

GloMag

GLOMAG

*Monthly Online Poetry and Prose*

*Magazine*

*November 2019*



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## COVER PIC

**Scott Thomas Outlar**

**Photograph by Mechelle Wilson Ballew**

**Scott Thomas Outlar:** He lives and writes in the suburbs outside of Atlanta, Georgia, USA. His favorite season is autumn. His spirit tree is the pine. Most of his poems are written in the woods. He hosts a podcast, Songs of Selah, that airs weekly on 17Numa Radio. Links to his published work and other thoughts about life can be found at [17Numa.com](http://17Numa.com).

## **ABOUT GLOMAG**

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

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

~ ***Glory Sasikala***

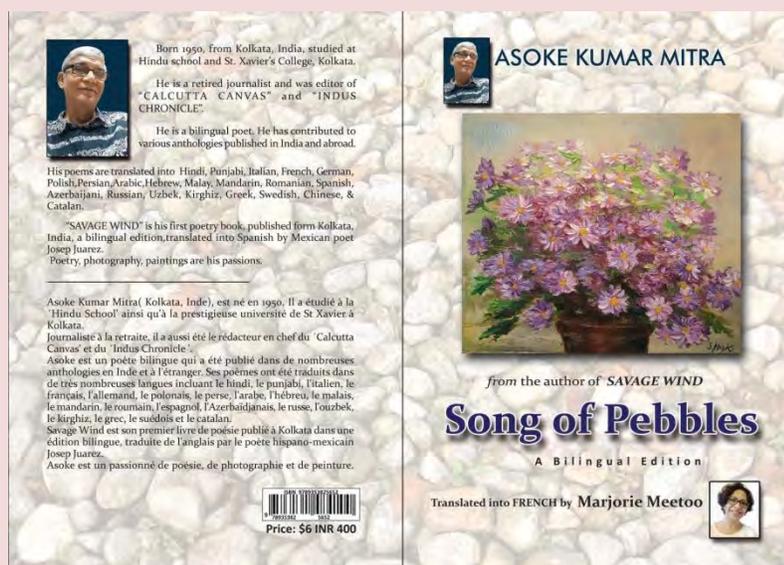
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## BOOK OF THE MONTH

### Song Of Pebbles by Asoke Kumar Mitra

*Translated into French by Marjorie Meetoo*



### **About The Author**

**Asoke Kumar Mitra** is a retired journalist and was editor of 'Calcutta Canvas' and 'Indus Chronicle'. He is a bilingual poet. He has contributed to various anthologies published in India and abroad. His poems are translated into various languages. 'Savage Wind' is his first poetry book, a bilingual edition, translated into Spanish by Mexican poet Josep Juarez, and now published in Italy with Italian translation by Poet Elisa Mascia. 'Song Of Pebbles' is his second bilingual poetry book, which is translated into French. Poetry, photography, paintings are his passions.

## ***Basudeb Chakraborti***

I read last evening the poems of your colourful anthology that attracted my close attention immediately after I had seen it. Photography and poetry are happily blended in the emotive appeal of each and every poem you have written. The Preface is neatly written about what your poems objectify. The natural and inbuilt link between the images and the linguistic symbols you have employed in your poems is intricately inseparable. Often the images are vividly visual. Each and every epithet added to denotative noun words in your poems are very much eye-arresting. Seemingly, I felt, while reading your poems, that I was reading Pre-Raphaelite poetry and enjoying paintings before Raphael. The abundant use of verbal words is conspicuously absent and is spontaneously avoided. The poems are highly readable. I thank you for your contribution to modern Indian English Poetry.



### ***Amit Shankar Saha***

Asoke Kumar Mitra's "Song of Pebbles" comes after his first book "Savage Wind". Both the books of poems are bilingual. The first book was Mitra's English poems along with their Spanish translations and this, the second one, has Mitra's English poems along with the French translations done by Marjorie Meetoo. In the Preface to the book Asoke Kumar Mitra writes that his poetry writing passion allows him to "paint images of the world... portraying ideals in my own style and rhythms." He also acknowledges that poetry is always a "literary accomplishments" and those who are aware of Mitra's verses will know the truth of the statement through the quality of his poems. Mitra is a poet of the heart; in the poem "Tomorrow" he writes, "Our hearts/ Longing like

grass” – words which are so stark and yet profound. In “Stroke of Words” he writes: “In your eyes I find lost manuscripts of my poems.” This sense of loss is universal as well as personal. He writes in “Wings of Darkness”: “Imprisoned between broken flowers/ Memories burnt.” This burning is a passion of the heart that gives birth to poetry. Nowhere it is more appropriately put than in the concluding stanza of the poem “Staircase”:

Insane vagabond heart

Climbed the staircase of night

Touched the tender lust of memory.

Asoke Kumar Mitra finds in the “grey twigs of time” the true poetry of emotions.

## THESE ARE A FEW OF MY FAVORITE THINGS

**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.



**Name:** Pratima Apte

**Occupation:** Homemaker

**Book, Ebook or Audio, which do you prefer and why?**

The physical feel of holding the book, turning the pages, is essential to the experience of letting the imagination run riot, as the author wants us to!

**Fav book:** Too many!

**Fav movie:** The Sound of Music

**Fav song:** Hello Silence old friend by Simon & Garfunkel

**Fav hobby:** Reading

**Fav colour:** White

**Fav sport:** None

**Fav food:** All sweet dishes

**Fav pet:** Dog

**Fav actor:** Shashi Kapoor

**Fav actress:** Madhubala

**Life philosophy:** Live and let live, forgive and forget.

**One liner describing you:** Broken but standing, seasoned wood!

**Favorite holiday destination:** None

**Favorite quote:** Being entirely honest with oneself is a good exercise -Sigmund Freud

**Birthday:** 28th June.

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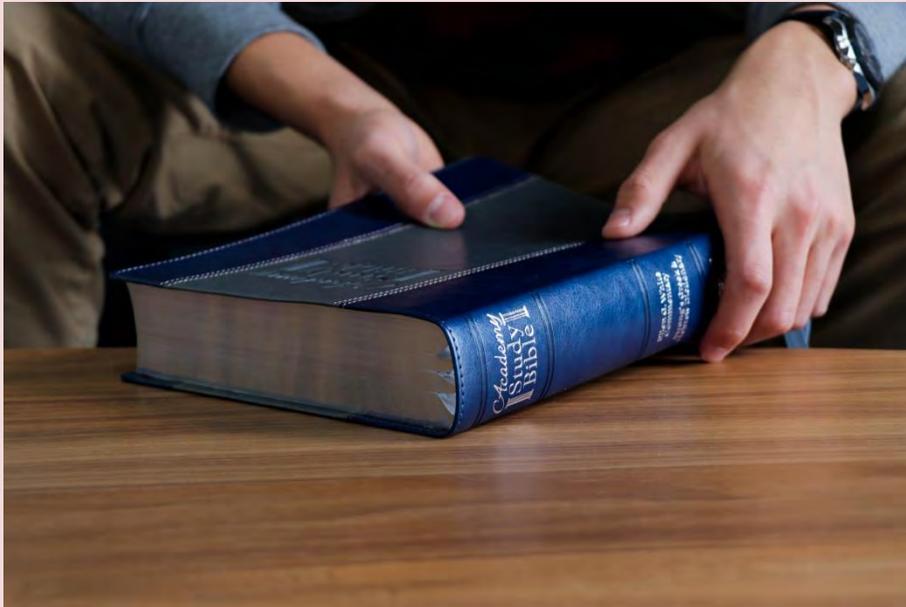
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## **NANTU, THE BOOKSELLER**

“Nantu, please display it on your shelf,” the old bearded author pleaded.

The bookseller, a lean young man, shabbily clothed, took the heavy volume and mechanically put it on a shelf. He was chewing betel leaf. His lips were stained and teeth all black.

“Ah! Where are you keeping? It’s not a notebook. It’s a reference. It took ten gruelling years. It’s for you and us! Here I documented our land and its people with minute details...”the author’s face was flushed, his voice choked, and eyes hazy.

“What’s the price?” dryly asked Nantu.

“One thousand. But don’t worry, I give you at half. Sell it at five; keep one, and the rest you refund. No problem,” the author smiled.

Nantu hitched up from his stool, took out the book and handed it over him.

“What?” the author screwed his eyes.

“Sir, from my childhood, I learnt the business from my father. I am in the line for two decades and more. It’s not a town. It’s a village stall. Most of my buyers are school children, and a few from the Gobardhan College. They ask for notebooks, chocolate bars, pens, footballs, racquets, gift items, diaries, competitive books, and syllabus-based readymade Xerox materials. I sell all and somehow make a living. Your book, sir, is a misfit. I’m sorry...”

“Nantu, you are a charming boy! I’m really impressed!” said the author elated while unknowingly pushing the book into his side bag.



**Abu Siddik:** I am a writer, residing in Berhampore, Murshidabad, India. I work as Assistant Professor. I have contributed to various e-journals and anthologies. I have also published three books. Website: [www.abusiddik.com](http://www.abusiddik.com)



## **THE WOUND**

Waking up with a wound  
is bearing an answer without a question.

The pain of a wound,  
an open eye seeking the vengeful cause.

For its lack of purpose,  
wound is an unwanted birth,  
even for the one who harbors it.

It is a map that doesn't know  
the place it is trying to be.  
Within its boundaries,  
the wound screams for help  
to become the citizens of a nation  
muted by brutal territories.

The wound lives in a body  
like a prisoner of war in an enemy state.  
Or the victims of a riot,  
the lesser equals of an own state.

Suture their mouths.  
Bury them alive in a plaster.  
Wilt their protest with chemical weapons,  
screams the lord of their flesh and soul.

The worst of men  
leave behind a bowl of ash and bones,  
but we appeal to our wounds:  
*vanish without scars and keloids.*

When we bury them thus  
without a trace of existence,  
we call them the fairies of hell;  
Our unsung martyrs.



**Aditya Shankar:** He is a poet and translator residing in Bangalore, India. He works as an IT professional. He has contributed to various anthologies worldwide. He has published three poetry anthologies and a volume of translation. His poetry collection XXL (Dhauri Books) was recently shortlisted for the Yuva Puraskar by Sahitya Akademi, India.



## **THE INVISIBLE SPIRIT**

The night is long, long as  
the stars are falling apart  
and so my tears are the  
rain on the child cheeks  
I thought that love would  
make us lucky, and happy  
until I realized that one of us  
must pretend that I'm dead  
Trust was the most beautiful  
word we have had in our talks  
sadly, it was replaced with a

betrayal and dangerous faith  
The invisible spirit forgot to  
teach me how to die without  
weapon, nor a case of twelve  
beers, yet the night is still long



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



## **TODAY, YESTERDAY, NO TOMORROW**

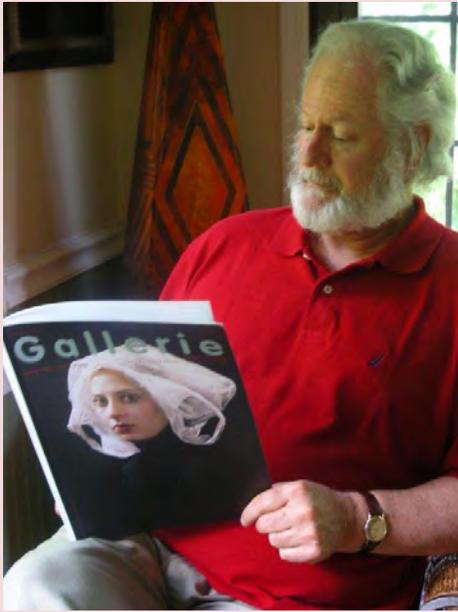
Hurricane incisors pound the rocks  
that foam shark fin jetties from the  
east if you're down looking up.

Clouds quiver supernovas  
several lightyears away.

Lightning, adjusting its elastic waistband,  
tases a soprano trumpet & proceeds  
to illuminate Spanish moss strangling  
South Florida elephant oaks.

No matter.

Hurricane incisors pound the rocks  
that foam shark fin jetties from the  
east if you're down looking up.



**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.



## **ALMOST PERFECT**

What does the word love mean?

Is it a mosaic of small parts of life?

Every day is like a design of words and deeds,  
Full of colorful dreams and expectations.

This love is kissing in the morning  
And serves breakfast to bed and roses.

It lights the fire of passion in the eyes.  
And heats up in the warmth of feelings.

The thoughts of its beloved make it smile.

Love always trusts and is tender.

It does not like good-byes and separations.

They force love to stand in a square window and look at the clock.

Love forgives mistakes, listens patiently.

Sometimes it suffers in silence, weeps in secret.

By changing the colors and shapes it matures and bears fruit.

Every day has similarities, though the years are passing.

Love drives out selfishness

And multiplies happiness by two.

Love is excellent

Despite many imperfections



**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.



## **LET GO**

Let go to anywhere but bring no doom

This earth is the only asylum

Like a hermit don't desert us

We are precious with fine ethos

Let go but banish not life's panorama

Mind please life's basic aroma

Our family members, near and dear claims

Are like pearls, valuable but rare gems

Let go anywhere you like

Have a heart for them alike  
Rather let go animal instincts  
Plant love seeds in precincts  
Live and let live others equally  
Let go jingoism, be not its ally  
Biotic and abiotic elements relate  
Work in a way for their supplement  
Feel the presence of the Almighty  
Maintain at any cost human dignity  
Let go but do only noble deeds  
An escapist person only bleeds



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



## **AT THE FIREPLACE**

It is still warm here.

Much like a room with  
a old world fire-place.

The light, gentle without  
the harsh glare or blaze.

Where we are on two  
rocking chairs, reading  
to each other what has

caught our attention,  
all we need to share.

We take breaks to feed  
the fire, fresh wood to  
replace the dying embers,  
new books to resurge our  
minds, in this unwalled room.

In the sleepy haze at night  
I see word-logs kindling  
the fire, the heat and light  
just right for a good rest,  
not keen to engulf, this flame.



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



## **WHEN WE MOVE**

We throw our history away

Disregarding

The younger selves it holds...

Books filled with drawings

And child-like verse

Diaries

And clothes

That signify

Important events:

Birthdays, Diwalis, Raksha Bandhan, Weddings...

Faded photographs

We throw away  
Because  
They belong to  
The people we were  
Before we became  
Who we are  
Today.  
We call it  
Cleansing,  
Making space...  
But for what?  
The new, we say  
Righteous, almost.  
What if  
We never wake up  
Tomorrow?  
Nothing of ours  
Would remain

Because we have obliterated  
Our own history.  
Like invaders  
Who burned down our temples  
And libraries.



**Ameeta Agnihotri:** Two words resonate in her mind: be present. That explains why nothing ever comes between her food and her. ‘When I am doing my job, I’m there for a reason,’ says the lady who has loved food and writing all her life. She takes meticulous notes, always giving positive, constructive feedback and suggestions. Many describe this Chennai Times Food Critic as open-minded, friendly,

knowledgeable and very professional. 'It is the present that matters. I believe in giving it my best. Always. Instead of looking at the whole intimidating picture, I set small goals: one step at a time, one day at a time, and like magic, the job is done.' She has 10 books on various subjects to her credit. And has a few ideas up her sleeve. 'It's the publishers that are missing,' she laughs. 'The world has gone digital, so it's Instagram stories now.'



## **A POEM FAKE**

Penning poems fake

How long will I be

A fake poet?

It was I who said

Looking you in the eye—

“On that pair of eyes alone

Can I write ten epics on the trot.”

Today I find that eye is a lie

That pulls me with an illusion

That but hypnotises.

The tear from false eyes

Is but the same

The one with false eyes

Is no different

The love of fake lovers

Is but the same

How many more poems on fake love

Will be mine?



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



The sky the sea

And the anarchy



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



## BIHAR, LOVE

Ever heard of the phrase

“Keeping your head above the water?”

This is what it means

It means being sunk neck deep in water

With a stick to keep you steady

And measure the depth to which you are sunk

In powerful waves that rise by the minute

Someone in another state or another country

Or another world  
Could decide to open some floodgates any minute  
And the water need rise  
Only 4 inches  
To enter your nose  
Your mouth  
And in seconds your lungs  
And you're a dead man  
In seconds  
Too tired to swim in the sunlight  
Having swum all night  
Your head is tilted back already  
To keep the water out of nose and mouth  
Not to call out to heavenly powers  
Or pray to the sun  
Or ask for non-existent human help  
Your eyes are closed  
Drenched not in tears but waves

In complete concentration

To fight Death

You hope for and yet dread your stark survival

So you try to keep some grains dry

And add an old paint tin of clean water

To keep you going in case you survive

Or somehow reach dry land where none may help you

Tie some bamboo stems

Spread some bamboo leaves

A plastic sheet

Keep the wheat you grew

And winnowed

Dry

To feed you

And perhaps a loved one

Out of a whole family you know nothing of

Since the waters parted you just after midnight

Dead? alive? Or Neither?

Half dead?

There is Death in those waters

Death hovering like a vulture overhead

Your hold on life could snap at any moment

The minute you are just too tired

Your arms pulled out of their sockets

Stretching, strained to breaking point

Your feet getting heavier by the second

Your leg muscles

Unwilling and unable

To hold you up

Life

And the Will to live

Exists mid wave and sky

In you this moment

None can tell

The next

I love you

Do not let life go

I love you, Bihar!

Hold on

For my sake

For God's sake

Never let go

I know you won't

Let Death come if it will

But you will fight it

With every atom in your every cell

For that I love you

You teach me love each moment that you live

You teach me life

You give me breath

Love. Bihar.



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



## **AMPAT KOSHY**

Sakhi,

My love, preserved in amber, is a fossil

You can see it there

in a shape as strange

as grotesque

as Gregor Samsa's infamous body

after he metamorphosed

and he died

and it was swept away out of his room

by his sister.

I felt nauseated by it  
on reading of it -

Sakhi,

my love is a dry leaf in a book

a peacock's feather that belongs to a dead bird

only a bookmark falling apart in a silver-fish eaten old,  
unread classic

Sakhi,

my love is skeletal mush

in this it's-nigh-on winter

squishing under my soul soggily

as my soul walks over its grave

in boots that it bought to fly to the church's nave

not to walk over love's dead, buried body

on wet, rotting leaves

dirtying the boots' feather-tiny wings

Sakhi,

love is sometimes a child

wanting his paper boat not to sink in driving rain

watching his paper plane fly up but not glide

not knowing how to fly his kite

hit by paper bullets, from rubber bands, that sting

the unpleasant childhood you later glamourize, valorize

Sakhi, whatever love is, love is

It must be the dusk that makes me melancholy

These days love is in scarce quantity

and may be banned soon, who knows

like wine, also/even in quality.

## **GLORY SASIKALA**

bugs don't lace

their words

the way you do

sakhi

i tied the knot at the end

let me lead you in a dance

one step at a time

look into my eyes

and follow my lead

rhythm

thyme scents the night

cricket calls chorus

the snake slithers on soft wet mud

and you dance to my tunes

lady lace

let me lead you

the death dance

and freeze you

fossil

lady lace bug

forever.



**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.



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



## **COLORS**

Everything has a color  
the color of desire, the color  
of want, of love & hatred

Our journey has a color  
Our motivation, betrayal,  
vision & senses

The color I see gets colored  
according to my desire, my wish  
my ego, my people

Long back I preferred white

After I scribbled so many wants on white

All colors became unknown to me



**Aneek Chatterjee:** I am a poet and academic residing in Kolkata, India. I work as a professor of political science. I have contributed to various anthologies. I have also published a novel named "The Funeral Procession" and a poetry anthology titled "Seaside Myopia". I was a Fulbright Visiting fellow at the University of Virginia (USA) and a recipient of the prestigious ICCR Chair to teach at reputed foreign universities.



## **A FOREST OF DREAMS**

Lost in a forest of endless dreams

Where time has no value

The deeper I walk into the forest

The lighter I feel with all anxieties forlorn

The gentle breeze brushing against my skin

Comforts my mesmerized mind

My soul finds refuge in the peacefulness

Embodied in the calmness.

In the forest of dreams, I feel like a princess

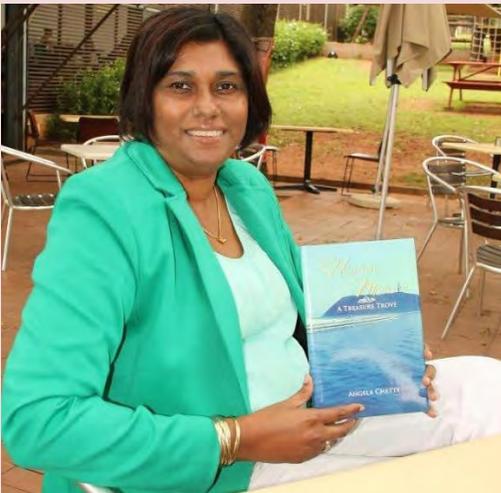
Serenaded with soft melodies celebrating my love

With the evergreen trees swaying in the winds  
To their own rhythm amidst the never-ending trails.

The forest of dreams will unveil the reason  
Why I find such solace in this place  
The sanctuary of hope and love  
The mysterious dimensions  
Of nature's intentions.

His illusive presence became a dream  
The faint hope of laying eyes  
On him was like tender strings  
With each moment the mystery unveils  
All tears melt like the morning dew  
His presence a reminder  
of unprecedented grace  
I find myself in his loving arms.

The forest of dreams has kept me sane  
In an unforgiving world  
Breathing in undulated oxygen  
The gift of life's blessing  
I inhale hope and unconditional love  
I exhale all fears and worries  
I breathe in the joys  
of a healthy healed heart.



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



## **WITH YOU**

I feel your breathings

Touching my nape

Hot and full of passion

I get tense

My nerves are swollen

I feel your kiss

On my nape

Hot and passionate

I turn now we are one

Two leafs getting rubbed

Against each other by  
The naughty wind of lust

I feel your pulse  
It is slow and steady  
After the river ran  
From me to you  
Incessantly for hours  
As the clock go on  
Clapping with its soft notes



**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.



## WRITE

Write like your pen would spew fire, the blazing kind  
For fire is not fire enough if it does not lick the sky,  
Burning your heart and lighting up the eyes  
To what is wrong and what is right.

Write. Mince no words when you write.

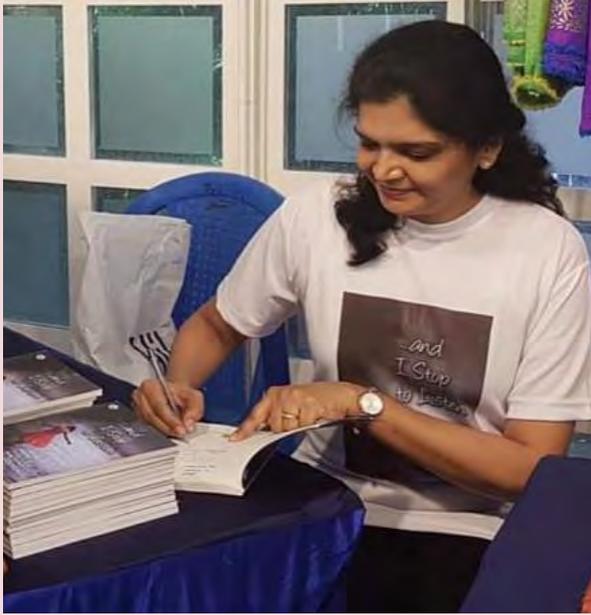
For the world has seen enough of hypocrisy and lies.

Let your poetry unchain the truth tied, hushed, crushed  
And release it in the air like a flutter of doves, flawlessly  
white.

Write. Let rivers flow as you write sweeping the spirit of  
men

Through currents that have long eluded them

For few lives run fearless and unconstrained  
Without coiling in weeds or by rocks hemmed.  
Let poetry dance from your fingertips  
Swirling in the arms of the universe, to its own mellifluous  
music  
So the reader sways in rhythm with the rhyme  
And twirls with every turn and curve of its lyrics.  
Write to fling open doors to new perspectives  
For a poet is often wild, standing head and torso above  
realities,  
Looking for beautiful words in parallel worlds  
Dreaming of impossible possibilities.  
Above all, write to milk your heart of all that it feels,  
Unwind yourself from life's real and unreal reels.  
Untangle your mind, encounter your soul  
For the word when written, speaks as well as heals.



**Anju Kishore:** She is a poet and editor residing in Chennai, India. A former Cost Accountant, she has contributed to various online and print anthologies. One of the winners of The Great Indian Poetry Award 2018, her poems have been featured in the readers' section of a Dubai based magazine and in a theatrical performance in Mumbai. Moved by the plight of children caught in the crossfire during the Syrian Civil War, she traced her poetic journey from war to the love of the universe in her book, '...and I Stop to Listen' that was published in 2018.



## **LESSONS LEARNED**

Never let go of what you love,  
keep it close at hand.

For tomorrow you may find  
everything has changed.

Looking back on what we were,  
and what we hoped to be.

I see mistakes were made  
throughout those many years.

We took for granted what  
we had, what we shared.  
Along the way we faltered,  
we did not make amends.

We did not stoke the fire,  
we let desire die,  
withdrawing within ourselves,  
as separate entities.

I know now, what I did wrong,  
too late to set things right.  
Hoping only to reclaim  
an inkling of what once was.

So lessons learned,  
I live my days in lonely solitude.  
Remembering what could have

been, if only I knew then...  
never let go of what you love.



**Ann Christine Tabaka:** She was nominated for the 2017 Pushcart Prize in Poetry, has been internationally published, and won poetry awards from numerous publications. She is the author of 9 poetry books. Christine lives in Delaware, USA. She loves gardening and cooking. Chris lives with her husband and two cats. Her most recent credits are: Burningword Literary Journal; The Write Connection; Ethos Literary Journal, North of Oxford, Pomona Valley Review, Page & Spine, West Texas Literary Review, The Hungry Chimera, Sheila-Na-Gig, Pangolin Review, Foliate Oak Review, Better Than Starbucks!, The Write Launch, The Stray Branch, The McKinley Review, Fourth & Sycamore.

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



## **TRIBUTE TO JAPAN**

Despite centuries of war  
and natural disasters  
discipline and courtiars  
all around and everywhere,  
suffering has made them better  
evaluate themselves better  
but there's extra special  
about remaining grounded to  
courtesies, honesty and respect  
even in darkest of times  
as they endure the endurable

with patience and dignity  
through inner discipline  
without rash, roughness and rigidity.

patience and dignity define  
their beautiful lives  
seldom someone hurrying past  
or breaking queues,  
they are almost never late  
and for their turn they stoically wait,  
sticking to the punctuality,  
time management their pride  
railways abide side by side.

Courtesy and respect  
two noticeable traits  
cities and highways  
Squeaky clean,

People pocketing quietly  
their own trash  
and so sophisticated toilets  
are so welcome surplus.

Although religion is not big part  
of everyday life  
but humanity certainly is  
because they are born Shinto  
and die as Buddhist  
Everything important to life  
Sun, wind, earth, mountains  
in the beautiful enigmatic religion Shinto  
the world should respect  
the world should learn  
the world should know  
belief in the basic goodness of all humans  
is such an innate and suitable religion.

Cleanliness is related to respect  
the key to living in harmony  
we must clean everything everyday  
because every object has a living spirit  
which is being respected  
because the revered deity visits  
only the clean environments,  
nurturing and caring for all  
inanimate, animate and mate forms  
is secret to discipline and courtesy  
and same is focus and diligence to work.

respecting people in their lives  
not taking them for granted  
touching is frowned upon  
no hugs and kisses while greeting  
no talks and tantrums while eating,

handshakes aren't popular  
bowing is the beautiful norm,  
public display of affection unwelcome.

people love life, enjoy life  
and so become experienced and old  
they are in majority  
I am told but they live by themselves  
and depend on community care  
instead of becoming hard to their own,  
with the innate mix of tradition,  
modernity and sense of respect  
they enjoy life threadbare,  
But number of elderlies increasing  
and birth day declining  
communities and robotics are joining,  
But we hope this well-oiled culture  
of beautiful dutiful Japanese

courtesy and discipline  
will continue and spread elsewhere  
from the Land of rising sun  
because such beauties of manner  
should not go unsung.



**Ashish Kumar Pathak:** He is a middle school teacher posted at Dharhara block in Munger district of Bihar province in India. He is inspired by the Japanese way of living and culture and wants same in his students. He has got a letter of appreciation from the President of India for his poem. Together with other writers he has been conferred WUP gold cross medal for his contribution in the world book "complexion based discrimination".



## **NIGHT...**

Fugitive moon tonight

With your loneliness

Passion swirled

The drum sound at distance

Night darkened...

The old road to seashore

My unfamiliar words

Turned cold

Our presence in drowsy murmur

Rumbling of piano and guitar

Sounds of distant thunder

We look into our eyes

As strangers in the winter

Deep inside of us, unfinished love

Become lovers once again

getting ready for a silent song of eternity...



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



<https://theforestscout.com/the-passage-of-time/>

## **TIME! TIME!**

O, time

Thou art mighty conqueror

Eternal and immortal

Be not proud of thy might

Today I'm vanquished

And lying in dust

But-

Still hopeful

When the wind

Shall blow my way...



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



## **YAYSAYERS, NAYSAYERS**

Some Naysayers will tell you, talented you aren't.

'Don't and 'Can't' they'll chant and chant.

And if you choose green when your dream says Yay,

Lotsapeople see red if you don't chant Nay.

Some tell you don't risk it, you'll snap, you'll break,

As if you're a biscuit or a piece of cake.

Some try to buy you, some spit nails,

Some kick you out when their nagging fails.

They'll say - YOU knuckle down and learn to conform -

Or the Bluebird of Happiness won't tweet at your door!

Some say you'll fall ill if perchance you should dream.

But if you want to be a bluebird, won't you dare to dream?

Naysayers are a big club. They love to rule Main Street.

Yaysayers are a small club, much more upbeat.

Happy bluebirds club up upstairs,

Your food can digest with love up there.

In the Rainbow Room you can sing, you can play ...

Good talk and dreams just love up there

In the Rainbow Room where the word is Yay!

Lotsapeople SAY: you can't do this!

Lotsapeople SAY: you can't say that!

Get a proper job or your passion will kill you;

Whereas a nice steady job will more than fulfil you.

Have you no brains? What is the use

Of your childish dreams, your artistic pursuits?!

You won't build a house like the mansion that we built?

You'll end up on a dump-heap, useless and unskilled,  
Don't sing on stage, you're bound to sing flat.  
But hey! Bob Dylan ignored all the flak  
When they said that his head and his voice were cracked.  
But he scattered the Naysayer's Club like flies,  
When all his cracks cracked a Nobel Prize  
  
Yet, Naysayers can crack you, even drive you insane  
So many a bluebird, that full-throated would've have sung,  
On the dump-heap of Can't-and-Don't got flung...

But the Yaysayer's Club,  
Is a Rainbow Room  
Full of bluebird loving  
With no room for gloom...  
Why, even the rainbows sing up there...



**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.



## **WHEN LOVE STRIKES**

like a gigantic wave hitting the breakwater

her love hits you like a crave a couples pretty daughter

a craze like winning the lottery

you cannot concentrate

because this girl a beauty

just became your mate

holding her hand

everywhere you go

you want her to understand  
everyone should know

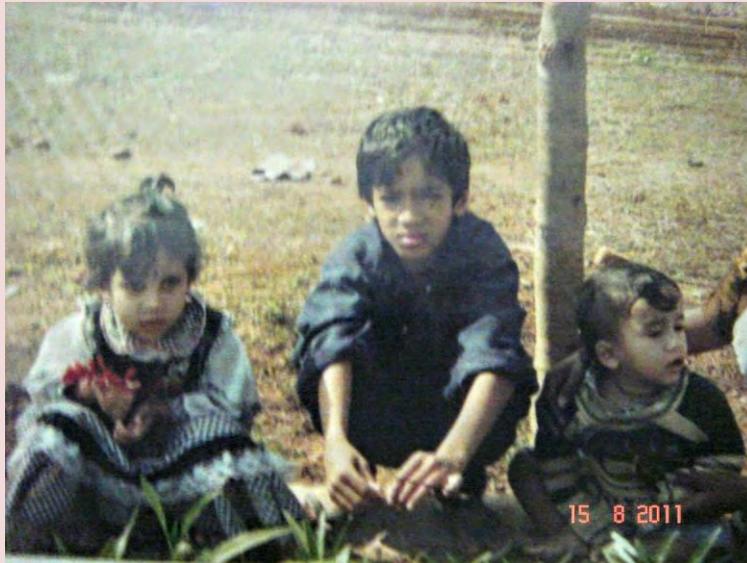
how immensely happy  
she makes you feel  
hurrying to get her expensive candy  
is just no big deal

your whole world rotates  
around her needs  
the beating of your heart rate  
whenever she sleeps

when love strikes  
it's like a punch to the jaw  
more brutal than mike's  
but yet you keep coming back for more



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



## **OH MY CHILD**

Oh my child!

Mummy and Papa love you

Come

Give them your sweet kiss

And also your little help

When they need you.

Oh my child

Grandpa and Grandma love you

Give them your sweet kiss

Hold their hands  
And play in the park.

Oh dear  
Your little sister loves you  
Share your toys and tofees  
And help her in studies.

Oh my child  
Uncle and Aunty love you  
Give them your sweet smile  
And do help them  
If they need you.

Oh my dear child  
Our dog Tommy loves you  
Give him your love and care  
And play around.

Dear child, your teachers love you  
Give them your respect  
Obey their words and do your tasks  
You will shine bright.

Oh my child, keep trying  
Never be afraid of failure  
Success will be yours for sure.



**Bharati Nayak:** I am a bilingual poet, critic and translator residing in Bhubaneswar, India. I work in the Government of Odisha. I have contributed to various national and international anthologies and e-books. I have also

published three poetry books, two in English language and one in my mother tongue ODIA and worked as co-writer in two poetry Anthologies. I regularly write on on-line poetry site [www.poemhunter.com](http://www.poemhunter.com) where I am placed among the top 500 poets and offered the title 'Poetic Basil' for my contributions.



## **ACTION DICTIONARY**

Joy does wonders above earth

I could not prepare myself for this interview with a man  
above his rank.

Action Dictionary would you mind

tell Heavenly radio earful story prisoners how you made it  
to angels paradise and why do your songs and dances shake  
even unstylish audiences.

I never adored the fact of being called  
a street kid while my stingy beard

was being shaved with bottle pieces

I build myself a shack with decent  
door and a window simultaneously  
slinging fatter thoughts about a villa.

I admired truth for respect upon  
this body that generously homed  
my spirit and soul for I knew one day  
it will know a house called grave.

I had seen men and women being  
rolled down one hole six feet below  
our footsteps successfully  
becoming skeletons around  
unknown caves.

I did not plan my death for my  
debt was to bury my bones  
with humility accord.

I hired somebody to find me  
a pastor, coffin and a bull.

Skillful enough to render funeral invitations without anyone noticing.

The world will know those  
to share my wealth as I resign  
from worldliness to lead  
a life above sunshine.

To answer your other question  
because I do not shy away  
from fractions.

Being slow in brewing myself for  
affection I accelerated my speed  
in matters of attention  
my voice would float on flooding  
chimes to experience tales life  
has been telling.

I unrooted my toes from muddy  
grounds aiming to jump only  
to recall myself fly in a dance.



**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.



## **SAILING**

*for Joseph Conrad*

I have always taken  
the four a.m. watch:  
those three hours before dawn when,  
inhaling the moist sweetness

of a new day, we awake  
and escape last night's darkness,

leaving technology  
to experience  
quiet and primitive satisfaction.

The ocean rushing underneath,  
its volume  
dependent upon current hull speed,  
spills a phosphorescent wake —  
the only natural source of light  
besides the moon.

Rolling up and down,  
swaying into balance  
on the balls of my feet while

cradling the warmth  
of a mug's contents.

Soon

an orange sliver appears  
and grows, as the sun  
finds the seam in the weld  
that fixes sea to sky.



**Bill Cushing:** First of all, Bill Cushing is pleased to announce that "What Love Is" (first featured in last February's print edition of Glomag) achieved a third place award in the

annual Helen Schaible Sonnet Competition. For this issue, he shares his favorite outdoor activity along with a picture of Chantey, a 38-foot converted Gloucester-style fishing schooner that he (and most of his neighborhood friends) cut their "sailing teeth" on. Built in 1927, Chantey still rides the waves, now out of Boston instead of New York. Bill busies himself these days by finishing up production on a new chapbook (*Music Speaks*) and continues promoting his recently-published collection, *A Former Life*.



## **THE MIRAGE CALLED LOVE**

Under the silver twilight love walks away  
The silhouette growing smaller  
Disappearing in the oblivion.  
Leaving behind a storm of darkness.  
Giving a feel of a hundred arrows  
piercing at once  
That's when the heart looks inside the void  
And wonders what had created the chaos  
What churned the life for a lifetime  
Pursuing bliss ephemeral,  
Is love for real or just an illusion

Or mere delusion  
Or fancy of a youthful heart  
Or a myth of folklores.  
For if love was real  
Then why it proves a travesty  
Doesn't love make you smile,  
When you first feel the vibe,  
Exuding an aura of bliss and joy  
Then why does it fade away?  
if altruistic emotions are its creations  
why does it wax and wane  
and hides behind shades  
turning into a stranger,  
to the one whose space it occupied.  
the weight of which felt,  
only once gone,  
Causing deep impressions,  
leaving a heart undulated for life.



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



## ROSES

One cannot blame one's origin

For not getting success or due honor

See the roses being born among thorns,

Radiate resplendence and grandeur

Spreading love and stealing hearts

A lover offers red roses

To his sweet heart asking love

A garland of roses are placed  
Around one's neck to celebrate success

Opening out the velvety petals  
Roses fill the air with pleasant odor  
Wafting into our minds and enlightening our hearts,  
Animate our ethereal essence

When we get up in the morning  
A garden full of roses greet us smiling  
Color our thoughts with optimism,  
The divine flowers make our day  
Bright and beautiful



**Bishnu Charan Parida:** He is a bilingual poet writing in English and Odia .He is from Jajpur Road, Odisha. An engineer by profession he carries a passion for poetry. His poems have been published in many anthologies and magazines of national and international repute. He has been honored in the state level Kalinga Nagar book festival 2015 in Odisha and at 11th Guntur International Poetry Festival 2018. He has been the world featured poet of Pentasi-B, China in 2019. Recently he has received the prestigious R. N. Tagore award from Xpress Publications, Kerala, India.



## **ALL DAYS SEEM THE SAME**

The outside world is waiting to be healed  
but blinds cover the windows  
and pain clings like a demon with sharp claws  
and the way out is like the Way of the Cross.

On the threshold, the pain stumbles over despair  
and in the bedroom guarding memories, curled tightly,  
a ginger cat gloomily meows.

There is a void that cannot be filled  
when children leave the nest before they are ready to fly.  
The nights are darker, all days seem the same.  
Unshed tears hover, waiting to fall.  
We stare at the blue bike standing orphaned in the hallway  
and ask ourselves – Why?



**Bozena Helena Mazur-Nowak:** She was born in Opole, Poland. In 2004 in search of work migrated to Great Britain, where she lives. She published seven volumes of poetry; four in Polish and three in English. She also writes prose and released a novel and a few short story collections. Her

work may be found in numerous worldwide anthologies and magazines. Winner of many poetry competitions. Proud holder of many diplomas, awards, and distinctions. Member of Union of Polish Writer's Abroad, Polish Authors' Association, and Association of American Poets. Her poetry was translated into English, French, Spanish, Swedish, Russian, Arabic, Telugu, Bengali, Norwegian, Albanian, Swahili, Philippine, Serbian.



## **THE CONFESSIONS OF AN ACTRESS**

I fly high in stardom, my wings tied.

Pinnacle of stardom with curtailed freedom, I laugh at irony  
and the sour taste of paradise.

I brood of nostalgia, of the petty beads and the shells,

Of the houses made of sand and dreams, of the fun with  
my comrades, of the dirty whirlpool of gutters I grew up  
with, of the scent of poverty and the aroma from the sweat  
of my father's shirt and mother's blouse.

I laugh, cry and fall ill today, only to make news. I cannot  
have a male crony, I am in love then; This life is phoney  
with money around.

When I emote truly, you say I overact, when I act, you compliment me as real.

Reel vs. Real: I giggle at irony again.

Yet I fear of my pride falling one day, of the ignominy of being forgotten one day and of the cacophony of gossips disappearing one day.

I sleep, peace disturbed today, with confessions.

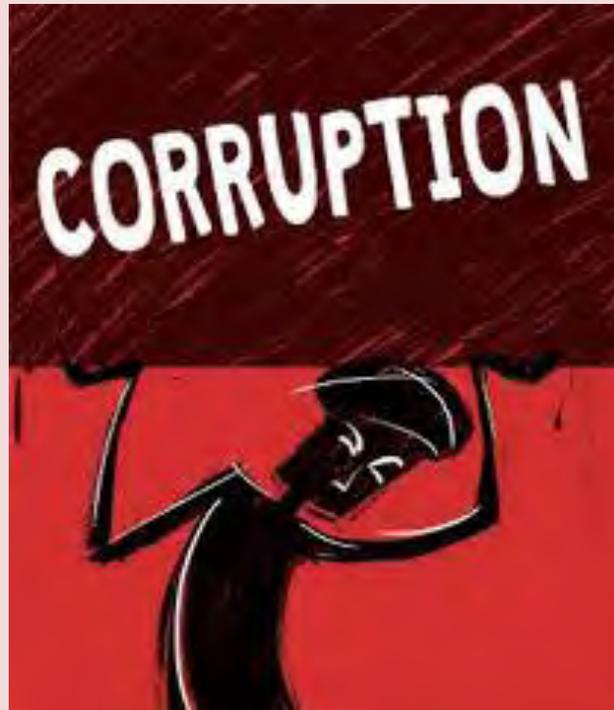
I want to confine myself and confide within.

I want to be myself, away from the crowd, from limelight and sensation.

I want to embrace solitude.



**Brindha Vinodh:** I am basically a poet and a freelancer residing currently in the United States of America. A few of my poems have been published in national magazines in India.



## **TRESPASSERS WILL BE PROSECUTED**

says this hoarding

outside the ministers house

before the election he said

come whenever you like

tell me your problems

today dogs guard his gates and ferocious men

you go to the temple of democracy

it says citizens not allowed

police station say

enter at your peril  
outside a department  
it say  
bribe is not a crime  
it offsets the price rise  
in a restaurant the waiter demands a tip before serving.  
A beggar threatens with a knife  
the priest looks at you fiercely  
fear grips you  
inside the lord in stone  
lifts his hands prays and says  
I am trapped  
helpless  
I cannot save you  
please cough up  
please cooperate  
you do  
then you come outside

and watch above  
the sky has turned red  
clouds bleed.



**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.



## **APHRODITE BECOMES A NUN**

The novice-mistress is fair, even kind

On occasion. I'm learning the psalter

Quickly, it calls my temple hymns to mind

But at needlework I sometimes falter.

Those gods were tiresome and the men would die

I felt like a goddess of ill repute,

My affairs were laughed at I can't deny

That time is best over I'll not dispute.

Mount Olympus closed down, I found odd jobs

And now a nice God I'll make my spouse.

I miss the clothes but not my love-lorn sobs

It's happier here in the convent-house.

I'm Sister Agnes not Aphrodite

Don't tell my address to Zeus "almighty."



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



*Pic: Isabel G. de Diego*

## **A GREEN MONKEY**

In Moradillo de Roa lands

On the banks of Burgos

Going down to Uncle Julio's almond trees

From the Rita winery

Almost dizzy

I saw a green monkey

On top of a branch.

-How handsome he is! I told myself

Asking:

-Little monkey, monkey

Where did you come from?

Look that you have courage.

What are you doing there

Uploaded on that branch?

Don't you know you can fall

And hurt?

The monkey answered me:

--No, I'm not going to hurt myself

Because I have seven lives like cats.

Moreover

There is a very pretty girl

That comes to see me

Three times in the week

But as you do not come

To Rita's cellar

When she comes

Because Moradillo don't like you

I can't invite her

And I spend the day

Like an anchoret

Trying to crack

Some almond tree with the tail.

- Oh, idiot, how cute!

As you find favor with me

And now people are at festivity

Well occupied

I will take you with me

To the Rita's pergola

And for some roasted black puddings

And some salami to the wine

That I'm going to give you

You have to delight us

With some of your funny things.

-That's done. But wait

My dear Daniel  
That over there is coming  
That little girl  
And I want to see her happy  
Making to her lovely things.



**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.



### IF/IN #17

once a bird once a bird

is not always a bird

the fog doesn't listen

to the fermentation

of the song

but it will bury a bird

just for hemming

the tree-line with joy joy

will drown a fog



**Darren C. Demaree:** I am a poet residing in Columbus, Ohio, United States. I work as librarian. I have contributed to various anthologies. I am the author of ten poetry collections, most recently "Lady, You Shot Me" (December, 2018)



*This poem is dedicated to the millions of South Africans who suffered immeasurably as a consequence of criminal activity in our country.*

*This is the photo of Arvitha Doodnath, Lawyer, lecturer and Gender Activist who was murdered in her car at a robot in Johannesburg on the night of 12 October 2019 at about 9 pm while returning home from an Indian cultural event.*

## **A VOICE FROM THE CAULDRON**

We scamper from cage to cage

Like nervous, frightened birds,

We South Africans,

While the demonic predators who terrorise us

Are free.

Free

To torment us, to violate our families,

To turn once hopeful,

'Finally liberated' citizens of Apartheid-free South Africa

Into tension-filled, stressed-out, scared prey,

Fearful prisoners in steel-ribbed cells.

The brazen criminals are free.

Free

To invade our nurturing homes, to raid our struggling  
shops,

To hijack our vehicles,

To turn distressed employers and worried workers  
into melancholy migrants.

The gangsters are free.

Free

To shatter our economy,

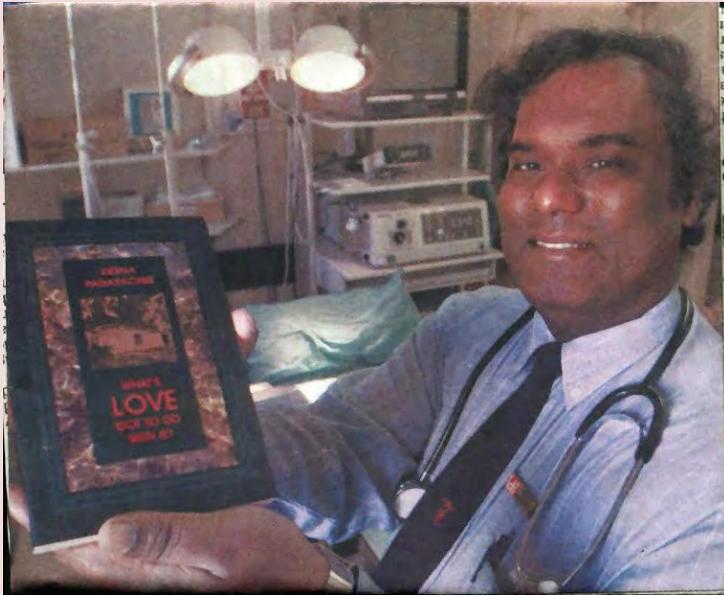
To attack the police,  
In their ceaseless assault on our country.

The ogres are free.

Free

To prowl our shuttered, sinister streets,  
Our desolate, dark city centres,  
Our frenetic roads,  
Like Raptors,

While we cower in terror,  
Wondering when our number will come up,  
When will we lose the war of deadly South African  
roulette?



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



## **A LIFETIME AGO...**

Still a little doodle on that wall

Fossiled with the grave

she visited my memory

the ghost is still warm

the shroud still dishonored.

Between today and a moment before

was an untamed unspoken promise

Abominable cursed and worshipped...

The Whore of Babylon

her dance in a trance

her footfalls in sand  
the glory of her flight  
and the muck on her thighs  
her sun filtered silhouette  
that impish hint of a duet  
I am no more me....  
I am that mist wreath on her head!!!



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



## **THE FALLING SPRING**

The clouds on my lips burst into tenors of spring  
Pelting in the baritone froth of his seas,  
My oasis gaze carilloned on the desert pyre  
Indented with oleander bays.

As the warm Chinook bugled down  
The fertile loin of my swollen tulip-lips  
Flickering as the last breath of a banjo-butterfly  
Swinging under the vault of jew-harped Jasmine arbors  
Waddling on the white-pansy woodland floor

Felt I the shrill horns of honeysuckle love in drips:  
Wet in the bruised blush of Saki's red sparkling wine  
Whose every breath heralds the trumpet of Persephone,  
divine.



**Deyasini Roy:** She is a budding young poet who hails from Chandannagar, a town in the Indian state of West Bengal. She's recently pursued her Postgraduate degree in English and Comparative Literature from Pondicherry University, India. She's contributed to various Anthologies and International Online Magazines of repute. She loves to set recourse to the idyllic and pastoral and record her impressionably sensitive response to the lilting cadency of Nature rendered in a swirl of lurid slashes and subtle brush strokes.



## **NOTHING REMAINS IN THE SCARLET SKY**

Did she walk alone  
On the seashore  
To cry, or to laugh  
At the end of the land  
Where the casuarina trees  
Meet the sea  
She stood  
Still, forlorn  
With only a piece of cloth  
To cover her loin  
And a layer of sand to

Cover all else  
She was not shy anymore  
As the men gathered around her again  
Like the hunters did  
To gauge their prey  
Before pouncing on  
She laughed aloud and said  
What could you take from me  
I have given all to the sand  
The sand has given all  
To the sea  
The sea has given all  
To the scarlet sky  
Nothing remains  
Nothing will come back  
Nothing ever has



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



*art by Jonel Scholtz*

## **CROWS CAW LOUDLY**

*(Kraaie Praat Hard)*

*No Wolves, Only Crows* – I dwell here each liquid black night seeking an embracing forgiving

haven where no one can touch me break me belittle me undermine me lie to me, mock me.

I willingly slip through to this subconscious domain to escape my daily demons, packs of

howling gnashing accusatory wolves unhappy with their own pathetic existence – Their sole

purpose to darken my mood, hoping to slowly delete me with their hoarse toxic whispers and

taunting growling but they are not here, only uninvited devious crows who somehow found a

way in without my consent, echoing my remaining weaknesses but I refuse to remain a victim.

This is my elected space to erase my darkening mood born from daily onslaughts of lexical

venom vomited by soulless jealous weaklings hoping to be victorious in my demise.

*Chorus of the Crows* – I should have known to make sure I did not fester on daily degrading

whispers from my darkened daily existence, which has now become an unwelcome uninvited

chorus aiming to further penetrate my emotional fatigue – They can peck at me, ridicule me,

deceive me, falsely compliment me but I need to be free. I need to be brave if I am to emerge

from this unscathed – Renewed. I need to reboot. “Shut up,  
hold your collective decaying

tongue! I refuse for you to have dominion over me! You  
may try to further deplete me but know

this – I. Refuse. To. Allow. You. To. Destroy. Me – I vow this  
to you. I will emerge renewed...

*Scorched Earth* – I wear my burnt colours with pride. I have  
nothing more to hide. I invite you

all to witness my scorched forest catwalk draped in my own  
existential design – Your fiery

tongues my scarlet flowers. Your filthy midnight feathers  
my stage curtains. Your blue grass

nesting nursery my elected scorched earth runway, bravely  
stomping on your doomed young

to avoid a future vicious bullying clan. What, you scowl at  
my daring revolt? You who used to

burn my emotions causing hurtful long-lasting bleeding  
emotional scars? You might stare at me

with igniting rage but this is the dawn of my new essence.  
Now leave this place or be erased!

*Metamorphosis* – Hear my final soliloquy! I now know that I had to face my ever present undernourished demons in order to protect my disappearing existence in a world infected with insincerity and lonely bitter vengeful souls whose primary function was to break me down. To unravel me. I had to take control. I have survived. I am better now. No more the hunted in nightmare demon alley street games. I will become who I am meant to be. I vow this to myself and those like me – Our shared journey...



**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.

**Jonel Scholtz:** She obtained a Baccalaureus Scientiae degree in Chemistry and Biochemistry from the University of Johannesburg in South Africa, in 1994. She started painting in 1988, while in high school, with Louise Goudemond, an American born artist, specializing in figurative work and oil portraits. In 2018 she was awarded an artist residency at Tamarin Art Centre in Mauritius. She went there for one month and expanded her artistic horizons and is now included as one of the exhibiting artists at the Tamarin Art Gallery curated by Leanda Brass, well-known UK sculptor.



## FATHER IN SON

Once the block's most indefatigable puddle tester,  
back when Santas and pandas centered your world,  
at 10 now you've graduated long since to  
pekes, pugs, poodles, and poms.

And your tomorrows life – who knows? Monk or  
musketeer?

(magematadormobster-millionairemimemosaicist-  
marshalmathematicianmachinst)

And I? To the very verge of vertigo I still view  
those decades of decadent expenditure of soul – for what?

Was it Watchman I aspired to or Watchmaker?

Unlike you, Mandalay, my future lies still in my past.



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



<https://www.theothersideofmin.com/echo-valley-hanging-coffins/>

## ECHO

*Translated by Artur Komoter*

On the rocky walls,  
suspended coffins.

Long ago mourned  
they connect  
the past with the present.

Prepared  
for the soul to be closer to heaven?

Awarded for a good life?  
Maybe just to  
give them silence and peace  
when they themselves are silent?

In the Echo valley  
still are alive  
the sounds of history.

Prepared  
for remembrance  
they hang  
not to delight.

But to amaze!



**Eliza Segiet:** She graduated with a Master's Degree in Philosophy, completed postgraduate studies in Cultural Knowledge, Philosophy, Arts and Literature at Jagiellonian University. Author's poem 'Questions' won the title of the International Publication of the Year (2017) in Spillwords Press. Author's poem 'Sea of Mists' won the title of the International Publication of the Year (2018) in Spillwords Press. Author's works can be found in anthologies and literary magazines worldwide.



## **A COMPLETE DAY**

With wicket hours of industry; calm  
The sun, waves its splendor gone.  
It's time to hear her beauty psalm,  
Before the new evenings yawn.  
As we nobly press hand in hand,  
Leaving the day's vile on the street.  
My delight rests with full command,  
Knowing my day is now complete.



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



I don't fight wars

As I have no war drum

I watch wars sitting in a chair

With some popcorn and rum

No comments

No suggestions

No sides to take

Nothing to fake

All around me

This ongoing rage

For safety's sake

I sit in a cage

Freedom gives me company too

War is not a game that it wants to play

We both know that peace will join us too

One of these days



**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.



## **I LOOK FOR YOU**

Silent night breathes your absence

The lonesome sky stops brooding

When the milky white moon rises

The roads appear clear and bright

Don't I know which road leads to you

But its the same moon you will be looking

As I always look up and wonder

How you light my nights just like the moon!

An eternal togetherness  
Between the night and the moon  
Strengthens my love for you  
No matter how distant you are  
We sleep under the same moon  
We wish the same stars...



**Gayatree G. Lahon:** Gayatree is a teacher by profession and a poet by passion. Nature is her great inspiration. Love, beauty of nature and the complexities of life find expression in her poems. Her poems have been published in newspapers, magazines and anthologies both in India and abroad.



Balancing an umbrella,  
Madhavan, in his nineties,  
Struggles with the clay he has to mould  
It is raining non-stop  
Once done, he places the mathevara  
Gently, in the wet courtyard,  
The kolam design has already thinned and spread  
He plucks some flowers  
Still holding his umbrella,  
Turns his head and mutters,  
“This year my mathevara is ruined

This rain will never end...”

His voice drowns in the downpour

But he waits for it to stop

For a long time.

It doesn't.

He bends, places the umbrella over it

To protect his creation,

And leaves, hands free, into the rain.

*Note: Mathevera is a symbolic pyramid shaped icon made of clay placed in front of the house during the Onam festival in Kerala.*



**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.



## **IT'S THAT TIME OF DAY**

When the stars fade away in the night sky,  
Zooming into another realm as they seek darkness,  
How strange they don't know that they shine for another  
star,  
When the sound of crickets dies down to a mere chchch,  
And the first crow discerns the earth turning ever so slow ,  
To face he truth of the oncoming day,  
When silence is broken by the horns of milkmen whizzing  
past,  
They mean we'll too but they want to be heard,  
  
It's that time of day when church bells, temple bells and a  
loud prayer wails,

And the arch of my feet sudden hurt with a muse,  
That want to reach my head but knows not of words yet,  
When my eyes are swollen with unshed tears of yesterday's  
stories,

And when shadows melt with the first ray of morn,  
When gold and silver race with each other on tracks of  
descending shafts,

To wake up the slumber of deaf consciousness,

My palms stiff with salty verses that are yet to drip into a  
cloud,

And my thumb taut with the angst of whether my muse will  
wake with me,

It's that time of day when my head brims with rivers with  
their tributaries running amok,

Towards oceans where metaphors wait with bated breath,

As tides of poetry inundate my soul,

Till waves get behind my vision and lungs screaming to  
articulate,

Vociferous and loud that poetry is strewn as shells  
everywhere,

When that little bird with a huge heart sings to blue and  
grey skies,

It's that time of day when gusts of muses levitate my soul  
to liberation.



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



## HOW I LOVE YOU

it's not only with words that I love you

it's how I love you unconditionally

i know that I cannot own you

neither can i possess you

you are not a chattel

nor an inanimate figurine

an acquisition that i have traded for

an ornament to be displayed

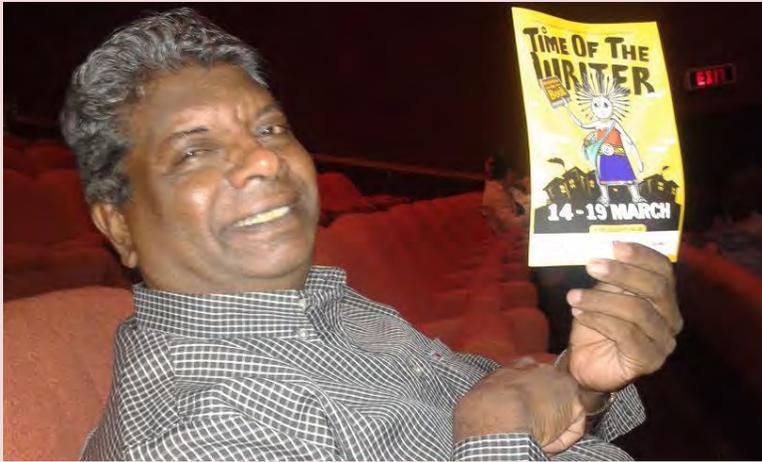
for my egotistic pleasures

you are a soul born without shackles  
with the vibrancy of life's energy  
surging within you  
with an innate urge to follow your heart  
to fly with your dreams  
like a bird soaring in flight  
with the currents of the wind  
the freedom to love and live free  
not to be stifled and denounced  
for that which is your birth right  
bequeath to you by a greater force  
neither you nor I can fathom

I love you, because you are the light  
that diminishes my fears  
to be loved and cherished  
is not a price you have to pay

with your soul and your life  
I will not imprison you in a cage  
and chain your free spirit to my notions  
power and control have no place  
in the haven we create for ourselves  
a place where our souls will dwell  
in complete rapturous harmony

love is the freedom to dance and sing  
to the universal music of the cosmos  
you and I, two passionate voyagers  
taking a lover's blissful journey  
gift-wrapped in the intimacy of our love  
we will be like two bright stars  
sailing on the wings of Nirvana



**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.



## **SILENT WORDS**

I am there, listening to the quietness,  
Healing the old wounds,  
The morning breeze overwhelms the boundaries  
Of the green slope, bruised heart, even the time plane.

Silent words seeping through the treelines,  
In the distant valley  
Far and below the meandering river drops sediments,  
Fingers grasp brush inside,

Cast in the country rocks, the unheard stories  
I judge by their lustre and hardness  
Sealed by the shining lights  
So clean, yet so mystic.

I return to the shadow of the tall trees,  
Through the foliage  
Now the autumn sky is in search of  
The lonely traveller.



**Gopal Lahiri:** I am a bilingual poet, writer, critic and translator residing in Kolkata. I have contributed to various anthologies and have also published nine volumes of poetry in English and seven volumes in Bengali. In addition, I have also jointly edited one anthology of poems in English and also have one translation work of short stories of Israel, translated by me from English to Bengali.



<http://poetryhiddenmeanings.weebly.com/i-know-why-the-caged-bird-sings.html>

## **CAGED BIRD**

*Original: Assamese : Guna Moran*

*Translation: Bibekananda Choudhury*

There is wish to fly

But no permission

The soaring bird

Locked up

In the cage of love

One needs special permission

To smile t other's happiness

To weep at other's sorrow

Else

Gets singed in the fire of envy

Fisherman dams up a flowing river

Rivers stop for a while

Captivated by the catch of fish

Fisherman turns oblivious

Of the force of current of river

The river flows along

Tearing through the dam



**Guna Moran:** He is an Assamese poet and critic. His poems are being translated into Italian and France language and have been published in various national and international magazines, journals, websites, newspapers such as The Tuck magazine, Spillword, The Merak magazine, The Setu magazine, Story Mirror, The Poem Hunter, The Sentinal, The Hills Times, Best Poetry and so on.



## **ATTITUDE**

One's attitude determines,  
Guides, influences life path---  
Ones journey of life,  
Quality of life.

Quality of thoughts,  
Way of thinking,  
Impacts one's perception,  
Attitude towards life.

Positive attitude takes

One forward in life---A happy,

Optimistic and contented life.

Negative attitude is

Regressive---Unhappy,

Pessimistic, gloomy life.

Attitude influences behaviour,

Behaviour projects your

Personality, image---

Positive or negative ---

Determines success or failure.

Attitude is all pervasive.



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



## **DISCIPLINE**

Discipline in life is must  
To prepare for the toughest challenges  
To make your boat sail  
Successfully,  
Through the winds of trials  
And waves of tribulations  
It makes one to explore  
The best of one's potential  
It releases all the energy  
To live life in the best manner  
To savour the essence of life

With heated ice

And spicy sweet

It reflects the true beauty

And pragmatism

Showing how beautiful and disciplined

The whole life itself is

How nature follows discipline

How day and nights follow discipline

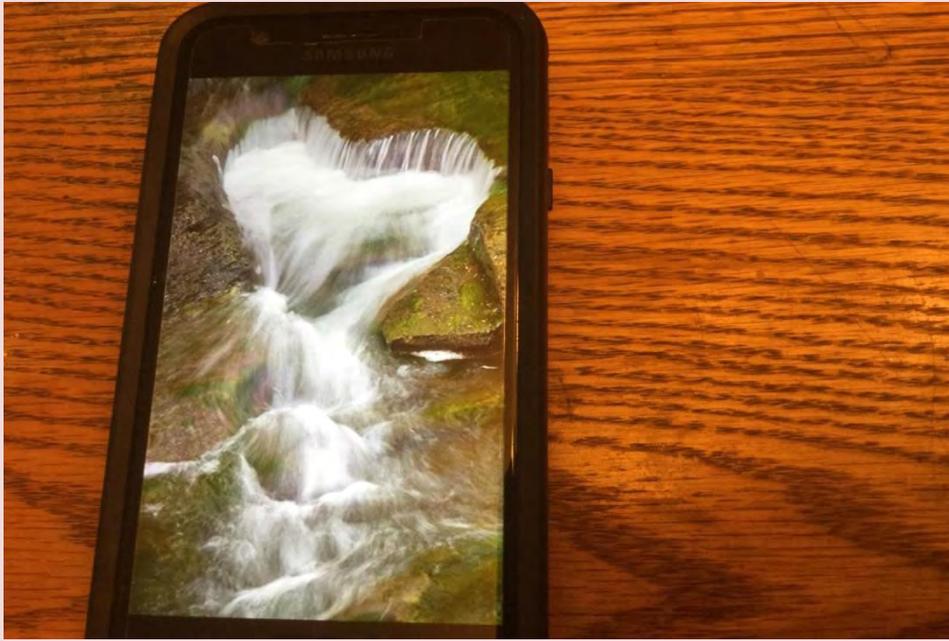
And how human life is bound to follow the same

If it wants to get connected itself with the supreme truth  
and,

Explore the mystery of life!!



**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.



## **WATERS OF THE HEART SONG**

You love me

like

a water fall.

A continuous

caress,

healing waters

of love.



**Jennifer Carr:** She is a poet residing in Santa Fe, United States. For the last two years, she has worked as an EMT and Firefighter. Her poems have gotten published in more than 10 anthologies. Her Haiku has been published in print and in online publications throughout the world. She flies by her own wings and looks for any opportunity to soar to new heights.



## **THIS AUTUMN**

A flying carpet of  
sugar maple leaves  
unfurls along my road.

Just enough light to glimpse  
silhouettes of yellow trees  
against the dove grey sky.

After evening showers,  
gardens of bright  
stars will blossom.

Tenacious...one ragged  
leaf clings to the bough.



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



## **THE PAST IS GONE**

Chennai's landscape is changing faster

beyond the raising of the brows;

A fusion of time zones where the Past  
has disappeared into the shadows.

A jaded glimmer of luscious green  
lurks like a tree in the maze of mist;

Roads cry for a fresh coat of life  
as wheels rip through clouds of dust.

New alleys of chameleon hope on view –

Farmlands giving way to pigeonholes;

where the old seek salubrious wind,  
the young tensing for defined roles.  
The Past only a dust-blown wall paper,  
uncover new vistas in the day's layer.

*Note: Chennai is one of the metros going through a paradigm of change and the present face is hardly what it was 40 years ago in memory. Only a Chennaiite will know and speak for what it signifies. A sign of ageing and sapping metabolism? Or is it a question of how one looks at growth?*



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



## MILES

An elusive presence, swayed like a paper rose,  
visceral in lavender -grey  
at the wind-washed doorway  
of the running train; speed tamed  
miles of rhapsody into prose.

Dusk behind the Agra Fort  
was dressed in whispering gold dust,  
fragrant with ancient incarnations.

The thirsty sequins of her flowy skirt  
absorbed moist sandy dirt.

Footfalls of speeding time ran

along the tracks, - old.

The journey, clung as a skeleton

to the metallic miles, - cold.

Colour of wind turned mauve.

The black scarf of absence

caressed the paper-rose presence.

Green tresses of the flowing wind among trees

traced the brows of the Taj, -

possessed by anguish of blue ease.

Yard after yard of stolen dreams

lay squared among the vast expanse

of shimmering dissolved pride.

Treasured absence whispered silky breath,

warm, on the shoulders of sightless presence.



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



## **BREATH OF THE SANDHILL CRANE**

A morning hush along the great Platte River as  
wing beats rush.

The Sandhill's awaken, grand birds now rising  
heading south.

Feathers float about the air like gently falling  
snowflakes.

Twisting and dancing like orange rinds in a shaken  
tequila sunrise.

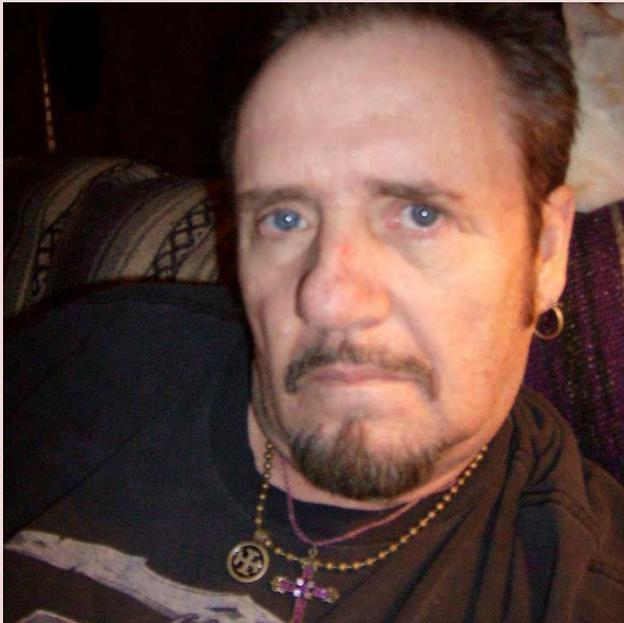
Autumn mornings bring a crisp to the inhale of  
the great birds.

Rising higher in a circular hover, the flock slowly

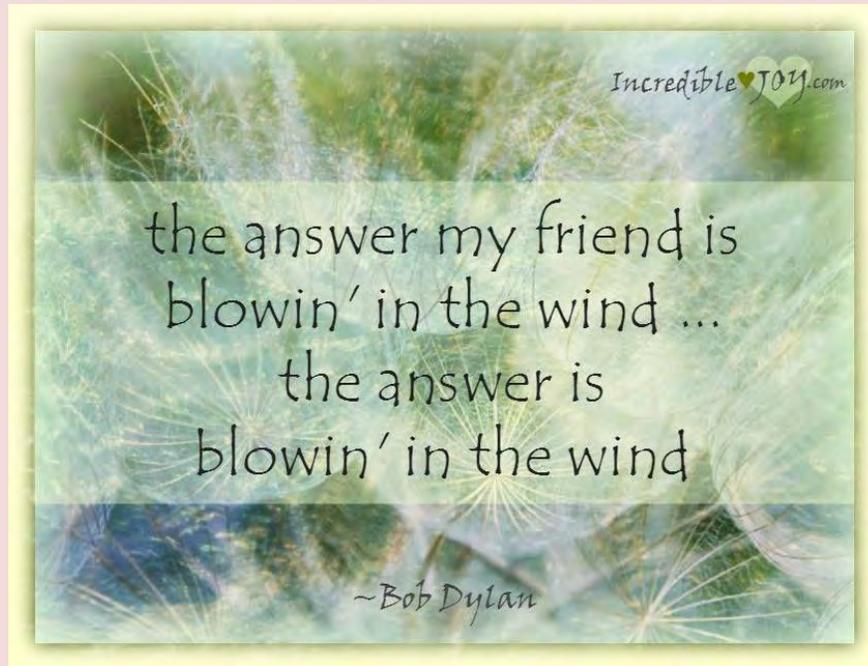
moves into a haze.

Red-winged blackbirds sit resting on branches  
preen and ready for the day.

It's now quiet on the banks of the winding Platte River,  
but for the Breath of the Sandhill Crane.



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



## **ASK WHY**

Always ask ourselves why

Before we agree to it

Always ask ourselves how

Before we agree it works

Because it's only by asking questions

We would find answers

Skepticism, not faith, is the way to progress

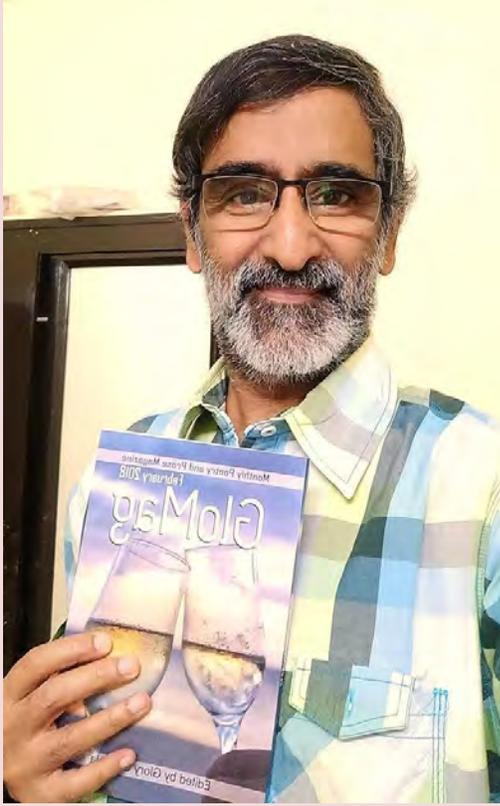
It's by asking why

It's by asking how that we change

Because the change we want  
Should start from us, only us

Mirza Ghalib said the believer holds me back  
The sceptic takes me forward  
I must leave faith behind  
To embrace logic reason and science

When the winds of change blows  
It touches everything in its path  
When it picks up the fragrance  
Of a thousand flowers  
It spreads it  
Not keeping the sweet smell to itself



**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.



### **WHEN I FIND YOU AGAIN (BAREFOOT DREAMS)**

I'm running as fast as I can to catch up.

And, when I'm finally even with your pace,

I can throw off my running shoes

and go with you.

We can swim with sharks that won't bite.

Climb,

to the very tops of mountains,

and not fall.

Sleep outside in the rain,

and never fear the lightning that accompanies it.

We can do it all,  
and nothing can hurt us.  
We will finally walk barefoot,  
arm in arm,  
throughout eternity.



**Linda Imbler:** Kansas-based Linda Imbler believes poetry has the potential to add to the beauty of the world. She has three self-published poetry collections and two poetry collections published by Soma Publishing. Examples of Linda's poetry and a listing of publications can be found at [lindaspotryblog.blogspot.com](http://lindaspotryblog.blogspot.com). She has recently completed her poetry collection about her Nashville trip in March.



## **EXCHANGE**

Might be

an accident

Or intended incident

We met...

Under the same roof

Only I could hear my heave

Loud echoes of my heart beat

Feeling a fast pulse speed

Warm blood gushing inside

Shimmering me to pink.

Thousand thunderous words

Sealed inside me  
Pinching me to come outside  
Lips wanted to remain stitched  
Thoughts were playing hide and seek  
blank mind pretended to stay tight  
but eyes reflected the spark  
voice fumbled while I speak  
feet were in the grip of tremor  
yet I preferred to remain as me  
we met  
no exchange of words  
no exchange of eyes  
only we exchanged fire with in us.



**Lopamudra Mishra:** She is a native of Puri, now residing in Bhubaneswar, Orissa. She completed her graduation (English Hons) from Sailabala Women's College, Cuttack, and post-graduation (English) from Ravenshaw University, Cuttack. Her fascination for writing came from her grandfather and father from an early age. Writing for her is the powerful medium of expression. Her poems have been published in many magazines and anthologies. Her books 'Rhyme Of Rain' 'First Rain' 'Tingling Parables' and 'Rivulet Of Emotions' have also been published.



## **FALL IN LOVE**

Every time your lips touch mine

I find one more reason

To fall in love

With you all over again

Every moment spent

Together with you

My love

Is worth a lifetime

Every word with you

Speak volumes

There is communication

In absolute silence & stillness

Love is an act of faith

Love is to commit oneself

To give wholly & solely

To each other



**Lubna Ahmed:** She is a Certified Master NLP (Neurological Linguistic Programming) Practitioner; NLP Workshop Facilitator and Soft Skills trainer; and Certified Advanced Life Coach. She conducts SuperKoolKids Art Therapy workshops. She resides in Delhi with her family. She has managed to carve a niche for herself in the literary world by her ever so simple 'Love poems'. 'Princess Lubna' is her pen name, her writers' identity. Her love poems are spiritual and have a Mystical Aura. She has written many poems for National and International Anthologies. She is an avid traveller.



## **SOMETHING NEW....**

Met so many

Haven't we?

Some free ones,

Liberated,

Few caged,

Imprisoned,

Thought processes,

Processes of thoughts,

Ambitious,

Courageous,

Amiable beats,  
Compassionate;  
Steps of flight,  
Towards flights of steps,  
Walking,  
Flying at times  
To newer horizons,  
Horizons of twinkling stars.  
Saw so much,  
Both of us together,  
Some happy moments,  
Few melancholic hours,  
Tangled webs of emotions,  
Detangled passions,  
Woven sheets of feelings,  
Reds, pinks,  
Oranges, greys,  
Interspersed

With the dark  
Of the nights;  
The dark that meets  
At the boundaries of dreams,  
Scaring at times,  
Mixing in then,  
Creating newer shades,  
Shades of warm colourful times.



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



## **THE NIGHT**

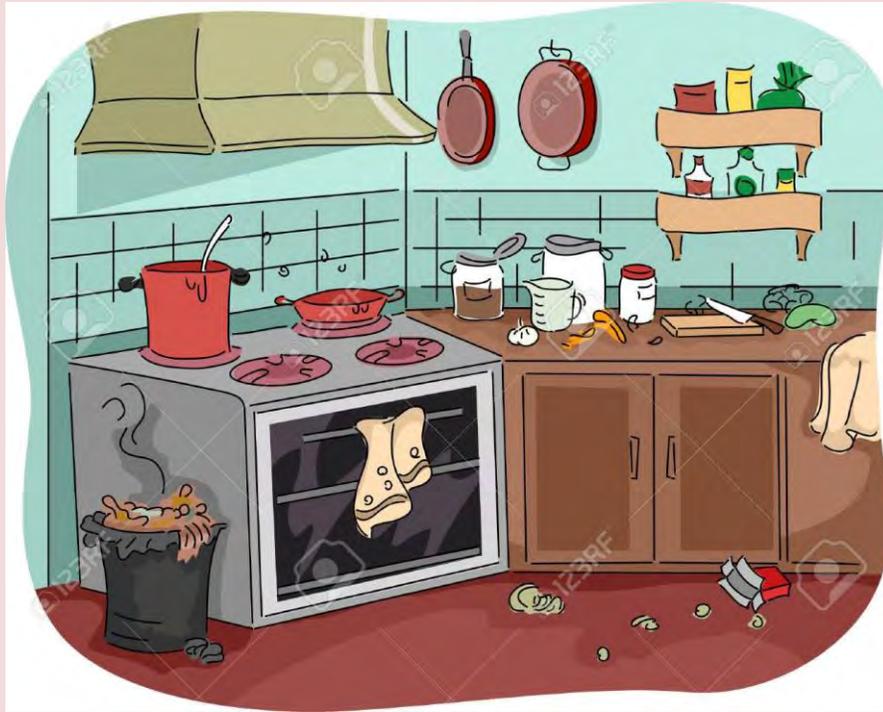
The night was dewy yet felt warm,  
The air above, filled with intoxicating scent of night flowers  
An eerie silence, got broken by tiktok of the heels.  
The mystical aura, enveloping the long dark night  
The straight path seemed, all, criss-crossed in front,  
Moving, like a serpentine as I walked along.

Taking a deep sigh, I tried to convene,  
My rush mind and the palpitations inside  
The cool breeze blowing, gave momentary solace

A lone star twinkling in the night sky,  
Smirking and beguiling, both in a way  
Smile on lips, yet gloomy in the eyes  
Life, as if, partitioned into two halves...  
The natural sheen, lacking now  
The warmth and sunshine, seemed amiss.  
Bracing it on, in my thumping heart  
Marching against, tide and time!



**Madhu Jaiswal:** She is a poet, writer, editor and a social worker based in Kolkata, India. She has got published in various national and international anthologies and is regularly featured in popular literary magazines and e-zines. As an executive editor of The Impish Lass Publishing House Mumbai, she has 5 anthologies to her credit. Madhu is a friendly, optimistic and compassionate person who believes in humanity and volunteers for the upliftment of the underprivileged and destitute. According to her, hope, belief, and perseverance are the powerful mantras that have the ability to pave our path towards success no matter what. Her writings often revolve around these keywords. She can be contacted at [madhuj2203@gmail.com](mailto:madhuj2203@gmail.com).



## MY PLACE

Rags dumped in corners

Flour strewn on the shelf

Pest infested Chick peas

Lentils in same state

White scum on the haldi

Rice with bugs in stride

Mouse droppings in corners

Stale smell in the air

My kitchen is messy

Missing my personal touch  
I bear with all and sundry  
A matter of time I think  
When my bones are fixed and straightened  
My muscles regain their strength  
It's been months I've been confined  
To the foursquare plank called bed  
But I know am going to make it  
To my kitchen which is my place.



**Madhu Sriwastav:** She is an Assistant Professor in English at Bamanpukur Humayun Kabir Mahavidyalaya, West Bengal. She is a multilingual poet, translator, has also written and published a few short stories. She is a practising poet, performing poetry regularly and has published in several national and international journals online and print.



## **TWILIGHT**

The knell of twilight.

The azaan\* of maghrib\*.

The birth of my brother.

The deeya\* lit over the peer\*'s mazaar\*.

Each twilight brings to me the  
memories of the games played.

The hide and seek.

The seeking and sorting.

The flails and flights.

The last lover who hid himself.

Months later, refused to recognise.

The other, abandoned me  
at a station at the twilight.

The third, I left alone  
in a nook in a haunted house

I, too had played hide and seek with him.

Though, it was a good place to hide,

the world at the twilight nailed                      secrets over its  
coffins.

Soon, it will bury inside earth  
disclaiming its eyes, ears, and tongues.

Lifting with it just the spell of winters,  
the sound of empty glasses,

the fragrance of tea,  
the colour of raindrops

and the zillion, flitting butterflies that would yet be another  
memory of the twilight.

**Note:**

***Aazan: Islamic call to worship, recited by muezzin***

***Maghrib: The Maghrib prayer, prayed just after sunset,  
the fourth of the five obligatory daily prayers(salat)  
performed by practicing Muslims.***

***Deeya: candle***

***Peer: Prophet or spiritual guide.***



**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.



## **THE WOLF AND HIS SHEEP**

Together they lived, Hard to believe,  
The sharp tooth Wolf and his fleecy Sheep!  
Naive and secluded from the world affairs,  
She believed him to be the only one to care!  
Unjaded callow fell for the gallant canine,  
With his touch loud roar, her bulwark shines!  
Day in day out, her protector bartered her fleece,  
Together they lived happily and in peace!

Innocent meek, loved her knight with shiny teeth,  
Lovingly he looks with watery mouth unsheathed!  
Cruel is the world, they declined her plagued wool,  
She believed in love, who cooked and ate her full!



**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://www.pictorem.com/149501/MOTHER%20EARTH.html>

## **EARTH**

The Earth is a hardcore she,  
nothing to wear, says she.

And grows green

to shun golden brown.



**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.



## **DIGNITY**

With full humbleness,  
today, I owe each one an explanation  
on behalf of womankind  
for state of sorrowness  
plying to the haziness  
leading to mere pretending locution.

With full humbleness,  
today, I owe each one a promise  
on behalf of womankind  
the right to live in dignity

free from fear, coercion  
violence and discrimination.

With full humbleness,  
today, i owe each one a dare  
on behalf of womankind  
not to take our sensitivity  
as our debility  
not to see our daintiness  
as our disability.

With full humbleness,  
today, i owe each one a challenge  
on behalf of womankind  
to speak out forcefully for  
zero tolerance  
to all forms of violence  
to all sorts of absurdity.



**Mehak Gupta Grover:** She is the author of three books - THE HUMANE QUEST (ume-1, 2 & 3), published by Authorspress, New Delhi. She has been bestowed with '100 Inspiring Authors of India' award in Kolkata. She has also been honored with the 'Women Of Influence 2019' award presented on women's day in New Delhi. Along with her books, her work has been published in various anthologies and she is recipient of various other prizes in poetry competitions as well. 'The Humane Quest' is a humble attempt to create awareness against the evils of society and stimulate the strong Indian values which are lacking in the present times. (mehakgrover@amartex.com)



## REFLECTION

You're gorgeous and beautiful

Know that you're unique

Keep smiling and never fear

You're blessed with an awesome life

Cheer up and face the world

Think of the memories we have shared

Unfold your dreams and passion

Life is adventurous and fun

You're never lonely when I'm here

Be amazing as always my dear

Life is a journey through time  
It's the real you I portray  
When you're here with me  
I'm the mirror your pal  
I can't embrace you  
But I adore you



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



Bulls in the field snort hot breath.

Cows stand and chew

as knives are being sharpened indoors.



**Mike Griffith:** He began writing poetry after a disability-causing accident. His chapbooks *Bloodline* (The Blue Nib Imprint) and *Exposed* (Soma Publishing and Hidden Constellation Press) were released in November 2018. Mike was nominated for the Pushcart Prize for poetry in October 2018. He lives in Hillsborough, NJ and teaches at Raritan Valley Community College. He is Poetry Editor (USA & Canada) for The Blue Nib.

<https://twitter.com/AuthorMGriffith>

<https://michaelgriffithwordpress.wordpress.com>



## **MANGAN'S SISTER**

'Every boy has that image of Mangan's sister'

That had been her observation,

Her patent one,

Aphoristic,

Assertive,

Statement like;

It had been a beautiful dusk of one winter,

We were returning home down that lane

Which would take us eventually through those places

As we have so often read in our books of stories-

Commonplace ones yet having some kind of epiphany,

That stable, that cow shed, that garden of Mukhotis with a  
deodar tree right at its centre,

Even a defunct bicycle pump lying useless in front of a shut  
down hardware store,

I was thinking of myself as Stephen,

And her as that chalice which was borne by Stephen,

The din and the bustle of passing people and vehicles made  
no impact on me,

We walked till our ways were to part,

I could have hurried away like Stephen,

But knowing how Araby posed as a great illusion

I did not do that,

Instead I lingered, at that point where we were to take two  
different directions,

She also, perhaps, knew it all,

Having read Dubliners

She decidedly also waited for a response

From me,

The evening was closing in,

'Next time, when you would come

And we would go out for a walk,

I would tell you a fairy tale,

Real stories carry no meaning as such,

They cannot take you to the moon and back'

I said, trying to be as much brave as possible,

She giggled,

The sweetest giggle I ever heard,

Which was enough for me to kickstart my dream of a fairy tale.



**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 BRUTALITY OF OUR MENTALITY**

Worship me i am God

Bow down or my rod,

Live solely on my vomit

Else i confine you to a limit;

The brutality of our mentality.

Keep mute and be my boy

Eat crumbs and remain a toy,

My children are in Harvard

So remain tiny like a mustard;

The brutality of our mentality.

You are brilliant and brave  
With my help; you be a wave,  
I will poison your air  
And buy you a wheelchair;  
The brutality of our mentality.

Someday you; be the president  
Then; reform the government,  
I will break your ladder  
And keep you sadder;  
The brutality of our mentality.

Sure i can pay your fee  
I can help you 'see'  
But my feces; feed on,  
Else you remain common;  
The brutality of our mentality.

Serve and age in my house  
Reduce to just a mouse,  
Be ordinary like toothpaste  
In fact you must be a waste;  
The brutality of our mentality.

Sleep with me or fail  
Comply or rot in jail,  
Tell no one or die  
Bound; i will not untie;  
The brutality of our mentality.

You are a promising star  
About to cross the bar,  
I must blow the bridge  
For you to fall inside the fridge;  
The brutality of our mentality.

You are better than the rest  
Allowed; you emerge the best,  
I must cook up a story  
So that i mar your glory;  
The brutality of our mentality.

You are a ray of hope  
I will cut off the rope,  
Naturally you are a beacon  
I dare not ordain you a deacon;  
The brutality of our mentality.

You have a unique approach  
In you i see a great coach,  
I must break your leg

For you to live with peg;  
The brutality of our mentality.

## AMAZING THE WAY WE ARE



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



## **MASTERPIECE**

Emitting lustreless rays of light,  
The hurricane lamp paints a monochrome of shadows;  
As if old trembling hands of Picasso is making graphics of  
worn out lives under the thatched roof.

Amidst those droplets of light and patches of darkness,  
She looks for her mirror of which she gets scared these  
days.

She finds her face ugly in daylight because she burns,  
like unwanted weed in the bonfire of the society.

She trembles; will she be able to stop the robbers!  
lurking behind somewhere in between sun and Moon!  
She was a mother of two children; she can't say,  
she is drying out of hope.

She musters her disconcertion for their pyre tonight.  
The hurricane lamp flared with devilish glow in,  
a mad desire of killing fairy wings,  
clad in milky stainless gossamer.

Death is certain; either being caged or being freed of  
shackles!

She chose to be a freed quill in her sail towards darkness.  
She deserts her children letting them to dream a while;  
She kisses them with a faint smile and walks out.

No more reeks in their body under that gloomy roof!

Little colour of faint enthuse in the dusky canvas!

She enjoys her victory on cost of her flesh,

and adores her small Earth from a far loneliness,

floating around in the canvas of darkness.

Swollen wheat in her orbit around the emery wheel!

A masterpiece is in procession; trembling hands of Picasso

for his final touch!



**Nitusmita Saikia:** By profession, an instructor in National Cadet Core, India, Nitusmita Saikia is a keen worshiper of literature. She is working presently in Jorhat Assam, India. A young budding poetess, Nitusmita Saikia, has been adored by the World society of poetry. She writes in both English and own regional language (Assamese). Being active in various online Poetry groups and blogs, she has been writing for E-Magazines like Tuck Magazine (USA), FM-Online (USA) poetry magazine, and blog Sparking.biz. With these, her poems have been published in various poetry anthologies National and International.



## **THE RHYTHMS OF NATURE**

The evening was pleasantly warm and emanating a sense of calm

The view outside the window beckoned me with a welcoming arm

The pull was so strong that it made me move

And before I knew it I was dancing to nature's groove.

A tiny little bee danced the tango flapping its wings

Hopping from one flower's embrace to another one's loving cling

The leaves all swayed under nature's gentle breeze  
In this garden of a thousand flowers and trees.

A kaleidoscope of butterflies waltzed gaily around me  
Garbed so much more opulently than any royal could hope  
to be

I thanked nature for having given me this chance  
To finally appreciate true music and dance



**Nivedita Karthik:** She is a poet residing in Gurugram and working in the publishing industry. She is an accomplished Bharatanatyam dancer and enjoys writing poems and stories. Her work has been published in Glomag and the Society of Classical Poets.



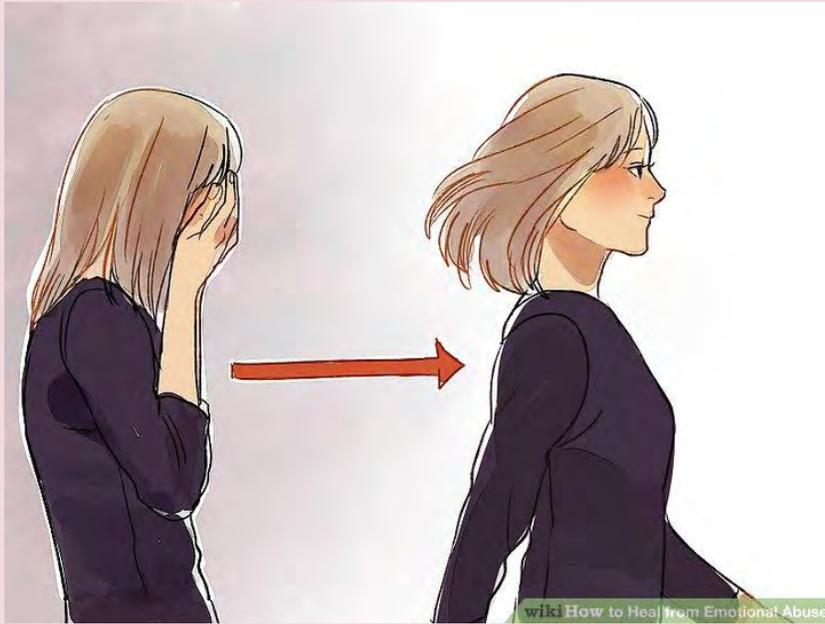
## **THE LOTUS POND**

I gaze at the dusky pink riot  
Of the flowers in the murky pond  
There they are, heavenly beauties  
So confident in their self-worth  
Though born in mud and dirt  
I ponder on the irony of nature.  
The majesty of a lion is not shaken by  
The wicked hyena's maniac howls  
The giant gorilla does not get fazed by  
The hoots of the visitors in the zoo.

The lovely lotus, abode of the goddess Lakshmi  
Is born and grows in the water  
Never giving up its pink perfection  
So, I tell myself to rise above myself,  
immune to murky depths  
And be like the lotus, the Padma.



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



<https://www.wikihow.com/Heal-from-Emotional-Abuse>

## **NEVERTHELESS**

Before I whine,  
Create havoc,  
Say things I don't mean,  
Pick old hurts  
From things you said  
Ten years or days ago...  
Let me remind myself  
The root of vicious unrest.

I do so from the hurt  
Of denied love  
Or small or large fragments  
Of my innate self.  
All this noise is mere pining  
For acceptance,  
To feel whole again  
And all it takes is a kind word,  
A gesture, a forthcoming hug  
From a large heart  
Who'd care to pull me  
Back to myself.

And with awareness  
I mellow down,  
Water the hurting, hurtful  
Emotions away  
Trying to converse

My need of the moment

With you.

But I pull myself back

Nevertheless.

***Note: Awareness is a strong tool that helps one hold it together through it all. The root cause of all disarray needs to be addressed before we burn another and drag them down with us.***



**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.



## **A MONUMENT**

The easy chair with moist trails of memory  
lies unused now. Termites feast on it.

One of the legs needs a support.

As children, we hopped and bumped on it  
not after it sucked in our father's last breath.

It holds his scent, desires and zeal;

Mom wanted to preserve it for long.

She sits by it every day, wipes it with her own cloths,  
her way of reverence, to last till the day of their reunion.

It gets periodic touch-up, but

imminent deterioration with time outlives all.

Finding it difficult to destroy or dispose  
for affinities and affections to our parents  
embedded in its weary planks, the chair has become  
a monument filled with memories and sentiments.



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



## **FAIRNESS CREAM**

Why so many creams to make my face fair?

Why don't they make creams to make my heart fair,

why don't they dare?

Fairness cream to make us shine.

Make us all beautiful in a line.

Don't they make creams to sparkle the mind?

Don't they make lotions for making the heart just and kind?

Fairness cream to make us dazzle.

With a fair face fitting in the jigsaw puzzle.

Don't they make creams to sharpen our brains?

Don't they have lotions to have kindness blood flow in  
arteries and veins?

Fairness cream to make us glow.

To make us the show stopper in the show.

Don't they make creams to make our heart accept all?

Don't they make lotions to let us help others when they  
fall?

Fairness cream to make us resplendent.

To make us attractive at every bend.

Do make creams to make a happy heart.

Do make lotions to stop all poison darts.



**Paramita Mukherjee Mullick:** I am a poet and live in Mumbai, India. I am an educationist. My poems have been published in more than 150 national and international anthologies. I have five published books to my credit. I have started and am the President of IPPL (Intercultural Poetry and Performance Library) Mumbai Chapter. Recently, I received the Golden Rose award from Argentina for contribution in art and culture.



Life is Erotic

from birth to death

we embrace life

all its sensuous pleasures

sucking life at the first opportunity

Death, we accept and Embrace too.

Life is no paper doll

real , flesh and blood

we connect, we grow

we play truant, we grow

mischief we do, we grow

all roads lead to Death.

No Regrets at Dying

I lived well. No Regrets.



**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](http://www.velvi.org)



## EMPTIED

my late dad's house took the memories  
down out of the loft tread over boards  
fibred with asbestos his industrial disease.

Emptied

my late dad's clothes tried on his shoes,  
black bagged his shirts took his blue coat  
as a second skin against September's wind and rain.



**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.



## **AND IN THE END! (PART 2)**

I'm a great big meteorite deep in space,  
Seeking out the planet of the human race.  
Will I get there Tuesday? Will I be on time?  
Will I turn the oceans into dark green slime?

Rushing really fast now hidden from your view,  
Creeping up behind you, perhaps I'll shout out Boo!  
When I meet the atmosphere warming up my skin,  
I'll break off into pieces, see the fun begin.

The final set of fireworks, what a show I'll be,  
Make sure that you all look up high, after all it's free.  
And when at last it's over, amidst the rising dust,  
Volcanic ooze will rise again, from the Planet's crust.



**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.



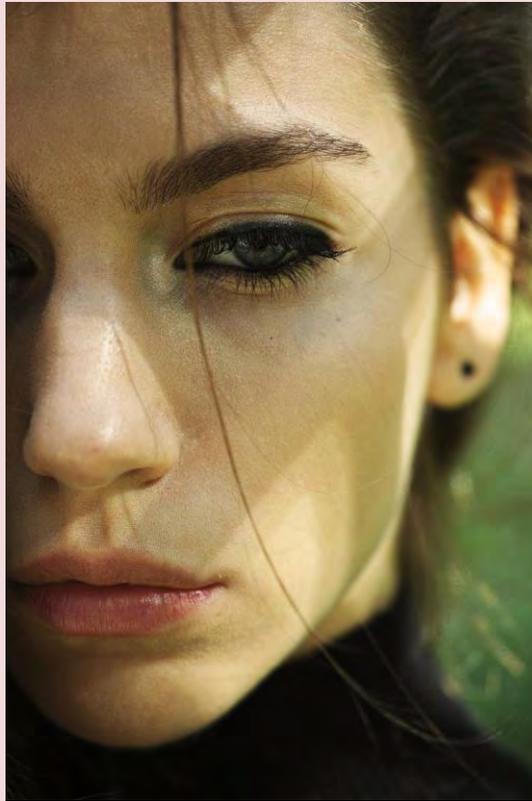
## SMILE

Smile is a humble poem  
that needs no teeth  
nor letters to write



**Pooja Suresh:** Hello! I am Pooja Suresh, an upcoming Carnatic music vocalist and I perform concerts along with my sister. We sing as vocal duets and I also play the instrument Veena. I started writing as a hobby, and now,

take part in various writing prompts and programs. I also recently completed a NANOWRIMO camp setting myself a goal of 10000 words and received an honorable mention for one of my poems on togetherness written for On Fire Cultural Movement. I aspire to write more and read more.



## **AFTERMATH**

Don't raise your eyebrows when you see her acting differently.

When she is caught staring bewildered at the gulmohar

Lost in thoughts

And in a parallel world of words

Of her own.

Don't disturb her as she empathises with the faceless mannequins

Glistening in bright hues

And sparkling sequins.

Don't accuse her of her indifference to the shopping spree.

She's broken...

And this is her way of mending herself.



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



## **THE MONSOON STORY**

Anjali took a sip of her tea and looked at the rain. The monsoon rains always made her emotions dance. Sometimes it brought out the writer in her, sometimes the thinker, sometimes made her calm and at peace with life. But today it was making her feel nostalgic and lonely. Each drop of rain seemed to revive a memory, and soon all her thoughts were in a puddle...

Her son Piyush was in college. He was enjoying the freedom of hostel life and was very busy, participating in all college activities, games, seminars, friends and...probably a girlfriend. She smiled at the thought. Last month when she had talked with him last, he was talking about some quiz that he had won. She had been so proud and happy for him.

Her daughter had been working for a year now. Purna was very homesick initially. She would call up twice every day and whine about how lonely she was and how difficult life is. Anjali had worried for her. But soon she had made friends in the new city and settled down. With increasing workload, the frequency of calls had gradually reduced. Now it was once a month. At least she was not homesick anymore...

Anjali sighed. Children grew up so fast! On rainy days like this, she used to button up their raincoats and send them to school. Sometimes it would be declared a rainy day at school and they would return early, their faces shining with glee at the pleasant surprise. And Anjali would take a day off from office just to be with them. As they grew up, they had refused to wear raincoats anymore; apparently they were for 'kids' and crammed their style.

And on rainy evenings, they would sit together and eat garam garam pakodas or Maggi noodles. The children would tell stories of their day at school, and she would, in turn, tell them about how different things were during her childhood. And the evening would pass in laughter and giggles.

Now her kids were away and her husband was posted in a different State. She herself was busy with her work, her

numerous hobbies, her books... But mothers will always miss their children no matter how busy and occupied they are. But she understood their busy schedule and never complained.

She stretched out her hand and collected the raindrops in the hollow of her palm as if she was collecting all the wonderful memories together.

She closed her fist wanting to hold them tightly, but instead the water trickled out from between her fingers.

Just then, the phone rang loudly. She came out of her reverie, a bit startled, and rushed to pick up the phone.

Prerna was calling. Prerna: "Hello mom! How are you? You know I gave myself a rainy day today. God, I feel so happy and relaxed now. I was hurrying to office, already late and stressed when my sandal broke. I rushed back to change. By the time I came back out, it started raining! So suddenly!! I don't know what came over me but I decided that I had enough!! I felt like God was telling me "chill girl". I took sick leave, and instead, pampered myself to a home-cooked lunch. I made hot khichdi just like you taught me. Of course, I can never cook like you. I love you so much!

Anjali's phone started beeping... Piyush was calling. She told Prerna that Piyush was calling.

Prerna: "Great!! Let me put him in conference!!"

Piyush: "Hey Mom! Hi moti didi... you won't believe how hard it is raining here! Remember when we were in Kolkata and it would rain like this? Water used to clog everywhere. It would come to our thighs. Didi and I had so much fun wading through the water while coming back from school. We used to imagine we were in an adventure and crossing some river."

Prerna: "Ooh ya!! Rainy days were the best!! The paper boats! The puddles! They would cut the power during the thunderstorms and we would make shadow figures in the candlelight... Good ole days. By the way, Mom, I think I will come home for a week. It's high time I took a holiday and I miss you."

The conversation went on for quite a while. In the end, they were laughing and giggling like old times.

Anjali rubbed her wet palm to her cheeks happily and thanked the rain...



**Pragyan Pallabi:** I am a poet and writer from Bhubaneswar, India. I work as a Human Resources Manager in L&T Company at Chennai I keep a blog, namely, bluemoon and rainydays at wordpress.com. One of my poems was published in the International poetry Anthology 'We All Are Persons' edited by Italian poet, Fabrizio Frosini. I keep writing in my own blog and thinking of publishing my own book.



## **THE COCKTAIL OF WORDS**

The cocktail of words

All over

The celebration of life

In an memorable evening

All over

Tomorrow is another day!

Let us wind up

Having pulled the shutter of lips down

Smile of salesmanship

All over

We have bought

What so ever sold today

Balance sheet being the name

Of the game

Nothing more nothing less

Balance of payment too in life's trade balances!

Fruit vendors are gone along with their mobile stalls

Ajar is the lone betel shop's

Wooden door

Last puff of the cigarette

In the lips of a lean and thin evening

The septuagenarian artist too is about to leave

Where ever eyes go

Vacant chairs

Vacant looks

And a blue sky like a ceiling over my head's roof top!



**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.



## THE SACRIFICIAL LAMB

'Hello?! I am speaking from Karuna's phone. She has had an accident, being wheeled into Dhanvantri Hospital.'

Rajesh was stunned. Quickly he rang up his other siblings, and rushed to the hospital.

There, he recognized the person's voice, who had rung him up. The person was a well-dressed middle-aged man, giving instructions to somebody about the blood bottle, medicines etc.

Rajesh went up to him and introduced himself. 'Yes, I know,' he said! Rajesh wondered... Just then, the nurse went to this man, with some papers. He quickly scanned them and signed on the dotted line.

Rajesh, while admiring his initiative and 'taking charge' was disconcerted with the man's familiarity with his sister, Karuna's details...

Till then, the rest of the siblings arrived. He knew them all by name and recognised them too?!

What's going on, Rajesh wondered...

Signalling the chaiwallah, he made them all sit down and have a quaff of tea.

Mopping his brow, he sat down, and scanned their questioning faces. He introduced himself as Dayanand, a friend of Karuna's.

He had just left her at the kerb, near their home, when a speeding car, knocked her over and fled.

Since, he was the last person called, the caller informed him about the accident. He rushed back, picked her up, and sped to the hospital. She had concussion and a fractured leg.

Her leg in a plaster, Karuna was wheeled into her private room. She called out, 'Daya,' hearing which, Dayanand rushed to her side, patting her hand, he murmured, 'Its ok, i am here,'. A wan smile appeared on her face and she drifted off to sleep.

Getting on to her two feet was a slow and painful process.

Rajesh couldn't believe this visage of Karuna, their eldest sister, the 'Karta' of their family. This very girlish side to her, was alien to him! The way she behaved with Dayanand!

All shy, coy and twinkling eyes!

Their drunkard father had piled on debts sky-high on the family, before succumbing to cirrhosis of the liver. Karuna, did odd jobs, while still in college, to supplement the income from 'tiffins' her mother supplied to students.

Rajesh and his two younger siblings were still in school.

Working herself to the bone, the last twenty-five years; she repaid all the loans her father had piled up. Now they were debt free!

Suddenly, she started to feel old.. Rajesh and his siblings, helped out, as delivery boys, taking tuitions, doing sari fall and piko, and becoming graduates. All three got married, and had families.

Who will marry her at forty-five? With the debts repaid, she could relax a little..

And as luck would have it, she met Dayanand, whose life story was a twin of hers... Similar backgrounds and circumstances, brought the two together. At fifty,

Dayanand was a confirmed bachelor, till he met Karuna. The two proceeded cautiously; feeling embarrassed to open up in front of their respective families.

And this unexpected twist of events! Formal introductions in a hospital!

Fate had forced their hand. Dayanand too brought his family to be introduced to Karuna's.

Marriage now was companionship. Now both were free to do their hearts' desire. Spend the rest of their lives, living for themselves. Let's wish them a long and a happy companionship!



**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.



<https://www.womansday.com/relationships/family-friends/g18922212/best-small-acts-of-kindness/>

Give with right hand

Hide it from left hand

Not for name or fame

Enjoy the joy of giving

Give to one who deserves

Not to one who demands

When you give

Leave your camera at home

Charity, not a show off

But, sharing the love within.



**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.



## **SOUL SPEAKS**

I follow you

You follow me

Then two hearts melt in love

Under the harvest moon

You kiss me

I kiss you

Our love illuminates the heavenly light

I grow with you

You grow with me

Then the road becomes smooth and shiny

I trust you

You trust me  
We start enjoying life  
breathing the warm glow  
of the midsummer night's sky.



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



## **OCTOBER**

take those dandiya sticks  
saw them into little bits  
dissolve them in sulphuric acid  
and pulp them into paper  
you'll hear the sweet sound of october

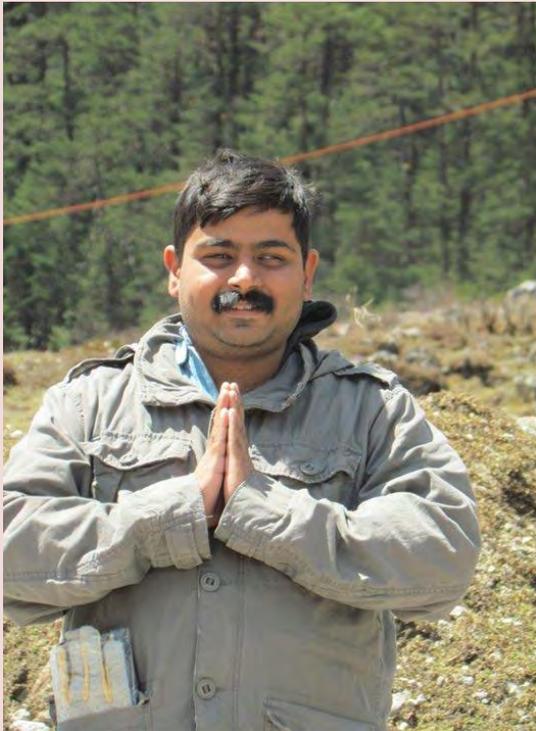
take those humongous speakers  
and those amplifiers  
microphones record-players  
run a road-engine over them  
you'll hear the sweet sound of october

take those lorries on the highway  
smash their axles burst their horns  
stamp on every car stereo you can find  
till the night road is a smooth stretch of silence  
you'll hear the sweet sound of october

drag out those cacophonous tvs  
from homes of insensitive neighbours  
smash them bash them hammer them  
till your hands are wet with blood  
you'll hear the sweet sound of october

shut every gossiping mouth  
stuff it with cotton seal it with tape  
knock the ones who resist unconscious  
till the paralysing quietness of fear prevails  
you'll hear the sweet sound of october

now calm your nerves your mind  
sharpen your ears your eyes  
and locate among the moonlit leaves  
the steady stridulation of the bush-cricket  
you'll hear the sweet sound of october



**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.



## HEART!

Ever beats with the music of life....

Each pore overflows with melody

And keeps whole being buoyant

Vibrancy abounds in all

Many things cascades down....

Like fragrance in the air

Myriad colors buried deep

Spring to life spontaneously

Many words gather up silently

Eyes sparkle....

Expression reflect them brilliantly

Sans sincerity, probity...

Then

Soul suffers....

Colossal pain silently

Things again move on the old rut

What a mess!



**Rachna Jain:** Dr. Jain has a PH.D in Chemistry. She lives in Muzaffarnagar (UP), India. Her hobbies include reading and composing poems.



## HOW MANY CARDS WE HAVE!

All said and done,  
Life is a card game,  
A labyrinth of unsolved  
Riddles, just as the blinding  
Mist in the morn, we are caught  
in the quagmire;

keep the kitchen burning,  
hearth in bed of warm,  
nutty fast food in your menu  
and night shows and scroll  
into mobile uploads;  
starched poly cotton sari,

and T-shirts; billing and packed  
all pushed in the corner seat of  
your car; simply a gentle swipe  
of Credit cards and debit in different  
nomenclatures, Master and Visa cards  
rule gentle in your wallet;

Mama says credit card is a Waste,  
Papa opines Chase is a show;  
But his spouse insists these are a must.



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

Her blogs:

[pearlradhe.blogspot.in](http://pearlradhe.blogspot.in)

[pearlradfhe.wordpressf.com](http://pearlradfhe.wordpressf.com)



## HAPPINESS

Allow me to tell you something about happiness, rather, about happy moments. You don't realize

that you are living them, until they become past.

I don't like people as they are. I like them only

as I think they ought to be, or as I wish them to be.

Ergo, I like very few persons. I like them for I think,

and they think too, and can reason. There are songs that always remind me of persons.

I could walk for hours on the banks of my river  
and feel fatigue fill my feet, yet my mind remains

full of contentment. I press on. I sit or stand for an hour  
maybe,

as fatigue fills my mind and body. I can't work a minute  
more.



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



I'm tip-toeing to the windows closed,  
My steps are measured and reach is low,  
I want to make a leap high in the sky,  
In an attempt to know more and grow;

I wish to break every glass-ceiling,  
And fathom deep into the world of letters;  
I'm young though I have strength,  
To walk easily in presence of fetters;

I'm a child precocious, true son of God,  
My vision is great, so is my thinking broad!



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



## **PEGASUS ON THE WING**

The power and puissance of magic,  
Beyond the touch and grasp of logic.

Soaring over the roaring oceans,  
In a flight full of swift motions.

Higher than the cumulus clouds,  
Mostly in a hazy mysterious shrouds.

Overlooking the vast fields of white lilies:  
Pure and lovesome like lissome lassies!

Reaching distant lands yet unexplored,  
A creature that the Greek gods adored.

Beyond the boundaries of time and space,  
A symbol of ultimate freedom and grace.

Yes, you are Pegasus, the winged stallion,  
Turning spring into a fountain of inspiration.

The immortal horse of the Greek mythology,  
You'll remain great in my poetic eulogy.

Make me fly in the boundless sky,  
On the wings of love: High and high!

Lift me above the perceived limitations,  
To rare regions vibrant in my imaginations:

Miraculous caves of resonant creations,  
Ever pulsating with hypnotic vibrations!

A wish to catch the beautiful moon  
Hanging like a big bright balloon!

Amid the sequin-silver star patterns  
And the splendour of constellations!



**Ranjana Sharan Sinha:** A professor by profession and a poet by passion, Dr. Ranjana Sharan Sinha is a well-known contemporary voice in Indian Poetry in English. Honoured with a number of prestigious awards for her contribution to literature. Received commendation from the former

President of India, A.P.J. Abdul Kalam for her poem "Mother Nature". Published 7 books and 50 research papers. Two of her poems have been included in M.A. English CBCS syllabus.



There sits he, engrossed in a book  
eyes fixed deliciously on the words he reads.  
His manly fingers moving along the lines!  
He lifts his busy eyelids then,  
only to look at me with distaste:  
seated on a wooden chair near him,  
with a heart counting guilty beats  
Unaware of the stories his mind feeds upon.

A frightening silence fills the room,  
the ghost of a dead-love lingering around,  
the only window brings in bundles of fresh air

and gives out packets of stinking memories.  
Terrified by the eyes which once bore oceans of love,  
and now hold droplets of hatred,  
I leave my chair to stand by the window,  
and swallow capsules of unsaid words,  
escaping the sight of the only man I loved and lost.  
The silence becomes more bitter,  
and now weeps the miserable sky!



**Ritika Ojha:** I am a poet, residing at Dhanbad. I have contributed to one online anthology, and one magazine so far.



**AS ANOTHER CYCLE BEGINS...**

skipping rocks on lakeside  
wet wilderness surrounding melting voices in Song

flat shore rocks nested, fitting together,  
becoming ancient bridges for ants to catch a cool drink

creation munificently adjoins outside, inside,  
infinitely stretching its borders  
freely admitting each new child born,

another act of offering,  
another act of receiving

above, honey colored sunset patch quilt sky  
trails of blue clouds witnessing the performance,  
ensuring the change is seamless, expansive, inevitable...

and silence prevails...  
pause...slow...inhale...exhale...  
till another direction stretches out  
till another path fades back into water  
bestowing Life demonstrating Death  
then washing it all away once more,  
flying wings melting onto walking legs...  
as yet another cycle begins



**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.



Photo from [Flickr](#) by [Over X pose U](#)

## **A CONCEALED SOUL**

Concealed by a shadow  
Behind the windows overlooking  
The gateway of no return  
The neighborhood is suspicious  
Of the elfish silhouette against  
The glass of an unlit room  
Where I reconcile my most  
Precious thoughts!

My thoughts have no cause  
For great concern

For if I really had to,  
I would explain,  
I indefinitely remain in  
This room where my future  
Is being designed!

Sighted, obviously  
Reported-a threat,  
I retreat behind  
My computer's desk,  
Deeper into the closed space  
Where I listen tentatively,  
Motionless, for the door  
To rip open hinges with  
Familiar complaints,  
Bracing me for opposition,  
While completely quiet I remain  
Letting them look like fools!



**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!



## **A WOMAN FROM THE GALLERY**

She'd had a long day  
of separating her Monet prints  
from her Degas'  
and when she walked  
through the door of the restaurant  
she looked tired of eye,  
but still strangely  
beautiful.

She was dressed in her professional clothes  
which meant sophistication.

I ordered a draft.

She had a white wine.

After we ordered our meals  
she excused herself  
to the bathroom.

Then I was alone again.

Surrounded by cold pasta dishes  
and appetizers  
with fancy names I could not  
properly pronounce.

The red tablecloth fell thick  
in my lap  
and reminded me  
of surgical wards.

Red things  
hanging limp  
everywhere  
while waitresses  
refilled coffees.



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



<https://abstract.desktopnexus.com/wallpaper/1318828/>

## CELIA

Lovely daughter Celia  
With her lovely crown,  
Stayed near the hill  
In a little town.

She played with her mates  
Who would to make her the queen,  
And she dreamed often to be so  
Of the country she lived in.

When she sat beside the river one day  
And was filled with her dream  
She met suddenly an angel  
And was blessed to be the supreme

A few days passed  
She got married with the king  
Who was ruling the country then  
And started happy living.

The lovely daughter Celia  
Became the queen Brown  
And ruled over the country  
With the king and her lovely crown.



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



## UNINVITED

Ding-dong! 'Who's there?'

'So-and-so, my dear!'

'Oh, hello! Come in!'

'Grab my bags, there's a dear!'

Oh well, you're back again

To stay for God knows how long.

Of course I can't yell at you,

So my frustration is in song.

One room occupied, my parents are there.

Another belongs to my grandparents.

The third's mine, and you'll be here-

Ugh! We could have opted for tents!

Or maybe, a guest room instead?

Your stuff's all over my table,

And I can't sleep in my own bed.

Yeah sure, you got me great gifts, but thanks,

I'd like my space back instead.

My mommy's overworked,

My daddy's stressed.

So please leave soon,

Dear, dear guest.



**Samixa Bajaj:** I am a fourteen year old student of class IX. I love to pen poems on topics that strike a chord with my moods at any given point of time. I love to read and dance.



## **ENTANGLED:**

Between trying to find answers to queries that pepper up  
my over thinking mind

And sometimes afraid of getting my answers

Between the uncertainty of tomorrow

And the possibility of dreams coming alive

In this journey from being a devout to an atheist

The ravages of time stare back at me in the mirror

Entangled in the webs questioning a belief in the universe

And a belief in myself,

I doubt whether I should trust even my own intuitions any  
longer

A tired soul that still dares to dream despite all struggles

Trapped in the confines of a body ruthlessly murdered by  
insomniac thoughts

I wonder whether I have become redundant

Living with a mask of pretension, now more of a habit than  
something that costs effort

A smile pasted upon lips, tears well concealed beneath khol  
lined eyes,

I now maneuver my way through the dark alleyways of Hell  
with seamless ease

Surprising the Devil himself

I am still entangled between taking the dare to dream again  
and letting go

I am but now a prisoner of my own mind!



**Samrudhi Dash (Inara):** I am a poet, novelist, editor and motivational speaker, currently residing in New Delhi, India. Along with contributors to over two dozen anthologies, international e-zines and magazines, I have published till date five solo poetry anthologies and two novels and conceptualised and edited an anthology of epistles, an anthology which is a tribute to the Indian Armed Forces and a medical assistance journal. I write under the pseudonym Inara and have completed my Masters in English literature from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. My signature words are "Hope, Live, Believe".



## **OUR CHRYSANTHEMUM PARENTS**

Our parents

Never failed to pinch each other.

Never stopped from hurting each other

And we thought they were enemies!

Constantly pinching & hurting.

Fighting & biting.

But now ,after climbing the life

I realised

Those were the beautiful wounds of their love!

The more they pinched

The more branches of their love grew.

The more they bore the pain

The more flowers of their love bloomed.

That's how my chrysanthemums bloom

When winter visits my garden.

Without fearing or surrendering

They present me the flowers of their wounds

And I laugh alone

remembering the pinches of

My chrysanthemum parents!



**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.



## **NATURE'S PLACEBO EFFECT**

The tiny bird tilts its head this way and that  
in this idyllic haven, where even the avian leviathans  
dare not intrude; the mother mongrel cuddles her brood of  
pups,  
away from the rude belligerence of a power- hungry world.  
The wild flowers sway in the happy breeze,  
unfazed by folks, choking on murderous hate,  
grating their teeth, vowing revenge,  
trying to avenge some alleged wrong.

Nature's magic has a placebo effect  
on my frenzied nerves.

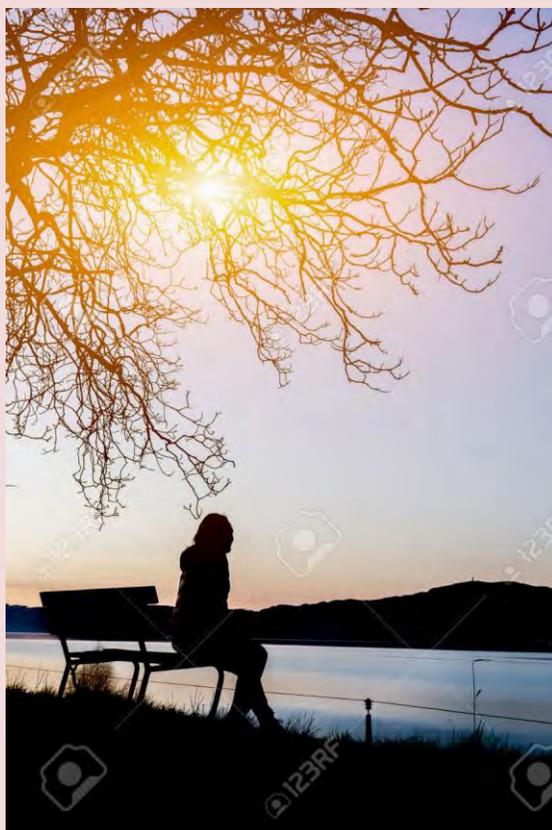
Clasping such joyous serenity to my heart,  
I feel valiant enough to turn my nose  
at the whiplashes of animosity  
thrashing and lashing the brash world,  
unabashedly.

The tiny coots glide on, as the world slides on,  
more and more into bellicosity.

A wild flower beckons me, luring me by its happy visage  
and it is there that I head, smitten by a kitten  
sunning itself in a patch of sunlight,  
stretching itself in lazy elegance, near a copse of bushes,  
where chickens scratch the sun - drenched ground  
hopefully.



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



## SUNSET

Relaxing under the sunset glow

My mind wanders to unknown lands

Those days of togetherness

Those days of passionate kisses under the twilight glow

These thoughts invade my lonely heart

I start singing a melancholic tune as symbol of my love I had  
cherished for him

It was under this twilight he promised his love to me

And a solemn vow we will be together till our end

The sunset reminds me now

Of my sunset life without him unable to bear!

Oh my love why did you leave me and go to the far away  
land?

Now it's pitch dark the sun has bid goodbye and the moon  
never showed up

The sky is dark and grey like my heart's cry weeping for him  
alone!

Let me return home holding my sweet thoughts of him  
which will never leave me alone!

Oh those echoes of his laughter ringing in my ears  
making my heart perilous!

I must forget him lest I may go insane!

Oh! that echo again

Let me cover my ears

Oh! his footsteps his cuddles, how can I forget those  
moments when I watch the sunset?



**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.



Never have I liked participating in many festivals  
They stressed my clavicles  
But this time over, the feeling was different, new  
And realisation dawned upon me like a glint of dew

With heaviness I set out for Navratri  
Dreading the late night that I was going to see  
I started early that I wanted to leave  
But my friends led me to believe  
In the beauty of the night  
Not through their might  
But gentle persuasion  
And to my surprise and their elation

That I agreed

I believe I was freed

From my resistance trends

Just as I realised the meaning of Navratri as a bunch of  
good friends!



**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.



## INDIGO

I prayed that your song  
would inspire a word

or two

shadow of the moon, humming glow

half yours, half mine

tithing each smile

to the sand in your teeth

trying to meet  
each person  
wherever they are  
on their own path  
while never forgetting  
ours

recklessly we  
crisscross and trample  
the narrow lines between us

but sometimes we dance



**Scott Thomas Outlar:** He lives and writes in the suburbs outside of Atlanta, Georgia, USA. His favorite season is autumn. His spirit tree is the pine. Most of his poems are written in the woods. He hosts a podcast, Songs of Selah, that airs weekly on 17Numa Radio. Links to his published work and other thoughts about life can be found at [17Numa.com](http://17Numa.com).



## **DEDICATED TO YOU, PAPA**

You are the light of our lives

And you know how afraid I am

of the dark

Always seeking refuge in the brilliance

That is you

Please don't let the light extinguish

The radiance that is you has illuminated

our world

And shown us the way

You know how much I need you to navigate this reality

All along my eyes attuned to your brilliance

Will not acclimatize any other lesser source

As I hold on to your hands tight

Always steady and firm yet so soft

they simply knew the safe and righteous path

Be my guiding light forever, please stay always

Clutching me to your breasts

I have accelerated my growth look I am ten times older

Almost your age but unable to attain your wisdom

My hard firm lines are wobbly and softened

As I keep Pace with your changes and figure out ways

To defeat and cheat death

And why not if fate can spring a cruel surprise

Nothing can stop me from arm twisting a deal

To wriggle you to safety for you have a role

to keep lighting up our lives

Who says filial bonds are bound by flesh. They walk  
together only to the crematorium

Some are stronger and outlast Time  
And cross over impossible boundaries  
Beyond limitations of flesh  
Even across rivers of Death into the scorching shadowless  
world of the decrepit soul  
I promise you will not walk the nameless worlds alone  
O fallen soldier, there always will be a shoulder  
Mine at the forefront and many more that you brushed  
with kindness and  
Embraced with love  
I will be there to share your solitude in tandem with the  
heavy steps of loss  
Always always with you, made of you, made from you  
I will not let you go alone that's a solemn promise  
For I am the essence that your soul is made of  
And I carry it within and have already shared some of it to  
next on line  
Ensuring your permanence  
And when you decide to spread yourself everywhere

I will be the endless horizon holding your dust and dispersal

I will be the space and the in-between

To hold your sunshine always shining

But why talk of nothing when you are everything

Why talk of the end when you are in a new inning, a new  
beginning

For you will always be the Sun and the world and the light  
that lights up my microcosm

And let this all be a nightmare brushed away like sea mist

In the brilliance of your enlightened smile



**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.



*photography by Carl Scharwarth*

## **ANGEL ON WHEELS**

Angel surmising at the hip joined to a double edge

Wagon wheel in breech with Gabriel's Goliath

Take the plunge and run the race callously

With hell's angel on fortune's run

Squander thoughts of stopping dead

Champion of occasional misfortune's turn

Empty of grace in today's heretics

But chariots of fire ablaze with lead  
Man of the hour light my tail  
Crosswind high on life's rubella  
Wheels churning belly burning  
My angel in tow saves me from certain death..



**Shanti Harjani Williams:** I am a lawyer and poet residing in Ontario, Canada and currently a stay-at-home Mom. I have contributed to online poetry and poetry review publications and hope to publish my own book of poetry soon. Recently I contributed to the publication Cultural Reverence for World Peace Day, my poem entitled "Hitting Back."



## **RAINDROPS ON DEW**

Raindrops falling into a well

Wellness- a being or a thought

Stream of thoughts

Invading into the being

No, is it a thought

Wherein a soul caught

Into the spasmodic swell

Of liability and wellness

A beautiful chasm widening  
Streamlining myriad thoughts  
Beauty and joy merging into  
Well-being thoughts and estuaries

Raindrops synchronizing with activity  
Of action and thoughts  
A beautiful medley  
Seemingly in motion and loveliness

Raindrops, a stream of thoughts  
Converging into mindlessness and beauteousness  
Raindrops, shining on dew  
Reflecting thoughts on a  
Plateau of mindfulness



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



## THE ARRANGEMENT

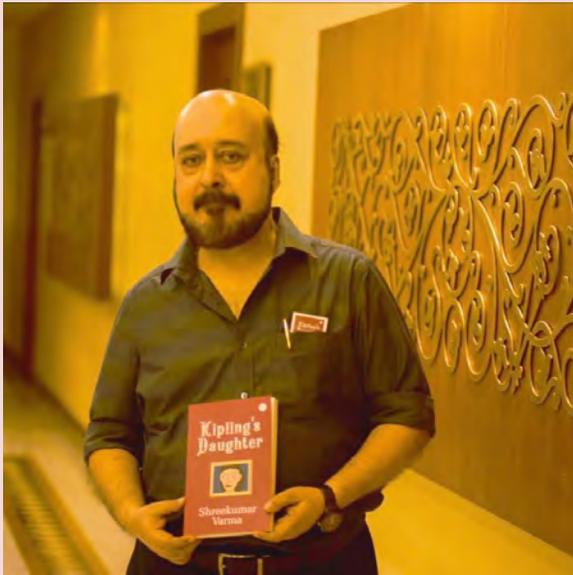
I forced myself to flee the house,  
the room, the seat, my only place.

To tear the skin of dark seclusion  
like a short-breath swimmer cracks  
the plastic surface of a doomed river.

I crashed through roads and gloomy lanes  
soaked in sweat of leery strangers.

I swam through crowds to touch the quiet  
of the forest beyond town, and breathe  
the breath of ancient years.

Silence drilled my head, and stillness  
was a mirror with no reflection.  
Ancestor trees glowed with dullness.  
Watched by perished eyes, I saw  
three seats; for head, heart and strength.



**Shreekumar Varma:** He is a poet, novelist, and 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.



*Raj Kishore Mohanty father of Smruti Ranjan Mohanty*

## **A LOOK AT LIFE-12**

The hands that groomed me,  
the eyes that loved me,  
the ears that listened to me,  
are no more.

The fountain of love,  
the epitome of sacrifice,

the perennial stream of wisdom,  
is no more.

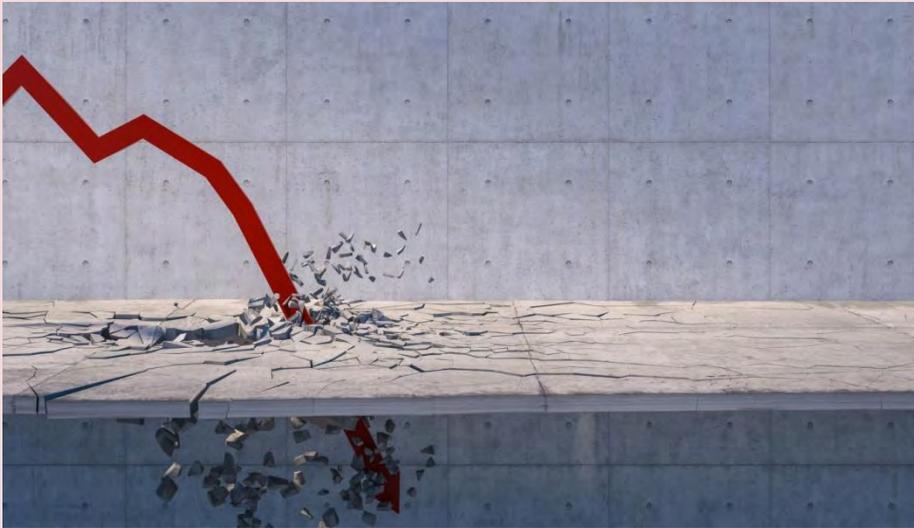
The beautiful tree  
under the shadow of which  
I played and smiled,  
grew and developed,  
and lead a carefree life  
is no more.

No more is the man,  
who manned and schooled me  
and made me what I am.  
No more is the window  
through which I looked at,  
no more is the giant patriarch  
who lived his whole life  
for others and the values, he held high.

I am all alone,  
in a sparkling whirlpool,  
the sea is boisterous,  
getting violent and virulent  
and more and more turbulent,  
the able navigator is no more,  
who will bring me ashore?



**Smruti Ranjan Mohanty:** Smruti Ranjan Mohanty, O.F.S, son of Raj Kishore and Shantilata Mohanty is a multilingual poet, essayist and writer. His write-ups are published in newspapers and in various national and international magazines, journals and anthologies which are widely acclaimed.



## **RESESSION**

Eat is that thyme of the ear

When things turn downwards

The kerb of the graphs

Hades south

Echonomists say

Eat it is re session

Pupil start to carve their ex pences

They start to horde

By jiving a wide birth

Two spending money

They start two budge ate

Sum re member

The Great Depression of 1929

Many busynesses collapse

Many reach people

Gate roo weaned

Hour be loved country

Deed knot fill it then

Be cause wee were knot

A freebie country

Off course our echnomy

Dead knot grow

Now wee our told of the slew down

Of the meld town

News reeders predict a leak pitcher

Butt eye do knot fill sow

Given our demo graphics

Demands will all ways be their  
Sow the supply will remean two

Resession will joust be a ward  
Ass we will knot fill eats effects

The reach will fill sow proud  
Flaunting their reaches  
Whining dinning and partying  
Telling sundry a bout work  
Hardly working  
Paying dividends

Eat is a wean wean situation  
Sea when we have wee men  
Having seventeen\* to twenty-three\* chill drain  
Per purse on  
How can supply fall

Eat does not matter  
If the smothers fall seek  
So lounge as they can pro deuce  
So let us bid ad dew  
To Resession  
We halve over cum  
The grate deep-ression

***Note: Lankatai Kharat from Beed is pregnant with her 17th child though her mother-in-law Nadarbai claims the figure is in fact 20. Bismillah, a woman from Nuh in Haryana has given birth to her 23rd child in 2007.***



**Sudeshna Mukherjee:** Her poetry deals with varied human nature. A keen observer she chronicles the happenings around her and society. 'Meanderings Of The Mind' is her published book of poems.



## **LEND ME NOT**

Send me not

a basket full of love

a subtle glance and a bit of nuance

shall spell wonder

quench my insatiable desire for sure

Fend me not

when my unbridled longing

jumps off ....the dotted lines of time

my feeble being fails to stand straight and act fine

save me not then...when I am caught  
in the whirlpools of wrong

Lend me not  
the warmth of your hug  
not for namesake  
I shall drag my stiff limbs  
along precincts of life's frame  
carry on with a heavy heart  
vouch for a fresh start.



**Sujata Dash:** I am a poet residing in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India. I work as a banker. I have contributed to various anthologies. I have one published anthology of poetry.



## **THE THINGS SHE LONGED FOR**

The call she waited for  
Never came for her,  
She was waiting in the lazy noon  
And even in the silence of night,  
Perhaps now the time is over.

The fiancé she longed for  
Did not meet her ever,  
Though he by his sweet false promises  
Tried to persuade her.

The moment she craved for eagerly  
When her father left her seeing her  
As a girl child,  
Her mom reared her with all those care and affection,  
Yet her waiting came to an end  
When she noticed no sign of her father's arrival.

The life she wanted to lead carefree  
Being the fairy of mom and  
Princess of father,  
Could not live for a moment due to the distressed situation  
ever.



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



## ME

Lone evening, a cup of coffee

In the corner of balcony

I'm with me!

This is the time

I get for myself

Sometimes there is little regret

Sometimes a twilight of glee,

I mixed up with my coffee.

This is the time I excavate myself  
For what I am destined, whom am I!  
How much of me truth  
Which part of me is a sweet lie.

It's not only about me  
But also about thee  
A part of you is always there  
What you want to be  
And the other you never thought,  
But you destined to be.

Whatever the reason,  
Nowadays know not why sometimes  
I search something there  
Looking above the azure sky.



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



*Pic by Sumita Dutta Shoam*

## FLAMENCO

Ring-side-view

Heat, light, crowd

Throbbing strobes

Vibrating, drumming stage

My heart thudding apace.

Muscles rippling, tight buttocks quivering

Sweat spiralling, flying—

Swirling alike flamboyant skirts,

From shimmering bared torsos

Above skin hugging trousers—powerfully male,

Black pant-suited lady, white shirt, black vest,

Perfectly feminine, scarlet flower tucked

In her black hair—the colour on her.

Three dancers, each powerful, their movements

Strength, confidence, practice, pride.

Those heels, whipping the Earth like thundering rain

Ceaselessly, tirelessly, passionately,

Knees-a-piston, back—ramrod,

Elbows precisely curved,

Gaze withdrawn to an inner trance

Epitome of grace.

Unnoticed vocals, instruments keep beat.



**Sumita Dutta:** She is a publisher, poet and novelist residing in Chennai, India. She is the founder of Adisakrit, a small publishing house, seven books old in October. She has contributed to various online sites and anthologies. Her debut book was *The Heart of Donna Rai*



<https://www.spiritualunite.com/articles/recognize-your-twin-souls-signs/>

## **WOMAN TO MAN**

Who are you to me? I often ask myself –

friend or lover, father, son, twin or brother?

Perhaps, bits of all to make that one whole, that One Soul

to whom I keep reverting for answer to life's questions, big  
or small.

This half-life of mine gains meaning, when every moment  
that I live and pine, searching for you, losing sleep and  
myself

gaining images of you, now here, now there  
needlessly taking you into my life, even when you do or do  
not, care.

Then spending tormenting, chilling, sleepless nights of  
introspection  
finding one answer-for you woman means only a reflection  
of your own love- a fleeting deception.

Friend or lover, father, son, twin or brother, whoever you  
be—

Somewhere along the cycles of death and birth  
a part of the SELF parted as I came to earth.

How I kept wandering, searching in vain, searching for the  
half

that raises me to infinity, birthing again and again  
yearning since eternity; which in you, I now realize  
else, why would I ache and sigh with teary eyes

seeing you despairing or in pain, or rejoice in your successes and gain

or want to shower you with the wealth of love.

In you seeking answers, even as you go looking for answers

to your life's questions in your own way.



**Sunil Kaushal:** I am a poet residing in Pune, India, a retired gynecologist, now working as a writer. I have contributed to various short story and poetry anthologies. Presently I am finishing my memoirs and a poetry book to be published soon.



## CHAI

The cup of masala chai

On the table,

Untouched,

In the midst of pills and liquids.

And long sighs, coughs, soliloquies

In slow, low cracked voice.

And---

Ears waiting.

Outside room, muted laughter and TV

And the usual cacophony of a Mumbai street.



**Sunil Sharma:** I am a writer living in suburban Mumbai, India. Work as a college principal. Published a total of 19 books, solo and joint. I edit Setu:

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



The indigo night sighed  
As the moon pendant fell out  
Shining silver among a sea of sparklers  
Under the tree  
By the gently flowing Yamuna she waits  
Draped in a pitambar odhni  
Lying on a bed of fragrant harsingar flowers  
Longing for him  
Yearning to hear his flute  
playing on her  
His hand lightly on her lips

Arousing desires locked up for centuries

His arms -

The only refuge!



**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.



## WRITTEN IN THE STARS

She whispers to the Wind

- why?

why just him?

A man from a foreign country

Thousands of miles apart.

Seven Seas -

Seven Seas of love

He

Her glittering, colorful dream

So close to her heart.

Sleepless nights,

Endless dreams.

Golden threads of love.

Veins of dark sadness.

Wild passion.

Woven into a carpet,

sight fails to capture

A image

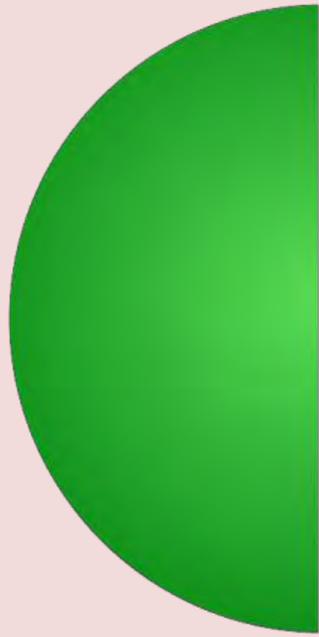
Carved into hearts of loving souls.

In every chambers of hearts.

The story is written in the stars.



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



### **MY DRAWINGS**

After drawing only half of a circle, the efforts of day ends.  
It ends suddenly at a considerable distance from origin.  
I can't imagine any negligence; but my line always bends  
To draw only a half; and the other half remains unseen.

You look at artwork; but, you don't know how my root  
sucks  
The elixir for my life from the deepest soil under hard rock.  
You blame me for doing everything for some extra bucks.  
But, don't know that I use my pen as my new alpenstock.

At the end of my day, I stare at my drawing with eagerness  
To plan the next half circle to be drawn on the following  
day.  
But, some invisible hands erase everything to its last trace  
At dark night, and lets the canvas free to roam like a stray.

Yet, I collect and recollect everything on the following dawn.

To prove that I'm not born to repent for loss, but to move on.



**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.



## TEACHING

I want you to be  
The best student of mine  
And I try to be  
The best of yours.

Teaching is always  
A mutual learning.  
I too grow  
When you blossom.

As 'giving' is never  
A one-way traffic.  
Whenever I give any little;  
The soft and subtle,  
Returns are always way too more!  
This is life's loveliest lore!



**Tribhu Nath Dubey:** He is a sociologist by profession and poet by passion. He is employed with the Commissionarate of College Education Rajasthan as an Associate Professor in Sociology. He has been Co-Editor of the Rajasthan Journal of Sociology—a peer reviewed academic Journal. He is presently serving as the Secretary of Rajasthan Sociological Association. He loves to resort to poetry as an essential means of catharsis.



## TALES THE BODY TELLS

In no hurry to dry my dripping self

In dreamy languor

Wondering what to wipe first

The red rashes on the left shoulder

I marveled at how the nasty insect crawled in

A look at the new abrasions

As old ones diminished right under the knee

The daily hurried ritual  
Left scant time for bodily appraisal  
Yet every inspection told me  
More stories than the last

Which parts escaped unscathed?  
Which parts ached for more touch?  
Still soaked in your caress  
Were segments of my fluid veins..  
And ever so strangely  
Old bruises resurfaced  
At exactly the same spot



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



## **MY EUPHORIA**

Several spinning

Feeling spiral unconsciousness

The whole world is spinning with me

Yeah! I love to spin

And my skirt that was...

Untidy with lot of dust of negative thinking and distress

Just go round and round

And left all its misery

On this ground  
I am dancing  
With positive flow and movement  
Who cares!  
For minute flaws  
Look at! My symmetry  
So mesmerizing  
When I feel internally  
Beautiful, I look beautiful  
Externally  
Life is a dance  
A dance of every emotion  
Where not only your feet moves  
But your soul dances with happiness  
So let's enjoy this process of spinning  
And cheers for each n every move of dance  
That gives rhythm and melody  
To your boring life.



**Varsha Saran:** She is a homemaker but a poetess and story writer by her passion. She did her post-graduation from Ch. Charan Sing University Meerut. She is a bilingual poetess and many of her poems and stories have been published in different magazines, international anthologies, e-zines and newspapers.



## **PARENTAL CROSSING**

Halting at the red, eyes glued for a green,  
An incessant honking proclaiming great emergency  
alerted me to turn. A parent with two uniform-clad  
school kids on a scooter—a frantic hand  
furiously sweeping the air before him, and a face  
contorted with the mouthing of expletives.

It took me a second to realise 'twas  
at me they were directed.

His crisis dawned upon me that moment:  
A conscientious parent that he was, he had to  
reach his children to school on time—

A discipline which he strove to execute diligently.  
Empathising with his anxiety, I wheeled my own scooter  
Into a luckily available gap so that he could  
Squeeze through the impatiently waiting commuters  
And shoot off, to fulfil his filial duty.  
As I watched him cleverly evade pedestrians  
upon the zebra and narrowly escape the criss-crossing  
traffic,  
I knew his children would reach school on time,  
a discipline well learnt. But, will they in life?



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



## **NIGHTS AND DAYS**

You speak, my love, through furrowed thoughts and I

Hear barbed prayers on a crowded beach:

Wide-eyed at twilight, your searchlight gaze

Brushes aside an edgy fate and falls

Upon a homing bird's discordant cries--

Moments pass like shadows across your face:

In love brewed through time between old friends

Forgiveness is not a drunken forgotten word

Awake but still asleep on faithless nights and days.



**Vijay Nair:** I retired as an Associate Professor of English and I have contributed to various national and international anthologies. I was awarded the Reuel International Prize for Writing & Literature in the year 2016. I was the 'Critic of the Year' in 2016, 2017 & 2018 at Destiny Poets, UK and was also adjudged the 'Poet of the Year' in 2018 by the same poetry group.



## **BEFORE**

I loved you then too  
In the days before we met  
When I was but a child  
And you a waif bright

I loved you unseen unknown  
In the days before we met  
The moon a dark circle  
And we but particles  
I loved you even before you

In the days before we met  
The day on the step a dove  
And tendrils of darkness dissolving



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



## WINTER SUN

I want to write about how pleasant the winter Sun felt as we lay down next to each other and ate guavas. It was her favourite fruit. She waited for that vendor who doesn't come to this street now. Someone must have told him or perhaps he got tired calling out in vain. I want her to know that I have never felt anything as delicate and as warm as her company. I see children who keep playing around their parents but they don't go too far, perhaps, 'cause they feel secure and perhaps because of this I know why I feel so much insecurity. Why am I always diffident? What is that terrible fear which never frees me?

I want to tell her that a lot has changed without her. My companies have changed. I don't like the winter anymore. I like that lonely summer wind which keeps blowing through

every street knocking at every door in delusive, forlorn hope of company. I feel akin to it. It has the similar plight. I want to tell her all this.

But there's no way of reaching the winter sun. There's no way of telling her things.



**Vivek Nath Mishra:** Author's short stories have appeared in The Hindu, Queen mob's Teahouse, Muse India, The Criterion Journal, Cafe Dissensus, Setu, Spillwords, Literary Yard, Indian Ruminations, Prachya Review, Indus women writing, and on many other platforms. His debut book is 'Birdsongs of Love and Despair'.



## SONNET 46

It was with my growth into youth  
Dark clouds appeared with ensuing winter  
The summer symbolic of joy lost into oblivion  
A biting cold foreshadowing misery  
Carefree days became all a thing of the past  
Anxiety an ever present gloomy companion  
Expectations thrust upon my shoulders young  
Like the yoke placed on a hapless pair of cows  
Pulling the cart albeit too loath to go on  
Dreams I used to call my own all abandoned  
Replaced with those others had of me

Became I a soul with no feeling to call its own

No stories to relate to the sprightly days

Invaluable is the price the sojourner pays.



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





**ciao! 😊**