
because you could spend one hundred years

in solitude

but not a second

in loneliness.



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.



US

At this given moment in time
When unruly words run out to play
Hide and seek with bewildered truth

And the mist suddenly shrouds our milestones,
Do you recall, my dear, the day
When the road turned slippery like our ideals

And the brakes failed in the treacherous rain:
A scream bounced across all our tarred lives--
When did we lose control over ourselves

And the rare gift of common sense?
Masks are tossed from face to face
As tongues, like folded palms, open doors

For the owners of vintage cars and talk show views:
While five brave nuns still wait for the sun to rise
Others climb eighteen steps to face a troubled god.



Vijay Nair: I am a poet residing in Palakkad, India. I am an Associate Professor in English. I have contributed to various anthologies and published 3 poetry collections. I was awarded the Reuel International Prize for Writing & Literature in the year 2016.



SOUL SONG

What is this
That binds us
Together?

The song of the earth
That runs through
You and me
Makes us aware
Of our unity.

The breath of the stars
That powers our dreams
Makes them vivid
And turns them
Into reality.

This that entwines us
And makes us one
Existed aeons ago
Binding us then.

So together we are
Here and now.
Together we came.
Together we'll go
Moving from today
To tomorrow.



Vineetha Mekkoth: I am a poet, writer, editor residing in Calicut, India. I work as Assistant State Tax Officer in the State GST Department. I have contributed to various anthologies. I have also published a poetry collection. An article published in latest issue of Malayalam Literary Survey, a Kerala Sahitya Akademi publication.



WE COMPARED NOTES

that afternoon

my former playmate

leaned back

into oversized

couch pillows

our aches, ailments

meds, the

insurance

opioid restricted

dust devil

choking the life
out of our lives

I asked how it went
clearing her mom's
house by herself
her with all brothers
me with all sisters

and we spoke
aloud things kept
otherwise secret
as though kids
taking turns sitting
on top the
ice cream churn



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 Midnight on the Stroll Poetry Contest. Her nonfiction “Big Love” was nominated for 2016 Best of Net by Red Fez literary journal.



Sonnet 89

I sit in silence on a foggy morning
The silence is broken by fake adulation
Of a man no less fake with hollow words
The street bears, shatters under the burden
Of lies that try to hide their ugly faces
Swarms of crowds chant like in a hymn
As if praising some sort of Demigod
Attributing epithets that never existed.

The noise echoes the surrounding wall
Comes back equally strong but still fails

To move the hearts of those wretched
Deceived souls that fear to trust again
Dream of a day away from all of this
Hoping to witness but celestial bliss.



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