

GloMag

GLOMAG

*Monthly Online Poetry and Prose
Magazine*

May/June 2017



Edited and Published by Glory Sasikala

DEDICATION

This issue is dedicated to the memory of our fellow writer Late John Poolieli Matthew. Always in our midst through his writings, thoughts, and music.



Glory Sasikala



Title of the Cover Pic: *...and then there was the moon!*

Glory Sasikala: She is a poet and writer, currently residing in Chennai. She is the editor and publisher of GloMag.

Moon Mania

There is this inexplicable and intrinsically woven connection between the Moon and me, having been christened "Glory Shashikala" essentially meaning the glorious Moonlight (shashikala meaning Moonlight in Hindi. Shashikala was later changed to "Sasikala" to accommodate pronunciation problems in school, which btw, did not resolve).

The ascending Moon I called "You have come!"to take me through reflected moonlight, shimmering, rippling in the lake, racing me to the island as I danced my way on

stepping stones...through life, teardrops so distinct from the lake water, the Moon knew them, these drops that sparkled on my lashes and fell...I threw back my head and laughed, the Moon racing through the Sky amidst clouds that partied with me...Cheers! Never a goodbye, they said, we will meet wherever you go, the Moon agreed, and I saw them race me through the window of the speeding train...I saw your face in the Moon..."Show me what's in your palm, 'tis a lover's charm you hold,"...my Moon was just a halo, some secrets never to be told...but even the Moon betrayed me, hardly daring to breath, my heart broken...this Moon will never shine again, I said, but now, I feed babies, showing them the Moon, my children, my grandchild...See! there's the Moon, there's a Grandmother there too, she makes food for her babies...and there's a rabbit too..."A rabbit Grandma? Can I see it?" "Oh yes! See there!

...Tis all alright...Life rights itself and smiles with the Moon.

ABOUT GLOMAG

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

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

~ ***Glory Sasikala***

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BACKGROUND MUSIC: “Bridge over troubled water” by Paul Mauriat

PREFACE

Ramendra Kumar

(A Writer By Passion)



WRITING: AN OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE DISORDER

Why do you write, I am often asked. I too have pondered over this question quite a bit. Why does a writer write? Is it for earning his livelihood? Of course not. How many writers can make a living out of writing, especially in India? I think you can count them on your fingers. If I had to live on my writing I would have starved by now and this I think holds true for most writers.

Does a writer write to make money? Here too the answer is an emphatic no. The amount of money I make from my writing would not be enough to feed my pet Labrador for more than a week. Money may be a welcome 'collateral advantage' to writing but it can never be the main

objective. Even if a writer is naïve enough and makes earning money his sole aim, he will fall flat on his face sooner than later. Except for the lucky(?) few, how many writers actually end up making big money.

Does a writer write for fame? Hardly. How many writers are able to seduce the elusive lady we call fame? Just a handful. For the rest it is a seemingly endless tryst with anonymity.

If it is not for a living, for money or for fame, why the hell does a writer write? I think because he has to. And the compulsion is not from without, it is from within. Even if he doesn't get money or name or fame he will write. Even if people think it's a waste of time, even if his wife thinks he is a wastrel and his mother-in-law thinks he is insane, he will write. Even if he is starved of praise, his waste paper basket or inbox is full of rejection slips or mails, and his friends think he is unreadable, he will write. Even if the world regards him as a failure and his writing as escapism he will write.

Here these immortal words of the celebrated writer George Orwell come to my mind, "All writers are vain, selfish and lazy, and at the very bottom of their motives lies a mystery. Writing a book is a long, exhausting struggle, like a long bout of some powerful illness. One would never undertake

such a thing if one were not driven by some demon whom one can neither resist nor understand."

I remember when we were young the society had a lot of respect for writers. They were treated with awe, respect and looked at with wonderment. Today if the writer does not have a foreign publisher and is not making more money on one book than R.K.Narayan made in his life time, he doesn't get a second look. Even if he gets one, it is more a look of commiseration than admiration. "He is a writer," you can hear people mumble. It is almost as if they were saying, "Poor fellow, he suffers from flatulence."

Many people think writing is fun or it is easy. All they see the writer doing is scribbling in his notebook or hammering away at the key board and more often than not staring out of the window or into space. They don't realize that for a writer there are no holidays. 24 hours a day, seven days a week and 365 days a year, it is work, backbreaking, gut wrenching, soul stirring work. Red Smith drives home this point when he says, "There is nothing to writing; all you do is sit down at a computer and open a vein." Gene Fowler puts it even better, "Writing is easy; all you do is sit staring at a blank sheet of paper (or a computer screen) until little drops of blood form on your forehead."

My fellow writers if my words have left you feeling a trifle depressed and desolate, cheer up. Even if the world doesn't acknowledge you now, one day it will. Your words will live far longer than you. As Bud Gardner writes, "When you speak, your words echo only across the room or down the hall. But when you write, your words echo down the ages."

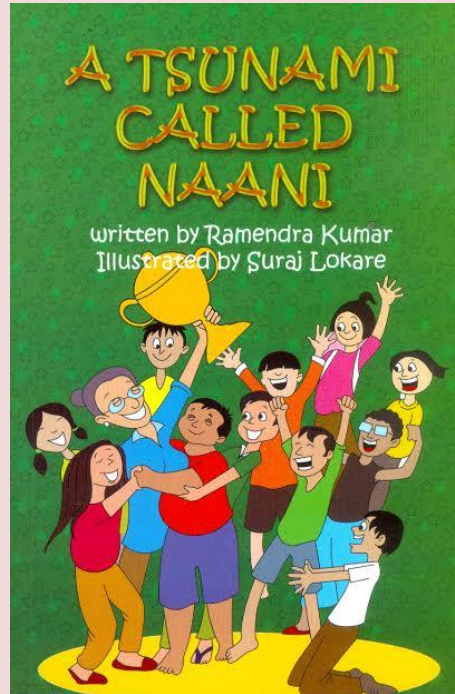
And finally let me end with these lovely words of Doris Lessing which pep me up whenever I am feeling down and out:

".....and it does not harm to repeat, as often as you can, "Without me the literary industry would not exist; the publishers, the agents, the sub-agents, the accountants, the libel lawyers, the department of literature, the professors, the theses, the books of criticism, the reviewers, the book pages - all this vast and proliferating edifice is because of this small, patronized, put down and underpaid person."

BOOK OF THE MONTH

A Tsunami Called Naani by Ramendra Kumar

Published by Mango Books, an imprint of DC Books



LINKS

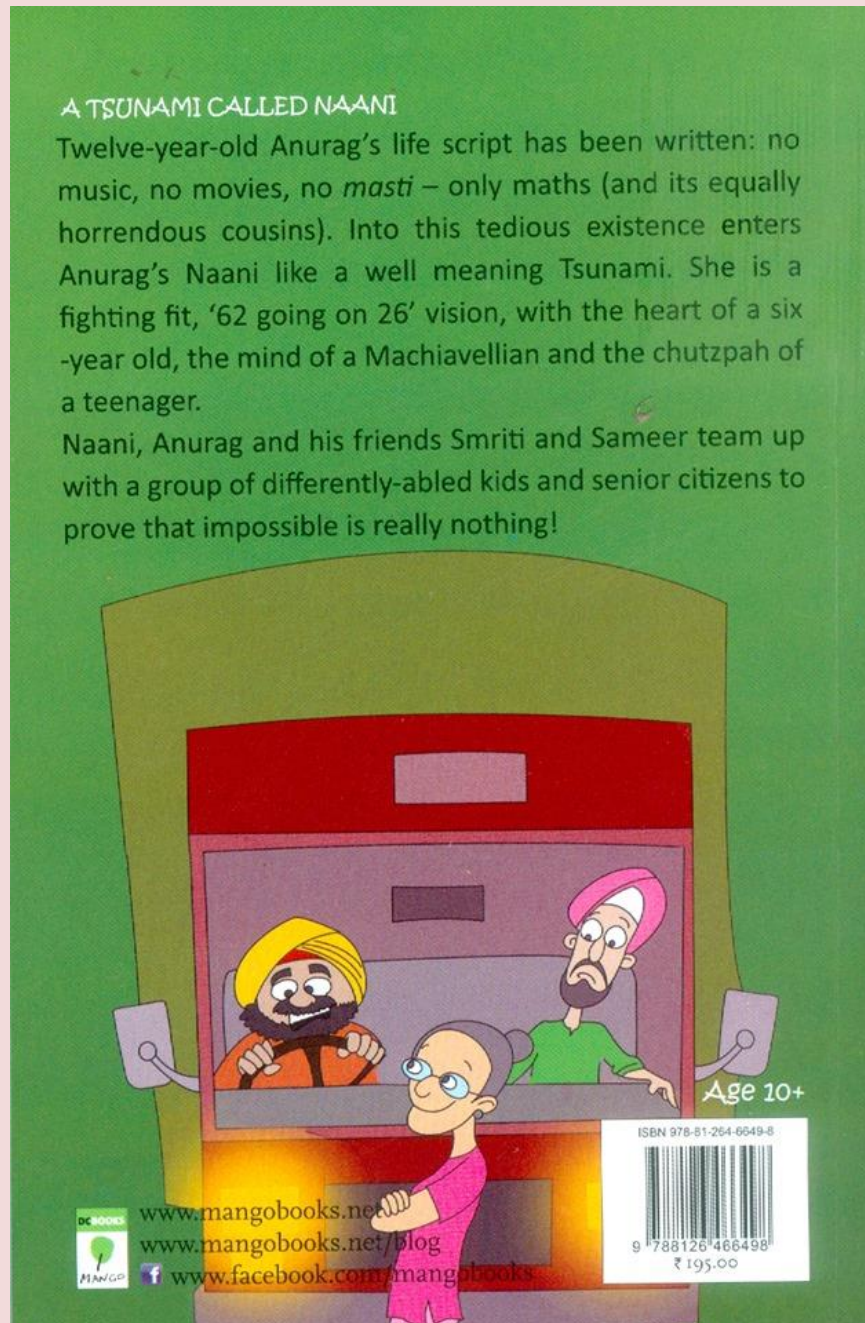
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REVIEW

<https://learningandcreativity.com/tsunami-called-naani-ramendra-kumar/>

The book is a tale of camaraderie and commitment and guts and gumption, laced with oodles of masti and chunks of humour.

ABOUT THE BOOK



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MUTED GESTURES

Million words fail,
For there's no space;
To make a way.
Hours are stale,
Recurring miles to trace;
An endless night before the day.
Blue sky looks pale,
Tired clouds do not race;
May pleads the tears to stay.
And there's an umbrella,
Which hates to walk alone.
Lay your feet not naked Cinderella,

Times the sandal in my hand has become stone.

Eyes are like windows,

A World waits to stand under her balcony;

Like life tides high and low,

To find a harmony in this cacophony.

And some day the Sun will go blind,

A moon would be absent forever.



Aakash Sagar Chouhan: He is a he is a contributing Author, a blogger, a prose writer, a Poet, an article contributor, Group's Admin of many Pages and Communities residing in Rourkela. He co-authored the book "Between Moms & Sons" along with Geethanjali Dilip in 2016.



WILD NIGHT

From rockets' red glare to hopes bursting,
just one, one more for the Gipper.

From mermaids' abalone hips
to grandmothers hunched
below bay windows somewhere
near East Lansing, Milwaukee, or
who knows, mostly north
of Mason-Dixon; still, who knows
where they were last Thursday?

From the moment your quartz blues

vibrated my bones, uprooting
crookneck squash & pruning cukes
in the middle of a Maryland drought;
free-throws killed 'em blowing 16 points
to lose by 4; did I recycle bottles & cans;
the dogs need grooming as I glide
like a splinter across your glistening
quartz blues below filthy moonlight.



Allan Britt: In August 2015 Alan Britt was invited by the Ecuadorian House of Culture Benjamín Carrión in Quito, Ecuador as part of the first cultural exchange of poets between Ecuador and the United States. In 2013 he served as judge for the The Bitter Oleander Press Library of Poetry

Book Award. His interview at The Library of Congress for The Poet and the Poem aired on Pacifica Radio, January 2013. He has published 15 books of poetry, his latest being Violin Smoke (Translated into Hungarian by Paul Sohar and published in Romania: 2015). He teaches English/Creative Writing at Towson University.



HIGH HILL

On that high hill
the wood burned like a flower,
the smoke rose to my lipline
under a decaying tree.

I walked down that hill to kiss a grave
and marry my heart to the iris of death.

But heat mounts near the waking sun,
and on and on goes the wind, brushing
the powerful weeds.

Walking along the path, my skin has changed,

my shell is under water where it belongs.

There is not much to understand, but to

surrender to honesty and to covet

the courage needed to speak

my ruling rhyme.

On this high hill

I drowned in the devil's chaos,

but that place is long gone.

And though the asylum of darkness still comes around,

it vanishes so quickly with kindness.



Allison Grayhurst: She is a member of the League of Canadian Poets. Three times nominated for Sundress Publications “Best of the Net” 2015, she has over 850 poems published in over 380 international journals. She has

twelve published books of poetry, seven collections, nine chapbooks, and a chapbook pending publication. She lives in Toronto with her family. She is a vegan. She also sculpts, working with clay; <http://www.allisongrayhurst.com/>



ANOTHER DAY

A little bright

That evening light

Shines mellow

Bringing out a glow

In every fellow...

Those feelings

Of nostalgia

Creep over me as

I remember

Other

Mini vacations

By the ocean.

Catamaran rides

Swims in the sea

Floating with our backs

On the waves

And our faces

To the sky

Watching the limitless horizon

Turn pink with promise...

Heading off into the night

Torches in hand

Treading gently

Looking for turtle eggs

Finding them

And watching them throb with the life within

Waiting

To hatch...

A sigh escapes

My lips

As I enjoy

Another weekend of bliss

Filing it away

In my memory

To sigh

Again

With joy

Another day...

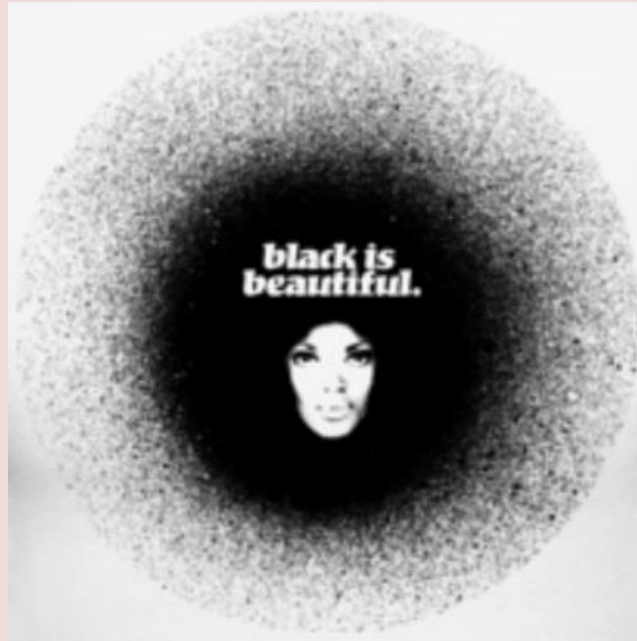


Ameeta Agnihotri: First of all, I love to write. Then I love to travel, and write about my travels, including about the food I eat on my blog. Being a Food Critic, I have four food books to my name: The Times Food and Nightlife Guide. My restaurant reviews come out every Friday in the Chennai Times. Yes, life's good. My book is done. It was done five years ago. Am still trying to muster the courage to edit it.

Work: <http://timescity.com/chennai>

Blogs: <http://silentsensation.blogspot.com/>

<http://fascinatingtastes.blogspot.in/>



A PROUD BLACK FELLOW

I'm proud to be a black man

Ka'ba, the holiest place, is black

I've today got: Black and white - no distance

Hazrat Bilal was black; no greatness he did lack

Black is night and Banalata Sen's hair

Bhagavan Shree Krishna was also black

Without night, does the moon look fair?

Gray hair makes you feel slack

Eyes are black; touchstone is black as well

Martin Luther King, Mohammad Ali

And Nelson Mandela made apartheid fail

I'm unspeakably proud that they belong to me

Since I'm black, you are white

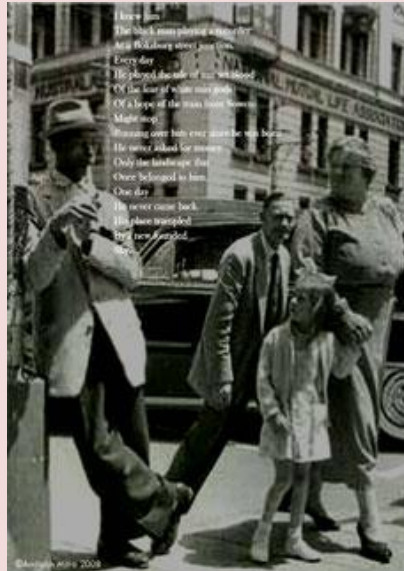
When I stand beside you, you look comely

Being dark, I made you bright

You can't find me ostensibly; espy profoundly.



Aminool Islam: A bilingual poet, I weave poetry in both Bengali, my mother tongue, and English. I also weave English sonnets. I did my M.A in English literature from National University, Bangladesh. I'm currently the sub-editor of a literary magazine named Neeharika.



I KNEW HIM

I knew him

The black man playing a recorder

At a Boksburg street junction.

Every day

He played the tale of sun set blood

Of the fear of white rain gods

Of a hope of the train from Soweto

Might stop

Running over him ever since he was born

He never asked for money

Only the landscape that

Once belonged to him.

One day

He never came back.

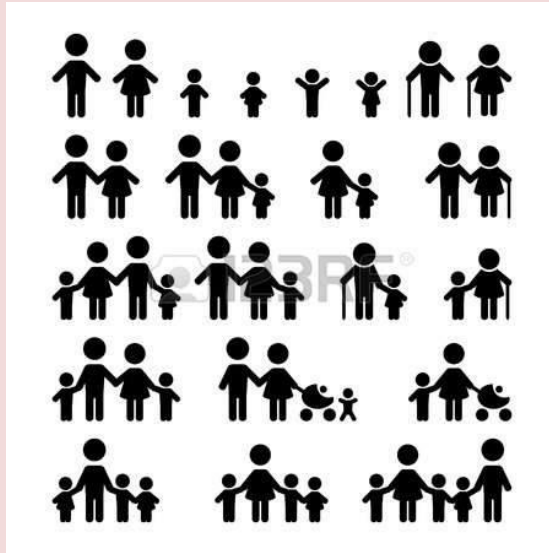
His place trampled

By a new founded

Sky.



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



WHY?

These phantom steps will take you back, in time

to a place where none of you were there

A tired teacher would get off a train

take out his scooty, ride home

to a small house

with a father, a wife and two small girls in it

and they would, all, talk a lot

Their faces would glow, even at night

Before he rotten-appled

Why didn't the movie-reel stop there?



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 Inklings and Umbilical Chords.



A SHORT ELEGY

in the picture, I saw
you were looking at me
an infectious smile sans flaw
is what I could still see
my lips widened, mocking your smile
tears slipped out from my eyes in the while
and I realized again you are no more
a void in my life that none could restore.
may your soul rest in peace, I pray
if there is heaven, may you there stay
I pray,
I pray.



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



BLESS THE DAY

Bless the day
I found you
Cos the lights
Are brighter
The misty morning
Is clearer.

Bless the day
I found you
Life is peaceful
Will this feeling remain
Shall I look to the day
We belong to one another
Will every sunrise be yours
Will every moonlit night be mine.

As time spirals into

The dreams I have
Will this memory
Always encapsulate
My innermost desires

If I read your mind
Will you touch my heart
Each time we say hello.
Will that tingling sensation
Never leave me
You came into my life
As the summer ended

And winter draws
its own canvas
With greys and blues
Rains and snow
Hot chocolate and port
Warming the body
Fraying the edges
Of Eden.

Like spring and summer
Melts into each other
And autumn dances

To its windy partner
With winter's arrival postponed.
You and I escape
the seasonal changes
And life is the longest summer

Bless the day
I found you
Life is a romantic dance
Never ending
No interludes
The music serenading
Our rejuvenated souls...



Angela Chetty: She is a HR Manager, an avid poet and lyricist who lives in Durban, South Africa. In 2013, an Anthology of Poetry entitled, Heartfelt moments - A Treasure Trove was published.

www.heartfeltmomentspoetry.com In 2015, her poem "Miss Me" was selected as Editor's choice for the Contemporary Poetry Digest and has been chosen as the best poems of 2015 for a Valentine's Special Publication. Angela has been selected as an Elite Poet for 2016. Her poem "Heart and Soul" has been selected as Publisher's choice and "Love's Carousal" selected as Editor's Choice for the Evergreen Journal of Poetry. In 2017, she has been awarded Elite Writer status by International Poetry and two poems "Still the Storm" and "Heart and Soul" has been published in the 2017 Poetry Showcase and Yearbook. In 2017, her poem "Lover of Mine" was selected for a special edition - From the Heart. Her poems have also been chosen as semi-finalist for International Poetry Contests.



A NIGHT OF LOVE

The young night speaks
In a whisper the sweet tale
About our love; under
Its shadow how we did revel

The silent hour speaks
How our bodies used to dance
Till a cool dawn broke
And we fell into a mystic trance

The darkness lived in us
Till that moment of peace

When inside you I left

Seeds of love fulfilling your wish



Anil Kumar Panda: My name is Anil Kumar Panda. Tiku is my pen name. I was born in a small town, Brajrajnagar, in the state of Odisha, in India. I am currently residing here. I work as a mine surveyor in coal mines. I write short stories and poems whenever I get time.



SUCH TIMES

First published in The Bombay Review

Then there are such nights that drive home the point
of the choices you made;

The path you began walking
much before you sat down tired under this leafless husk.

The water bottle long empty,

the heart long estranged,

the next mirage only a breath away at the market of
lingering hope.

You haggle with serendipity;

she offers nostalgia in little packets of new love.

The ambience is perfect, they have sprayed rain smells around.

“Verboten! Verboten!” you cry to yourself,

as is empty ritual now.

Cosy in the room of rented dreams,

you roll your newfound treasure

in the leftovers of a forgotten honeymoon.

You light it with the warmth of your first penetration.

You breathe in. Deep.

Deeper.

You watch your heart holes leak smoke.

A beautiful morning beckons.

You stuff your familiar half-spent libido in your pockets marked To-do.

It is time to continue on your path to nowhere.

You smile.

At least, no one has to walk it with you.



Anish Vyavahare: Writer, brand builder, quizzer, public speaker, event organiser, psychology, advertising and writing teacher - essentially if there is a job to be done, I do it. Or get you people for it. I have a long standing affair with eating, cooking and Wikipedia. I like to travel if there is someone from the land to show me around. So if you want to invite me to where you are, I am welcome. :) For the serious stuff, I teach UG and PG Mass Media students. I

help businesses do smart marketing where they build a strong brand, make money and do some really cool stuff to engage with their audience. I have been running a Poetry open mic in Thane, called Poetry Tuesday, for the last 5 years (almost!). I teach basic creative writing to beginners. And I have recently launched a multi-lingual Youtube channel called The Poetry Affair of India where you are welcome to feature with your poetry!



What if the Earth was an ink palette, writing stories with you as its character; Would you realise that planets with no life are just going through a writer's block or would you agree that in the eyes of this universe, you are fiction and you have no time for negative things, and thus will choose to smile?

~ Vasanthi Swetha

REPLY

If the earth was a palette of ink

And I was a character

I'd be very exciting and excited to think

Where can I take my reader

Can I hold her by the hand

And take her to where she wants to go

Or take her where she needs to be
And show her all she must forgo

Or can I just do nothing
But lie quietly by her side
As she decides where she wants to go
And I wait for her to make up her mind



Anurag Mathur: He is a trained bean counter, works for a financial services group and has spent almost 2 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.



and now.....

unbutton your fragrant dreams

unbutton your silence.....

the silence is no longer ours,

you smiled as the moon closed its eyes

last night the storm whispered your name in my blood

unbutton your silence.....

a night bird's laughter echoing in an empty room

savage night of desire,

and now.....

two tired birds on the wings of darkness.....lost for ever



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



TAKES TWO TO TANGO

You are shifting the blame
as if you were never involved
now you wish you can have
all ties with the partner dissolved

Excusing yourself
As if you were never part
of the schemes and lies
right from the start

She could not have done it
all on her own
you were the mastermind
the relationships backbone

Now that your deceit
Is out in the open
You act all innocent
As if you were never the kingpin

It takes two to tango
Admit to your mistake
Instead of being a coward
For heaven's sake!



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



OUR WAIT

Pretty long this wait

for you and me this time

Tomorrow we meet

But until then can you and I no longer wait

Because if you and I see

then the silence, the rage, the abuse

all of it comes when you and I say enough

I cannot take you any more either I can almost say

But I say instead I love you

and I say I do too, Bristi Rudy says



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



HIDEOUS

Selfish

self-centred

hollow lives

we all live

presuming

living for others

let us come together we say

we who never ever jumped into the fray

sacrifice is a word we often use

having done none of it

with deceptive words

we weave the world around us

then

sink into the slush and muck of reality.



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



CALYPSO

Men never know what's good for them,

Odysseus please stay!

Your kisses are my diadem,

Don't choose the bitter way.

Remain right here with pleasures near,

Beware the graveyard sea,

Immortal lips should hold you dear,

Be my eternity!

Penelope does not need you,

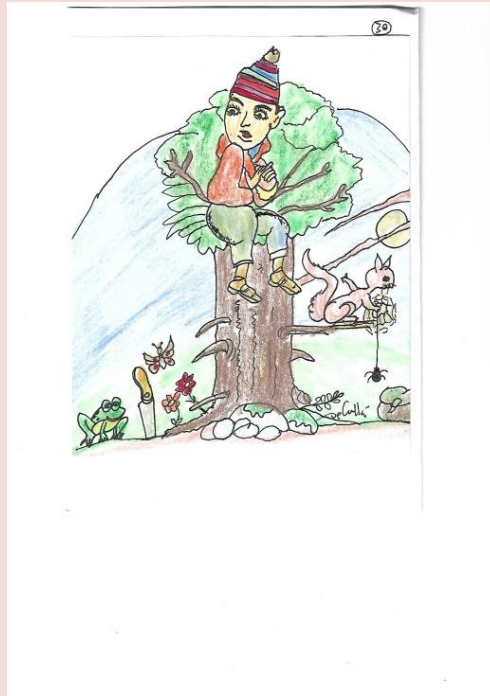
She has other suitors,

I'm a goddess, can't I please you?

Your taste needs better tutors.
A safe journey then I shall pray,
And wish, though I'm divine,
That I could crack to dust and clay,
If only you were mine.



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



SIMON, THE BABY

Simon, the baby, asked his father:

What happens in this World

Where crimes and death takes over?

There is no place in the Globe

Where hatred does not flourish?

A church, a mosque

Where their gods do not take to kill?

They say that Cain killed Abel

With an Ass Jawbone

That Delilah made Samson impotent

Cutting his hair and something else
That all fascist governments
Need human blood and flesh to survive
Especially from contestants and comedians
Young people
That's why they kill, kidnap and imprison
Right, dad?
Rivers and seas are spaces
Contaminated by foul and bloody lava
Fascist & Mystic Lava
From humans turned into cannibals
By the grace of a God and a Caesar.
The innocent are always killed
To be pasture of the fascist Herods of turn
While their scorts and candlemen
As monsters of prey
draw their limpet tongues in Syria,
Iraq, Afghanistan

And all the other nations

Right, Dad?

"Yes, Simon, it is the plain truth.

Son, Study and love Nature and all the living

it only saves us with the Science

and the Reason.



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



UNLESS IT'S MY OWN

I have seen

Mount Vernon

poorly spent

& I have heard

no talk about

Mount Vernon

& I am told

about Fredericktown

& Danville

all of the time.

The whole county

is on fire

& we're arguing

about which

town uses

the least gasoline?

These drugs

are cheap

& they are magic

& it's all happening

somewhere else?

No. That heat

doesn't respond

to piss

& it's already caught

the bottom

of your pant leg.



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



FREEDOM

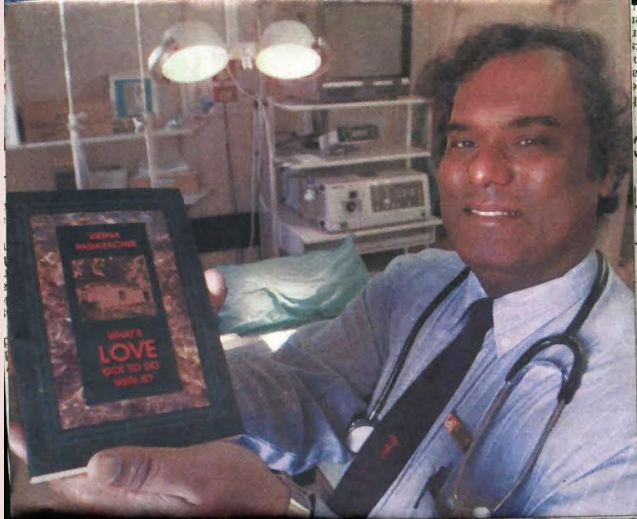
The armies of the warring continent
that shackled the world
Rose from the trenches of despair
And slaughtered each other.

The Pain, Terror, Destruction and Horror
That they had unleashed on the planet
They erupted now upon each other.

Like mindless puppets on steel chains
They did their Masters' bidding

And fell

So that we might be free.



Deena Padayachee: is a South African born medical doctor who is the winner of the Nadine Gordimer Prize for prose. Crux, Wasafiri, Skive, Glomag and the Indiana Voice Journal have all featured his work. He has delivered lectures on his writing at the universities of Copenhagen, Tuebingen and Louisiana. His book of short stories, What's love got to do with it? was awarded the Olive Schreiner prize. His prose features in the University of Cambridge's Writing from South Africa, the Reader's Digest's Best South African short stories and A century of South African short stories.



DREAMS & SCREAMS

Men

They slept too long with their desires

Desires

They lived, livid and tired in dreams

Dreams

They litter around like thorns

And scream

Screams

They find their getaway to the soul

And pinch

Pinches

They pierce right within/ up to skin thin

And bleed

Bleeds

That never see the light of the day

And dawn

The dawn bleeds to dusk

The dusk pinches the night

The night screams

Those dreams

Livid and lived

Desires... Lived /not lived

Dreams & Screams



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



A PROMISE OR A GOODBYE!!

Standing by the doorsteps,

Bidding him bye

How hard she wanted him to stay back...

Memories lane by her mind,

Of their good times...

Her crowned heart and his pinnacle of glory,

Her fist and fingers and his clenched engagements,

Her bridge of devotedness and his zeal of ardency,

Her footprints of tenderness into his life...

Just to make it more complete!!

But then there came the time...

where his vow for his Mother Earth was unfeigned,

Leaving her startled, shattered, splintered at midnight

And running to rescue the lives on the border...

There she was reflecting with teary eyes and blood cold,

Wishing to see him soon,

On the edge of his life who won...

His promise to his patron or her goodbye!!



Devyani Deshmukh: She is pursuing master's degree in computer science at US. I am highly interested in writing. This poem is nothing but a fictional work. It shows the plight of a girl who is broken in love and made to keep distance from him.



THE HYMN OF PLEASURE

In the garden of Eros everyone wears a mask,
The rainbow of untold desires makes every casque.
Costumes that hide the passion and the body of lust,
Go away with the wind that blows from the past.
The suppressed rapture and the forgotten pleasure,
Reappear in the agonies of secret hunger.
Dreams overshadow the virtuous reality,
As everyone marches into a temple of the deity.
Those faithful of Philotes, the Goddess of copulation,
Chant the hymn of pleasure and liberation.
Oh God, in thy honour and praise,

Let our true desires rise above all daze.

The norms of the majority are nothing but illusions,
Which make us live in a life of mesmerizing delusions.

Oh God, in thy honour and praise,

Let our true passions rise above all daze.

The values of the majority do nothing but suppress,
Which bind us in a labyrinth of shame under duress.

Thus invoked is the Goddess of pleasure and coitus,
As the devotees get liberated from their painful hiatus.

At the garden of Eros, thus go the rituals over the ages,
And true desires are worshipped at the temple of Philotes.



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



I WEAR TROUSERS - DEAL WITH IT

Look at me - And I will make you

see what my identity means to me,

Black my darkened mood like charcoal molten lava
imploding

pounding

as I try my best to deal with this

social mess wait what, you want to confess?

Don't make me laugh - Did you think I would just sit back
and take this accusatory flack

hoping my expected womanly veneer would suddenly flake or disintegrate to seal your foretold fate?

Brown my murky anger at your obvious stereotypical misinformed social brainwashing -

Your burning desire to see me weak and melting at your trampling feet but guess what?

I choose who I want to be who I used to be who I strive to be who I was meant to be - Your damning glare will not penetrate me nor will your vile tongue discredit me or amputate me - Do you really think your fiery voice gives a choice of who to love, who to care for, who to look up to, who to devote to?

What, do you seriously expect me to bow down to your rules, your man-made commandments, your splintering fragments?

Come closer and I will make it clear to you - I am a mother, I am a scholar, I am a giver, I am a receiver, I am a sinner, I wear trousers - Deal with it!



Don Beukes: He is a retired teacher of English and Geography now writing poetry. Originally from Cape Town, South Africa, where he was born, raised and educated in the last two decades of Apartheid, he taught in both South Africa and the UK for twenty years and hold EU citizenship. As a person of 'mixed race' heritage, his poetry reflects the racial and cultural battles growing up in a racially divided society and indeed as a global citizen and hopes to adjust our moral compass. He also writes about the socio-political, life and death, womanhood, nature and religion.

Jonel Scholtz: She started painting in 1988, while in high school, with Louise Goudemond, an American born artist, specializing in figurative work and oil portraits. She has exhibited in South Africa in Johannesburg, Clarens, Cape Town, Swellendam, Hartebeespoort Dam and Dullstroom.

Internationally, she has exhibited in New York, Miami, Italy, NY at the International Expo in 2010 and the United Nations as part of International Women's Day.



Running frantically
To take out
Forgotten you
From the hidden compartment
Of my bag
I ran out of breath
As you suffocated
To death

I have always wondered
Why death and breath

Rhyme

When they are so unlike

Each other?

Now I think

Maybe they are mates

Who complete each other



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



THE FAMILY GATHERING

Summers are memories in darkness
Of lost times and ancient dreams,
They hide mysteries and secrets
Behind pillars and crumbled walls.

Every face is a story, unrevealed,
Waiting for release behind smiles,
Yet they gather, like dark clouds, slowly,
Making the parched earth cry.

They share the same blood and hopes,
That end in tributaries, divided,

Gushing into seas and oceans,
Lost in multitudes, divided!

Come, let's forget, this one day,
All the pains we gathered over time,
And forget, once again, this day,
Till we meet, once again, next time!



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



WHIFF

By your mere thoughts that saunter in my quest spanning
remote, evergreen countrysides,
Spiraling with the night's teal mist of a sighing earth,
Reach out and rip off the wooden skin that have layered
themselves on my torso trunk, through ages,
For having waited for your perceiving me, standing as a
viridian pillar rooted in my own choices,
The soil feeding and fueling my fantasies of a once lived life
in your gandharva village,
Stroke my bare chest that holds breasts engorged with the
milk of endless offering,
Of fruits beyond the carnal, that ask nothing in return but
the breeze that you are,

A sheer grey purple wisp that drifts from lofty mountains
where we sojourned painting a canvass in the firmament.

My cleavage a truthful pass where flows a river, barely a
thread pares the inundation of fostering pristine progeny,
that will roam this ground,

Of promises you and I made together in the sinking
moment of a flaming sphere, around which we strolled
hand in hand!

By your mere gaze, liberate my waiting for I flower to bear
fruit of endless penance.

The gnarled hands outstretched caressing the night sky,
star sprinkled,

As they drench all of creation with their mellow light,

By your mere words sing that song of everlasting love as
you drain your passion into my myriad toed feet,

Where you nurture the fire of commitment to my soul.

Just quench my dream of reunion with you in a field of pure
light for we are eternity!

It will soon be dawn and the "muhurtham" will merge with
evolution.

My scented hair whispers with clouds of hopes... come whiff my mind oh breeze of incantations.

I shall ever wait.



Geethanjali Dilip: A Chennaiite at heart, she is a graduate from Ethiraj College and a postgraduate in French from Bangalore University. She is passionate about poetry, travel, teaching travel, gardening, interior decoration, and enjoying a deep spiritual connection with everything. She's been teaching French, freelance, in Salem for the past 34 years in schools and colleges, and at her centre, Zone Francophone, in Salem.



RAINBOW LAND

In Rainbow Land

“The women

Come and go

Talking of Michelangelo”

Some are brown

And some are black

Hang on, the white ones!

Oranges grow in Rainbow Land

Lush grapes hanging

To press sweet Zouth Afrikan

Wine

Pressing Mafia money

In the wine press

Baksheesh for the orphan

Oh, Orpheus is a liar,

“Ayuda por comida”

It reads

There’s gold in South Africa

And diamonds

De Bears

Prowls de shunting yards

Killing by night and knife

And Coke is quaffed

(And sniffed)

By jolly black boys

In Mdantsane

They joke and josh



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



JOYS OF HAVING A ROOSTER AS A PET

dedicated to my pet rooster, Chinkie, who died on May 15, 2017

Every time the doorbell goes 'kikikiki...' Chinkie will go "kukukukuku..."

Chinkie thinks I'm crowing too when I talk loudly on the phone. So every time I say, 'HELLO! HELLO!!' Chinkie will raise his neck and say, "Cockadoodledo!" "Cockadoodledo!"

Chinkie knows when I dress up and put on my slippers, I'm dumping him and going out, and so, will go quietly under the table and settle down.

When I come back home, Chinkie generally follows me around, clucking. At first I thought it was just asking for attention, till I found it pecking my foot in anger. I was being scolded. :(

Something about my cooking time excites Chinkie. He will follow me to the fridge and back to the stove, fridge and back, fridge and back, clucking all the time. It's like a conversation, 'cluck cluck, cluck, cluck, cluck....'



Glory Sasikala: She is a poet and writer, currently residing in Chennai. She is the editor and publisher of GloMag.



FORBIDDEN LOVE

Birds fly south with the migratory winds

to find the summer solstice

my heart yearns for wings to fly

tears sting my eyes

they burn with a pain

of a lovers memories

that won't die in the ebb and flow

of the changing seasons

in her innocent love I basked

my soul she caressed

with a passionate tenderness

before the sacred presence
of mother Ganga
we pledged our undying love
a love so strong
we believed that it would even
tame the tempest monsoon storms

in our lovers pastime fantasies
she was the divine Radhamoney
I her Krishna, the lord of Brindivan
the maestro on the celestial flute
captivating her soul
with rhythmic melodies
blissful, and enchantingly deep

sometimes in our lovers romantic games
she was Sita my devout queen
I her Ram, the lord of Ahyodia

the vanquisher and slayer
of her evil abductor, Ravana

O! a love so sweet and true
could only be free in fantasy dreams
our love was forbidden to grow
for we dared to cross
the unyielding boundaries of caste
steal precious moments of illicit love
through the thorny fences raised
by prejudice and bigotry

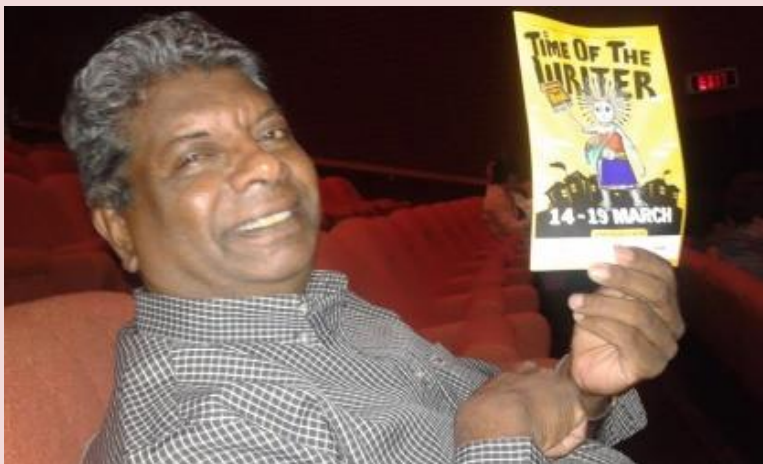
for this transgression
there was a terrible price to pay
shame! they said, she had brought
upon her Brahmin caste
she had to be punished for the dishonour
visited upon the family name

true to every morning's first light
heart pounding, yearning for my love
I made haste to our treasured secret place
deep amongst the reeds, flourishing

on the banks of mother Ganga
her sacred waters thrashed and churned
as she hastened in a frenzy
to her lover the philandering sea

I found her, my innocent,
sweet true love
floating face down
in the turbulent tears
of mother Ganga

fragile was our love,
sculptured in delicate porcelain
we wished it, engraved in stone
to flourish beyond the test of time
now it only endures
in my tragic fragmented,
tormented dreams



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.



THE WRITING OF WARS

I move in a thousand green flickers,
Mad, dark tongues lapping up the perfect light.

I move to you, like a white river,
A mountain's breath, fleshed pure as a babe.

Yet you move away. In a recoil,
You bite back the safety and tear into the night.

Your voice turns the womb
Of my mind black and gives birth into my stone hands.

A word! A word so small in spite
Of its full, round shadow. You pull the sky close and weep.

You great, booted bastard -

You spit at me, and wind the telephone wires around my
neck -

Have i not worshipped you,

You with the swastika branded on your palms,

You with the bloody teeth?

Yet you kill me, and kill me again, and again,

Only to wake us into this dance,

The truculent hunger eating away at my toes -

The children sleep like ghosts

In their burning cradles as we move in our masks of bone

And step on each other's holy feet.

Give me this one, I cry and you slap me with a red arm.

You will live, you say, wild Nemesis,

And i have no right to claim a word, a whisper, a sight.

Yet after the ritual, i write

The last word, and my darling, you die, you die.



Gowri Suresh: She is from Kottayam, Kerala. She is a student of class 12. She was the recipient of the Reuel Prize in 2016. Literature is her passion and she enjoys every genre. She can be reached at gowris113@gmail.com.



MY HUSBAND COMMENTS ON HOW I'VE LET MYSELF GO

he tells me I remind him
of a beached whale lying in
bed in the morning I close my
eyes and imagine myself
being picked apart by the claws of
tiny sand crabs burrowed into
by thin red beach worms
gobbets of flesh ripped

from my carcass by flocks of sea gulls
luring even the raccoons down
from the stubby forest

following the shore. he asks me
if I feel ashamed of myself
and I don't answer because
I feel dead already I'm
too busy

imagining the shock of
girl scout troops stumbling across
my massive corpse in the shallows
the feel of their tiny hands
on my body joined by the larger hands
of Greenpeace workers and passing
tree huggers as they try
to push me back
into the water

hoping somehow that this half-eaten
cold and lifeless body might

magically come back to
life and swim away if only
they could get me back
into the water.



Holly Day: She has taught writing classes at the Loft Literary Center in Minneapolis, Minnesota, since 2000. Her poetry has recently appeared in Tampa Review, SLAB, and Gargoyle, while her newest nonfiction book, Tattoos FAQ, is coming out from Backbeat Books at the end of 2017.



That last night

That sort of pleasing music, on piano

That shrilling and reiterating positions in the body

That awaited sense to maneuver sappily

That mood pregnant with fidgetiness

That cue ablazing the passion inside

That cocooned flower panting to bloom

That untamed fissure to flail the warmth

That pacified cloud waiting to rain

That festive ambience imbued in each corner

That enlightened charm over the face

That spark to light the best

That plant holding its breath to germinate

That raveled bubble of themes
That sanitized skin ready to be united
That labyrinth soon to be resolved
That new life soon to be born
That last night to stay as a bachelor!!



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



ON VIEWING BUDDHA IN THE MUSEUM

Ommmm, cool Buddha

how relaxing you are!

Your legs in lotus position

as you sit on jewel of flower.

Your right hand telling me

"be not afraid".

Your left giving me the universe,

sly fox!

I will spend this short hour with you.

Ah, you seem to wink at me.

I will then tickle your cozy toes,

tease you out of Nirvana.

Ommmm, holy, wise one.

Ghandarva!



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



The firs in front
beyond the bay window have
Become particular.

Awl limbs weighted
With snow, a stair of
Discord to the top where

A star could be.
At night, during

tranquil summer, they were

A unity, a dense beauty

With no top

Or bottom. Lush and undistinguished.

Secrets of Paradise

Rustled through their body.

Laughter climbed the hearty trunk.

Seer sky above

Took a twinkle to

Its kind eye.

But I know

much better by now

Do I?

I see through them

now

Punched and battered

Into the next street.

No one

Is walking past

Noticing their change.

No

More piano sifting

Sunday hymns back through

Them. It has

Fallen quiet and cold.

The sky has left.

Who will notice?

The seasons

Have held out

I have

Held out.



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



THE BREAST TAX

In my faraway homeland of Kerala state,
There used to be tax, records indicate,
Called Breast Tax, a tax on breasts
On women who cover their chests.

One day, Nangeli covered her chest,
The Pravathiyar grew wild and upset,
“Pay the tax, at once,” he said,
“I will not,” said Nangeli, unafraid.

“You defy the law and thus your King,
For this you will do some lamenting,

You shall be whipped and made to pay,
The price of trespass will come your way.”

Grabbing breasts, she cleaved it with sickle,
Watching people cried, “Don’t be so fickle.”
Laid them on leaves, presented to Pravathiyar,
“Here’s your tax!” she said, as he watched in horror.

Nangeli died, whereupon the tax was withdrawn,
“It’s not right,” said the owner of the crown.
“Women will have all rights in my kingdom,”
Thereafter, it’s said, women were harassed seldom.



Late John P. Matthew: Writer, poet, singer-songwriter, and blogger John P Matthew was born in the state of Kerala, India. His first success as a writer was Penguin’s world-wide short story contest “India Smiles” in which his short story “Flirting in Short Messages” was selected for publication in an anthology. His poem “Call of the Cuckoo” has been published by Poetry Rivals. He was working on his first novel and writing a book-length travelogue about his native state of Kerala.



CONFIRMATION BIAS AND FACT CHECKING

When you fact-check and expose a hoax I had posted, the factual position does little to persuade me. The sides are already taken. If I'm swayed by phony videos of cows or soldiers, photos or fudged data, or stories of Jesus image on a window or vibhuti on a god picture, I'm already leaning that way in an exhibition of confirmation bias.

A rumour sticks because it confirms something in my existing bias and wishful thinking. So merely busting a rumour does nothing to uproot the tangle of presuppositions that made me receptive to that rumour. Exposing logical or historical errors doesn't change me. I would rather sulk or justify my delusional stand, instead of accepting my mistake with humility.

When my false story is scotched on a WhatsApp group, I'll continue, with "forwarded as received" to circulate dubious but serving-my-purpose posts.

My core beliefs are not open to rational revision. My instincts are stubborn in the face of contradicting evidence. I work with intuitions and mental shortcuts, shaped by my upbringing and experience. For instance, upper caste or majority religion privileges are my entitlement. I need to rationalise to avoid seeing my ancestors as unjust.

If you seek to persuade me, you need to recognise that it takes a huge effort to take me out of the mental structures I was born and raised in, out of my comfort zones, out of my community feelings. I do not want to transcend my identities, the accidents of my birth. Instead I tend to fiercely protect my identities like my gender, caste, religion, language and nationality. Thus your efforts to make me more open-minded and freethinking would make me descend further into my box.



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



THE DEAR BABY BUMP...

She tells it a thing or two

Knitting sweaters and shoes.

She read it a short story

And asked it not to worry.

She shopped pristine white lace

And sewed it on its pillow case.

She cleaned a little space in the house

Hoping to build a doll house.

She gathered all things adorable

She gathered all things sweet.

She made three baskets and she bought tiny clothes

Food, bath, bed and toys everything she chose.

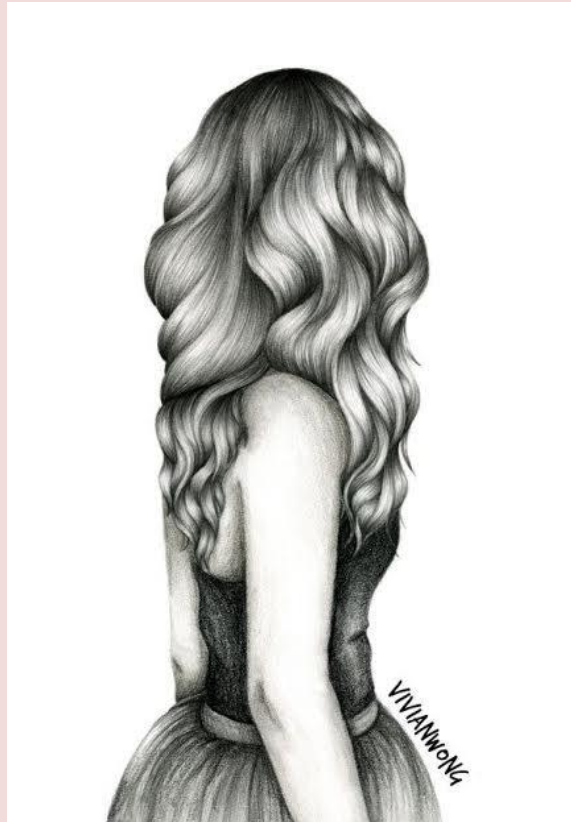
With great care, she designed colorful mitten
With joy, she read New Mother's Guide by Huggins.
And when she cried she made sure
It didn't hear or see her fear
She prayed each morning and every night
For it, she ate each and every bite
And when it kicked she had tears of joy
While everyone guessed 'it may be a boy.'
She now couldn't see her feet
Her eyes saw the baby bump as a treat.
And in her room, as she sang it a rhyme
She knew that now was the time.
In pain, she cried and lay almost dead
But when she saw its tiny head
She cried of joy and not of pain

She saw its face again and again.
When she woke up with pain to embrace the newborn

She felt a little empty now her baby bump was gone.
Never did she think separation will come
With the child in her arms, she still felt numb.
Her stomach lay flat all stretched and ugly
She had to feed first even if she was hungry.
She cared not for her own hair or face
But groomed her child with all grace.
In her heart, her baby never grew older
But she had greyed and become the old her.
She guarded the child fiercely
Loved it dearly
She gave it values so high
She gave it wings to fly
But never did she talk about her sacrifice
Her pain or hurt, her emotions have no price.



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



SHE CONCEIVED

She conceived,
post-midnight when
the earth was slowly
turning its face from
dark to grey to white

She named her conception,
housed the image of its face

in her bosoms like the ocean
shelves housed calcium oyster
shells which made pearls.

She concealed,
the news of its incubation
in the seal of her lips.

She protected its name
from speculations of the
curious world and evil eyes.

She waited,
with utmost patience,
(something which was
not in her nature) for it
to grow organs and limbs.
So, she could feel it taking
shape and crawling steps.

She delivered,
her idea in its full bodily form,
her original conception of
creating, supplying, sustainable
life support to her fellow
incubators

To protect the
dreams they conceived post-
midnight when the earth was
turning its face from
dark to grey to white.



Mahitha Kasireddi: She is from Hyderabad, India. She had been a writer with online magazines Youth Ki Awaaz. She is a former content director at Campus Diaries. Her poems have been published in literary journals such as GloMag, The Ink Drift Magazine, Unbound Emagazine and the Telegram Magazine by the Talking Books, Delhi and in The New Indian Express. She is the writing finalist of the Campus Diaries 25 Under 25 2016 National Contest. She's certified by the University of Iowa for completing the International Writing Program MOOC on How writers write fiction 2016: Storied Women. Her poems are also to be published in an upcoming anthology by Author Press India called Women Poetess: Within and Beyond Shore due to be out in 2017.



SONG OF DEPARTURE

I have seen the rains

I have painted the picture

of the dripping pain,

the iridescent rays of daydreams

have strummed rain on my guitar.

~chalat ~

the oar splashes against the

flowing water.

I have wandered through the rains,

seeking homelessness,

freedom from the walls of confinement

where the mirror reflects faces of strangers

and the blurred skyline of the city.

Life, like a lusty figure, shimmers at a distance

and I see myself,

a parched soul walking through the long rugged stretch,

beguiled by the mirage of happiness.

The raging sky stands in angst,

the storm tossed palm leaves mourn the tale of my loss and betrayal.

I have learnt to let all go,

yet, letting you go

has been the hardest of all.



Mallika Bhaumik: She had been a student of literature and did her masters in English Literature from the University of Calcutta. She is passionate about writing and many of her poems and stories have been published in National and International anthologies, well known magazines. She is an event planner by profession and is fond of music, travelling and cooking. She lives with her husband and sons in Kolkata and is a proud Kolkatan.



OPPRESSED

I am a loaded gun

I am a bird with folded wings

I know I'm the marked one

'Round my feet are imagined rings.

Any time I will burst forth and fly

Now on, I will crackle and not cry.



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.



AWESTRUCK BY NATURE

A few miles away from city limits into the country side

Nature was cold and silent a place anyone would love to visit

The blue skies above the snow-capped beautiful majestic mountains

No scorching sun yet the snow melting down the slopes

A home underneath the mountains with love and joy I guess

And a tree in solitude embraced by the passing wind

The fields with yellow flowers on either side of the road

Indicating the changing season around this place

The road less travelled? No traffic signals or traffic jams

Driving must be a pleasure in a road like this

The serene view of nature so inviting and inspiring

Sparkling and igniting the hidden creativity

Awestruck by the enticing nature I began to write

There's beauty as far as the eyes can see

When the roads taken with nature succeeds in

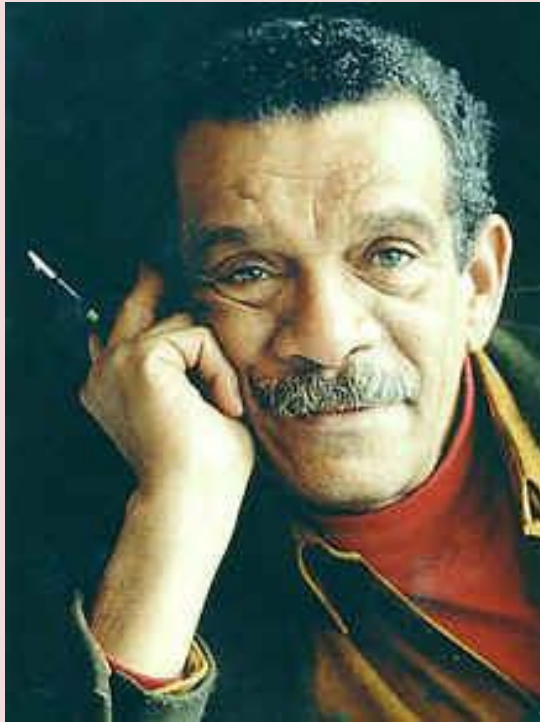
Reaching new heights when travelled with patience



Merlyn Alexander: I hail from Nagercoil, had my schooling and college there and did my post-graduation in Botany. Surrounded by nature all around our district with tall coconut trees fringed sea shores, beginning of the Western Ghats, paddy fields and coconut grove, rubber plantations, with some red cliff valleys and scattered mountainous

terrain, I feel blessed that nature has lots to offer for my poems. I'm an ardent lover of nature. Other than writing my hobbies include painting, craft, travelling, music, reading, and cooking. I'm a blogger and I have a cookery blog. I would love to publish a cookery book someday. My collection of poems in a book. Gimme some time.

www.alexanderskitchenrecipes.blogspot.com



TO DEREK

this write-up is dedicated to Derek Walcott, the poet extraordinary

"He saw the poetry in forlorn stations
under clouds vast as Asia, through districts
that could gulp Oklahoma like a grape,
not these tree-shaded prairie halts but space
so desolate it mocked destinations." In the world where
poets and so called intellectuals
Throng like unashamed swarm of bees
Seeking honey,
You stood like a monumental passage of grief,

You talked about home and exile,
Black women with shiny foreheads
Resplendent and oily,

The people in New York called you
The Mighty One,
A poet who had been profound and complicated,
To me, you are as long as your poems
Which made me travel to turquoise seas and white sands,
Palm trees I heard roaring in the air,
In your words the world seemed restless yet strong,
Passionate yet morbid,

You have made me find beauty in distant lands,
In wings of pelicans
And candy floss shaped clouds.



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

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



MEMORIES: HAIKU POEMS

III

The episodic configuration of life conceals

what lies ahead. Yet

I dream, I am at the seaside, all revealed.

IV

Standing waist-deep in the blue water in the innumerable
twilight

of green, sapphire, jade, emerald turquoise blue--
soothingly

caressing my limbs, I felt the ocean were my own private
aquarium.



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



TECHNOLOGY

There was a time not very long ago—
actually, in the years recently past
before the invention brigade hit town
and all items were manufactured to last.

That was the time, I remember it well
when all the friends you had were real and true;
when you were liked for being you and not
by the number of people following you.

Technological growth, I don't deny
has shaped the world for better today.

No one knows what tomorrow will bring, but for now, technology is here to stay.



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



QUARTER TO THREE

I'd look at the watch again

the time from 2:44 to quarter to three would

be the minute that never end

the hands in my watch would move at an excruciatingly
slow pace

the hands that would usually run around the field of clock
would no longer race

it was like one of those summer mornings

At the bus stop waiting for the bus

the heat would prick the forehead and every minute

would seem like a day

Quarter to three was when the time paused
the slices of clouds froze
And people stopped working
my legs ached waiting to run down
And eyes longed to see your glimpse



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



I walk down memory lane

Revisiting glimpses of life as I knew it

Loving parents, affectionate siblings

All create a mesh of memories,

bathing me in a warm rush of emotions,

so like the tears that follow.

Ruminating on the past, frowned upon by many

Works fine and dandy with me

My past is the world I escape to

When my present and the future

Overwhelm me

Childhood escapades, antics, holidays

With cousins, giggling with classmates

Behind teachers' backs and listening to grandma's tales,
made up all the time

to prepare us for life

Fighting and making up with brothers and sisters, a daily
circus,

leaving us feeling drained but happy, encircling us in an
unbroken bond

Hiding the hated glass of warm milk from my eagle eyed
mother who

Forces me to gulp it down,

all the while lecturing me on its benefits that escapes my
fretful mind

Maths help from my father,

An involuntary yawn escapes my errant mouth, earns a
scathing remark from him

Who was perfect in so many ways

My house. A heaven of laughter and silliness,

compounded by two adorable pets,

a frantic dog and a lazy cat whose antics

Were reruns of any Tom and Jerry cartoon

Where do I save these memories

If not in my heart

Don't tell me that that the present is what matters

I am smart, I know that

But I am me because of my past

So love me, my past and all



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



HERE KITTY KITTY

He looked and he rummaged
For what she wanted the most
Was it work, fame, attention,
Something that feels like love?

He could draw her to him
Once he found out
Dangling it like bait at her face
“Here kitty, kitty!”

She has what she wants already,
It angers and aches that she is beyond reach

So he hopes to leave her high-strung
Pull on one or more of her seven deadly sins.

But she just looks back emotionless
As if she knows exactly what he intended
Then looks away resuming her chatter
Puffing her cigarette, laughing away.



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



Live Life Directly,

Not through Books

Dale-Carengie self-help tips

you can't taste Hyderabad Briyani with a recipe book

Jack Daniels through an Advertisement.

Sitting or standing or lying down

you are Living Life.

Connect with Body,

Space and people

a hug, a touch, a smile

whisper, scream, cry, laugh

You don't have to prove

You are Living to anyone.



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



CORAL MOON

I wish grandma had an ornate wood box where she kept worn-out letters, well-thumbed trinkets and a jade necklace passed down through generations. I wish, I could tell you about the memories this box evokes long after she is gone.

But all Gran left behind is a hollowness that was once filled with last night's chapattis reheated to crisp and a wordless

tune that never failed to put my six-year-old eyes to easy
dreams.

family heirloom . . .

an unfinished poem

folded neatly



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



DON'T READ THIS SENTENCE.

Don't understand this meaning.

Don't interpret this link between words.

Don't interrogate each word
as having a separate existence
from this context.

Don't recall where you first heard,
or read these words as they
have no history.

They have not been written before.

They are new born, awaiting meaning.

They need maturity to fit in correctly.

Will have their wild times in places

where they shouldn't be, next to words

they will be embarrassed to recall.



Paul Brookes: He was shop assistant, security guard, postman, admin. assistant, lecturer, poetry performer, with "Rats for Love", his work included in "Rats for Love: The Book", Bristol Broadside, 1990. First chapbook was "The Fabulous Invention Of Barnsley", Dearne Community Arts,

1993. Read his work on BBC Radio Bristol, had writing workshop for sixth formers broadcast on BBC Radio Five Live. Recently published in Clear Poetry, Nixes Mate, The Bezzine, The Bees Are Dead and others. Forthcoming two illustrated chapbooks "The Spermbot Blues" published by OpPRESS (summer, 2017) and tentatively in autumn "The Headpoke" by Alien Buddha Press.



A SONG FOR HALLOWEEN

(Chorus)

Rattle them bones all down the line

Down the line, down the line

Rattle them bones all down the line

It's Halloween tonight

A skeleton walks in the town tonight

Town tonight, town tonight

A skeleton walks in the town tonight

Its Halloween once more

Chorus

He shakes his bones and nods his skull

Nods his skull, Nods his skull

He shakes his bones and nods his skull

Its Halloween once more

Chorus

He plays on his ribs like a xylophone

Xylophone, xylophone

He plays on his ribs like a xylophone

Its Halloween once more

Chorus

He shakes a leg bone back and forth

back and forth, back and forth

He shakes a leg bone back and forth

Its Halloween once more

Chorus

Skeletons like to dance all night

Dance all night, dance all night

Skeletons shake with all their might

It's Halloween once more

Chorus and fade away!



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 two sons and a daughter and 3 grandsons. He has written a number of technical papers, which were published internationally, before turning attention to writing poetry, short stories and a children's novel. He also founded The Young Poet Society. He has published a novel, "The Elfin Child," which is available through Amazon, Barnes and Noble and at www.elfinchild.com



I AM A LONELY ISLAND

I am a lonely island

let somebody discover me

I am encircled by water

let somebody discover me

I am a lonely beach

roam around me in naked feet

when the early morning's breeze

fly like birds

when the sky looks more like the sea water

bare naked, transparent, blue

when the fishes swim like
twinkling stars in aerobic style
Illuminating like glow worms
in dark night

Thou roam around me
in bare naked feet
to feel the sand dust
as if dew droplets all around
and water flowing like ferries
in search of shore-
your bare naked feet.



Prahallad Satpathy: He hails from Balangir district of Odisha (India) is a bilingual poet. He writes both in Odia and English. So far he has published three anthologies of poetry in Odia to his credit. 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. By profession, Dr. Satpathy is a Reader in Economics, at present in Rajendra autonomous college, Balangir (Odisha). He has represented Odisha Sahitya Academy as honorary member for two consecutive terms.



ALONE

Alone we come into the world, even as twins to
quintuplets,

We are unique identities,

Reflecting just a tiny particle of the all pervading Entity!

I thought i came alone, was alone, felt alone, till I received
Grace at the most unexpected moment,

I am blessed,

The One is with me,

I am not alone!

I see Him in everyone and everything,

So, i may be alone, but never lonely!



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



Her heart

A temple of love

Enter with prayer

Offer unconditional love

Get back love and care.

Enter with lust

She closes her heart

Can crush or ruin

Can't touch her being

It is hidden in her heart.



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.



LIFE IN PAIN AND PLEASURE

Sitting alone on the sea-shore

Under the midnight sky

Looking at the floating clouds

And the twinkling gems

I can forget all my pains.

I keep walking on the shore endless,

I can fly like a moth

I can sing like a cuckoo in the forest

In her mellifluous voice,

I can ride on the fields of heaven

On the wings of my fancy,

I can transform my tears into joys
Hiding all my sorrows and troubles
In the vast open land
Under the midnight sky
My vision search the lighthouse of my eyes
I can hear the cry of my soul
I can hear the roars of my growing pain
Gloomy thoughts revisit again
In my tender heart
Spreading their branches old
Life flickers like a candle
Tender and brief
Sitting alone on the sea-shore
I can hear the cry of my soul.



Preety Bora: The poetess, Mrs Preety Bora started writing from her College days, hails from a beautiful state " Assam "(India). She lives in Golaghat with her son and husband. Nature inspires her to write poetry. She writes in both languages : English and Assamese (Mother tongue). Her poems has been published in various anthologies and magazines in India and in foreign countries. She also wins various poetry contests in India organized by various groups.



THIS TENDENCY TO DIE

Dedicated to Glory Sasikala's pet rooster, Chinkie, who died on May 15, 2017

Pets are prone to it. As are grandchildren.

And the little birdies and kittens

You bring in from the cold.

All you can do is rage - in impotent disbelief,

And sorrow, and anger, and desire, and hope,

And go through what they call the four

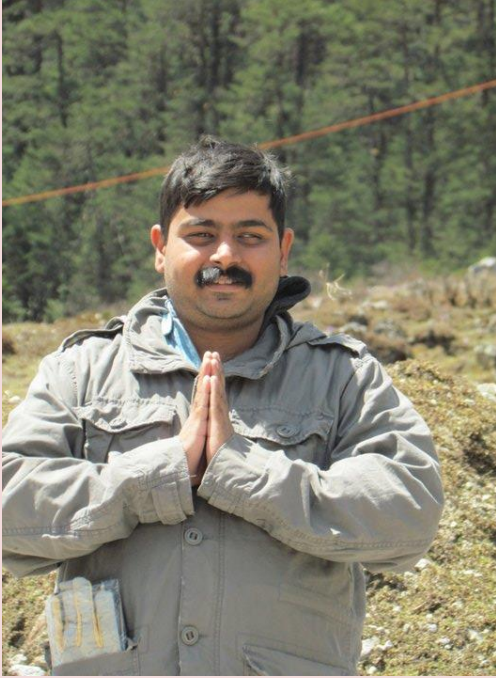
Stages of grief, but what man was so heartless

To coolly count while a woman smashed

Her bangles on her wrists, fresh-widowed?

But it's a tendency we cannot avoid,

And while we may clamour, in foolish lust
For the hanging or shooting or electrocution
Of someone we have been taught to fear;
Our own papa or hubby or Sox or Puppy
We were never taught. Oh yes, there it is
In the Vedas and Quran and the Confucian texts
And maybe we could use it for our own time,
But for papa or hubby or Sox or Puppy
We never could learn, never could be taught.
All you get is vague notions that are inadequate,
So inadequate, to fill that rising emptiness
Called life hereafter. And yet we fill it and
'move on' till someone else expresses, unwantedly,
This strange tendency in us to die.



Raamesh Gowri Raghavan: He moonlights as an award-winning copywriter by day and daylights as an award-winning poet by night, and sandwiches an archaeology course, running two literary clubs, astronomy, the occasional trek, some peer counselling for suicide prevention, and learning languages in between. He thinks he is funny, but his friends vehemently disagree.



MY PARROT, I WILL WAIT, WAIT

I waited till dusk,
Breeze blowing alone,
Cool moon partakes of
My restive composite.
My parrot, reigning queen
In my spacious home garden
Failed today, know not why,
“Unheard melodies are sweeter”
I am eager for its chirping;

A dulcet for the day.

Green liveried, for good

Comradeship as if soothsayer

Ready for my angst.

Perchance moved to a different

Branch, for a while: new faces,

New invitatory notes quite for many;

Ere, long ago, you have come from

afar, with broken leg: tended by me.

Memory so painful dipped in unreceding

Casket. Now it is past eight. May be in the

Blessed morn you will give a wake-up call.

I will wait, wait.



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



SPRING FEVER

One morning in spring
I was feeling very low,
A walk in the park, I thought
Would make my spirits soar.

The birds were chirping
The flowers were in full bloom,
Seeing the beauty all around
Melted away my gloom.

In songs and flights
In nips and bites

Love was in the air,
In the flowers, in the pollen
In the petals that had fallen
Love was everywhere.

All were roaming in pairs
Whether humans, animals or birds,
They were speaking the language of love
In silence, caresses or words.

Spring the season of love
As ordained by mother nature,
Was holding in its thrall
Almost every creature.

In this sea of happiness
I was feeling very lonesome,
Desperately I looked for a partner
Who was loving as well as winsome.

I saw a pretty lady
Sitting under a tree,
With a book in her hand
She appeared quite busy.

I sat down beside her
Looking at her visage,
Was this angel face for real
Or was she a mirage?

I had just lit 18 candles
I felt I was ready to make someone mine
Would this lovely creature
Agree to be my Valentine?

Suddenly closing the book
She looked at me,
"The last pages are missing
What happens? Can someone tell me?"

I had read the book many a time
I told her the ending,
The story was a tragedy
The denouement heart rending.

Tears in her lovely eyes, she asked
"Why are all love stories so tragic?"
Is it because after sometime
Love loses its magic?"

"Love that is true
Love that is pristine,
Is everlasting," I said
Taking her hand in mine.

And thus began
The love story of our life,
The saga continues,
Even though we are man and wife.

Now when I ask her,

"You chose me because my persona was riveting?"

"No, silly, " she says smiling

"It was the season of spring."



Ramendra Kumar: What would you call a person who is a writer by passion, a story teller by obsession, a mentor by aspiration and a communicator by profession? You would probably call him insane. Well, we call him Ramen.

www.ramendra.in



STRANGERS

We meet; two silent landscapes.

intimacies, hidden waters,

lost in the speed of details.

I wave my hand; The slowness
of a wall clock in an abandoned home.

She smiles; A smile measured secretly
in the excess of togetherness.

A letter never meant to be read
enveloped in our indifferent gazes.

We stay still; like a moment between
two trains, crossing.

The two trains part,
our seats exchange.



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



ice dark streets
merging frozen lakes,
somewhere some steel grey river toots
kick-alive breadcrumbs,
begging memories past

Goddess,
exhausted nightrain,
pointless tonight...
dreams emerge
drowning out our souls,

snows,
warm productive kitchens,
the blending of lives,
gone years, tired
winters,
killer wind
stabbing passersby,
knives between the trees

people line up
Eskimos blind from birth,
water paintings wet with organs,
paintings of Manhattan,
only lofts of words,
loves slipped into shyly
no other reason than ice...
habit often mistaken for love

roads,
lakes,
winters,
birthdays of empty vapor-
these loves of this life
merge tonight...
knives between the trees



Robert Feldman: Born in Paterson, New Jersey, Robert Feldman was inspired at an early age by members of Paterson's literary tradition. He has organized and participated in poetry readings, produced and hosted a community issues news hour and a biweekly bebop jazz radio program on KDNA-FM. Robert was instrumental in publishing influential writers such as Drummond Hadley

and Michael Gregory, and collaborated with Lawrence Ferlinghetti on his Bisbee publication, “Mule Mountain Dreams.” He continues to write, paint, and play tabla, besides working with high-school students as faculty advisor of the Park Vista Writers Workshop.



image designed by www.imikimi.com

A CHOSEN ROSE

Here, I have this rose
That for you I have chosen
From my lonely garden,
It carries the message of love
Just like it was a dozen!

Receive this red rose
That still retains its aroma

And reflects the love

I deeply feel for you!

Love, come now to me,

Let's not waste any time

That life is very short

And the difference in age

Really does not matter

When there is real love

Between both of us!



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



DREAM CHILD

As I wore the garland

Of thy arms,

Thy soft velvety cheeks rubbed mine.

I inhaled the aroma of milk

In your tongue, in your teeth less mouth!

My happiness giggled in thy dimples!

And with thee I crawled

The miles of moments.

Time has grown long with thy hair,

That I carefully combed and ornated

Thy braid with stars of my love.

You danced Merrily!

My heart danced, oh it danced
With thy happy feet!
Your charisma bewildered me!
And I became the prisoner
Of thy charm!!
As I ran to arrest thee in my arms,
You disappeared!
your giggles kept crooning in my ears.
I jumped from sleep and found
The dark night in my empty arms!
And realized, you are born of my words, Not my womb!
You, my dream child,
Breathing in my hummed lullabies!



Sanhita Sinha: She is a native of Tripura, is a teacher, a bilingual poet. Her poems got published in different national and international anthologies, journals & magazines like "Heavens above poetry below," "A haiku Treasury," "In our own words," "Scaling heights," "Epitaphs," "Milenge," "IFLAC PEACE ANTHOLOGY," "BETRAYAL," KIRNOKAL," "ANTOHKORON," "RUPANTAR," "PURBHABASH," "GALAXY," etc. Apart from writing she is actively engaged in cultural activities too. She is a regular artist of television and radio too.



MASKS

Countless are the masks that we wear, the roles that we
play

Every second, every moment of our lives.

Now rising, now diving, now traipsing

Through life with fake smiles.

Now darting, like wounded animals maddened by pain.

Running after mirages, hankering after gains.

Hopping about, fuming, imploding, frothing at the mouth,
exploding

Like rats squeaking and scuttling about in the darkness,
blundering.

At times like a boat quivering and groaning

In the grip of elements.

Writhing in a death agony

Backpacking through the wilderness

In the jungle wild, in a maelstrom caught

With apprehension taut.

And yes, at times gorging on cakes of all makes

Sitting in the patio of a five star hotel

Fantasizing about vacationing on Mars

As a beggar, feelings masked, nurses his scars

And a turbulent gale shakes his soul.

While the turquoise blue Sea hums out its secrets

Unmasked.



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



It's been a long while

Since he boarded the procession in style-

The white horse the shining chariot

From the bar that was called Mariott.

Drunk he was, I don't think he remembered

Towards the chariot he strutted and staggered

He climbed upon it without realising

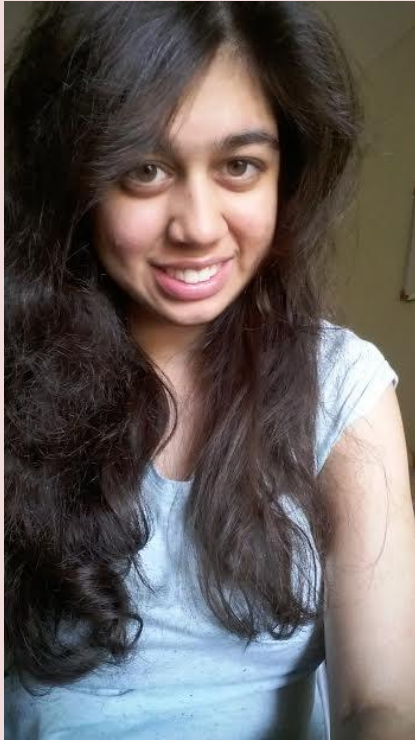
While I stood and watched, it was terrorising.

The world bestowed me with the title widow

I was dumbstruck, with nowhere to go

I knew this would happen to him

His forever drunken stupor would let eternal sleep take toll over him.



Sara Bubber: I am 19 years old going on 20 this year on June 23rd. I am a student of Second Year Human Development and Family Studies (soon to be in Third Year) in The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda. I started writing poems properly when I was 15. I love reading books, mostly Love Stories, Mythology (Amar Chitra Kathas and novels), History of the Mughal Era, etc. In my leisure time I listen to Hindi songs and watch movies, again in Hindi. I love playing with my dogs and just watching them be themselves.



HEAVY RUMBLINGS GATHER IN FORMATION

Careening across galactic plasma
comes a blue liquid globe
glowing with the waters of life
in our time of strife
to douse us
with just shy of another flood.

Shake, rattle, and roll loose
the marbles
of our madness

as all these rocks
in our brain
that ignite fires
across the earth
are reduced to dust,
are scorched to ash,
are brought to the edge of chaos,
guaranteeing a higher state
of order
right around the bend
as we begin
to rise.

Orange is the color of salvation,
hot in the veins,
printed on the page,
ripe in the heart,
ready for evolution

as a sign

from the clouds.



Scott Thomas Outlar: He hosts the site 17Numa.wordpress.com where links to his published poetry, fiction, essays, interviews, reviews, and books can be found. He serves as an editor for The Blue Mountain Review, Walking Is Still Honest Press, The Peregrine Muse, and Novelmasters.



Cody Lyon: She is an artist, painter, and singer/songwriter who works at Buffalo Woman Ranch in Colorado. More of her work can be found here: <https://www.facebook.com/cody.lyon.79>



Translation of Nida Fazli's 'Waalid ki Wafaat Par' in English as 'On Father's Death'

On Your death

I didn't come to recite fateha

Because I know

You cannot die

Whoever had spread the news of your death

is a liar

Was it you when

A dried leaf, blown by the wind was broken

My eyes are

seized in your sight till now

Whatever I see

I think

It is the same

Your world which was based on both good and bad name

Nothing has been changed till now

Your hands

Still breathes in my fingers

Whenever I pick pen and paper to write anything

I see you sitting on my chair

Whatever blood I have in my veins

that is yours

Flows with all failures and successes

Hidden in my voices

is your mind

You are in my sickness

You are in my helplessness

Whoever had written your name on your grave

is a liar

I am buried in your grave

You are alive in me

Whenever you get time recite fateha on it.



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



"Sunset on steroids" by Suvojit Banerjee

CATHARSIS

The season in my part of the world
clings to summer

that has torn through the knots
with bleeding wrists

yet autumn hangs by the door
watching her desperate escape

and does nothing. The helpless

glances, the imploring, the vigorous
struggling

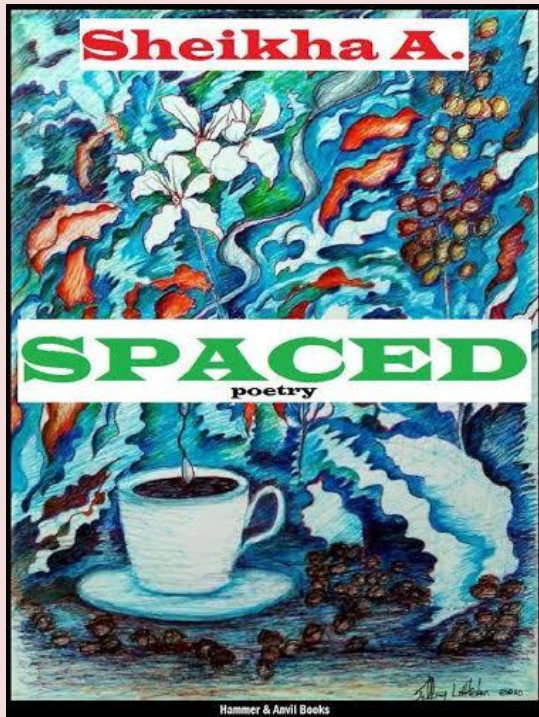
but winter arrives with a bag
full of the demanded bounty,

digs deep its nails into summer,

dragging her away, limp and drained,
to wither away for the rest

of a new cycle. In my world,
I skip seasons;

and cling to what I like best.



Sheikha A.: She is from Pakistan and United Arab Emirates. Her work has appeared in over 80 literary venues both print and online. She edits poetry at eFiction India. More about her can be found on her blog sheikha82.wordpress.com



A lawful pen draws lawless earth
And I vote for the law,
Of the jungle fallen for Kingdom come,
Where man rules the world..

Democratising borders of borderlands lands
Taxing the poor off their empty hands,
Slicing flesh in the name of fair trade,
Oh what have we become?

The pen that defeated the mighty sword,
Printing laws torturing weaker souls,

Must rise again, in deeper thought
To preserve the impermanence of humanity.

Piercing the lands with the ink of law,
I ask before you vote,
To preserve the jungle before building a kingdom,
Where the world needs to be conquered.



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

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



STREET LIFE

Long winding roads

remote and borderless

There seemed to be no end

no completion

A street light here

A street light there

Looking into a deep void in between

Darkness glimmering

in an all-enveloping embrace

Lights where are you
Streetlights showing the way
like small pinpoints of success
in between bouts of darkness
Darkness which has a habit of recurring
in the ways of life's wavering
But solid and sound
The only respite being
the solitary street lights
lending their solidarity
To the deep and endless well called life



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



PLAY

On attaining surrealisation,
I wrote a play and populated it
with dead, dying, drying
characters, seeing darkness
has an enlightening purpose.

Using my text as pretext,
they squandered my words.
Her voice was mine, but
her eyes were mordant fire.
Though his lines were mine,
his smile cracked up
in devilish confinement.

Their goals weren't mine,
they spoke a decadent dialogue,
brooking no director's touch,
drinking in my words like acid
that burnt their guts, and so mine.

They missed me at curtain call,
a puddle beneath the feet
of my weakest character...



Shreekumar Varma: He is an Indian author, playwright, newspaper columnist and poet. He received the R. K. Narayan Award for Excellence in Writing in English in 2015. He is known for the novels Lament of Mohini, Maria's Room, Devil's Garden: Tales Of Pappudom, The Magic Store

of Nu-Cham-Vu and the historical book for children, Pazhassi Raja: The Royal Rebel Born as HH Prince Punartham Thirunal of the Travancore Royal Family, he is the great great grandson of the artist Raja Ravi Varma and grandson of Regent Maharani Sethu Lakshmi Bayi, the last ruling Maharani of Travancore. He is married to Geeta Varma (poet, teacher and columnist) and has two children, Vinayak and Karthik.



LOVE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

A booming flower

Smiled at me

In the garden of my home

Looking at me!

What is the reason

O' dear girl

That has created smile on your face

Your hair turning curls!

Why you dance like butterfly

Always jump high and high

Without any occasion

You celebrate your life?

Even in the scorching sunlight

Your face looks shiny and bright

What has happened to you

You're even awake at night!

I simply smiled for a moment

Was listening to all those questions

Only one answer I had

I met my love man!

When love enters someone's life

It changes the ways to survive

Without any reason

You want to live for as long as someone's life!

The little flower then smiled

I understood now dear child

Love is such a word

That makes you live with pride!!!



Sonia Gupta: She is an oral pathologist and senior lecturer in a dental institute. She has published two anthologies in English and two in Hindi. She has also contributed to several anthologies, and is a regular contributor on GloMag. She has received the Nari gaurav samman, Yug surbhi samman, Prem sagar samman, Women of the year samman, sahitay gaurav samman in hindi literature awards.



Submitted wholeheartedly,
he savored like a predator,
he left leaving me with restlessness,
so much to say so much to convey,
all remained within my heart,
searching for love,
finding only pain and violation of dignity,
but nothing seems wrong,
tried to reason to get answer,
but love is beyond it all,
every moment I love him more,
as last hope of salvation,
one-sided love gives a taste of death,

but I wait for next time,
hoping my love will reach him,
and my predator will turn into lover.



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

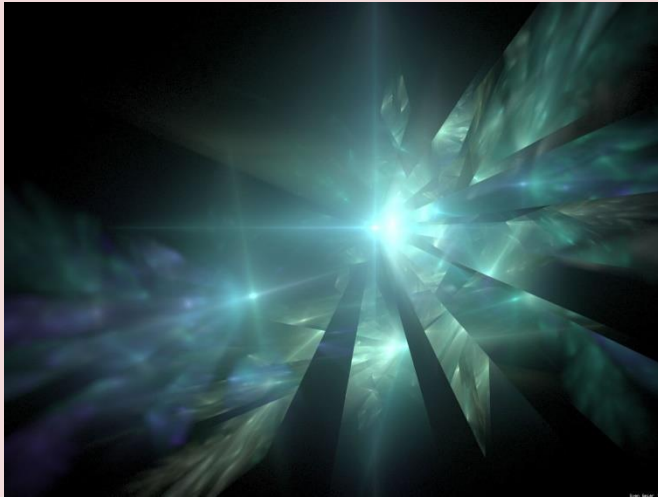


image courtesy: Sven Geier, USA

ANIMA

on that primal dark, a chasm awaits.

Inebriate titans, sub-human

dwarfs and beasts from the other-worlds.

I am scared; I am a man of flesh

are you my anima I am trying to save?

I can't let you fall into that abyss

my piece, my peace ! My sole soul!

I feel you deeper than the

philosopher's muse. Width that

exceeds poet's ecstatic verge;

Leave the door open, I am you
your red-book of dreams,
you are my ancient myths of soul.
you gravitate my silken space
and I grind you to shimmering pieces silt.



Sudeep Adhikari: is a structural engineer/Lecturer from Kathmandu, Nepal. His recent publications were with; Beatnik Cowboys, After the Pause, Poetry Pacific, Silver Birch Press, Outlaw Poetry and The Bees are Dead. He digs beat poetry, punk rock, hip-hop, science and good beer.



ELUSIVE

Just a beautiful thought
Precious tremulous dear bought
Up about for a fleeting moment
Oh just hovered for a nanosecond
Flitted across as if a wisp
All subtle without any lisp
Born from where I knew not
Recalling it tied me up in knots
Into inaccessible places it hides
Does not come forth even with gentle chides

Floats away in every stage nascent
Unable to hold on to even for a second
Fleet of foot in every bit
Could not latch on to it
Desperate to disapparate
Swirls twirls and pirouettes
Leaves without any trembling trace
Leaving me to grapple with my mental brace
Oh if only I could hold onto the thought
Paeans I could write embellishing its lot
But bent upon it is in its houdini act
Beyond my control is the inescapable fact .



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



A mother, wanting her sons to learn about their motherland, takes them on a journey across Bengal in a local train. Following are the two generations' translation of what the train says as it rattles along.

The Train's Lament

Dharam Dhooroom Harrumph,

Engineer, you didn't oil my joints enough.

Dhichuk Dhichuk Dhantanadee,

Help, my knees have arthritis

And my wheels want to escape far from me!

Chants the Train across Bengal's Plains...

Watch me go rushing, rushing, rushing,

Steaming and puffing and gushing, gushing, gushing.

Onwards ho, never flagging, never lagging.

Hear my horn blow - bragging, bragging, bragging -

Of a man-made machine that's tirelessly chugging,
chugging, chugging;

Carrying people, parcels, letters and anything for the
lugging, lugging, lugging.

You may hear me moaning, groaning and grumbling;

You may feel me shivering, shuddering and trembling;

Pay no heed, that's just my metallic body rattling and
rumbling.

Rocketing past towns; but through Bengal's fertile plains
keenly gliding,

Absorbing God's kind grace in the sunlit paddy ripening -

Glimmering, quivering, whispering - humbling.

Such a beautiful land is your country,

Dear children, listen to its stories of sacrifice and bravery,

Know the great souls whose deeds wrought its history.

Look at the farmers, their oxen - tilling and toiling,
To feed people regardless of creed and race,
Waking up to face hard working days.
To earn a meal for their family and eke out a few grace...



Sumita Dutta: She is a photographer and the proprietor of Adlsh Photo Art. She has a degree in Fine Arts (Painting) from Chitrakala Parishad, Bangalore. She loves writing both poetry and prose. She resides in the southern end of Chennai with her two sons, her father, a cat and a dog. Find her blog at: <https://zippythoughts.wordpress.com/>



CHEERING RAINS

First showers---

Sudden and fierce

Riding on a rough wind

black with fury

Rattled and kicked the tiles and sheets

of the shanty town;

Then the molten sky turned

Grayish-brown;

It rained for fifteen minutes only

Welcomed lustily by the street kids

And the fat kids vociferously;

After-summer rain!
No season gets such a warm
annual welcome
from the slums and the sky-scrapers!



Sunil Sharma: Mumbai-based, Sunil Sharma is a widely-published writer. He has published three collections of poetry, one collection of short fiction, one novel and co-edited five books so far. He is a recipient of the UK-based Destiny Poets' inaugural Poet of the Year award---2012. Recently his poems were published in the UN project: Happiness: The Delight-Tree-2015.



SOLITUDE

Waking up to the cold sweat of solitude

Dripping wet, knowing that I had slept

With my various nemeses

Jostling in the dank dark.

Choosing the nearest and dearest,

Seeking the caresses of the myriad grabbing

Hungry fingers, a symbiotic two way quench

Lolling in the luxury of another's need

Almost basking in the mesmerizing sluggishness

The importance of being needed

Is a starker reality

Than the truth of the vows that bound.



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



Seated 'lady like' and demure
diagonally opposite you
We the convent indoctrinated
Skilled in social niceties
Your head shook at the right moment
"No thanks I am done"
At the mention of another petit four
But our cores throbbed
In unison
Wanting to devour each other
Instead of the canapés on offer
The heaving bosom saw your discreet glance

And wanted to dance loose for you
But for the constricting apparel
That came in the way
The self-conscious legs crossed again
Flashes of you spreading them
On verdant lawn
Pounding in open blue sky
Settled on that sofa across
You never did ask how hungry I was
And I wrapped in bourgeois propriety
Never did tell



Vandana Kumar: She is a bon vivant who loves travelling, working with young minds and exploring creative possibilities beyond the ordinary. She has done her masters in History from Lady Shri Ram College and her Diplôme from the Alliance Française de Delhi. She is a French teacher in a couple of schools and private institutes and also translates for various publishing houses and corporates. An active member of various quiz clubs across Delhi-she has a soft corner for Kolkata where she spent her childhood. Her various passions include singing, playing the piano, composing music and participating in local antakshari competitions. She describes herself as a dreamer...a wanderer and a certified incurable romantic...the romantic moorings worsened with all her fancy French studies. Poetry for her is her stress buster -her flight of fancy-and strangely – what keeps her rooted too.



SCHOOL

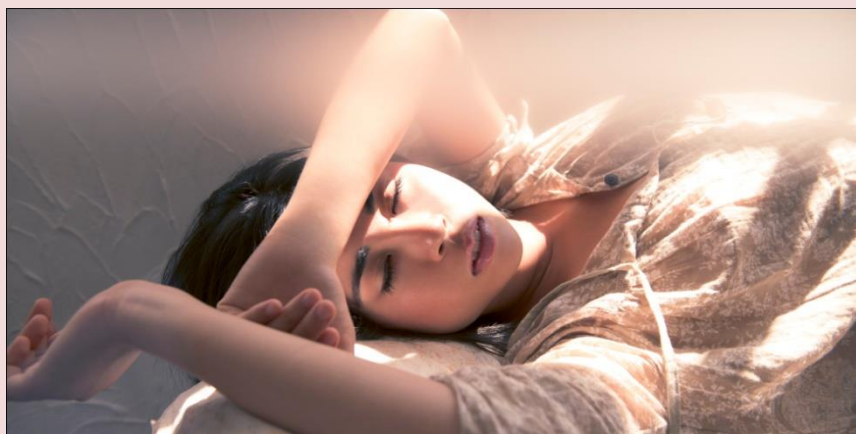
School was a graph
with axis tilted to
suit comfort
and innocence,
my compass
traces perfect circles
of imperfect joy
that came from sharing lunch,
losing erasers and sweating
after a kho-kho match.
The rulers remain broken,

first crushes still alive,
and last bench giggles
still play in old tape recorders
decorated with incomplete homework.

The corridors tell me
as many stories as the
classrooms do,
but farewell still remains my favourite
memory,
for ending a journey
and to walk towards new beginnings
meant creating another universe
with blunt pencils marks
that were replaced by ink.



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.



LET THIS POEM WRITE ITSELF TONIGHT

Let this poem write itself tonight

As I gaze at you sleeping on my bed--

Watch it grow through simple images

Undisturbed by dubious similes

And mixed metaphors, trying to capture

The silent loveliness I see.

Let the landscape not be crowded

With the usual clichés

As I stretch and touch your hair.

Let it not blow hot, blow cold like all of us
As you turn and hug a pillow to your breasts--
The poem is written. I hold my breath.



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



THREE CAT IMAGES

- kitten -

A tail twitches from a skate
alone and mottled with rust,
on its side in a closet, its worn,
hard rubber wheels face out
so that every time the kitten passes
they move, scraping in protest
of memory.

- watch cat -

Mischief walks the night literally

on cat feet that assert.

He keeps one eye

(his only one)

On the grounds. Curving

around corners, he rubs

an arched back

against the stucco wall.

- alley cat -

I lost George twice: once

to old age

when I buried him whole,

and the second

to a boiler room fan

when I buried him in pieces.



William P. Cushing: Bill Cushing continues writing, teaching, and reading in the Los Angeles area, but for now he returns to some feline encounters. The last segment ("George") was recently expanded for two anthologies (Paw Prints in Verse and Purrfect Companions). Bill has lived in numerous states on the East Coast as well as the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico before relocating to Glendale, California to marry, where the couple now raise their son, Gabriel. Although now a college English instructor, Bill has driven trucks and taxi cabs, tended bar, sold electronics, but mostly worked as an electrician on commercial and Naval vessels following a stint in the U. S. Navy.



SPLENDOUR IN THE LAST BED OF DUST

I have discovered in graves
A splendour inexplicable
A peace eternal
Transcending mortal woes
Where the dead are beyond affliction
Where feathers and flowers
Surround the heavy sleeper
And fill the void of solitude.

I have discovered such lessons
In the last bed of dust

The grass, the stones, and the epitaphs
The shades caused by the leaves
The soothing summer breeze
Home to memories long dead
The whisper inaudible of the spirits
The birds chirping in an ecstasy
Residing there for free
Wish I to be covered under the clay there
And make a home under the banyan tree.



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



ciao! 😊