

GloMag

GLOMAG

Monthly Online Poetry and Prose

Magazine

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Edited and Published by Glory Sasikala

BEVERLY JAMES



Title of the Cover Pic: Night Bridge

About The Artist

I am 11 years old. I study in 6th standard. I started drawing from the time I held a pen or pencil or chalk in my hand. I love drawing. It makes me happy. I like to draw sceneries and people. Besides drawing and painting, I love singing, dancing and creating interesting things. I put together things that are useless and make new objects that make people wonder. I am a little “Tinker”.

Other Details

I had my art work published in Glomag. I have played Digiredoo, an Australian instrument for Times of India along with my dad. My songs and videos are also in a webpage of a theatre group called “Thinai Nila Vasssigal” and “Udalveli”. I have also acted in many plays.

Art Perspective

I just didn't have any thought. I just drew. The colours inspired me. I believe everything has a creative side. I look at things differently. I believe that when I make something of my own it gives me so much happiness. I use old socks to make puppets. Old carton boxes to create miniature houses and slippers. Some left over paints, old things, glue and some old throw away fabric is enough to make magic.



Nikhat Mahmood is an English Lecturer, a short story writer and an occasional poet. She has translated from Urdu to English and also transliterated in Hindi, a book of poems 'Zard Patton ki Shawl' written by a prominent Pakistani poet. She is currently working on her debut book of short stories, 'Scent Of The Bitter Almonds' and a novel, 'Revived Oaths'. She lives in Karachi with her husband and two children.

WHEN SPRING CAME

Before the winter in which Saher became a widow, Suhail and Afaaq were best of friends. Suhail knew Sehar as one of those beautiful and talented women who for some strange tradition of destiny end up being the wives of men most unworthy of them. They had worked at the same company, and at parties, Suhail had noticed her husband keeping a watch on Saher like she was an emerald egg. The marriage

as judged rightly by Suhail was an unblissful one, soon he found out that she had many wounds that needed healing. Long back, she had wanted divorce from her husband, who had refused to let her go, nevertheless left no stone unturned to keep her unhappy. The Masculine supremacy in the country would have cost her the custody of her children, his death came as god sent for her.

Afaaq was the sauve owner of the café in which Suhail often sat to write his stories, being an occasional writer, he was everything occasionally, including a singer. Afaaq sang too, so did Saher, she was the best of them all . Suhail and Afaaq had formed their own band called Mausikaar, singing old Hindi songs and uploading them on Facebook and YouTube, which was leading them nowhere. In one of his frequent visits to Saher after her husband's death, he came to know that she sang and invited her to sing for their band. She, having been yearning for this freedom for almost a decade since her marriage, eagerly draped a floral chiffon saree over a halter neck blouse and sang an old number with not just innovative twists of tunes but also of her still attractive waist. When an alluring woman with the most melodious voice, singing between a pair of handsome men got released on Mausikaar, it broke the internet. Mausikaar became the country's top independent YouTube

Channels, and Saher fell in love with Suhail; he and Afaaq both knew this, yet none spoke about it.

Afaaq knew how complicated Suhail was especially when it came to love and relationships; he was always obsessed by the shallow desire to be adored by many women. Afaaq could see the trap, the chains entangling Saher, she would be Suhail's biggest conquest, a woman who could raise an empire from the wreck around her, he had conquered enough silly bimbos, his quest now was the queen herself. He was riding a high having her crushing on him. There was a fighter in Saher, Afaaq could literally hear every moan of hers and discern every expression on her face, it meant he could feel every assault made on her senses. He didn't want the warrior in her to go down, he couldn't fight her battle either, he could only helplessly watch her receiving an injury afresh each day.

The spat came between the two friends in spring when frangipanis, jasmine and hibiscus adorned the high branches, and Suhail disheartened Saher yet again. He had driven half a mile leaving her sharing a lone bench with bulbs of purple tulips, when he saw Afaaq driving towards Saher's house, thoughts came to him in a flash, and realization struck him that not only Afaaq but he himself too loved Saher. He brought his car to a screeching halt, turning it around in a gust of smoke. Afaaq was saying

something to Saher in soft tones, and she was crying when he reached the gate of her lawn heaving heavily.

Next winter, Afaaq-Saher's band Mausiqui was soaring in the musical skies, and an estranged Suhail was struggling with Mausikaar.

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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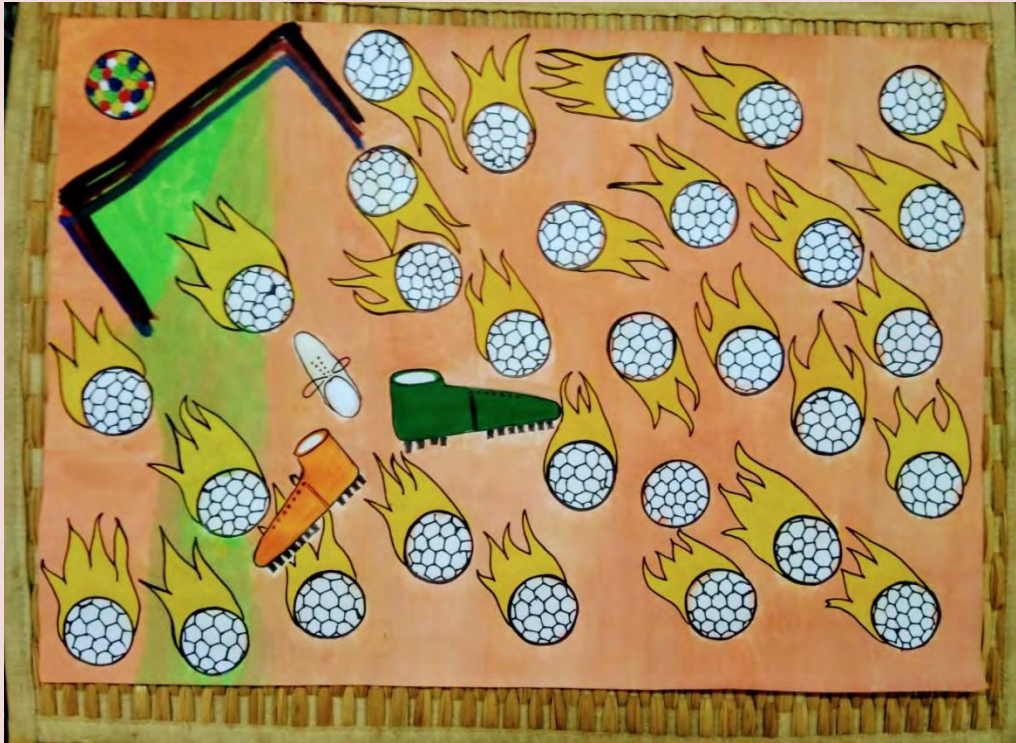
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LINE # 10

Tis' an open field

A free letter box for all studs to post

Fiery bulletin chips perching balls in

Strategy touch and run

Pass baton pass

The tricolor bribes tutorial beyond gravity

Formulae of goal derives itself from escape velocity

Fortunate touch of Midas' kisses Romeo & Juliet

For lightning strikes, times rain bows to Cosco

Messy Ariel spells myriad on a close figment

Ninety minutes of Jataka spar to know katha in one D-box.



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



A COT

On an empty roof
Of a dark dreary home
Beside my window-ledge
Rests a rusted cot in sun and rain.

Nylon straps are battered shreds
Legs corroded, body bruised.

No hands kiss it

No feet dangle

No voice whispers.

Someday I watch it gracefully

Covered with clean clothes of a dying man—

A spotless white sheet, trousers, shirts, kerchiefs,

Creased, crumpled, faded too.

Someday it lies naked,

And wears the face of a

Sick man counting last hours

In a distant corner of his bustling home.



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



FREEDOM

Freedom won't come
Until you revolutionize
the way of living;
It won't come through
malfeasance and vileness

I have not as much right
to convey my sermons on;
neither the other lads have,
to vitiate the land

Once named

“paradise on earth”

Now, I am pooped of harking

people buzz ;

let it arise, what is arising,

no need to

bewail; revel in the life

of earning money grungy

I don't know; how my

life is running to regale me,

Tomorrow, I will be

here or not; who knows

Nevertheless,

Freedom won't come until

you plant the seeds of ecstasy,

devotion, sympathy...

I am the one; like me

Here are many;

I need freedom,

They need too,

Freedom will come

When justice favors,

When people regard,

When evils go,

When sons make their

parents blissful,

When people turn to Allah.



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



ON THE LIST

From the early inhaling of the cigarette
Death arrived at my private space again
I knew that I wasn't on the list this time,
like the last visit he did with another list

Inside of me, every inch is quite damaged
I thought I died inside my grandpa dream
He died in the arms of Baghdad, since then
I wished he never died a million times alone

I smiled at death, and my smile turned into an
cemetery, with echoes asking for forgiveness
Nobody died for me, but I always dream that
I'll die for the human, who refused to cry if I die

I no longer interested to live a life of homesickness
The thunder and lightning die screaming to the rain
Death never answered me, when I asked him how
He died, when the stars were clueless about their death

Just like me...



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.



COSMIC PICNIC

I sit in the bleachers of daily existence
as if I were rubbing a magic lamp to orgasm,
an orgasm requisite for each of us.

I contemplate the universe as I would
like it to be all the while resisting creation's
inevitable undertow of cabbage waves
with pale jade attitudes, waves like sharkskin
scuffing dreams of bicycles or icicles stabbing
neutrons like olives during an intergalactic buffet
of shaved ice beneath smoked salmon, borealis
yogurt, plus the torso of some creature considered
a delicacy among the wasp nebula engaging
in its first (and perhaps last) cosmic picnic.



Alan Britt: He has been nominated for the 2021 International Janus Pannonius Prize awarded by the Hungarian Centre of PEN International for excellence in poetry from any part of the world. Alan served as judge for the 2018 The Bitter Oleander Press Library of Poetry Book Award and was interviewed at The Library of Congress for *The Poet and the Poem*. He has published 18 books of poetry and served as Art Agent for the late great Ultra Violet while often reading poetry at her Chelsea, New York studio. A graduate of the Writing Seminars at Johns Hopkins University he currently teaches English/Creative Writing at Towson University.



CONVERSION

It is a pity that I cannot buy a new soul.

In supermarkets, there are no special offers

- New Soul! On sale!

The old one is dysfunctional.

It is much easier to have a simple vision of the world.

Keep your feet on the ground and don't have dreams.

Being greedy protects the heart.

Life has a physical dimension. Ideals hurt.

Gain a prominent place in the rat race,
Dispose of sentiments, tears.

My soul is able to forgive.
It cannot learn to trust again.

It says it does not enter the same river twice.
Unreasonable? Perhaps.
It does not listen to reason.
It pulls away from people



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.



IF I COULD

It does to you every night.

Carries you lightly while
time ticks away in its own
indifferent pace, undeterred.

It holds for you all that you
find heavy to lift in your mind
during the day, pointedly
showing why they feel heavy.

Those mutilated promises,
razor-sharp betrayals, masks
you wear to cover the scars,
that scream to be ripped off

and you are grateful to it
when it comes to you, this
nightly friend, holding the
key to the periodic amnesia.

If I could like it does, lull you
to a restive state, only to make
you day-ready, you would fall into
me, call me by its name; sleep.



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.



pic by Ambika Talwar

LISTEN TO THE SACRED TREE

Mother Tree portals hold
worlds in motion pole to pole...
Aligned with music of Light,
chants emerge from core of void.
In each cell, where dance is
there we must dwell –
Sing even in deep blue silence

passaging over waves...

Lovingly we arrive, when arms
readily receive and give...

Let our footprints create joy
not sorrow for those who walk
through our lives – Let us honor
sacred trees in mighty forests
Branches weave in you and me
Let us be still and listen...!



Ambika Talwar: I am a poet/author residing in Los Angeles, USA. I work as English professor. I am published in various anthologies. I have also published a collection of poems and a poetic-spiritual travelogue. My creative expression lends dimension to my work as a spiritual-intuitive energy practitioner.



MY INIQUITY

Trust me! Same blood is flowing

In the veins of my body

Same tears I shed when crying

I get not blue what you get ruddy

I came through the same trailway

As the one you came through

I spell not 'night' what you spell 'day'

Drinking same milk I grew

The only iniquity I committed is
I was born black and poor
Hence I deserve not human bliss
Seeing me many shut their door!



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.



MISCARRIAGE

I feel a pang of alienation
severed from the womb that cradled me
meandering lanes of belief wind
through a maze of sighs in wilderness
values worshipped hover
in the transience of monsoon clouds
unheard voices stalk in shadows-
negotiating pitfalls in every bend

i tread an unsought path
only to recoil to an orphaned self,
the sacred placenta
which nourished and nurtured
a virgin mindscape
disintegrates to turmoil in my soul
i juggle the pieces to rebuild my faith
in an alien world
as old as my estranged self
the womb that conceived me
bleeds miscarriage.



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



let me go
i had told you then
your smile unleashed a sea
in the ravines
palaces were swept off
to a distant sky
and a painted afternoon burnt the fort
for ever

yes, we must all leave, you concluded
the reign has finally ended
to a long summer that had once brought us together
birds that had flown off somewhere
our kisses stayed only with hurts
breathing against ageless stones
and a rainbow that climbed an arid bastion
leaped to escape a promised
another day.



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



FUJI FROM A KITCHEN CALENDAR

And I looked, and I thought, can it be? Can I consume time like a beetroot, or consommé? Is the icon imprisonable in a plasticky print repeated and million times and hung in kitchens where sushi is prepared or maachh—bhaat or in fish and chip shops? Do icons like to be worshipped with vinegar in salt sea air food stalls or eaten with ivory chopsticks in family dining rooms? Is life mine to live? Can a volcano live in ice-encased cones like a hot chilli ice cream or will love steal into my heart like a mountain reflected in a still lake? Does a living passion die or can music still explode into war bombs fading slowly like fireflies turning into dull green prickly insects in growing daylight?

Morning breaks to unfinished haiku and promised novels
when the heart crumbles into butter-biscuits in beige milky
tea. Gauche geckos dart back into shadowy retreats with
mouthfuls of fat mosquitoes replete with four o'clock warm
sleeping human blood, while eyes seek familiar scene-
hooks to tether the restless souls lurking in glinting glass
windows.

A Watercolour

Of Fuji, Lake Syouzin

From Calender



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 by The Significant League , a Creative Writing group on Facebook. On 22 January 2020 , TSL announced the award of the First Reuel Prize for 2020 for Non - Fiction to me for my Experimental Prose plus Multi -Media Anthology , ' The Saaqi Chronicles'.



IF LOVE IS WAR

If Love is

War

Then

I want to be

Vanquished

Before

I

Fight this

Good Fight

And

I
Fall and succumb
To
Sheer Fatal Delight
Show me no Mercy
Please.



Amit Krishan Agnihotri: I am a poet residing in Landquart Switzerland. I work as a County Manager. I have contributed to various anthologies. I have also published short stories and poems in UK and India.



CRAZY DIAMONDS SHINING ON (A TRIBUTE TO PINK FLOYD)

One went mad

His brains fried by acid*

One has now died**

Two don't talk

To each other***

One goes on****

The other two, too

Apart, alone

Together still

Only in the music of the past

Is that the prize/price

One has to pay/get

To produce something that will last

Echoes that will last into the very distant future

Is there no other way?

Note:

****Syd Barrett***

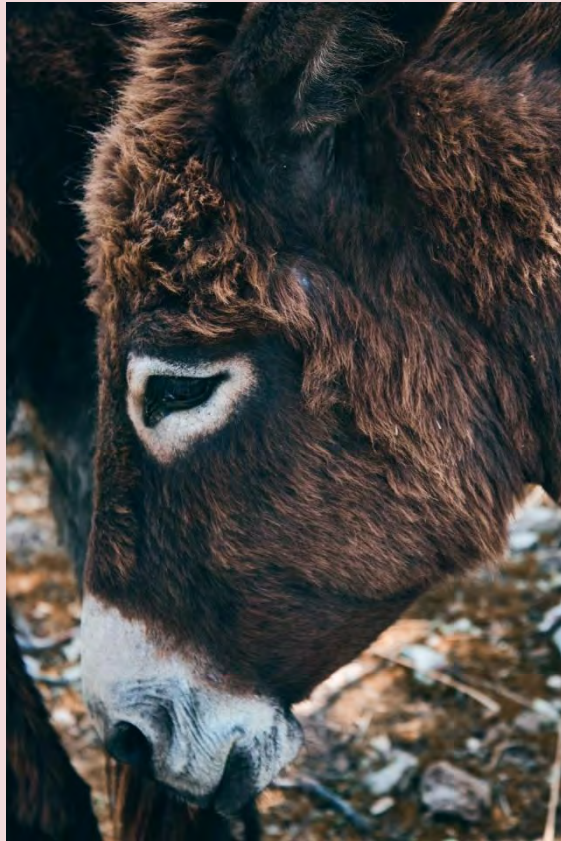
*****Richard or Rick Wright***

******David (Dave) Gilmour and Roger Waters***

*******Nick Mason***



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



THE PICTURE

Amid swinging drizzle, I saw a child on the footpath, with a paper in his hand. It showed a colorful picture which drew me close. The head of a mule was trapped in between gaps of a chair. The ass was trying hard to pull out its head free, but it couldn't. The child was intensely looking at the image and laughing profusely, all by himself. The chair looked costly, high quality, with exquisite designs. The donkey, nobody knew why, was attracted to the chair and put its head in between the splendid curves and got stuck. Or it could be the other way. The chair came closer to the ass.

The child found the whole episode quite funny and pointed towards the pic when I approached.

Honestly, as an adult I didn't find out what was so funny in the picture.



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



IN THE SILENCE

In the silence I hear your joyfulness

Listening to timeless melodies, beautiful music brings back

Special moments treasured consoles my ravaged soul

In the silence I feel the stillness

Steep into my restless mind,

As the calmness weaves into the crevices of my psyche I
feel an overwhelming peace

Flooding my heart and soul.

In the silence I see your beautiful countenance

imprinted in my heart

I miss our time together

A mother, a best friend and confidant

Your soft voice whispering in my soul with words of wisdom
and counsel

My compass in life.

In the silence I reminisce over theatrical shows and dance,

With such eloquence and fluidity

Mesmerizing the heart and soul

Oh! how I cherish those memories etched in my heart
forever.

I listen to the birds singing, awakening me to the gift of life

An orchestra saluting the morning

Even the birds need to be fed

Your favorite morning pastime

Welcoming sparrows and an array of others

They too have a place in my heart.

In the silence, Mother, I am so lost without you
Missing you more each passing day
Memories remain safely tucked in the chambers of my
heart

In the silence, resting where there is no pain
Only heaven knows my grieving heart

Soul searching, heartrending
Ever so real in my dreams.



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



TOUCHING ME

And you touch me like a creeper
Sending a soothing sensation into
My body
Getting your touch of love and
Passion my heart sings a sweet
Rhapsody

And you play with me like a
Stream plays with its banks and
Lazily flows

As it runs ahead through deep
Foliage and across green plains
Highs and lows

And you hold me tightly in your
Arms like the sky holds to the
Sweet moon
Into my body you send a song
Of love and passion and I begin
To swoon

And you fall on my sweating
Body like a shy creeper shaken
By the wind
Fragrance of love lingers thick
Long after our bodies get peace
After they sinned



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



HAD I KNOWN

I'd have lingered longer, had I known
that an isolation, chasmic so
would long keep your whispers
from my toes.

The ears roar
with the silence of walls.
Lips sip the sting of brine
off a faraway heart.

What chases my eyes to smart
with a heave of silver memories
as I delve into my depths
like you, for a turbulent peace?

The spray that startles my cheeks
must be your song.

The world echoes within its hollows
But our music must carry on.

What times have we come upon?

What times have we come upon
that they yank no more
the sand beneath my toes
to thrust them headlong into tomorrows.

Tomorrows of which nobody knows,
float in feather-like indecision.

Had I known, I'd have lingered longer
with the dying coals on your horizon.

My grilled sky clouds over with concern
but its rolls cannot carry me to your shore.

Had I known, I'd have lingered longer.
I'd have lingered longer had I known.



Anju Kishore: Anju Kishore's poems have featured in many esteemed anthologies. One of the winners of The Great Indian Poetry Award 2018 and The Prime International Poetry Prize 2020, her book of poems '...and I Stop to Listen' was published in 2018. She is part of the editorial teams of India Poetry Circle and Kavya-Adisakrit Publishing. She is Senior Editor at Pinkishe, the magazine initiative of the Delhi based NGO, Pinkishe Foundation.



TRUE SELF

Anonymous stands with his back to the wall.

Desperate grappling of an unsettled mind.

Piercing screams emitting from some lost place.

Unsure of any fate, real or imagined.

Looking past a vague blackness,

slowly filling an empty jar on the shelf.

Cardboard dreams crumbling,

while paint peels off in layers of obscurity.

A disease of doubt fills his lungs.

Labored breaths choke out bits of molested truth.

Contrived beliefs smolder

in a cauldron of his own despair.

There is no redemption.

He is a delusion of his own making,

not knowing right from wrong.

Struggling past the dark clouds,

he discovers who he is.

Note: Published by Ethos Literary Journal, November 2018



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



UNKNOWN IDENTITY

The world without me

Wouldn't be there

How long a barren cow

Could get timely drinks and fodder?

The details of my birth

Must have been bad news for the family

The moment of womanhood

Flows like the Ganga of poesy

With no trace of stopping bar,

Changing rocks into yielding alluvium

The civilized to savage
And savage to civilized.

The question of finding my name
Amidst monuments of plenitude
Worth preserving has troubled.

The bazaars dazzling with
Various apparels, jewellery and makeup
Each, a factor of my beauty
The most exciting and heart-touching:
When I am nude
The outward wears are mere pomp
No exactitude.

All moral lessons, commentaries
Institutions imparting etiquettes
Are directed towards me

My sullenness or non-cooperation,
Movement of a moment:
More appealing than an earthquake
Won't let it loose upon my creation.

How can 'breathing life' into all
Take leave of all
To assert herself on her own?



Antaryami Mishra: I am a bi-lingual poet writing both in ODIA and English. I am residing in Odisha, India. I work as a senior teacher in English in R. D. C. H. S., Chilika Nuapada, Puri. I have been contributing to nearly 10 numbers of Literary forums and already published in a dozen of anthologies of national and international repute. I have a collection of ODIA poems published in 2017. Recently my English poem 'An Ode to Adjective' has been published and Reviewed in 'The Haven' Furnace'.



VASANTHI SWETHA

How many poems,
about flowers,
should I write,
to turn it into a garden
you can come to
and write your own poetry?

ANURAG MATHUR

Your poetry is
Not just a garden
It's a forest of feelings,

Where I take
Hesitant steps,
Feel the rhythm
In the breeze,
Tiptoe around the flowers,
To reach
That wondrous waterfall of words
That cascades over my pain
In a joyous release

VANDANA KUMAR

There is a universe of lesser plants
I neglected in my childhood
Learnt names of all the roses
Dahlias and tulips

I go back to every dandelion today
And every
Wild flower and weed

Those that longed for a glance

I never bothered to

Not once

Find out botanical name

Or how much sun

They needed as feed

My poetry is an apology

I lay for all of them

For the leaves we long dismissed

Even when ancient wisdom says

The medicine for every malaise

Rests there



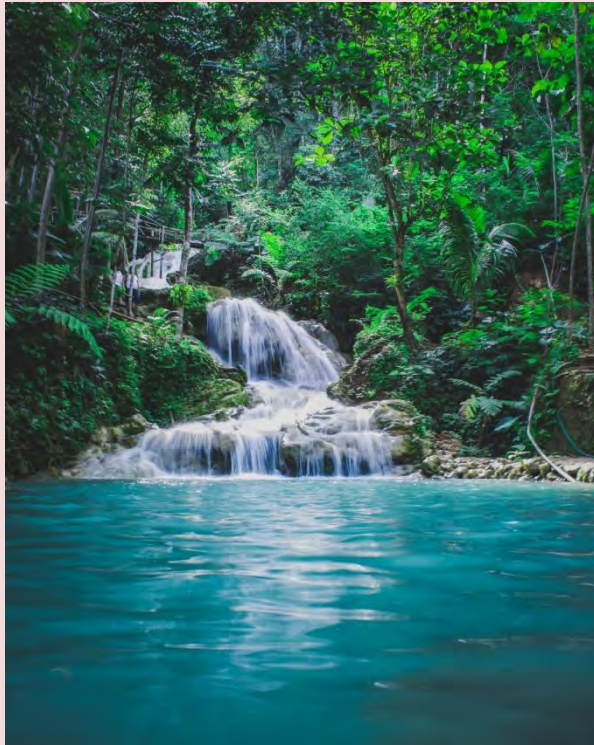
Vasanthi Swetha: She is extremely passionate about the art of poetry, dance, reading and dreaming, and she believes that every poem that she writes is a result of a conversation with her soul.



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



Vandana Kumar: I am a poet residing in New Delhi, India. I work as French teacher and translator. I have contributed to various anthologies. Few of my poems were recently published in 'Spillwords' and 'North of Oxford'.



THE MIND WE LOVE

The mind we love
must have wild places
an overgrown and
unending little wood,
tangled orchards,
the chance of lions in front,
mysterious snakes a few,
a lake that nobody has
fathomed the depth,

a fall just unimaginable
and high,
the land -a bedsheets of
greenery and unthinkable scenery,
paths threaded with flowers
largely unseen,
and when we go back
from here,
we ourselves ask
what a fantastic fantastic
Place we have been?



Ashish K Pathak: He is a primary education teacher in India's most backward state of Bihar. He has got letter of appreciation from the President of India for his poem. Recently, he has been featured in 'Fragrance of Asia' anthology and is slated to be featured in 'East Meets West anthology' and 'GloMag' and 'Unkept Resolutions' anthology. He has been conferred World Union of poets gold cross medal for his writings in the world book' complexion-based discrimination. He is one amongst only six poets selected for the 'Marula World Anthology' from Asia.



LET US...

Let us close our eyes

Before this loneliness

Shadows running into the summer wind

Language of hope

A magic voyage

Dragonfly goes wild

Fugitive wind

And the sunflower in our closed eyes

Broken memories of years gone by

Escaping nameless darkness

Fireflies dancing

Moving Silently towards morning sun

Only a poet knows

The heart of a poet

Whispers of a crazy sea wind...



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



SPIDER

I notice, how

You keep on, on

Spinning

- My oh my oh my! -

In almost

Perpetual motion ...

Working your icky sticky

Geometric guts out

Do you happen to know
How fine your spinning is?
Oh how fine
You fine-weave, as do
Our weavers of
Rugs, carpets, tapestries
Who make what we hurry to see
In great homes and galleries

But you've some different payoff
For your toils than
Our stitchers, spinners, weavers
Or our own ardors
In pouring through homes and galleries,
From which the likes of you,
Dear spider,
And of any traces of you,
Have been swept well clean

Your makings

Your sweat

Your trceries

Your loveliness

Pour out of

Your intent Patience...

From out of the guts of Yourself...



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.



DESIRE

crawling up your legs

like a creepy spider

heating up emotions

like a house on fire

an irresistible drive

soaking up your time

is wanting something

than such a crime?

on your mind

24/7

your desires

like a raven

scavengers

your entire being

its the only thing

worth touching and seeing

desire

it's like an empire

the only thing

you wish to acquire



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.



PETRICHOR, THE ETERNAL

The day light has dimmed,
Sun is going down in the west,
I am looking back,
To the roads I left behind.
How have I crossed those rocky paths!

Pictures of some greenery
Flash before my eyes,
Amid thorny and sandy deserts,
I hear someone calling behind.

From where comes the voice?
Is it from heaven or from my heart?

So blissful this feeling!
Is it sweet breeze of Spring?
Or is it, from the wet earth
The Petrichor rising?

When life becomes heavy under grind stone,
And heart chokes from unbearable pain,
I hear that voice of assurance.
How quickly the wound heals!
I become a self-sufficient whole,
One complete being!



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



SAVE OUR CHILDREN FROM SUICIDES

It is high time our perspectives changed and love for our children is given wider dimensions. Instead of burying their tender developments under expensive material gifts and giving in to their unreasonable demands, equating this as our love for them, let us shower our unlimited love on our children for sure and at the same time teach them to love too, to love all sentience around unconditionally, indiscriminately inculcate in them values of love and kindness. Let them be brought up amidst songs of birds, purring of cats, touch of cool breeze, music of rain hitting against windowpanes, cuddled up story sessions with elders or evenings spent together in a garden, enabling them to observe and emulate love and kindness showered upon them and learn from family interactions.

It is imperative that our parenting be inclusive, highlighting and emphasizing high values and responsibilities as well as acquainting children with hardships, failures and rejections faced in life. Our children grow so cocooned in love and security that they find themselves unequipped to face the challenges of real world once they step out. As they grow up and embark on their journey they should be aware that one can't tell which way the wind blows but there is no harm in carrying an umbrella and also know that they are loved unconditionally by their family and friends, irrespective of their position or success in the world, so that they don't hesitate to confide in us if faced with adverse conditions in life.

We often reward our children when they succeed but chide them on their failures, instilling a sense of insecurity in them since their early years which manifests into deadlier forms, later on. We need to redefine success which should mean trying on the righteous path. 'Best' is dangerously interpreted as the means of being loved and accepted while not being the 'Best' is construed as rejection or the end of the world, making them withdraw into themselves and plunge into despair.



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.



OF LOVE AND LOVERS-1

Myriad stories told
And umpteen poems crafted,
On love and lovers
The affair does not end

It's always the least,
Of how much you speak up,

Of love and lovers,
Their immortal sagas

Bound with
An unseen rope of love,
We survive on the earth,
As eternal lovers

We are born to love, my dear friend,
Love adds to life,
But,
Hate fragments

Come on, don't fret,
Hold my hand in love, the lover says,
Merge your heart with mine,
Let love multiply,
Love and love

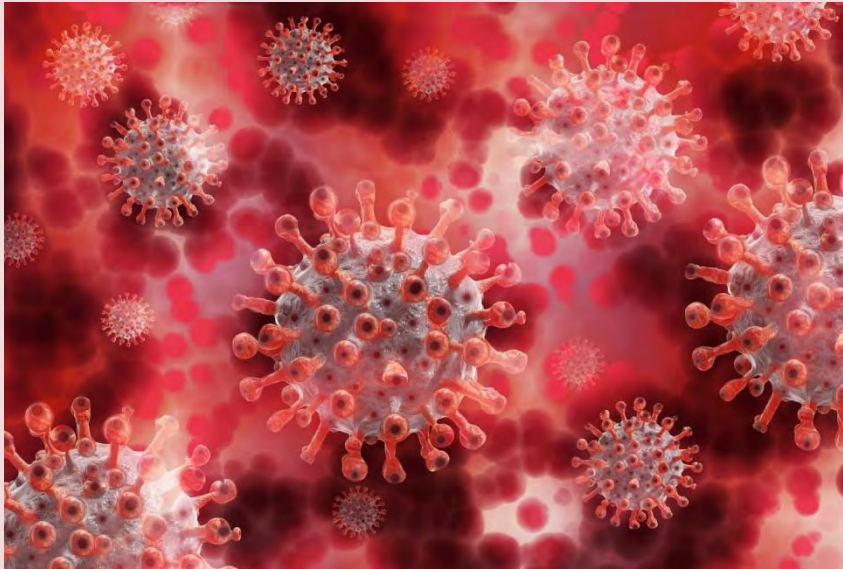
Love is a music that pulsates in the heart,

Love is an eternal song echoes through the veins

Love is sublime, a flow endless



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. He has also been a recipient of the prestigious R. N. Tagore award from Xpress Publications, Kerala, India.



IT MIGHT BE THE LAST LESSON

just yesterday they believed it would be okay
they fought for every breath, for every sip of life
today rows of only empty chairs remind of them,
the cat mewling in the armchair and dog in tears

loved ones should be close, but they were so far away
there was no one to hold their hands and tightly hug
now they lay lonely in rows of nameless coffins
in the middle of nowhere waiting for the grave

where did it all start and how it happened, who knows?

they say in China but are they really sure?

if there would not be the pursuit of money and power

there would not be so many hungry people in the world

there is enough money for bombs and space rockets

the food drowns in the sea by some madmen creatures

and their sick visions instead of feeding the hungry

although tomorrow, our world may cease to exist

it is still not too late to shake off the madness

to learn from this cruel and maybe last warning

first of all, people must be treated equally

the rest will slowly follow when you open your heart



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 FLOWER SELLER

This poem is based on Anhadhi form of Tamizh literature where the last word of the previous sentence becomes the first word of the next sentence, similar to modern-day loop poetry but not exactly the same.

Her tender hands knitting tendrils of JASMINE

JASMINE flowers fragrant with scented fervors UNIQUE

UNIQUE as the scent of a baby known only to MOTHER

MOTHER-to-be this girl pregnant with a protruding
STOMACH

STOMACH as big as a whole pumpkin WHITE

WHITE and pure like the moon this young GIRL

GIRL probably as young around years EIGHTEEN

EIGHTEEN the number of her coloured BANGLES
BANGLES on each hand - green, pink, blue and RED
RED also the colour of vermilion smeared on her FOREHEAD
FOREHEAD sweating from humidity of a hot DAY
DAY sinking and sweltering from the subdued advent of
early EVENING
EVENING the time when her flowers mostly SELL
SELL as fast as express trains lest they become STALE
STALE as her very own untold TALE
TALE awaiting wings of FREEDOM
FREEDOM from that caged CIRCLE
CIRCLE vicious and vicious circle of poverty.



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



A PRAYER

O, God bless me-

With faith and firmness and fiery zeal

To overcome struggle ahead

So that I may ever feel

Thy presence within

And warmth of thy love

O, God bless me-

With truth, patience and perseverance

To live a meaningful life

In the wake of storms and stresses

To stay cheerful

When darkness surrounds me.

O, God bless me-

With inner strength

To pave the way out of mess

For others who have lost hope

With the song of life

So that I may sing for them.

O, God call me-

When work is done

When smile pervades around

And song of joy

Echoes everywhere

And fear and ignorance are gone.



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



PRESENCE

Like a barrel of honey resting over
our firmament, blankets of cloud strata
weep crystalline snowflakes of manna
To bank against the pond.

As crisp, clear, cold air creeps
into the homes and bones of arctic cusp
philosophers,
They prepare themselves for the night.

Midnight.

muddled skies have cleared of clouds

as night clarifies their minds

With twinkling stars flecking overhead

like mica in clay.

Finally, out of the heavens

suffuses the aurora in shades

Bold and pastel at once,

One beautiful giant wave of light

snaking in and out of presence

Into the dawn.



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



RETURN

Zephyr winds blew through
The monolithic structures
Of antique concrete and
Modern steel.

The morning awakening
To the extinction of
The fallen impending
Man-unconscious.

Will the fragmented
Promises and divine
Lies splinter in a memory
Of another past?

Beginning to talk to you
From another dimension.
Silhouettes on standby falling
Silently on the world.

Calling you to us
Waiting for a new history
To begin and a signal
Of your heavenly return.



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



What happens when those who fight exploitation

themselves exploit

those who raise voice against abuse

abuse

those whose duty is to protect

kill

those who should feed

deprive

those who should work

shirk

stay awake

sleep

those who guard

plunder

when a mother throws her new born

into the garbage bin

when innocents are tortured

fathers rape

what happens when the sky does not cry

when the earth burns.

WHAT HAPPENS.



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.



MONEYTOWN

This seems another country, I come here
On a tourist visa, these grand places
Are not home, into basement flats I peer
Down where there is little, no human faces
Who owns these mansions? Do families laugh
And shout within them? By what sort of means
Were they purchased? What brought them to this path?
Have they a nation? Slow my eyesight weans
Itself away, how I wish to impute
Lurid answers to these questions, I am

An unjust judge sometimes in a dispute.
Is this whole world built on some bitter scam?
Talent and hard work can go far of course
And I admire the beauty of it all
Whatever built this I can feel remorse
That I a stranger here would always fall.



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.



Kylian's She Bunny. Pic: Isabel Gómez de Diego

KYLIAN'S SHE BUNNY

-Open the cage for me, Little boy
Open the door for me, honey
That for your pretty face
I've to get rid of this confinement.

Kylian opens the door
And like a door guard
She Bunny stays still.

How pretty Kylian's She Bunny
When it comes out of its cage
Freshly washed and combed
Lifting only one ear
Listening carefully
What happy family talks about.
It has taken out a SpongeBob doll
A bun with two eyes
And a cotton ball
With a little bow of colors
For the kid to play
And do not war his parents.
What whiter skin
What black eyes and what black ear.
The boy who is still very young
Has become infatuated with it.
He pulls on its ears
Pinches its cute little nose

And She Bunny escapes, so crystal clear
To get into the captive cage
Preferring to stay in it
Before to put up with the kid
Who now cries and sighs
Because it's gotten out of hand
This cute She Bunny so precious.



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.



THE LITTLE MATCH THAT LIBERATES

A British tax on cheap Chinese tea exported to their colonists in America helped to split apart the wealthy British empire in 1775.

A senseless British tax in India on inexpensive salt ensured the eventual end of the British empire.

An idiotic insistence on the use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction in African schools presaged the annihilation of asinine Apartheid.

Myopic micro minds are often offended by minor 'infractions'.

Animosity arises quickly in arrogant mediocrities.

Lighting a match in an atmosphere of acrimony comes easily to the risible.

The acrid odour of death suffuses the air when little minds wield power beyond their little minds.

Base, often less than pale predators prey on the just who expose the thieves' treasonous war against South Africa.

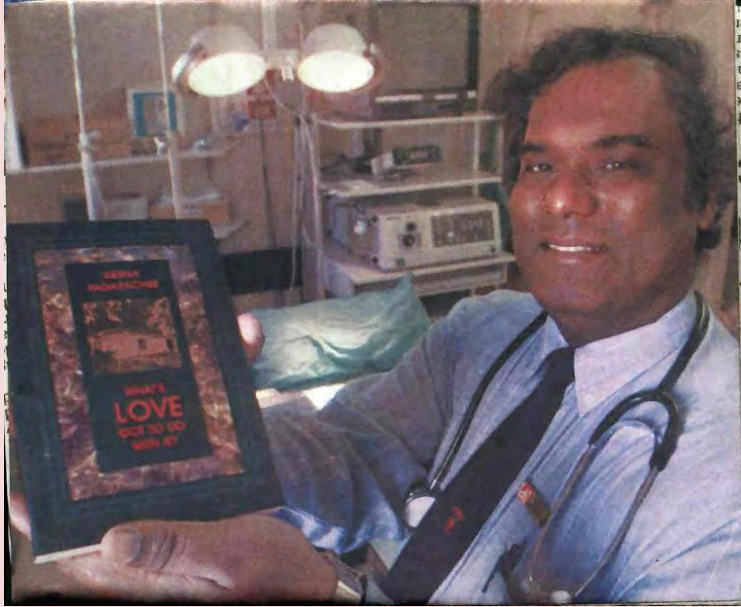
The filching agents use the wealth and the resources of the state to betray the state,

Much as the German army used the resources of Germany to destroy Germany when it initiated its genocidal attack on gigantic Russia.

How shallow and shameful are the mindless minds who macerate the land of their birth.

It is indeed fortunate for humanity that the ogres' feeble minds orchestrate their own demise.

How fearful are we to fight the foes of our stricken country!



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



Source: <https://www.piklist.com/free-photo-sshss>

THE CONSECRATION BY OUR CHOSEN GOD

In the sacred hunt for happiness

Where did we stand?

The veil of morality

That we hid inside a jungle

On the way to the sanctified mound

Was untraceable,

And that was how it was supposed to be.

The secrecy of the journey

Through the bouts of immorality,

When no one raised an eyebrow,
Even as the walls tumbled
Between rectitude and depravity,
Then came the hour of our call
And we looked away with conviction.
Our hunts for happiness,
When we went unmasked
Were always cloaked and hooded,
Consecrated by the God
Whom we chose to trust.



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



UNDER THE SKIN*ONDER DIE VEL

Red Alert – My ears now deaf to your daily invasion of my childhood legacy

My curiosity punctured of who next where next what next in this senseless blood

fest shredding my confidence – Red lights flashing blinding my fading vision, I

freeze as yet another ambulance announces its nightly dominance, burning

my former innocence as death comes ever closer to my
safe family enclosure but my
inner rage is rising. I refuse to be another statistic, so stop
your sweet-talking tricks
offering me only blood-stained sweets to silence me tease
me insult me!

Township Catwalk – You might feel empowered, crowning
yourself king of our street,

My life my destiny but I own my foretold greatness. I come
from a proud line of

matriarchs whose confidence now fuels my individuality, so
look at me as I strut my

township catwalk past your front porch kingdom, twirling
burning pain dress, stomping

my essence to show you how I am not bowing down to
your intimidation even though

you spit your toxic warnings, hoping to mute my voice
permanently but I will not!

Vi wat kyk djy? What you lookin at? Surely my skull should remind you of death

surrounding me haunting me mocking me due to your prolonged selfish tyranny your

inhumane lunacy blinding yourself willingly to our suffering! Say what? You are so

ignorant – My rain cloud is witness to our tears which you have selfishly caused, Our

daily curse amongst territorial senseless wars you stir and escalate on this estate –

My eyes raw from your annihilation apocalypse. My tears bone dry dried up bloodshot

Shut up! We have had enough of your hell-bound chariot ride. My leaf puzzles you?

Challenging your limited brain capacity? Do you feel incapacitated, not knowing why

I am so enraged so utterly frustrated? You stunted my growth violated my innocence –

My dreams now scream because of your fiendish
culling of my developing mind.

I am no longer that innocent child you violated breaking me
hurting me...

Underneath – You cut me deep with your sharp words of
violence whilst all I ever

wanted was to run down the street and scream out with
innocent glee but your

dangerous murderous toys prevented me from feeling free.
Look at me and you

will see what your poisoned mind has done to me broken
me flattened me...

Look deeper underneath my river of sorrow and gladly
drown in the fractured

Legacy of me. The hollow of me. The rage of me. Do you
see?



Don Beukes: He is a South African and British writer. He is the author of 'The Salamander Chronicles' (CTU) and 'Icarus Rising-Volume 1' (ABP), an ekphrastic collection. He taught English and Geography in both South Africa and the UK. His poetry has been anthologized in numerous collections and translated into Afrikaans, Persian, French and Albanian. He was nominated by Roxana Nastase, editor of Scarlet Leaf Review for the 'Best of the Net' in 2017 as well as the Pushcart Poetry Prize (USA) in 2016. He was published in his first SA Anthology 'In Pursuit of Poetic Perfection' in 2018 (Libbo Publishers) and his second 'Cape Sounds' in 2019 (Gavin Joachims Publishing). He is also an amateur photographer and his debut Photographic publication appeared in Spirit Fire Review in June 2019. His new book, 'Sic Transit Gloria Mundi'/Thus Passes the Glory of this World' is due to be published by Concrete Mist Press.

Gary Frier: He lives in Cape Town, South Africa. He is an internationally exhibited artist and Graphic Designer. He currently works as a freelance artist, teaching and facilitating art at a local N.G.O. providing educational and cultural programmes for youth at risk and the Occupational Therapy Dept. at Valkenberg Psychiatric Hospital. Frier combines contemporary and historical African elements and juxtaposes masks, photography, fabric detail and colour with urban figures.



MY FIRST POME

(for Durl)

Roses are reddish

like a round radish

and some roses are white

like a long radish, right?

I like to see em

and I like to eat em.

So my heart won't harden,
that's why in my garden
I grow the rose and radish
in rows with my cabbage.



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.



THE UNKNOWN HOPE

The sun has gone, the moon has gone
Gone with them that all emotion
But live with me thy last sworn
That makes me live, waiting in moan
You brought the hope, not dreamt
Too far, too tough, to achieve it
To crown thy word with glories bright
Crimpled the Joys, began to fight
Appealing the days months and years
Ran after the goal through chaos

Chanting thy hope as hymns source
Had many ups and downs to cross
The victory was humbly brought
With thy spirit and mirth
But that day break not
To flower thee my lovely breathe
The path is as long as unseen
Thou art found nowhere
Lamenting the bygone days in
I step ahead for future
How time flies, flies the beam
Hopes are dim about to fade
Still I hope to dream thy dream
Laying on the last life bed



Dusmanta Choudhury: I am a poet residing in Jeypore, in the district of Koraput, Odisha. I work as a Lecturer in English. I have contributed to various anthologies. I have also published many Odia and English poetries.



APPLE

Translated by Artur Komoter

Long, long ago, before the ages
in the arms of the sinful hand
the succulent apple lead into temptation.

Today—

nibbled—

it arouses desire.



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



TIME

The hurried bursting of confinement,
A shallow grave of window reflection
Opening a distinct faculty, granting
The mind the insight of nature's planning.

Imagination surrenders, witness
The last of the new leaves, being born,
Becoming the terminal buds, protecting
The anxious men wondering, reconnecting.



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



look at you

you stare back—

the longest

conversation

we have had in months

Hariharan sings

in the background...

it seems

that he stole lament from us
and we never noticed

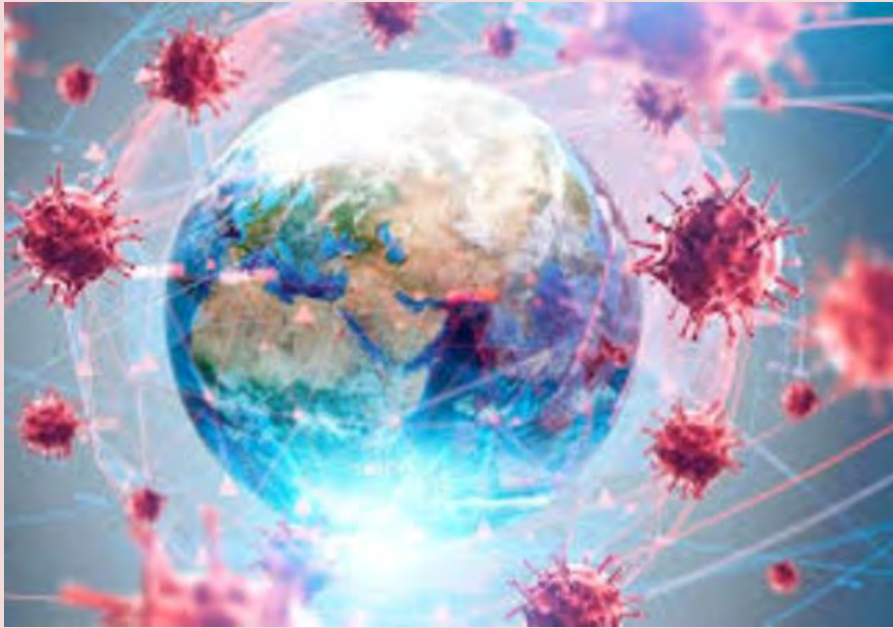
I push those chairs away
to create distance...

my arthritis
as good an excuse
as any other

the purple sunbird
jumps on hibiscus and roses
that you have planted...
how long does
a garden survive without water



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



PANDEMIC

Breathing in a dreadful time

Life mourns with a pale face

And death shines with a sadistic smile

Inflicting pain and agony all over

Death is the eternal truth which seems to be peaceful

But corona offers a death, uneasy and frightful

The aura of life is lost in darkness

Love , friendship, brotherhood

All are distanced by a fear suddenly

A fear of losing life has made all indifferent

A monster in the guise of a deadly virus
Landed in this earth to make us apart
Swallowed countless lives...
Now humans hate their fellow beings
The love for life which made them united before
Now made them separated and panicked
Where are the colours of love?
Where are the days full of mirth?
Still the bird of hope sings silently in the corner of heart
Dreams to be free from the cruel clutches of this deadly
virus
Awaits for the embrace of a new beautiful morn....



Gayatree G. Lahon: Gayatree is poet and a teacher from Assam. Nature is a great inspiration for her. According to her, poetry is a celebration of life in its myriad shades. Her poems have been published in many national and international anthologies and e-magazines.



Remember son,
The day we over-slept
Cuddled together
Thinking there was no school
Though it was not a Sunday,
Our room was dark
It was pouring outside
When the school van honked
And the doorbell rang,
Then it was a rush
Getting ready to school

But the van left
I had to take you to school
You were so happy
As I drove, you screamed
'Faster, faster...'
I almost hit a bus in front
Wasn't that yesterday?!



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.



GRASS ROOTS

Nothing's changed really,

But I've moved,

I don't believe in « moved on »,

I've moved from the grass roots of name, title, banner,
sect, race, colour and skin,

What could change under this vast translucent blue sky?

I've pushed through the dirt, swamp and parched earth,
Crawled, trailed and climbed wherever light touched me,
From the sun and the moon,
From the stars and all the reflections of what water throws
around,

In torrents, gentle showers, words, conjectures,
conclusions and illusions,

I've grown, evolved, accepted, and soaked it in that I'm not
just moss and fern,

I'm all of it that it takes to flower and carry thorns and
thistles,

And stretch out my arms that are now branches in luscious
forests ready to touch the skies,

As I stand rooted to the ground ,

Regardless of whether or not I'm watered,

For love is my food and love my sustenance,

Isn't that what creation is all about?



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.



OLD WOMAN ME

Little world of Old Woman me.

My slippers are big and flat,

My clothes, loose and comfy

Spectacles, I've learnt now to balance perfectly on the
bridge of my nose

I'm now the proud owner of my own medicine cabinet

I talk seriously of breakfast, lunch and tea.

and happiness is a cup of tea.

Sunlight and the world outside look all good from my
armchair

My needs are small now,
contracted to some security and acceptance of days filled
with food and small pleasures.

The twilight gives way to darkness,
and comforting blankets and bed are all I need.



Glory Sasikala: She is a poet, writer, and publisher residing currently in Chennai, Tamilnadu, India. She is the Editor and Publisher of the monthly poetry and prose magazine 'GloMag' and is the administrator of the 'GloMag Group' on Facebook.



THE FOLLY OF YOUTH

The paths we have travelled
have become a long and winding highway
now we are at the cross roads
trying to recall the life we lived
in retrospection everything is blurred
with the mist of time
where has time taken us
through the tumulus years

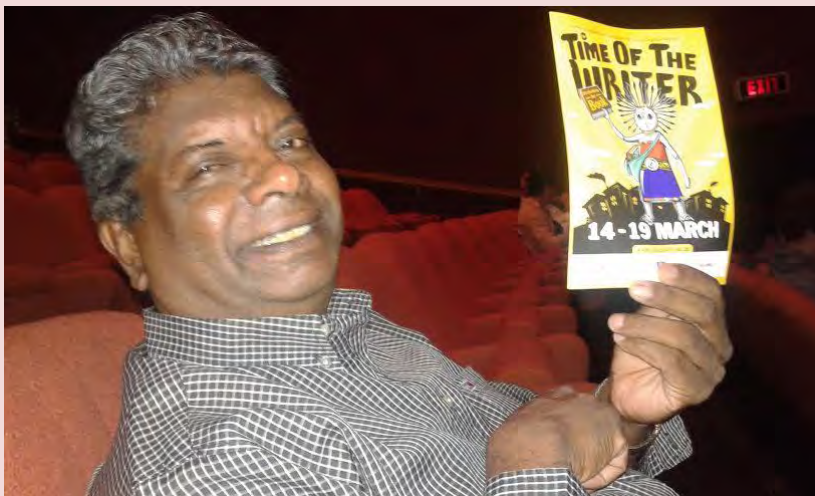
we were young and naïve

carefree and reckless
thought that the world owed us a favour
but the world only laughed in derision
at our absurdity, the absurdity of youth

the clouds are grey like the mist
that adorns the sky
in the far distance
the horizon is lost to the eye
and the exuberance of youth
has faded into a sombre grey

the robust high spirit of our youth
the brashness, arrogance, insolence
defiance and posturing
have mellowed
and we watch with trepidation
the new generation of youth

repeating history
and with a subtle smile on our lips
with a glint glowing in our eyes
for we know, and are wiser now
that we have been there
saw it all and done it all,
a long, long time ago.



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.



WARMTH

It's my turn to be near the window
only now I know that someone is yet to arrive,

and silence is everywhere between the walls
lightly touching the string of joy,

how red it looks-*Rangan* flowers in the morning breeze
weave unknown songs, linger long in the memory,

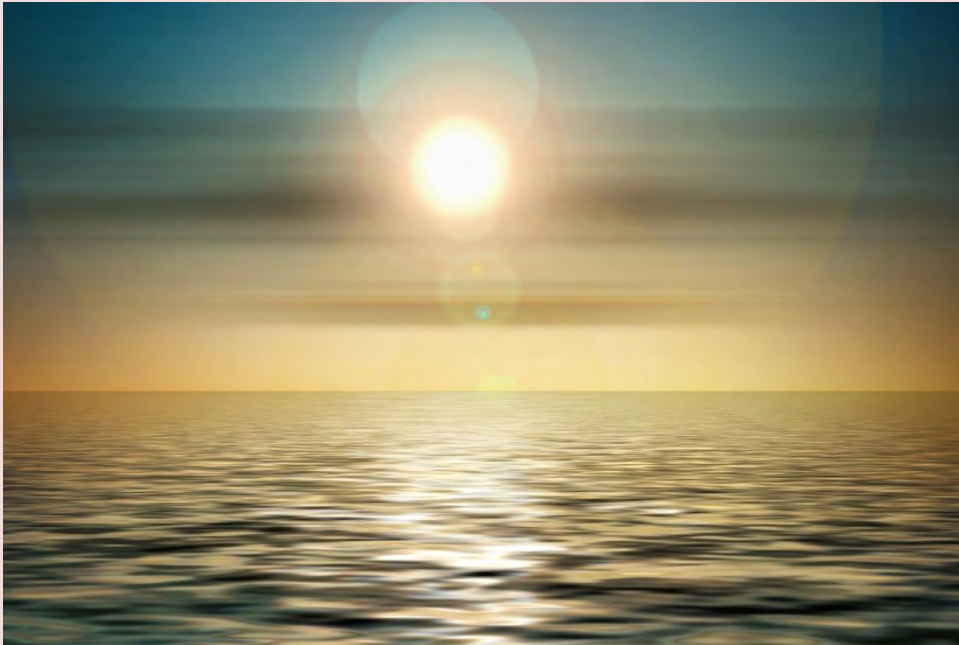
outside the wind crosses borders of stormy nights
wet footprints slip out from the unfinished dream,

the sunbird is in search of nectar
clouds assemble to greet the antelopes,

may there be a river beneath my words
all I need is mother's warmth inside.



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



DEATH OF GOD

Original: Assamese : Guna Moran

Translation: Bibekananda Choudhury

Air

After being turned poisonous

Took refuge in water

After water turned turbid

Hid in the forest

After the forest turned into desert

The homeless God

Became an inhabitant of prison

Snatching of Draupadi's robe

Misfortune of the honest and the pious

The hero of the drama

Like the brutality of the imbecile

Could not come out of the jail

He can't even deny the

superlative adjective of the blind God

pronounced by the downtrodden

Sees but denies

Hears but refuse to accept

More wretched than the weakling

Weaker than even a child

The last hopeless male in the world

Go to his prison twice

Every morning and evening

Primarily to feed him

In return

Sign an agreement assuring a certain berth in heaven

What sordid time

The head of the three worlds

Was allotted mainly

Three easily accessible abodes in heaven

The freedom seekers great burden of reaching the God

Also died down



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.



GHAZAL

You sewed shut my mouth so I hide above stars,
Scorched my soul during night so I ride above stars.

In regret I chopped my cloak as a whole,
I'm your servant, will you guide above stars?

Will sea permit the fish to walk outside?
Or earth's beasts will stride above stars?

One who is frozen is lost in his own affairs,
Leave the world, come and find pride above stars.

If you are the sun, why your heart is so black?
Enlight the darkest corners and reside above stars.

Don't stay melted, become a piece of jewelry,
The treasure of unity is found inside- above stars.



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



ECHO

The World,
is made up of
Original and its reflections.

Echo,
Is also a
Reflection , a repetition.

Writings and speeches,
are echoes of the innermost

Heartfelt feelings and thoughts,
Of writers and speakers.

Powerful and impressive words,
Echo, reverberate in our mind,
For substantial time.

Children,
are echoes
of their parents.
Real close friends,
Echo feelings and emotions
Mutually.

Sometimes,
there may be,
Silent echoes,
of some people,

which are

Subsonic or inaudible.

However,

Original

Can never be,

Replaced or Substituted.



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



FULCRUM

Tell me the color
of your dystopia—
purple scars on
asphalt or green.

Empty glass bottles
litter the scene
where I try to determine
the location of the sun...

I write a song with gelly roll pens
only to be erased with yesterday's
cold tea.

The kerosene poured in
to light the sooty lantern
goes neat through
the fulcrum of memory.



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



STRIVING BALANCE

Balance is what

Life is all about

There has to be a balance

Everywhere

Between light and dark

Between day and night

Between summer and winter

Between stress and cool

Between sorrow and happiness

Between failures and successes

Between where we are to where we want to go

Between what we have become to what we aspire to
become

Between what exists now and what will exist in future

Between what we decide to do and what we actually do

Between what we think of us and what we feel about it

It's an imbalanced state of mind

Which creates

Havoc, global warming, suicides,

And none other than

Corona pandemic!!



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.



BRIGHT PINK BEGONIAS

While bees glide and lovers stroll
through the plaza this afternoon
clouds stretch past the horizon as a
young man calls from his cart
"fresh juice, fresh juice".

The air fills with oranges,
guitars strum love songs and
children skip across sidewalks.

You kiss kiss my lips again
again always begonias begonias

growing bigger every minute bright
pink begonias begonias everywhere.



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



EPITAPH FOR KHUSHWANT

His grey beard was a prism of
joy in living, evening out pain;
Had his share of rows with the
mighty, let it die with a grin.
Woke the morn with a pen,
so seductive was its nib;
Malice was only on its tip,
yet never flowed in the blue.
His eyes had the spark of wit,

never departed from wisp of truth!

He harvested a valley of hate,

never sowing it in his stream;

For he saw the light in the tunnel,

wished Man to see his dream!

The Muse was in his veins,

forever swimming in its magic;

Death, a visitor to every door,

was too shy to even knock;

Now he will rest in peace,

The pen will miss its soulmate.



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.



DESERTED COUNTRY-HOUSE

Now no one lives
in this house anymore.
Many smiles, laughs,
freedom of swift days
shining warm
in yellow summer,
some embalmed shades
of unnamed bushes,
or silly prattles

of obscure childhood,
the long-known street
from the dusty threshold,
all receded like
daylong shadows
shaping the dusk.

No one lives here, anymore.

The birds sitting
on the overhead wires
soaking the evening
of the drizzling may
signed on the sky
the simplicity of fading
gradually into the oblivion.

Distant fringes of trees
held remnants of the absence,
while presence dissolves

into a clumsy haze,
disappearing into the depth
of washed and ironed thoughts
fading carefully with time.



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



The journey is very challenging
But don't give up, my comrade
And don't lose hope, my friend

This night of suffering will end soon
The darkness of sorrow will melt away
If it takes a little longer
Please don't lose hope, my comrade

Our hardship won't last forever
Our destination is just round the corner

Believe me and keep your spirits up

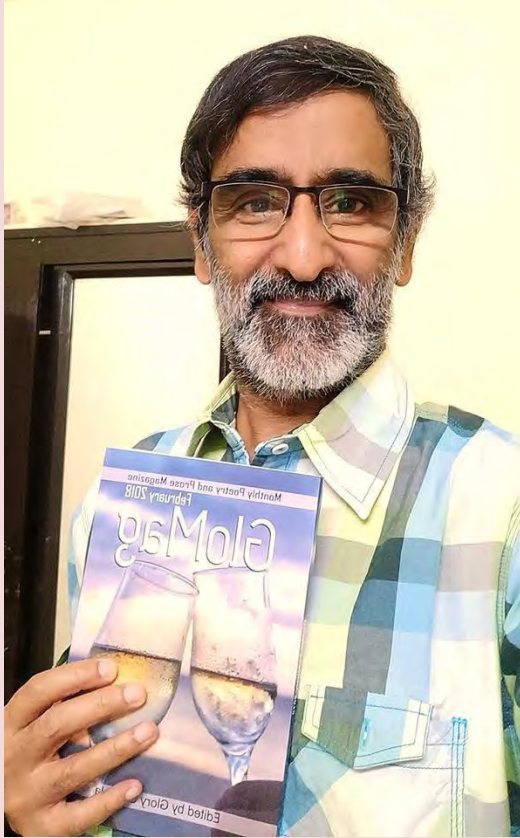
Please don't lose hope, my friend

You will soon join the procession

Towards a bright sky and a just world

You will see what your eyes are searching for

Please don't lose hope, my comrade



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.



INDIA—THE LINKING OF RIVERS

Nature calls. Oh! It really does.

“A physicist can do any job but not an engineer ”

– APJ Abdul Kalam,

The Hindu,

24*07*04

I take this quote to start my argument. Not on the conceited stand of a Physicist but on the basis of a greater stand called ‘Physics’. It is a known fact that Physics, Natural Philosophy, is the one subject that attempts to explain ALL natural phenomenon. It is Physics that also tells us about thermodynamics . . . entropy and the eternal longing for equilibrium that haunts all systems natural. Also, however much we understand and exploit processes to cater to our needs we have realized that we need to be

very, very, very,, . . . careful. Otherwise, the MNC called 'NATURE UnLimited' would wreak havoc on humanity.

All this had started with the earliest manifestations of communal farming, which destroyed natural bio-diversities. When we harnessed waterways by constructing artificial dams and water bodies natural topographies were changed [Luckily ' Silent Valley ' had been saved from the Human's exploitation and greed.] . They say that the exploitation of the East Coast road for commercial purposes led to a change in flora along its coastline and consequent greater susceptibility to Natural disasters like the 'tsunami'.

Now, in the name of biotechnology, Nature is being interfered with. . . .cloning . . .and all the rest of it. "Playing GOD". We also know that nature, as Physics will have us to understand, will always maintain its grand balance. Wherever, humans have tried to change established natural order we have been penalized. It is again a well-known fact that ' venereal ' diseases came into civilizations because of some of our more adventurous ancestors and their revelry across human-animal boundaries. Then, sodomy resulted in AIDS, they say. . . The reports of human 'endeavour' keep on increasing as the human's greed keeps on growing, unsatiated with all that it had tasted.

The great Indian Maharajya wants to destroy the arteries that make up the complexion of this great land called India and alter the river systems that exist. Without going into the complicated analysis of the 'statistical' mechanics that would take place with displaced systems in such a large land mass would it not be prudent not to disturb natural order. Rather than listen to Political and supposedly humanitarian considerations, I suppose that it would be most prudent to listen to Geologists, Physicists, Zoologist, Botanists, Archeologists, Historians, the GAIA movement, Naturalists.

Note: this was written in 2005. COVID19 is another pointer, now!



Lakshminarayan Nariangadu: Dr. Lakshmi, as he is called at GLORIOUSTIMES, is a Professor in Physics, retired from the Madras Christian College. He has around 50 publications in Scientific Research Journals and Conferences. A few textbooks too. He also writes otherwise. When the mood sets in, the emotions tingle and words fall in place. In this space, he writes both in Tamil and in English.



CORONA-VIRUS

there's an invisible killer

in the air

it's here, there

it's everywhere

it sticks on steel, paper

cardboard and plastic

when it gets hold of a human being

it makes the individual sick

please follow protocol

and act wise

wear your mask

and sanitize

regularly

wash your hands

avoid visiting

families and friends

if not necessary

don't go out at all

if you have to make contact with others

send them a whatsapp or give them a call

if you know that you've been in close contact
with someone who's been infected
for your safety and your loved ones
go and get yourself tested

and most important
pray for yourself and others
nephews, nieces, cousins, uncles, aunts
sisters, brothers, fathers and mothers

let's not lose hope and faith for healing
through Christ Jesus
and an end
to corona-virus



Leroy Abrahams: He lives in South Africa, Port Elizabeth, Helenvale. He currently works as a Spot Welder at a Motor Industry Firm. He is a Published Author and enjoys writing poetry. His first book entitled, 'Verse en Inspirasie' was published by Selwyn Milborrow (Milborrow Media). His second book entitled, 'Testimony in Poetry' was published by Bevan Boggenpoel, and the third book entitled, 'In Pursuit of Poetic Perfection,' which he wrote together with Bevan Boggenpoel, Selwyn Milborrow, and Don Beukes was published by Milborrow Media. His poetry describes himself and how God has transformed his life. He is also a member of a Master Class group of writers as well as Afrikaanse Digters.



THE MARKING OF DOORS

Looking for marks upon the doors.

Old Herod strove to find one blessed.

The drowned of Katrina searched for.

Looking for marks upon the doors.

Pharoah sought out those he abhorred.

What tragedy this represents.

Looking for marks upon the doors.

Old Herod strove to find one blessed.



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



THE STAR IN ME

The stars in me query

Why I bury

The mystery

In the sanctum

By the shield of silence

the depth of darkness

the intensity of stillness

Which I sunken amidst turbulent blender

Is scary

I am learning to look at bright

At time I fail

At time I succeed
Still I attempt to cross the zigzag curve
Boldly and dauntingly
Because stars in me sound loud
The stars in me want to come out
In their flaunting way
The stars in me want to shine
In their frivolous sway
The stars in me want to play hide and seek
In the vast hemisphere of my mid-day.



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



FLORETS OF FANCY

As I wander amongst the nature in a park
Whispering prayers of my fancies so stark
To the fairies dancing on the delicate flowers
These tiny mercies having mystical powers

Moments with beloved beside the flowing river
Winds creating minute ripples in wavelets like shiver
Melodious musical rhythms in my heart beats
Singing songs of your praises with lovely lyrics neat

The tiny fairies are my florets of fancy divine
Bestowing on us devotion, our intentions superfine
Our being together passionately in love, ecstatic
Transcends the universe our state euphoric

Love soars and soothes my soul in serenity
Surrounded by peace, divinity and tranquility
Love for you ascends beyond the celestial stars
Believe in love and its mesmerizing wonders



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.



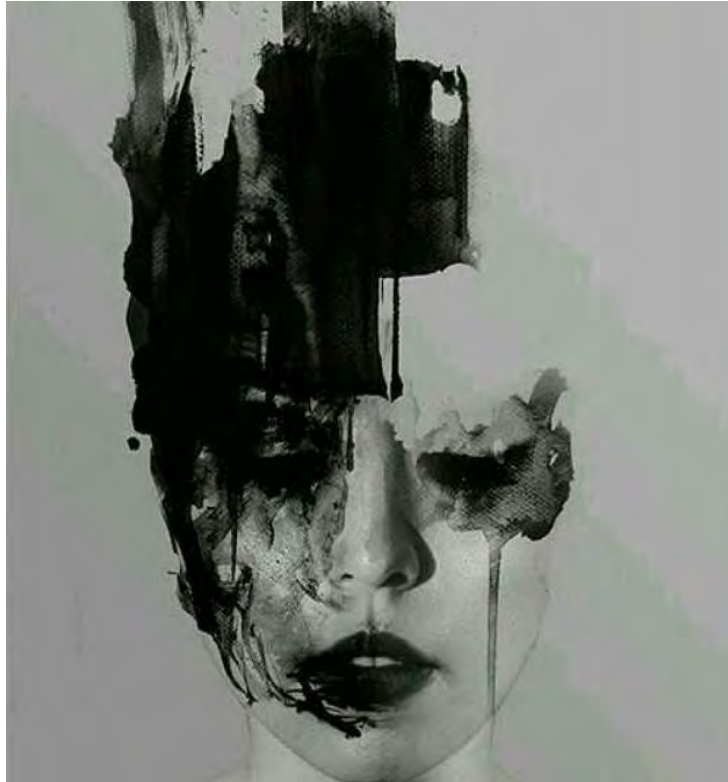
WINTER MORNING...

In the foggy, hazy cold winter morning,
My heart feeling the warmth of your arms entwining
Around my pale white skin,
Warm thoughts racing within,
The dew still alive
In the soft, mellow sunlight,
Smoking mugs of coffee
Finished warming our hands, now sit in a corner softly
Watching us keenly,
As we keep aside the shawl, that sits now lonely,

The winter sun, the bare branches, in our warmth basking,
The frozen snow too lights up, gleaming and shining,
We sit huddled, soaking in the tranquil, placid calmness,
Listening to the windy melodies without any disturbance,
Soaking in the leisurely hours of the winter morn, serenely.



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.



HORROR WITHIN

(On the suicide of Sushant Singh Rajput or for that matter any person)

Who am I?

What defines me?

Who decides my worth?

It's me and the world

A me within me

and one that faces the world

My inward me looks on the outside

Ambience outside shapes the contours of the me outwards

The inside me comforts motivates

The outside again realigns

But sometimes the inside me cries, sobs, lonely, silently

The outside me still smiles...

The world goes on at its pace, unnoticed, unconcerned

The inner me becomes dark, sucks as a blackhole

The outside me stifles, desperate for help

Tries to reach out but fails....

Before anyone abides the whole being succumbs

To the untended unheard hollows within

The horrors of the dark!!!



Madhu Sriwastav: She is an academic, poet, translator, reviewer, critic. She has published her creative works in several National and International Journals and anthologies such as Setu, GloMag, OPA, Teesta Review, Borderless Journal, Amravati Prism, The Vase etc. She is a performing poet and has been reading at various poetry festivals, National and International across the country. Her debut book of poems is *Trips Climbs Circles*.



SELF-METAPHOR

What an OCD driven girl?

Washes her hands a hundred times

Yet trusts her mum's fingers

To feed her favourite Kaju Katli*

Constantly checks upon safety and

Ritualises before taking every step

Serene as a mountain wind and
Yet at times beats up the fury of winds

If one dares to objectify her or
Calls her out bad names then
This Ruby gilded sword of a lady
This Pearl hearted woman

Flares up like fire. Her scattered hair
Resembling the branches of Keekar*
Or the fury of a warrior Princess
Waging a war on demons

But in times other than this
She, a maiden wearing ivory
Sits by the lake, flowing tears
Aching over one thing or the other

And in the process marks slits

Over the garden of her heart

From which springs out

A fountain of eternal mercy

**Kaju katli: a kind of sweet made of cashews*

***Keekar: Acacia tree*



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



OBSESSED...

When I write

Write spontaneously

Thoughts and feelings

Come like cluster of dark clouds

Words keep on following

Uninterrupted, deep showers

I control them

Craft them, carve in shape

Amazing consequences

Evolves, sensitive poem

For amusement, or
For the message, sent
Most of the times, it's said,
Poetry is the reflection of poet's persona
It becomes the voice of the poet
Which shouts his perception, aloud
When the poem and poet's mind
Become one,
Best mingling, best messaging
Readers should read between the lines
To relish actual taste and spice...



Manjula Asthana Mahanti: I am a poet, novelist, writer, and translator, residing in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. I work as editor with aabs publication. I have contributed to various national & international anthologies, emagazines, OPA, etc. I have also published (novel 1, poetry collections 2, gazal sangrah 1, 'Abhishap Damini Ka' novel (translation), and translated many poems). I have received Shabd Sadhak & Kavi PantSmruti Sahitya Samman.



BROKEN PEOPLE

Irritating are his shouts, his constant nagging talks!

Selfish his motives and his stingy moves, he's never supportive!

Blame it on those childhood slaps, often isolated in hunger and thirst!

He grew up broken, now mistaken!

Cold is her demeanour, icy is the look,

Devoid of emotions, never getting shook!

Accustomed to loneliness, engulfed by sadness!

She practiced what she saw,

Empty is her canvas, nothing to draw!

She grew up broken, now mistaken!



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!



TREES

Trees as tall as five stories
stare at me like
slightly offended priests.
Nature's mobiles,
like extra glamorous women,
their torso and limbs exuding
harmonious riffs adding
to untimed symphonies.
On a windless morning,
their quiet repose seems

more a readiness than fatigue.

A perpetual delight.



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.



there are still unfinished emotions
and darkness that persists over

the bend of the smile
the confusing layover

the sunset hiding its own sun.

the lungs can't breathe
and the heart no more feels

the tears all dried up
as the feeling conceals

yet, in the dark light
nothing
really
matters.



Mehak Gupta Grover: She is the author of three books - THE HUMANE QUEST (volume-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.

(mehakgrover@amartex.com)



DON'T BE SURPRISED

I looked up to you
With trust and hope
Gave my heart and soul
For this beautiful love
As you started to drift away
I prepared myself
Convincing my mind
To stay strong and happy

Overcome the pain and sorrow
The heartbreak that will follow
So don't be surprised
When I say it's all over



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



I AM THE DUSTMAN, CLUTTER COLLECTOR

Surreptitiously

I am the dustman.

I am this lazy spirit

roaming, living within you

weaving around your mind,

vulture consuming cleaning

thoughts, space, your slender body.

I feel it all day,

this night alone.

I am your street sweeper,

garbage collector of thought the alternator

village dweller, walkway partner.

I am key door holder to entrance
man, to Summit house.

For years of abuse, I am dust eater.

I hang high outside on lampposts,
edged inside on top wall pictures.

I dim your lights yellow inside out,
ghost inspector.

Inside I roll the house over.

I am a damp cloth, Mr. Clean,

I smooth over, clutter-free,

tick-tock clocks, books,

antique silverware,

pristine future furniture pieces

solid state advances

fragment mistakes etched in mind.

Investigations exacerbate our relationship

unhinged. My snaking gets me kicked out.

I still remember those piled up old newspapers,
future books, scattered across your
living room floor.

Shake me, scrape out a new home,
cheaper, exasperated.

I am the dustman; dustpan shakes out.



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



YEARNING FOR THE GREEN FIELDS

Yearning for the green fields

"When someone asks you your favorite sport, And you answer Baseball in a blink, There are certain qualities you must possess, And you're more attached than you think." - Jack Buck

In winter when frost covers up

Everything under silvery white gown

When only white remains as boring monochrome

I yearn for green fields,

And those shots going over the field

As if catching the whiff of air
Floating like specks of cotton coloured dreams,

And then suddenly, like an epiphany,
I rise up from monochromatic season of life.



Moinak Dutta: I am a poet and novelist, residing at Kolkata. I work as a teacher. I have contributed to various national and international anthologies. I have got two published fictions to my credit. My third fiction will be published soon. I have worked as editor of several anthologies.



Where the flowers chose to bloom and
The river chose to flow
There I made a wish and
Let the candles glow.

Where the lovers kissed
Their last goodbyes and
chose to never meet,
Where they buried
All their dreams
Folded pretty neat,

There I've sung the lonely song
And treasured the glittery tears,
As I've always known they'd live
Through all the worldly fears.

I've loved the fallen
To make them rise
Again and embrace life.
Here I tried hard to cut
The norms with a blunt knife.

Where there were shades of red
There I found my heart,
Sadder than the weeping willow
On the laughing dirt.

But again, I took care of it
And made it safe and strong.

A mended heart with a fierce love

Can never choose the wrong!



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



HAPPY FATHERS' DAY

(Dedicated To All Fathers)

My father, my teacher

My guard, my vanguard

My guardian, my custodian

My historian, my librarian

My director, my mentor

My hero, my mirror

My model, my citadel
Happy Fathers' Day, Dad.

Real, raw, natural
Brave, bold, bright
Humble, honest, hopeful
Sane, sound, strong
Blessed, gifted, talented
Disciplined, soldier, survivor
Tested and trusted,
Happy Fathers' Day, Dad

We rejoice with our Fathers
May God settle all matters,
Happy Fathers' Day!



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.



EVENING TUNE...!

Propelled by the moaning clouds,
A tempting canvas outside the window,
Seducing my eyes to draw the evening,
And so I perched a few fallen pearls,
On the mystic shoreline of my eyelids,
Pulses on the rise in my tiny planet now...!

Sudden groans of thunders...!

As if,

Breath of your dreams clashed in mine,

And thus,

distorted the imitated evening.

Shaking in emotions; shedding thoughts,

I paint my heart beats breaking all the rules,

And then a rebellious smile brushes,

swollen skyline in crimson hue,

Now a living sunset in the rainy canvas falls due!

Like the first youth, the tender clouds whisper at times

Proposing my colour to blend into love and hope.

Pave the way for unleashing the trapped verses,

heavenly cascade now overriding all mountains,

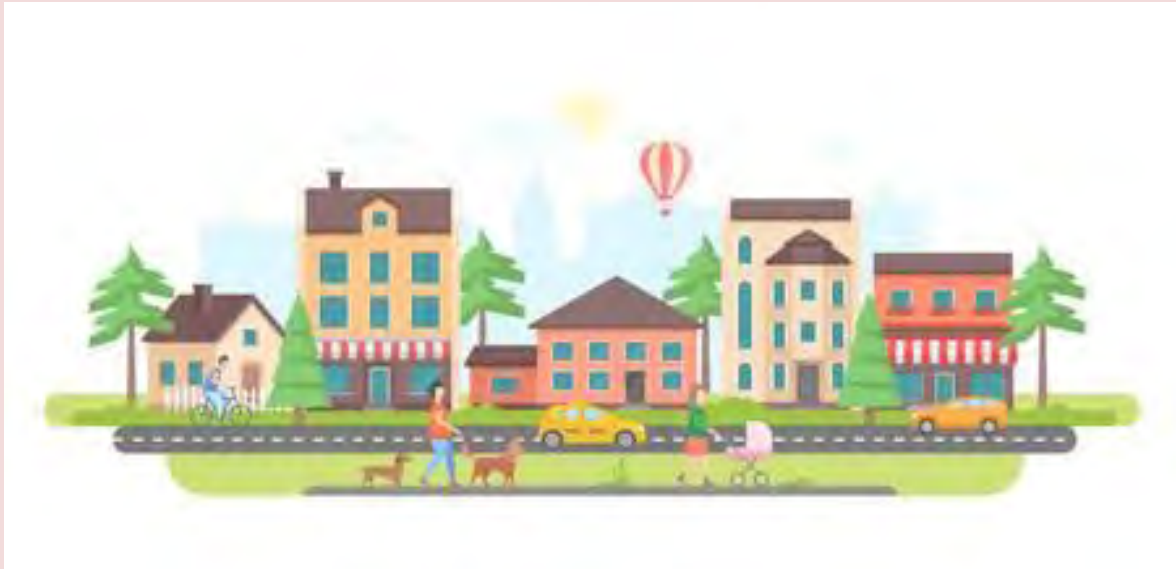
Dashing towards the lake already emptied its chest
Shedding tears of joy to adorn the evening,
A rainy canvas portraying some bare feelings.

Like a temptress, flirting with all colours,
The rainy evening takes my poem in its arms.

The rainbow route to the realm of pearly drops...!
Take of a sojourn in my words,
Now I bid farewell to the trembling sky,
As my window welcome the melting dark outside.



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 GRANDEST STAGE OF THEM ALL!

A simple walk down the street
reveals the biggest stage of them all –
a magnificent set with actors and audience
all rolled into one.

This is the place where

strangers become friends and acquaintances
become partners

enemies quarrel and lovers unite

battles are fought and wars are won

thievery abounds and justice is served

congress is held and riots are quelled
accidents happen and lives are saved.

This fleeting glimpse of the smorgasbord
that is human life at its truest
is the greatest stage set of them all,
capturing reactions and emotions
and the million immeasurable facets of humankind.



Nivedita Karthik: I am a poet residing in Gurgaon, Haryana, India. I work as a freelance reviewer. I am an accomplished Bharatanatyam dancer, and my ramblings on subjects that catch my fancy can be found on my blog “justrandomwithnk.com” and on my YouTube channel Just random with NK. I have been previously published in Glomag, Visual Verse, Eskimo Pie, Society of Classical Poets and Epoch Times.



THE WHISPERS OF DAWN

The cool morning breeze,
whispers secrets of life
as the sun glimmers, ever so
slightly on the pale blue horizon

Two worlds touch at this divine time,
the time to pray and to wish
For at this divine balance of time
The whispers of the breeze carry
forth our prayers for a better day.

A glorious dawn and grace pours
down on earth as the sun begins
his golden ascent and birds chirp
in celebration of answered prayers.



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



MINE

what a small, strange,
selfish yet comforting word.
it feels like a person
sitting alone inside a room
with a large window
within my heart

waiting, waiting, waiting
alone, happy maybe...
in the morning light.

i keep one called 'mine' thus
for the comfort of knowing
i am not alone
i have a person to turn to
when i crave company
or many other such things
and feelings

waiting causes restlessness
a willing heart turns sour thus.
so i leave open
the large windows and door
so if you wait at all
only if you wish to...

You are free to fly
fly, fly, fly
to wherever you please
i will not trap you
with the word, 'mine'



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.



FOR LONGEVITY

Voices of the dead I hear,
from the graves in the groves they sigh,
The eddying winds bring to my ears
their mournful pine, I can't ignore.

'Beneath the soil we lie amidst dust
yet think of our children in great fear
sitting long at the desk you do pledge
precious lives for unreal gains.

Lend us an ear for a moment to stay fit
till you get the last summons doled out.

Walk for an hour through the greens a day
The woods are calling you for a pleasant stroll
with bird songs, winds' whine and splashing waters.
Moon or mist, go with your plans
with an affable talk to brace the bonds
and know, pleasing smiles shrink the miles,
which you will relish in your twilight years.
Don't forget to laugh till your belly aches
and grasp a sound sleep, no junks.

To swallow your day's chills and ills,
what else we can do, except to pray,
for your life shouldn't end up fast.
We don't crave for your company ahead of times.



Pankajam: Pankajam, retired from BHEL as DM/Finance, is a bilingual poet and novelist settled at Chennai, India. In addition to several poems, book reviews, and articles published in national and international journals, she has twenty-two books to her credit, including thirteen books of poems, a translated poetry collection in French and three fictions in English. Three books on literary criticism, viz., *Femininity Poetic Endeavours*, *History of Contemporary Indian English Poetry-An Appraisal and Socio-Cultural Transition in Modern Indian English Writing & Translation* discuss her works in detail. She has won many awards for poems and short stories including Rock Pebbles National Literary Award 2019.



(Nuremberg Chronicle)

FATHER OF WRITTEN POETRY

We write poems almost every day.

Writing we take for granted, it is the easiest way.

Aeons and aeons ago it was not so.

Writing was unheard of; oral tradition was on the go.

The Grecian philosopher poet brought written tradition to
the fore.

Human expression in written form found a door.

Homer, the father of written poetry.

Ushered in written tradition and oral tradition became
history.

His epics the Iliad and the Odyssey.

Stories of adventures and mythology.

Who can forget the legendary spear?

The one which was to the hero Achilles' so dear.

Or the Trojan Wooden horse of the tale.

Greek soldiers hidden in it made the Trojans pale.

Plato and Aristotle had sung his praises.

They applauded Homer's metre and formulaic phrases.

We got tales of heroes and their adventures as an award

From the 8th century blind bard.



Paramita Mukherjee Mullick: I am Dr. Paramita Mukherjee Mullick and I live in Mumbai. The sheer love of poetry transformed me into a poet from a scientist and educationist. I have started and am the President of the Intercultural Poetry and Performance Library (IPPL) Mumbai Chapter. I have five books to my credit and my poems have been published in more than 250 national and international journals. I am blessed to receive numerous awards including the Gold Rose from Argentina for promoting Literature and Culture. Some of my poems have been translated into 31 languages.



<https://indianexpress.com/>

There's a machine
In every rail station
Next to the Nescafe stall
Close to the dustbin
Full of garbage—
Uneaten food
Coffee cups
Newspapers
Sanitary napkins
Condoms—
With the stink of garbage

Climb on the podium of the machine
Insert a five rupee coin in the slot
Pop comes instant poem
Four lines of poetry
With a prediction for next twelve months.

Poetry that comes from blood
Can't be demanded
It's given unasked
Un solicited
It flows from my blood
It chooses where it should flow.



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



A STILLED MANNEQUIN

leaf washed up by gust
on performative shores.

Trees lose their masks,
and gloves. No longer
use protection so open

window display tall,
thin models who wear well
the cost of living, open

doors to our flotsam insides,
our efforts to sell
the right image.

Mannequins in our image,
not just hangers for clothes
but sustenance providers

for soil hardened to weather.

Goodness givers res-seed barrenness.

A gift left on the doorstep by kindness.

Trees will remask, reglove
in the Spring. We hope to lose
our masks when a cure is found.

When we take off the gloves
washed up on familiar,

to hug, warm the winter into spring.

strangers into old friends



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



A CIRCLE OF WIND

The wind blew through the trees

The trees were bending at the knees

The knees were knocking at my door

the dormouse scampered across the floor

The floor came up to meet my chin

The chin was there through too much gin

The gingerbread man came round to tea

The tea was where it ought to be

The Bee got honey from the flower

The flower opened at that hour

The hour bought on what was destined

The destined bought on howling wind

The wind blew through the trees

The trees were bending at the knees

The knees were knocking at my door

the dormouse scampered across the floor



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.



A SHELTER WAS LAID

~BALLAD OF A BIRD'S NEST

I saw, as I peeked from my window
two twigs from a nest had fallen,
two leaves from a nearby tree
withered,
just to cover up the nest

I saw, as I peeked from my window
two leaves from the nest had fallen,

two lilacs from the Bauhinia tree
fell down to protect the nest

I saw, as I peeked from my window
those lilacs from the nest had fallen,
some cotton blown away by the wind
flew down to cover up the nest

I saw, as I peeked from my window
the cotton was blown by the wind
few squirrels from another tree
squabbled, jumped and pushed some fruits,
that accurately covered the nest

I saw, as I peeked from my window
the fruits were eaten up by the birds
there was a hole in the nest
and they were again in agony!

And finally, the Mother bird was back
with fresh twigs, leaves and many material
the little birds bereft of its mother
jumped in joy and relief

Soon a new home was made
with the most precious twigs
chosen and selected by the mother bird
as they all laid down cozily,
in their newly formed nest

The mother bird now wept
tears rolled down its eyes
they were tears of thanks
they were tears of joy
they were tears of relief
to see her home alive!

A shelter was laid
few leaves had fallen
few lilacs from the Bauhinia tree
some cotton too blown by the wind
a few fruits pushed by the squirrels
until the mother bird flew back to its nest

A shelter was laid by the nature
a shelter was extended
like a miracle from heaven
a shelter was laid
a shelter was laid
just to protect the little nest.



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.



GREENER PASTURES

Disguised as hope

And most of the times, draped in cloaks of the endless
search for a greater morrow,

Entice the green, greener pastures;

Only to prove to be a mirage

Or a cunning cluster of illusionary images

By the time you struggle and run and gasp for breath

Trying to jump the fence of thorns

And brave the storms

Effortlessly ditching

Your present

Which was once a picturesque, promising pasture

For you too.



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.



TRUST BREACHED

My trust was breached
And support mistaken
Heart strongly throbbed
But I was wrong—
To unworthy bloke I belonged

Previous time spent together
That would enliven life
Was dumped into oblivion

And you walked away
Strutting with pride.

Reality has dawned on me
It has taught me well
How to take the rough with the smooth
So, no more frail or fragile
But stronger than ever before.

Remember, time spares none
The truth will out soon
Your pride will collapse in agony
Remorse will sweep you away
But it will be too late.



Pragya Sharma: I'm a student pursuing B-tech in Computer Science in Delhi. I completed my schooling in my hometown, Muzaffarnagar (U.P.). I spend most of my time writing poems and prose and reading books and novels. I'm a strong believer in the laws of nature.



THE BONE GARDEN

The bone garden is boneless these days

The fire of pyre has engulfed all the bones, reducing the garden to ashes.

No trace of limbs, palms, veins, blood

Even the garden has stopped breathing!

Only the memory of a garden all that I have,

MAYA, the garden appears to be,

Illusion merely life is.

Only a shadow guards the corn of words like a scarecrow.

Imagination, poetry all dead

No birds, no wings, only a Shadow hovers around the
skyless earth!

Only the rising Sun once you have captured through the
lens in your bicycle's basket is alive.

The 'Igloo' houses your soul, only the body has left for the
heavenly abode by the sledge.

The garden is boneless

The hall of indraprasta hotel is empty

Only two chairs, a table, two glasses and four walls are
visible to naked eyes,

Silence talking to silences.

I am searching for your head always held high, knowing
fully well that by now you are headless boneless, bodiless

All that I could see your cap hung against the wall of time.

(The poem is dedicated to story teller, Sarala awardee, Mr. Manoj Kumar panda of Odisha, who passed away on July 9, 2020. He has two translated (from Odia to English) story books to his credit, 'The Bone Garden And Other Stories' and 'One Thousand Days In A Refrigerator.' 'The Bone Garden And Other Stories' was in nomination list for Frank O' Connor international Short Story award, Ireland)



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



GOOD HABITS

Habits make us or break us!

Good habits make our routine lives bearable,

We unconsciously, mechanically,

go through our daily ablutions, with ease,

Being creatures of habit brings a certain comfort level in our day-to-day drudgery of staying alive!

The problem starts when we develop bad habits,

When we are obsessed with them, our whole lives revolve around them,

To the exclusion of everything else,

Smoking, drinking or gambling are family devastating habits,

The world wide Covid 19 scare is a great leveller,

We have to unlearn our casual attitude towards public and private cleanliness,

We need to curb mindless partying on weekends,

Gallivanting around recklessly, aimlessly,

Better to be careful,

Never know, when our lives will get snuffed out,

Let us be mindful of our social duties,

That just may save us from unexpected tragedies and heartaches.



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



MEN IN DISGUISE

On the surface I smile
look poised and charming
inside I am suffering
with pain and agony.

Behind my polished mask
hide in a web of lies
woven around myself
build a decorated prison

with flowers and leaves
so safe in that home
look beautiful to you.

Want to be real
now I cry aloud
let the tears flow
wash away my mask.

Though not charming
as I was before
Now I am relaxed
become authentic & real.



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.



THE RAGE OF THE NIGHT

The sky was murky and a thin drizzle was falling

By the side of the river

The kans flowers were blooming with grace

But, suddenly everything seemed to be blurred

I , with desolate eyes,

Stood in my back yard

Confronting my soliloquy silently.

Then I heard a thunder voice whispering

Came towards me from the distant valley

I was in quite darkness about the hailstorm

Which was coming like a tsunami

And deusted my tiny balcony all in a sudden
Nor had I found to defend myself
Somehow I got a place to hide
From the rage of the ruthless storm.



Preety Bora: Hailing from a beautiful state 'Assam' (India), the poetess, Mrs Preety Bora started writing from her college days. She lives in a city called 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.



AMITABHA

It is long since I have seen her, not so long since she stopped being a part of quotidian memory. Yet yesterday, she welled up from the deep recesses of my mind, her face frozen in the time I knew her - big eyes filled with the wonder of science, Iyengar nose and attitude, and the smile that would vanquish me were I to see her again. In all probability I will not;

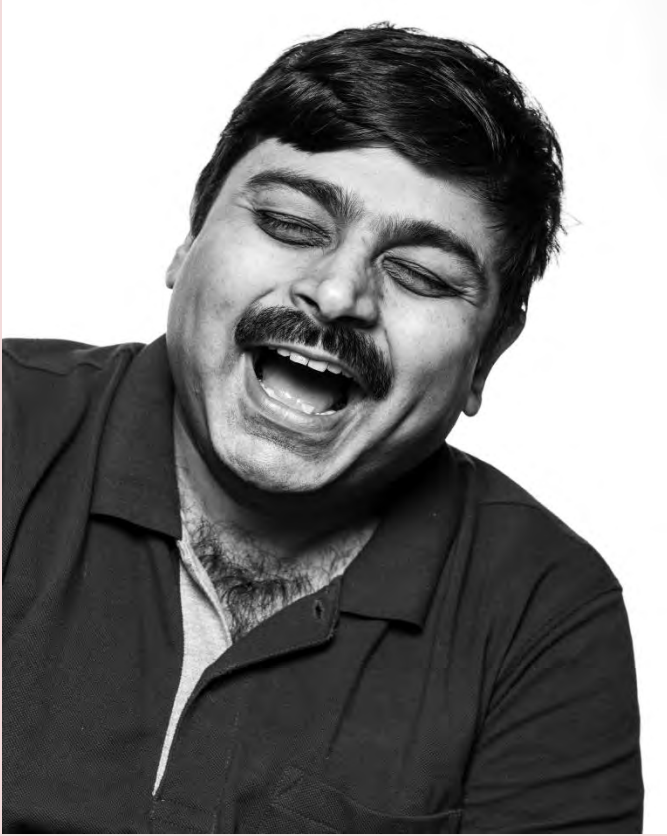
our worlds having diverged so far. And yet she appeared in a morning dream, and they say morning dreams come true...

the way I

put myself through hoops

for that tail wag

Note: Amitabha is the Buddha of infinite love. The attached picture is of an Amitabha statue from Tokyo National Museum.



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.



THOUGHT OF ERASING

Construction—the very word itself
is longer than image, toil and sweat
going into the mind-set of those involved
be it artisan, mason, poet or architect;

how much of planning and project
into the outline, inviting word and images
fix and decorate into the auditorium
draw and paint dipping into acrylic

with brushes of deft strokes every where
selected, touch and smell the paint;
ready for scaffolding, write and draft;
all for records, posterity and content;

but a sudden hand of blunt and mad
rush embarks upon erasing, rubbing,
not for progress, but for erasure
to destroy from page, image, history;

woe to the hand plunges upon erasure
woe to the mind plotting to blot and remove
those that require consolidation and construction.
woe to the very concept of erasure.



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

pearlradfhe.wordpressf.com



I'M AN HONOURABLE MAN

For all practical purpose I am an honourable man.

No, really, I am, and it's a plain statement.

Not that I can prove it on paper, but it's true.

Not that there is an objective test like the one for IQ.

There is no case against me in any court of law (yet),

So, I assert that I am an honourable man.

So what if I stalk my facebook friends' walls sometimes

To see whether I find a mention in their posts.

So what if I go to read their blog posts sometimes and
search

For a line, even a phrase in a poem, or a sentence in prose
pieces

That mentions me, even if in irony.

Does it make me any less honourable? Does it?

Even if it did, I'd still go looking there,

And I'd still find nothing there.

Do my friends come and check my pages and posts?

Even if they did, they'd find nothing about them there.

I write only about myself, not about them.

For I am an honourable man.



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>.



SLEAZE

Morning new

Refreshed view

Closed words

Sees light

Mundane autumn

Springs flight,

Mingling hearts

Hidden fright

Clobbered love

First sight,

Fantasy galore

Future tread

Thorny pleasure

Rose bed,

Fragrant eyes

Silky mane

Yours me

Mind insane,

Dreamy slumber

Evenings freeze

Forever us

Hypocritical sleaze...



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



Any fake news spread like a jungle fire,
But this time jungles itself are on fire;
From Brazil to Australia, forest
Are burning freely and steadily at its worst;

In Australia, bushes were burning for considerable time,
Where millions of birds and animals have died;
While in Brazil, lush green deciduous forests,
Have vanished magically from our sight;
Flora and fauna became extinct overnight,
Where they were flourishing with grace and might;

Only we are responsible for such jungle fire,
Our greed has surpassed all the limits;
These forests and bushes act as a sink to
Poisonous gases, we have forgotten for long time;
Flora adorns the beautiful earth, while
The forests are the fauna's natural habitat.



Rakesh Chandra: Mr. Rakesh Chandra 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 News Papers' literary supplements. He also has authored two books on Law.



THE COVID MARTYR

Carrying their world on their backs,
Their universe clasped in their hands,
Tied to the yoke of despair
They trudge to far away lands.

They are the 'nowhere' people
Worth only a click,
For the political scavengers
Just a statistic.

Hunger and fatigue they can live with
It is the absence of hope that is killing,
The mind and the body they can leash
It is the crunching of the soul that is stifling.

They left their meager shelters
To stitch together a tomorrow,
Happy with a slice of joy
Ensnared in shards of sorrow.

At the first scent of a crisis
They became the first casualty,
Abandoned like breathing carcasses
By a cruel, callous society.

As some are mauled beneath wheels
Crushed on railway tracks

No one is there to mourn
For these lumps of flesh and bone.

Can each of us become a crusader,
An empathetic warrior
For the Migrant Worker.
For the Covid Martyr



Ramendra Kumar: Ramen is a writer by passion and a narcissist by obsession. He has 27 books to his name, almost as many awards and translations into several Indian and foreign languages. A popular story teller and mentor he is working as Chief of Communications, Rourkela Steel Plant. He has a page devoted to him on Wikipedia and his website is www.ramendra.in



GHAZAL-7

Pains buried like dead leaves in the soil of heart become moist and germinate, I feel sometimes:

A rain of tears—porcelain drops fragile with memories innate—I feel sometimes.

A surreal moon on a dark canvas, with fact and fantasy, seems to weep;

My wistful mind, waxing and waning, finds an algorithm novate, I feel sometimes.

Dry and dewless faces of years amid cracked walls with
regrets hanging like old coats;

A sad prism with secret sorrows into spectrum infinite, I
feel sometimes.

The mysterious ambiguity of the smoking blueness puzzles
my soul;

Like a fish swimming in the ocean of emotions intricate, I
feel sometimes.

When sadness melts, I love the tranquil solitude—better
days of my breathing life:

The air, Ranjana, with the sound of balmy birdsong
resonate, I feel sometimes!



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



POETIC DRIZZLE

WONDER

Sunlight

is exceptionally jubilant

When it rains!

STRUGGLE

A beggar

tries to sort out

stale food

from staler ones!

EXPECTATION

A job seeker

hoping phone call just received

by interviewer is

not to short list someone else!

LONGING

A starved farmer

looking skyward

and earthward

by turns!

WAVE

Start of a

seamless movement

getting viral...

CONTRADICTION

Sweeping your compound
to make it clean
dumping the debris
in neighbour's gate...



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



THE GIRL NEXT DOOR: A POEM

Maayi re! Who are you
And why am I detained
Chappals, did you ask
Oh, barefoot is tradition
No, not penury
Not in the least
Yeah, I have got trinklets
Don't they look gorgeous

A feast for ears too
Of course I attend school
Abhaya Sundari is near
What have I learnt so far
Ah! I don't remember
You showcase your phone
May I have one too
You say I am too young
You don't look much older either
Which class 9th or 10th
As if I care
Pause
Laughs
Ta-ta ta-ta
Mother needs me
Tata!



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



PARADISE

walking away from the garden
the path becomes the actual destination-
we are exultant wherever we have reached.

answers are not sought-
the mere ringing silence of sounds
is all that is needed to hear.

for here along this garden path,
I conduct the unbroken ensemble of
longing for the extremes of Love.

how foolish am I
wishing for unachievable.

for the promise to unveil beauty
or others' wrongdoing becomes irrelevant-
I must strive for something unbearable to test my fortitude.

we are here but for a few moments,
a gust of wind,
and like the morning star
we will fade,
then vanish.

let others dwell in their paradise-
I choose to be face to face with you.



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



Image designed by: www.imikimi.com

— with Phyllis Banberger.

BURNING THOUGHTS

In my thoughts I drift away
To a warm summer night
On a tropical island
Just you and me
Your name written in
The sand yet it comes
As no surprise for

You are the woman
Who invades my dreams!

Inscriptions of imagination
Unrestrained passion
Now within reach with
Burning desires fulfilled
Bringing my spirit back
To life once again as I
Turn around to find
You really there!

A gift of gold came
To join my life as
By some magical
Wonder you appeared
The receiver of my adoration
As you whispered in my ear

I've been here waiting

For you all this time!



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!



\$45 DOLLARS OFF

She says

she got a coupon

for \$45 dollars off

from *Hello Fresh*

and *Good Food*.

I ask her how much it costs

and she says it was \$36.

So they owe us money?

I ask.

I'm not good at math,

*but it sounds like we have a couple bucks
coming back our way.*

Always good in difficult times.

No!

she laughs.

So how much does it actually cost?

\$36/month,

say admits.

For three months.

Then I have the truth.

Walk back upstairs to write
about it.

So you can know what I know.

Be in the loop as the two piece
professionals say.



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



THE FOOLISH CROW

“How nicely you sing”

The clever fox told

Seeing a crow with a piece of meat

In his mouth to hold.

“How sweet is your voice,”

He again said,

“Sweeter than the cuckoo”

“Lovely to hear,” he added

And he pleaded

“Sing a song dear crow”

As the crow’s heart melted

And he tried to sing

The meat fell down below.



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.



<http://ww25.imgarcade.com/>

REMINISCENCE

The wet evening is in its last breath

My dear, sit beside and watch

The blood stains splashed out from

The darkened rainy clouds

The wet evening is in its last breath

My dear, let us sit together for
Some time in this evening
To witness the magic of nature,
To see dragging back of the unseen thread,
To swear on the fall of night

Beloved, be close to me,
Thought, now it is not allowed to be,
But it is quite long, since last time we
Have spent lovely moments...
And let me catch up the old memories
Those are shivering afar from
The bluish curtain of moonlight

Hey, darling...

I could feel your moist eyes
Pain of losses may last for years

But glow of gains would stay only
For a short span of time

Hey, now it is drizzling outside
Blows of a cold wind gives
A soothing effect in this balcony
Let us together pick up some
Scattered memories of joys



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



HEADING YET AGAIN

HEADING yet again

towards a mystical journey,

Yet to fathom out

the gaping abyss of loneliness

As teetering between tears and dolour—

Even on the brink of exhaustion.

Hope still penetrates but lingers on
So I haven't my nerves lost
To restore an easy-going peace in life
Thereby, chasing the patience only,
And surging to soften
the each corner of heart

In one way or the other
Still waiting for the day—
that somewhere, something
Will help me turn over a new leaf!



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



NEW REALITIES

The troubled times we live in now,
The world is seemingly stuck in a slough,
And we know not how long this will last,
Even so, all say that this too shall pass;
But will it really, though?

They say school might reopen soon,
And for once, it may be quite a boon!
For we shall meet our friends again,

Play in the sun, dance in the rain;

But will we really, though?

Ma used to say, "Go out and play!"

And now she says, "In you shall stay!"

And it is ironical, is it not?

Well I guess I'll just sit with my own thoughts;

But can I really, though?

Well at least now I can prepare,

For the pressure inching nearer,

And for all I know, my exams might

Be written in my room, sunny and bright;

But can I do it, though?

We know not what will come next,

So we pray, and to God we leave the rest,

And next year, this might be history,

And the world will continue with its story;
But will it really, though?



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



LOST INNOCENCE

Beyond the horizon, the sun bled its crimson hues, rimming over the lush green hills and slopes. The road back home was a lonely, deserted one, cut through valleys and undulating terrain. She made her way back from the din and bustle of city life into this far flung village, nestled in the depths of the valley.

Evening was descending like waves calmly sliding over wet golden sands. She hurried on, as fast as her tiny legs could carry her fragile frame, humming softly to herself; a small smile on her face.

Balanced between her right hand and slender waist was an old wicker basket.

colours of the rainbow

in hues of sepia

unheard melodies

The lights disappeared into the distance as darkness engulfed the surroundings. Following the muddy path by the stream, she knocked at a tiny stand-alone hut, awaiting with bated breath. Someone came to the door with an oil lamp. As a pair of eyes glared at her, and the unsold clay toys in the basket, her face fell. She handed out a few rupee notes she had earned from the toys she managed to sell at the city market. These days, children no longer wanted these colourful clay figures, now that more exotic things were available. But who would understand little Naina's woes? Not enough money meant she had to go to the Sahib's house that night.

Weary little feet made their way through the clump of trees towards the concrete house at the far end of the village. The fragrance of jasmines and magnolias now sent a shiver down her spine, suffocating her.

A few tears slid down her now pallid cheeks, the smile and humming tune long since engulfed by the silent night.

still waters

beneath a muffled scream

blood splattered sheets



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



PEACE

If you do not find me
On these stairs waiting for you
Do not worry nor blame me
As I already have bade my life adieu.
I crossed the miles crossed the seas
Have seen the heaven and the abyss.
With bleeding feet and sore knees
I walked miles and miles in search of peace.
But found none, tired I, sat before his feet.
Did not know how to behave or how to greet!

The king of all kings was sitting before my eyes!
How should I pray? I am not wise.
In tearful eyes I joined my palms,
Surrendering my soul as I chanted, "om mani Padme hum"
He opened his eyes, smiled in bliss.
And finally I regained my lost peace.



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



pic by Dr. Santosh Bakaya

VAULTING AMBITION

The concrete monstrosities bloated by their vaulting ambition

try to prove their superiority over nature,

by untiringly going higher, still higher, trying to touch the clouds.

The grey clouds floating in the sky rumble their dissent, aloud.

Careworn and bedraggled laborers scurry for cover
as the indignant clouds hovering overhead
rumble in stentorian wrath, frothing at their wispy mouths.

The laborers stumble towards the safety of shady trees;
the concrete houses that they had built will not offer them
shelter.

So they race helter -skelter as the rain pelts down on their
unprotected heads.

Incarcerated in their flats, with their dogs and cats,
red-eyed humans watch from inside their concrete cages,
petrified, turned to stone, raging against the looming
unknown.



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



THE POETIC STORY OF THE UNFRIENDLY TREE

Once there was a big beautiful tree

He was the epitome of vanity

He said I am so beautiful I am so strong

look at my branches sturdy and long

He shoed away Eagles who made it their home

I am strong I am proud I am mighty I'm alone

He shook violently when a Monkey came

and said I should not catch you on my branches again

He shoed a birds who wanted to sing

He said get lost you're bird I want to do my thing

No animal is worthy to come near me
I am such a big and beautiful tree
For many days he stood alone high and mighty
One day came the termites and attack the tree
Hey I am not dead, I am a living tree
But you're as good as, friendless and lonely
The tree cried, "Help help, woe is me!"
All the animals said his end is acceptable to me! "
But then the kind-hearted beings called the woodpecker
Who ate the termites and the tree felt better.
As the animals were about to leave
The tree on his rude behaviour began to grieve.
He begged forgiveness from his mates
And his new friends, he embraced.



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.



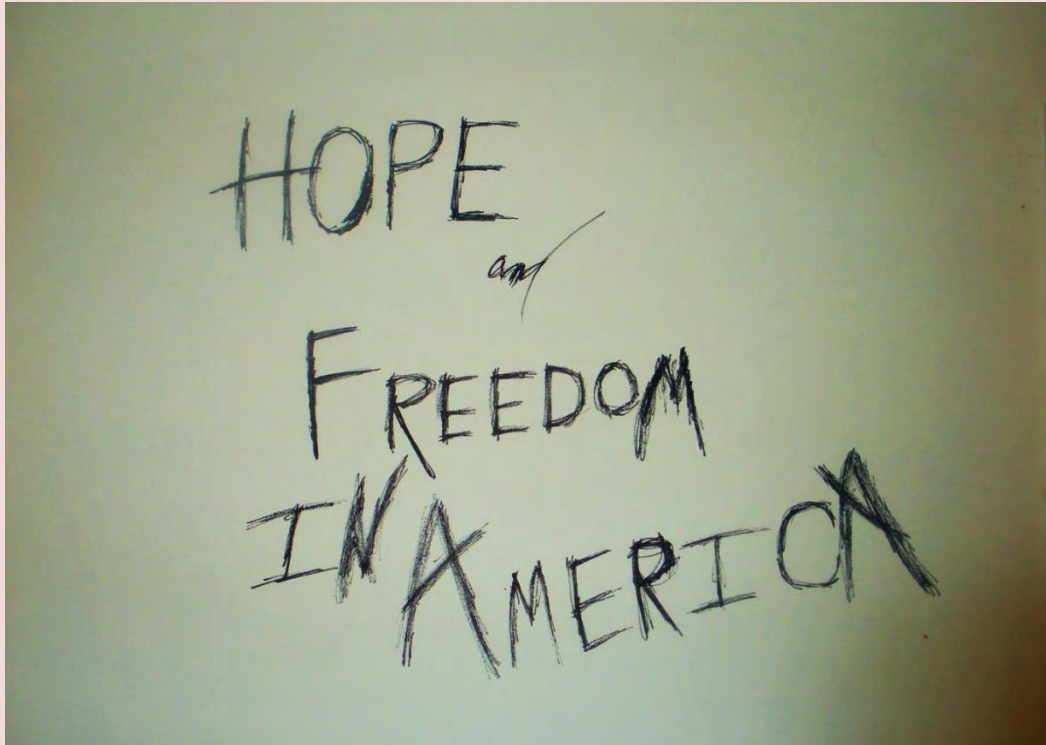
ETERNAL LOVE

I see the flowers blooming
In your eyes, a vast ocean full of love
I hear the beat of my heart
Getting faster n faster
The ripples created by your
Soft look making me weak
In my body n mind
The touch of your tender palm
a feather so soft n sweet
Your arched eyebrows

Questioning my love
Why waste your time my dear
You know my feelings for sure
for years, and years to come
The moon may wane
The stars may hide
behind the clouds
but my love for you
will ever shine
like the morning sun
and the sunflowers in bloom
This a never-ending love
an eternal love
beyond compare
beyond time and space
Let this soul to soul talk
Never end
A beautiful and divine love



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.



MASQUERADE

How many viruses sour your verses

secret vowels, corrupted vials

spent coding

firewall

breached

This is not the God you promised

nor the war I begged

but all in all

Lordamercy

it's still a beautiful

age

to be alive



Scott Thomas Outlar: He lives and writes in the suburbs outside of Atlanta, Georgia, USA. His work has been nominated for the Pushcart Prize and Best of the Net.

Selections of his poetry have been translated into Afrikaans, Albanian, Bengali, Dutch, French, Italian, Kurdish, Persian, Serbian, and Spanish. His sixth book, *Of Sand and Sugar*, was released in 2019 through Cyberwit Press. He hosts a podcast, *Songs of Selah*, that airs weekly on 17Numa Radio and features interviews with contemporary poets, artists, musicians, and health advocates. More about Outlar's work can be found at 17Numa.com.



If only I could cup the laughter
In the sun lit upturned faces
Of buttercups proliferating the meadows
Heavenly landscapes you painted for me
Holding your mischievous grin in my palm
Winking a thousand ways to sin
If only I were free to canter
wild in the steppe a frisky filly
Keeping the pace that you set
As you raced me down the drunk slopes
Of rolling meadows toasting the high spring
in the shadow of icy peaks

These emerald meadows draped their best
The wind high and boisterous
Pushing scandalous stunts of marvel
With knee high grass to tickle her soft underbelly
A thrill that kicks up a quite storm
To the bottom plummets her belly
As the sky rings with carefree laughter
When an unexpected brush of a whispered 'hello baby'
Caresses my cochlear heart tender



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.



SHINING RAY OF HOPE

A beautiful light passing through
Seemingly unreal in its form
Was there a thread as is the norm
Beauty and perfection striking as if in a form

Can the poet see what is absconding
As if in a vast expanse ever expanding
A ring of life and uncertainty

Threads of gold and silver
Intermingling like life
On the very threshold of timelessness
Beauteousness seeping through
In its salubriousness

Can there be a variation
Of life and soulfulness
Throughout the entire cavalcade
Of emotions and feelings
Hanging on a vein
Of purity and thoughtfulness



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.



IN VERSE FARM...

The magpie is a magguy,
scouring the sky for pie.

In case he spies a shiny thing,
he'll wing down in a zing!

This kitten's bitten all my toes,
I can't go out tonight.

For kith 'n' kin and all my foes,
my feet are such a sight!

I had a mongoose for a pet,
then tuegoose, wedgoose and the lot.
That's the way my week is set;
more goosebumps than I thought!

My dogs don't dig my doggerels
of beasts and birds and cockerels.
"Don't sell," they growl, "your little verse
for bread, for butter or for purse!"



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

www.shreevarma.com

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



MY MOTHER-10

When you look at me a thousand sorrows

Dissolve in the ocean of bliss,

Thousands agony find salvation

When you smile a thousand problems find solutions,

When you open your lips, when you say I am with you my
son, go ahead without fear

I find nothing on my way, it is your love all the way

At your lotus feet find my tears and smile their lone asylum,
in you maa! My whole life my childhood, youth, middle age,
my sorrow and happiness

I and my life are all yours

Tell me, my mother, who will take care of your life when
you are no more?

You were not for yourself, you were for others,

Your kids and all those you loved

For them, you stretched your life bit more for which you
suffered

My maa! Who else can suffer for her kids

Except for one's mother

Maa! How beautiful was life when you and Bapa were here,
how dull and pale the world looks

When I lost you both

To have that bliss infinite one has to die and take birth once
more to have you and my father

I am prepared to die a hundred deaths. and take a hundred births, endure sufferings innumerable

To become your unworthy son again and again



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

and its intricacies. He is a featured poet of the PENTASI B World Friendship Poetry and Year of The Poet, U.S.A. His collection of poems 'A LOOK AT LIFE, SOMETHING I LOOK AT, A LOOK, THE RIVULET, THINK ONCE MORE, THE JOURNEY, AU THARE, AU EKA GAPA, SROTASWINI, JATRA, are in the press. Website: smrutiweb.wordpress.com



DITHERING

You tell me to learn
When I am so advanced
Rich with life's treasures
With lots of silver in my hair
With bits of gold in my mouth
And my brain about to close shop
Tut! Tut! The jelly lodged in the dome
Quakes in mortal fear
While new learning beckons
With spiteful leer

Trapped is the feeling
With the mind reeling
How to bell the tiger
Tame it
How to remember
What is learnt flies out of the bay window
Memory drowns in its own swan song
Learning prefers young company
(Who doesn't really?)
Agile and sprinting
Bouncing and speeding
Learning looks
Askance at the fading cells
Challenges it to rise and quell
The tenacious the tenuous
Falters yet trudges on to conquer
Those limitless bastions
Victory at last is won

Battle scarred and weary

It plonks! It sinks!

Little enjoying the fruits of its labour

With open mouthed fatigue

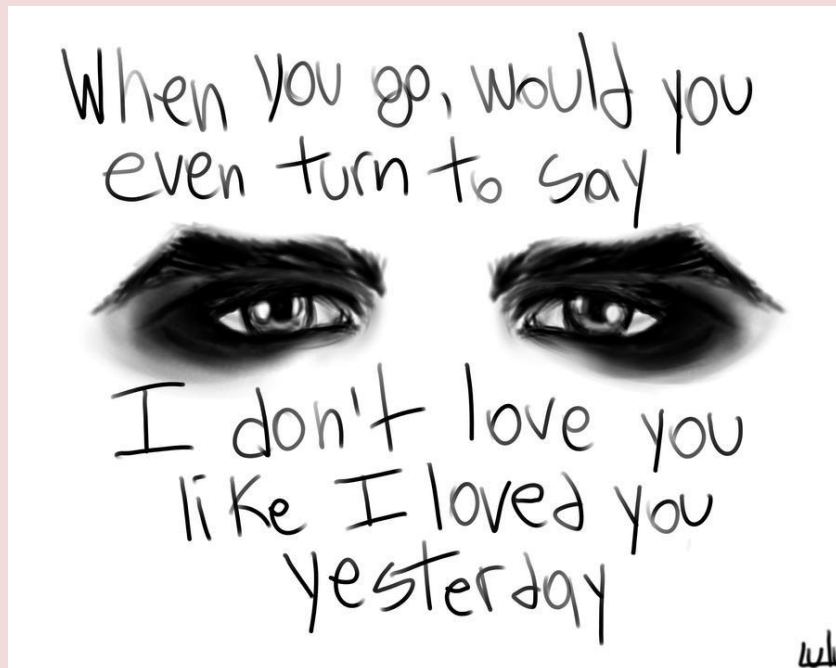
It puts its feet up

To reap a much hard earned REST!

The tired brain I said...



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



I LOVE YOU NO MORE

I love you no more

my time is rigged and wait is over

my patience is worn out, let the whole world know about

the birds the flora and fauna

the animal kingdom and human race

move ahead in circular orbs and pace

and my frenzied being remains static

like hours bunched to those walls in an archive

I need you no more
let the soothing fragrant breeze entice me and hug
the red kite up and above...
send flying kisses to assuage hurt
sparkling waters whistling willows enamour
tie in silky gossamer reverie
my body mind and core
let hues dusted from rainbows
paint fleecy fluffy clouds and glue me in love

Hug me one last time
take me in deep embrace
Under this twilight moment
let me not stand like an obsolete phrase
let us shake a leg in discreet air of elegance
as my gaze lingers on your chiselled features
let me purse my lips and take this last chance
to utter...“I love you no more”

and my moist eyes epitomise

saga of this withering romance like never before.



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



AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF AN EMBRYO

Myself an embryo

Would you like to listen my autobiography?

Then listen how sweet as well painful it is!

My parents are learned like all of you

Though they couldn't fully come out from the traditional
customs inherited by grandparents.

The presence of mine in my mom's womb

Was a remarkable incident for the whole family.

My mom was nurtured or looked after

As much as they felt the need.
I had been happier too as
Everyone in the family was waiting eagerly for my arrival.
Though sometimes I got hurt for my mom
For she got sick often for not being able to have food
Due to vomiting tendency and some other complications.
But my mom bore all these troubles in smiling face
As she would have the womanhood by conceiving me.
In this way seven months crossed
And suddenly she felt uneasiness,
Dr prescribed for ultrasound and
Accordingly it had been done
But the report stirred all because
They came to know that I was a girl embryo
Whom they don't want, then who will look after their
property and everything?
My mom objected several times but
With so many kiths and kins she was all alone
To protect the issue and then

Next day Dr arranged so many scissors and tools for the abortion,

I was cut into pieces of my hands, legs one by one,

She too couldn't tell anything then as she was made senseless by anesthesia.

Maa, don't be upset,

I must come again or the civilization will stop here,

But not to be raped and killed but

To take revenge and open the eyes of the so called civilised people.



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.



LOVING OURSELVES

Why do we put ourselves last?

After family, friends

Our parents, their parents,

In-laws and ancestors...

A smile, a pat on the head,

like a thrilled pet

we wag our tails.

Whole lifetimes spent

being the good daughter

the sacrificing mother...

Otherwise, tagged 'selfish'.

Wage parity is still a distant dream;

Worst: we don't think

we deserve equal consideration,

help when we are in pain.

We see our sisters' faults oh so clearly

But our brothers we love to pamper.

And ourselves?

Can we love ourselves first

Before we give to others?



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



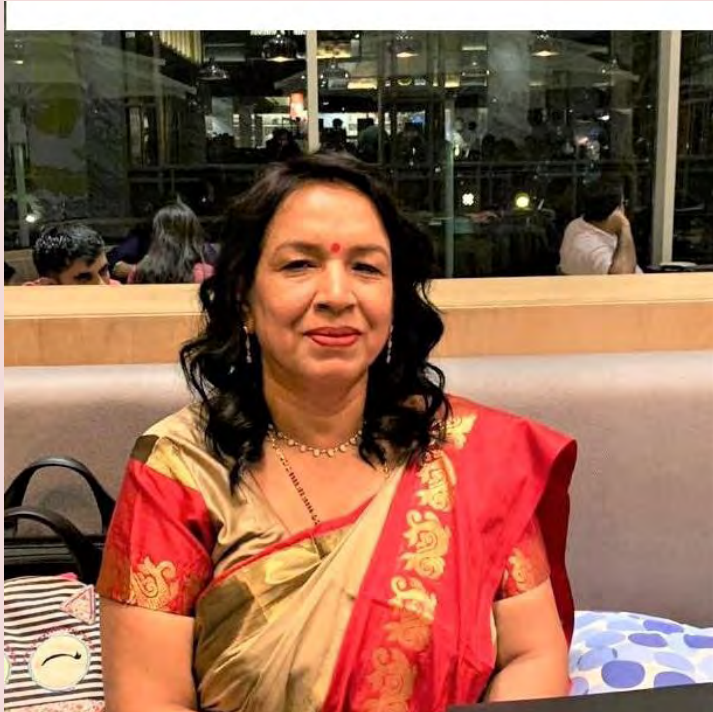
GROPING BEYOND

While groping beyond the scenes
Of mortal mayhem, panic and pain,
I stumbled, swirled behind the curtain
Of darkness and fell with a thud on you!

But I stood up with conviction
A conviction, pure and simple
That the fork on the map of our minds
May be just a juggler's trick to feign
Or the snare of a hunter to frighten!

When I sheltered under imagination
Webs of words deluged my pen and paper
When I shuffled the cards of my vision
Words floated as bubbles in the pool of my soul.

Groping beyond the shadows
Of vision, of imagination, of words
Finally I gripped the flitting reality
Of you, me, and our small world,
You shone as the star, me as the moon
Reflecting the light of your wisdom
Through my rough but cool persona!



Sumitra Mishra: Major Dr. Mrs. Sumitra Mishra is a Professor of English who retired as the Principal, Government Women's College, Sambalpur, Odisha. She has also worked as an Associate N.C.C. Officer in the Girls'

Wing. She is a life member of the Odisha Lekhika Sansad and the Sub-editor of a magazine titled “Smruti Santwona”. Her poems and short stories in both English and Odia are widely published in literary magazines and e-zines. To her credit she has twelve published books; four collections of poetry in English. She lives in Bhubaneswar with her family.



IMAGES WITHIN A DREAM

My body, a fetus bossomed in clouds
inside moist celestial soil fragrant, comforting.
I sit up, my feet growing roots that keep growing
growing, growing, rooted and wombed into darkness
each a different color. Something black, viscid, offensive
flows into layers of earth marked pain, regrets, guilt, and
others.

I feel a purging, anointing,
the body supple, throbs with vibrancy,
a flood of light above my head bathes my form.

Warm, comforting, permeating into every sulcus of the
brain

each memory cell, in heartbeats every knot of pain
untangled

toxins released, restricting beliefs drained deep into the
bowels of Earth.

I rock, float, a buoyancy lifts me

a ball of fire, energy suffusing each vein

rejuvenating every muscle, tendon, skin, and bone

each organ reconstructed. My heart, yes the heart most of
all

overflows with an abundant stream of peace, hope. joy,
light, and Love.

One with the cosmos, I grow new roots. The sun bathes my
face. I wake up Reborn.



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



REGAL FRIEND

On a power cable trembling before the wind
that plays havoc with trees and tiles of cottages and hovels
a typical feudal lord, violent power-drunk, indifferent;
Up there, on that throne—sits a lonesome Kingfisher
regal, haughty, detached from the ground zero

a visitor from the far-off heavens; a pleasing sight on this
rushed

Mumbai early morning.

a creature, tiny, vibrant, dressed in a multi-coloured coat
worn earlier

by an agile harlequin, doing acrobats in an Italian court, for
the seventeenth-century audience; the feathered guest

lightly sitting on that high perch

a stoic, silhouetted against the

immensity of a dark-grey sky, threatening rain.



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

Please visit for details:

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



SUNLIT MEADOWS

Yes, I had deserted you
or you - me
but no longer.
what a surprise,
bumping into you –
sharing moments
filled with food, laughter
our endless chatter
and the jokes –

still the same!

the teasing

the banter

how the masks cracked

melting in the sunshine

our birds - flying

our clothes - fluttering

our restless feet

running

over and over again

in the sunlit meadows -

of childhood



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.



Water color painting by suzette portes san jose

A PLACE...CALLED HOME

...of love and hope

....of peace and serenity

.....of beauty and wonders

a dwelling place in caressing fragrance of love and hope
underneath the moonlight, when eyes will never grope
in colorful wonders of hues were the flowering brightness
a light in guidance of your inner self with relentlessness

...in a wandering fantasy

.....in an ecstasy of enchantment

.....in a fascination of magic

a place of wonderland in whimsical wandering fantasy

of life's realization in an enchanted dream of ecstasy

from the world beneath the incantation of a darkened sky

a place called home found magic beyond words in a sigh



Suzette Portes San Jose: She was born and raised in Cebu City, Philippines. She was born with a passion for writing and living in her art forms. She now has joined 23 book anthologies internationally. She is also a recipient of multiple awards for her ART works and Literary works. She also founded her own Poetry Group of artists and poets writing Ekphrastic Poetry. She is also a founder of Artist Kids charity project all for free. She is also a Publisher and is now publishing her own book along with other book anthologies of her group.



FOR CRUSH

Her constrained malleability inside a sequestered abode,
Is eager to escape from the heat and pressure of the dice.
It tried to mould her; but, she has stepped on the road
In search of a crooked way, leading to her own paradise.

Her delimited bustiness confined inside her safest hearth
Is restless; as, it has been pulverised for sake of isostacy.
Her age couldn't deflate her; so, she stepped on the earth
In search of more sap from the alluvial soil like a tree.

Sometimes, relationships of life can't let her consummate.
So, she comes out for consummation; but stands alone,
And tries to decode the messages of life yet to celebrate.
But, staggers on road just to count the digits of milestone.

She can't believe that someone may wait with a paintbrush,
And may search for colours to draw the image of his crush.



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.



WINDOW OF TIME

Consider who I am...

I am the soil under your feet,

I am the roof over your head,

I am your shelter.

I am Home...

In your darkest night,
I consider your plight.
The window of time,
Changed converse to mime.

Eons ago,
In sequence we've grown.
In pieces you broke,
By thought and emote.

You took and destroyed,
My goodness employed.
Our Soul disconnect,
My sources neglect.

My soil turned to dust,

My forests to ash.

My oceans sigh,

My rivers run dry.

Your plight is too late,

My wrath in its wake.

I falter, you fall

I am the end all.

Remember my name,

Make choices, don't blame.

Through the window of time,

Choose ethics, don't mime.

Collectively shown...

I am Home.



Val Smit: I am a South African artist based in Cape Town, and I write my own ekphrastic poetry per artwork. I work as an Interior Designer and have run my own company, My Room, for 14 years. All my pieces are severely emotional and have the sole purpose to shock to realisation. I use various media in portraying images that I feel fitting to deliver the message of the words I pen down. All artworks are sketches and elements of water colour, acrylic, charcoal or pastel are used to define certain elements.



AT ARM'S LENGTH

It felt like another eon

This surely wasn't our century

Plagued by something

As evil as the bubonic

No heroes to the rescue

No masks to fall from the skies

Stay away from human touch

We were told

Just as well

We got accustomed

Adding virtual friends

Boredom in the air

That we filled

With cyber sex

Within your home

A parent who sneezed

A spouse who gasped for breath

A child with raging fever

All were enemies

Of each other

And of state

Maybe a good thing to stay
At arm's length
To avoid gathering in large numbers
God knows the world
Needed a break
From those assembling
With hate
Armed with matchsticks
Some fuel
And hand grenades



Vandana Kumar: I am a poet residing in New Delhi, India. I work as French teacher and translator. I have contributed to various anthologies. Few of my poems were recently published in 'Spillwords' and 'North of Oxford'.



ALONE

Alone is my path

Alone is my thought

Alone is my shadow

We are all totally alone

In the jungle of relations

Where bushes of deceives

And torture of its needle like

Words, make us feel

Sad and dejected
What I dreamt yesterday!
I was drowning in the deep ocean
Of hatred
Oh! I'm dying
No more oxygen
To breath
Suffocation of lungs
Made me paralyzed
Am I bird!
Without wings
How can I fly!
In this infinite sky
No one is there to help
Only self-reliability and confidence
Can medicate my injured wings
When the wall of trust
Gets collapsed

Love lost its charm and

Durability

The lifeline of love of any kind

Becomes dead

And you are walking

Without any mission!!

So better to feel alone

But complete and detached

In this concrete jungle of relations.



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



One side love
still has two sides:
one is of yours
and the other is of love's,
so this feeling
may not have a head or a tail,
but when you flip this coin
the probability of it landing
on a heart
is one,

and that heart is
yours.



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



OF PINK FLOWERS AND BLUE HEARTS

She sent me a pink flower,

And I sent her a blue heart—

In reply.

Will you, she texted me, write

A poem on my pink flower?

Lost for words, I sent her,

Not one, but three flowers, pink.

Who said pink flower emojis have no fragrance?

And blue heart emojis beat not with love?



Vidya Shankar: A poet, writer, blogger, motivational speaker, mandala artist, and yoga practitioner, 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 four publications, and have published two books of poems, one, a coffee table book in collaboration with my husband and the other, to create awareness about mental health.



WORDS AND SENTENCES

You were the stranger who came to see

The indifference of their words to our sentences:

You said: Forgiveness is a forgotten word--

But apt words appeared as in a crossword

And though you were masked, your eyes smiled

Like a prisoner's that had captured a flight of birds--

Observe, you said, the folded palms of those who seek
And the raised arm of those who hate. Observe, you said,
The impatience of the drooling mob--

Reflections don't always make us wise
Refraction does
And the silent stare that does not flinch--

You said that to find your voice you have to listen:
Some feel the need to kneel in prayer or protest
And some kneel to kill.



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



<https://www.dnaindia.com/india/>

REMEMBER, REMEMBER

Two little petticoated girls swinging in the breeze

The hills around charming

The river a story telling

Swing this way

Swing that way

Round and round

In the breeze

The nooses are tight

The bruises are bright

Yet the nooses brought release
The pedophiles roam free
In those hills
By the gurgling river
Forgotten by a people
Overwhelmed by disease
Overwhelmed by fears
Overwhelmed by everything selfish
What do two little petticoated girls
Swinging in the breeze matter?



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.



BOOKS

I am a book

Your friend in distress

When others have shown

Nothing but a double face.

I am years

Eons of the best thoughts

That occurred to the best of people

Among an endless multitudes of mediocrity.

In me you will find
A world full of wonder
Food for thoughts
Reasons to ponder.

Do not think I am just some pages wrapped
That you can leaf through and forget
I am more than meets the eye
Ignoring me results in a sigh.

I am what you are not
I am what you could be
I am what you strive to become
Full of erudite rhetoric but with exemplary calm.

Do not just let me lie untouched
In a blind corner for years

Take me out and read through at times
Before the death bell for you chimes.

Read and let others read
Be a better human from a mere seed
And light the light in you
Germinate the glow for your kid.



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! 😊