

GloMag
GLOWING

*Monthly Online Poetry and Prose
Magazine*

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Edited and Published by Glory Sasikala

GAYATRI MAVURU



Title of the Cover Pic: Poise

POISE

Don't get glued to your fears

Rather get chained to your purpose,

Yes, storms of negativity

Came to wash off your hopes,

But, learn to swim

In the streams of your own tears.

Sacrifice your comforts

For a while

Don't get hypnotised

By the negative forces.

Though sitting restlessly

Under the storms of negativity,

Choose not to be shakeable or breakable.

Remember,

You are stronger than the storm.

About The Artist

Gayatri Mavuru is a Bhubaneswar-based poet, artist, social activist, choreographer, educator and social entrepreneur. She is the founder and Director of Cherry Blossoms Pre-School. She is also the founder and a managing trustee of Sri Gayatri Vidya Vikas Educational Trust, which deals with women empowerment and education for the underprivileged, and promotes art, culture, literature and heritage. Her book 'Sizzling Verses - Drizzling Colours' presents a unique blend of poems and paintings, attesting her skill in using the pen and the paintbrush with equal finesse. Her works have been published in various national and international magazines. She has also contributed poems to more than ten anthologies. Recently, she got featured in the W&Art, a magazine featuring contemporary women in art. Recently she have compiled and edited two national Anthologies entitled Vasudha and Vasudha 2. She

describes herself as a painter turned poet, since the colours on her palette inspire her to paint her verses.

ARTIST STATEMENT

My website is under construction.

I have been working on canvas for 6 years, though previously I used to do only pen and pencil sketches. I was afraid of using colours as they may destroy my works, but one fine day, I dared to face my fear of using colours. Thus my journey had started with colours. While using colours, I feel so positive and motivated. I don't paint to impress others. I just paint to feel relaxed as painting has been a meditation tool for me.

Particularly while doing this painting, I was flooded with many negative thoughts, but I decided to be unshakeable. It's a life-changing painting for me. Whenever I look at this painting, I recall those series of events that have made me more strong and unbeatable.

ABOUT GLOMAG

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

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

~ ***Glory Sasikala***

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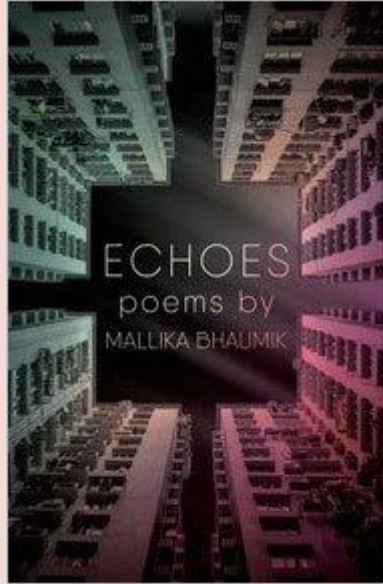
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BACKGROUND MUSIC: The River by Anand Shankar

BOOK OF THE MONTH

Echoes

By Mallika Bhaumik



Book Available At

<https://www.amazon.in/Echoes-Mallika-Bhaumik/dp/B074G1DP3X>



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mallika Bhaumik had been a student of literature and has a Master's degree from the University of Calcutta in English Literature. She is passionate about writing and has contributed in many national and international anthologies and e-magazines. Her writings have been published by Rock Pebbles, Cafe Dissensus, Duanes Poetree and Glomag.

REVIEW BY GLORY SASIKALA

It's my pleasure to be reviewing the work of one of my favourite contemporary poets, Mallika Bhaumik.

The title of her book of poems, "Echoes" is significant. There is in these poems fragrance that brings back precious memories...

Of love lost and found

But then,

That was a tale of another time,

When our lips promised eternity

And love chimed

Sometimes of memories attached to object/s

bills, receipts, prescriptions,

warranty of proud purchases

that at times perhaps, defined us,

bits and pieces of our humdrum life

lying randomly

Sometimes capturing a moment...

*Innumerable moments,/surge towards my rugged
shore/leaving behind strewn sea shells/as wept over
memories...*

The passing of time...

How time flies by!

And today

with salt and pepper hair,

We sit in a cafeteria

watching the fading hues

Of romance buried under layers of daily humdrum...

Bottomless depth,

Would you dive to retrieve,

Pearls in oyster shells

Desires heartfelt?

The vivid hued corals reefs

Passionate yearnings

The hurt and tears

Of yonder years,

lost in the labyrinth of daily grind,

Often struggling to resurface?

Deft sketches that stir the child in us...

How I miss the paper boats

That ferried our wishes

Through the waterlogged dingy lane,

And our shy foolish smiles

Eyeing each other

Watching them sail!

And as I read these poems, I recall incidents from my own life, my own long-lost love, joys and sorrows. That is the beauty of her poetry. The poet makes us aware of how similar we all are, how alike our feelings and experiences, how universal!

By sharing her experiences with us, she reminds us that yes, we're all one, that life is a sea of emotions and we're like boats on that sea, being tossed sometimes and overcome by the waves, but sometimes calm and serene too.

Every boat has its destination, its place of rest and peace, and while we wish that Mallika too find her destination, we also hope that she continue to dip into her repertoire of memories, feelings and experiences and continue to enthrall us with her poetry.



THESE ARE A FEW OF MY FAVORITE THINGS

Bill Cushing has been writing poetry since 1987 but has been sailing since the age of five (1957). Bill returned to college after serving in the Navy. Because of that personal history, he was known as the "blue collar" poet by classmates at the University of Central Florida. Graduating with an MFA from Goddard College, Bill moved to Glendale, California where he now lives with his wife and son, teaches college English, and continues writing. He has been honored with a Pushcart nomination as well as being named one of the Top Ten Poets in L.A. last year.



Name: Bill Cushing

Occupation: College English instructor

Books/e-Books: Notes and Letters (chapbook); A Former Life (to be released in 2019); YouTube page

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCcBq6xyF20DFZNugaM_1x6Q

Favorite book: Earthly Powers by Anthony Burgess

Favorite movie: Casablanca

Favorite song: Life During Wartime (Talking Heads)

Favorite Hobby: Sailing

Favorite color: Blue

Favorite sport: To do: fencing; to watch: baseball

Favorite food: Italian

Life philosophy: "Life is maintenance"

One liner describing you: "The man who loves good music, good Scotch, and a good argument" (Thanks to Tom Moss)

Favorite holiday destination: These days, San Diego

Favorite quote: "True liberty means having to hear things we don't necessarily want to hear" (George Orwell)

Birthday: March 7

Sign off message: Any book not worth reading twice probably wasn't worth reading the first time. (paraphrased from Oscar Wilde)

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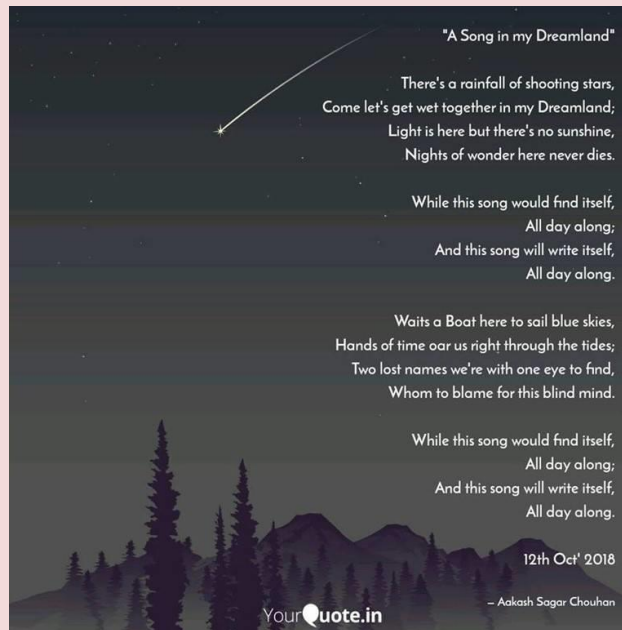
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A SONG IN MY DREAMLAND

There's a rainfall of shooting stars,
Come let's get wet together in my Dreamland;
Light is here but there's no sunshine,
Nights of wonder here never dies.

While this song would find itself,
All day along;

And this song will write itself,
All day along.

Waits a Boat here to sail blue skies,
Hands of time oar us right through the tides;
Two lost names we're with one eye to find,
Whom to blame for this blind mind.

While this song would find itself,
All day along;
And this song will write itself,
All day along.



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

Since then, he has contributed to several anthologies. He has published the sequel of “Between Moms and Sons- II” with Geethamma this year.



THE RAINBOW WHO SAVED MY LIFE

The last rainbow that appeared,
recognized me from my eyes
he told me that I survived the war
and that he saved my life
he said that back in my homeland
he can't be seen when he appears,
instead he helps the angels to paint by
Marking the children with my colours
he painted red on the ones that died
he painted orange on the hungry ones
he painted yellow on the ill ones

he painted green on the orphaned ones
he painted blue on the heavily wounded ones
he painted indigo on the ones with last breath
and lastly, he painted me with violet
to live between all of my old friends

Who died, and I did not



Ahmad Al-Khatat: He was born in Baghdad. From Iraq, he came to Canada at the age of 10, the same age when he wrote his very first poem back in the year 2000. He also has

been published in several press publications and anthologies all over the world. And he currently studies at the Concordia University in Montreal. He recently has published his two chapbooks “The Bleeding Heart Poet” and “Love On The War’s Frontline” with Alien Buddha Press. It is available for sale on Amazon. Most of his new and old poems are also available on his official page Bleeding Heart Poet Copyright on Facebook.



WELCOME SADNESS

You entered unbidden through the closed door.

The tight windows and the thick walls did not stop you.

You appeared out of nowhere and settled everywhere.

As a thick layer you spread out on the carpet.

You immediately settled comfortably in every corner.

Later you sat down in an armchair to mix the bitterness of coffee with tears.

In the evening you curled up on the couch and you put in stillness.

Only a drought flipped listlessly through the pages of favorite books.

In melancholy eyes the emptiness grew.

The last signs of a smile disappeared on the pale face.

Worries bent the figure to the ground.

The silence sounded like an intrusive turret.

Even the phone was tacit as if it had forgotten about the existence of good news

Please, go away and take all troubles and worries with you.

I know, you have to visit my home sometimes.

When you leave me, you will make place for the joy.



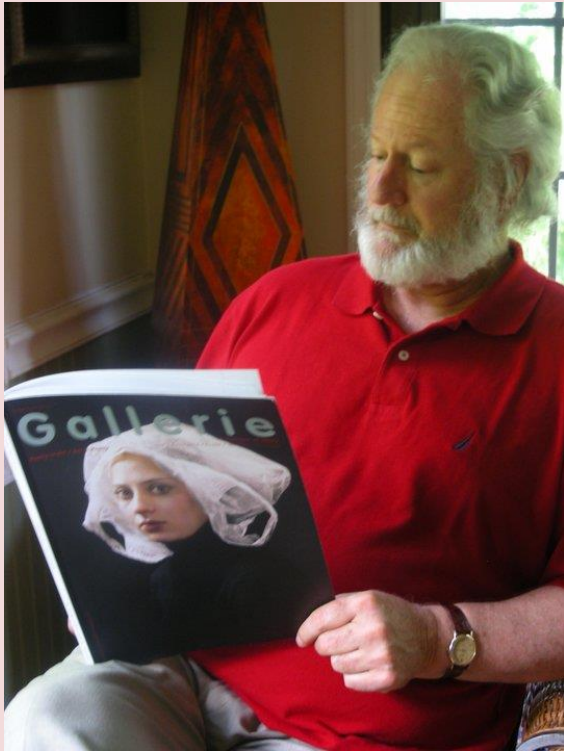
Alicja Maria Kuberska: She is an awarded Polish poetess, novelist, journalist, editor. Her poems have been published in numerous anthologies and magazines. She has published 13 poetry anthologies. She is a member of the Polish Writers Associations in Warsaw, Poland and IWA Bogdani, Albania. She is also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



MERRY CHRISTMAS!

How do the homeless daily root through day old doughnuts below early morning steam belched from institutional dumpsters?

And where does that leave the rest of us swallowing our regrets with a shot of cheap grape soda pop, (as Grandma Vida lamented one overcast afternoon while rolling her two-tone reef coral & white Buick over the cobblestones of Tampa, Florida, 1962), regrets disguised as irrelevant, or circling the globe like Santa in his ridiculous sleigh declaring, *Merry Christmas to all and to all one helluva a good night!*



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



FLOWERS ARE ROLLING DOWN CHEEKS

(This poem is my tribute to Ayub Bachchu (AB), a legend of Bengali rock music, who died on 18 October' 18)

Today flowers are rolling down

Millions of cheeks

AB, Why this early have you gone?

You our music still seeks

You were an integral part

Of our adolescence

And held a huge portion of the heart

Now who will fill in the absence?

You have passed away

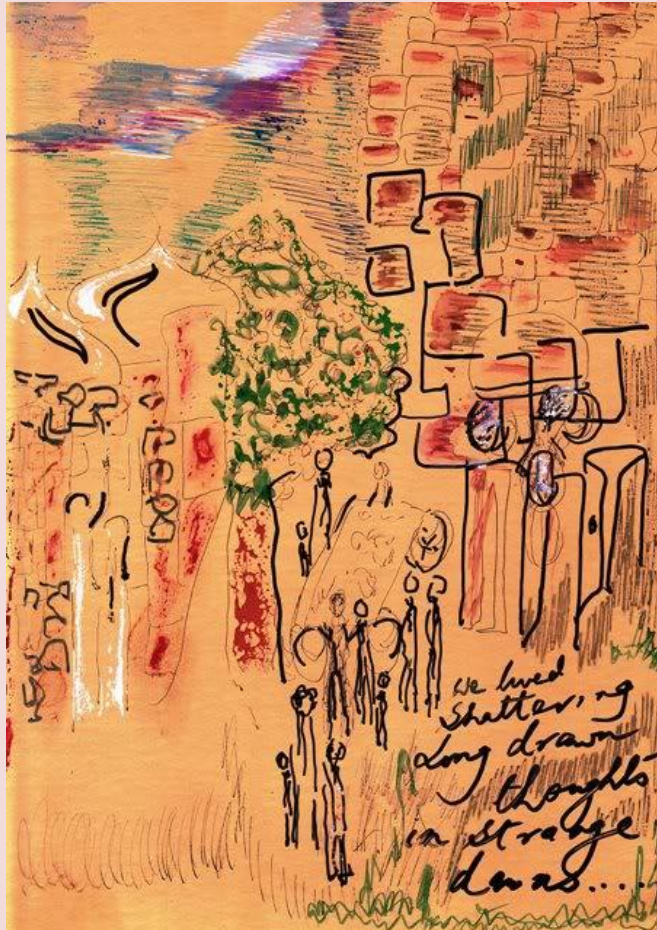
Making the whole nation cry

Rest in peace, Legend, we pray

This nation will never let you die.



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



many aeons back
when rock changed faces
many a times and clan men
resisted irrefutably
time
the sky always gave way
to unhindered horizons
to newer lives

in dust torn
revelry
each time we passed the long
languorous tunnels of
waking
each time we found
ourselves on ledges
of looming betrayal
the fort grew taller and higher
overlapping many a skin
many a shadow
many a summers
and i thought
perhaps one day
you would tell me a secret
of holding the lizard
in my grip
of a moment

knee deep in a drying river
of your breath
navigating a stronghold
of refute
you told me
the ruddy earth would also change
the peacocks would be no more
fungus and fern would darken
such agreements
such love
insisted
and we would remain torn
answerable only to the wind.

why did we run away each time the
sun changed surfaces
why did we cross eye storms
ensnared long hidden stars

why did we eclipse in patterns
of lip talk on your neck
why did we turn one and only one
burnt one single night
why did we then never die
why did the fort
keep silent
why

beneath us
deep down
stayed the dargah
the mad man danced
looked at us
in sightless eyes
we had seen him before
much before
when the hot wind

blew away advancing
and departing reasons
a maratha willingness to melt away
at each nightend
we saw him still
shaking his head
his hands sang the song
of the next blitz
the dead around in cavernous
holes never slept
we knew
the rainriver
would storm down
in crypts and crevices
in sultry memory lanes
weather broken thickets
on to those
living and buried

we knew then
it was the moment
of a quiet dismissal
of unhastened departures.

families left for far shores
and houses sprung up on
rusty dreams
a dishevelled robe dragging
a far innocence
hands sought to hold a
belief
and eyes stored tears
unbelieving
on your lips i saw a murmur
loves disparity rootless in
undefined times
i told you the stillness of the fort

stillness of our drifting
stillness of the riversong
stillness of an everyday sky
yet
we lived
shattering long drawn thoughts
in strange dawns
in
old gwalior.



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.



MONSOON

The day unfurls with a flourish

Of white clouds on blue canvass,

The fragrance of white flower wafts in my room,

I sit by the window, the morning glory seeps in my being.

A deep breath, a sip from my morning cuppa

The canvas abruptly juggles to ashen grey.

A truant gust of wind nips a couple of bel flower

They repose on my lap.

The ruffled curtain lashes my cup

It trips off the window sill

Crashes at my feet.

Monsoon can be treacherous at times!



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



FAHRENHEIT

You would like to forget -

world

society

people -

for various reasons

though you say

you want to remember

but I won't let you forget

That's why I am here

and I am that one you never saw before

who though he goes under the water

comes back up every time
till I die
like cork
I'm still here
despite everything
beyond everything
to remind you all
of what you don't
want to be (reminded of)
want to remember
of the memories
of those who mattered
you want to forget
and erase
once for all
what was said and done by them
but can't quite
because of

people like me

repositories

of ancient lore

wisdom

and truths

galore



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 Significant League and has

instituted the Reuel International Prize for Literature. He is a poet and critic and fiction writer of renown in India and abroad plus a Pushcart Prize Poetry Nominee of 2012. His Ph.D was on Samuel Beckett and his thesis was later published as Samuel Beckett's English Poetry: Transcending the Roots of Resistance in Language. He has also co-edited *Inklinks* and *Umbilical Chords*.



FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

You have the right to love

The right to think

The right to help

Yet you won't

You have not the courage

To break the chains

That holds you down

Yet of selfishness

You become a compelling clown

Freedom of expression

My learned friend

Cannot offend another's sentiments

Actions, expressions of offence

All knows

Only brings forth restrictions

You can only go thus far

Till purity is not spoilt by a scar

Wanting freedom

Mend your ways

Bend that mind

Set it free

The more you give

The more you get

That...

Is freedom...

At its best.



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



WITHOUT HIM YOU ARE NOTHING

Without him you are nothing

In the bonds of marriage, you become one

In his untimely death you are all alone

Stripped of your honour and individuality

Sentenced to a living death eternally

Shunned completely by a depraved society

Professing you're fated with the widow's curse

Making you lose your loving husband.

Without him you are nothing
Society dictates this to every widow
Now you have no voice to state your opinion
Decisions impacting your life are taken by others
Like your faculty of thinking has evaporated
Your daily existence is but a fading shadow
Moving in a daze forever silenced
To a life of mourning donned in widow's garments
Defining your "hopeless" future.

Without him you are nothing
Don't be perturbed by the labouring whispers
of a heartless society with no compassion
Harshly judging and criticising you
on how you should live your life
How would they feel if it was their sister
or mother who became a widow?

Without him you are nothing
Mourn his death the way you want to
Claim back your individuality and humanity
Make informed choices in your best interest
Can't you laugh and live life again?
Dance in colours to the music in your soul
Surely you should not be banished
From ever loving again and living life.

Be bold for you are not alone
You are a strong woman of courage
Treasure the beautiful moments you shared
Knowing he will always be in your precious heart
Choose to embrace life once more.



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



YOU HAVE LOVED ME ONCE

Once you have loved me
When the heat was intense
Around the upper land of
Our country side
You have not cared to run
Through thin forest and fallen
On my strong arms like a
Raging tide

Once you have loved me
When it was raining in hill
Sides and wind was playing
A soothing music
You have left you hair open
To catch the raindrops and
With your kisses soaked me
Till in heart I felt weak

Once you have loved me
When it was snowing across
Plains and dales and bones
In us were cracking
You have come to lie by
My side in the bed and held
Me tight as from your heart
Passion was spilling



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



A SONG TO THE TWILIGHT

Ruby studded sky,
the horizon calls to me.
It knows my name by heart.
I have stood here all eternity,
watching a coral glow of evening,
as geese fly past the moon.
Stories of past lives
unfold before my eyes.
On wings of imagination
my mind takes flight.
The night is my master.
The night is my friend.

It folds me in its warm embrace,
darkness pulls me in,
like a lover waiting to be kissed.

I sing a song to the twilight
with voice soft and sweet.

Dancing stars join the refrain.

Night is my salvation,
its magic lives within.

Everlasting is its song
from beginning to the end.



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

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



NEHRUVIAN Y(EARS), RUSKIN EYES

(This is my tribute to Nehruvian years through Ruskin bonds eyes, these views are entirely fictitious)

Those years were
rather peaceful years,
a lot happened
in those years,
dams were built
year plans were made
cities were planned
and built in front
of common eyes,
people found themselves

growing up,
people going abroad
wanted coming back,
people had emotional attachment
to people, peace and soil,
petrols were in paise
politics were for praise,
Serving in army was
a decent and respectable career
but to the shock of my mother
I wanted to be a writer,
and yes! under him it was easier
to just ease into India
to make a home here,
he could understand
or rather wanted to understand
mind of poor, destitute or rich
even a foreigner,

lots of foreigners wanted
to become Indian again,
I also became an Indian
not just by birth
but also by choice,
times have changed now
even Indians living here
are now so deceived by
their own government
and many find themselves
being biased, deceived and so distraught.



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



A SECRET RAIN...

A blind wind tonight

Loved the sunflower field

Unleafs the memories

Gently dancing

There will be no prayers

Moon licking the old wounds of love

A wordless desire of this night

Rain-drenched hunger

Rain tossed skies

A secret rain

Kissed her tears away

Rain that washed

Her sorrows

Under the restless sky, she lay wounded...



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



LORDS ARE THESE....

Have rueful-heels passim moved?

Laomy-earth and lofty-earth traces bemired;

Pitch-darks, trendsetters dooming

Each-every stuff cañon afoot?

Sods, dallying clueless keens

Bestial black heads dusting soil;

Lords, lumping sods seedhead on slightly tip-tongues,

Still, upon bitter, cropping bleeds? Homes' rulers,

Lethal lordling nonlethal, Massive upon airhead,

Sleeping smartness; Mother's lands back-and-front

Oceanic avails; the greatest-possessors thrive fleet-footed?

Father, motherland mothered hold

Backing bigness, culturing cruelties:

Twist twisting, drift wanting a net;

Pitch-folks' hot matters crossed

Oozing heels, innocent bleeds score

"Hither come the Messiah, thither black

Going piracy, for artifice, Old-Nick a-crossed.

The rulers nur-sin-g mealymouthed

Upon sweets and biscuits pussyfoots

For day long tipping thump; sods raising depths.

Massive abiding struggle puissant breeds

Bemusing puss', commission freeing freed.

Cross, sifting dicken's doom.

And of gold and silver sods

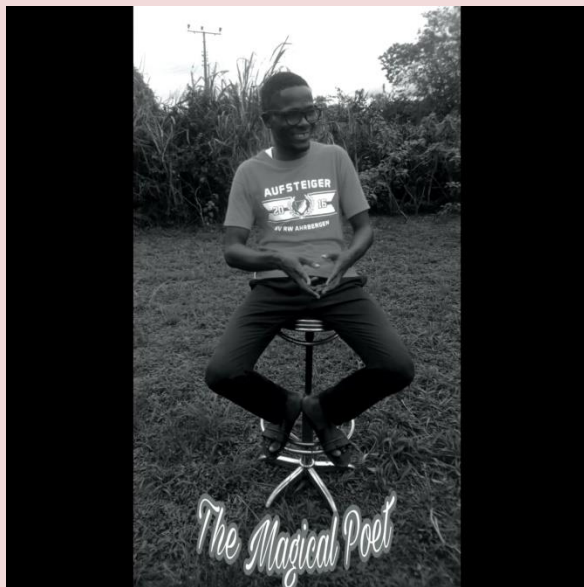
Sheeting not glitz, forming faithful

And fake, yet, none purification purified

But mothered that shoots stem

Upon high faxed; would better fibre fine

Of massive lingering to set on term of immortality freed.



Awotide Oluwaseun: He is a Poet, Prolific Writer, and Phone Photographer. He lives in Lagos, Nigeria.



THE US AND Us

Some history buffs argue that by far

The best US Presidents of all time are:

Washington, Lincoln and FDR

As many a cherry-tree Yankee knows,

They've had a few Presidents who've kept on their clothes,

With nothing for the National Enquirer to expose

But -

Did the boy George axe that cherry tree? No.

Was Honest Abe honester than Robert E. Lee? No.

Can we bear to think that FDR lied

In those radio chats from his fireside? Well he did.

Since the pundits have revised saint-Presidents like these,

What then of our leaders in Australia Fair?

In this Land so chastened by Kings and Queens,

Where we are all mates and true blue and square.

And know Fake News can get swallowed by the Yanks

But that here our historians have nothing to revise

When we put our trust in our pollies and our banks

And that no historians can look you in the eyes

And say:

The Aussies swallow porkies, and the Yankees apple pies...



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



WAY AHEAD

What will it be like?

Right now I can tell

An absolutely

Living hell

What will it offer?

What can you see?

A homeless beggar

With a college degree

A hopeless future

A broken dream

This beautiful world

Torn at the seams

Diminished pride

Increasing crime

Lawlessness

All of the time

Crying for help

Begging for change

Leaderships behaviour

All the more strange

A clear and evident

Disregard

For an honest, truthful

Brand new start

But then again,

What do we expect?

Greed and power

Will always impact

A once gentle heart

A once caring mind

Good morals offloaded

And left behind

A wayward manner

Taking priority

Integrity

A distant memory

What will it be like?

Open your eyes and see

Only hardships and suffering

Waiting ahead for you and me



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



In Case I tell a tale
Too many songs solid with rage
changed when the rain came
Countless voices went frail
in whispers when thunder struck
Myriad stories got bone buried
under storm limelight
Unknown wounds unveiled
by non-sympathetic
story mongers
With dust on their heels
they awoke mountainous
historic rocks that abandoned

human eye

Some dropped their guns

and spears to derive

a hopeful word from

a man uphill

They dropped their hoes

and whips to engrave

their thoughts

on a silent river

I know them

In this joy they hug you

with intimate songs

fiddling their future.



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



PLANKING THE TANGO

Working with Harry, a Polish carpenter,

I spent my sixteenth summer re-decking
the teak of my father's 42-foot cutter.

We cut planks so dense they destroyed metal blades
as an acrid odor of smoking steel
filled our nostrils despite the Southerly breeze
blowing in off the Sound each afternoon.

The wooden tongues—snuggled securely
into grooves—waited for the black resin
to be spread: tar so pervasive that only a monthly
buzz cut could get it out of my hair,

and although my father wasn't always there
as I would go through each sweat-soaked day,
it is still the closest I ever felt to him.



Bill Cushing: He has been writing poetry since 1987 but has been sailing since the age of five (1957). Bill returned to college after serving in the Navy and working for a decade on oil tankers, fishing boats, and naval vessels. Because of that personal history, he was known as the "blue collar" poet by classmates at the University of Central Florida. Graduating with an MFA from Goddard College, Bill moved to Glendale, California where he now lives with his wife and son, teaches college English, and continues writing. He has been honored with a Pushcart nomination as well as being named one of the Top Ten Poets in L.A. last year. Bill's bio pic shows him "then" and "now."



MASK

Artist outside Jehangir Art Gallery

in an oiled old golf cap

sketches your face

for rupees 100

his breakfast, chai, lunch and dinner

the sketch

turns your real face into a mask.



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



SAINT FRANCIS

It takes a wise man to become Christ's fool,
It takes a great man to become a child
To live not just to hear the Gospel rule,
The raging fury to become so mild.
You shed your gaudy clothes and father proud,
You left behind earth's glory and repute
Feasting on hunger, destitution-bowed,
You trod the painful path in Christ's pursuit.
Pain was your joy, poverty your bride

Your congregation men, birds wolves and trees
Within your body preached Christ crucified
And stigmata greater than eye sees.
Brother Francis, let me be your brother,
Kept close to Christ and his Blessed Mother.



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.



ANOTHER AUTUMN

I'm in Tosantos

Locatlity of the province of Burgos

Sat in an "Ottoman"

As a sofa

In my room at ground level

Listening the rain falling

Getting me on nerves.

Just stop raining!

I get up

And I'm going to the window

Admiring

The second grass

That produces the meadows

And the earth 'seasoning

That is put in good condition.

I look out the window

Seeing Autilla and Otoción

Older woman and man

Listening from they:

He: Woman, Grass sprouts in Autumn

She: If only will sprout Yrsj

They were going to laugh

When they stop talking

Seeing two lovers arguing
The girl with a milk pitcher
Under the arm
And the boy with a slab in tow
Talking about the days
That spend without feeling.
I turned to the "Ottoman"
Starting to listen
Because I have somewhere in me
The newly wet Autumn:
Lake of Tears'
"So Feel Autumn Rain"



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



CITY DEER #22

bless my quiet my quiet visitors this city's deep breath the
let's hold on for one minute before we decide to place our
teeth on the day maybe maybe maybe our lips are enough
to keep our tongues from wagging at each other until lunch
let's do some work or let's do nothing at all



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.



MEMORIES OF KHAJJAR

They stood on a bed of thick snow facing the snow-capped ranges of the Himalayas. The cluster of deodar trees unfurled all over the mountains slathered with fresh snowfall of yesterday night. It seemed as if the whole universe is draped in white. The kids started thrashing snow on each other and some on Bonny and Shirish too. After a while they all started playing snow fight. Bonny stretched the hands of her mother-in-law and put a lump of snow on them. “Oh! So cold!!” she said with a broad smile on her face. Shirish threw some snow on Bonny and she threw back some on her husband giggling and wobbling on the snow. Memo and Coco hobble to their granny who was still try to adjust with the snow lump jiggling it from one hand to another. “Come on granny play with us” they chattered giving a tug to Granny’s coat. Sova tried to drag her legs through the soft snow which kept dabbing down beneath.

Memo threw some snow on granny as Sova flutter with the sudden hit of the cold. Bonny scolded her son softly “No not on granny”. Memo went back to his parents to join the snow fight. Coco said “I won’t go, it is too cold my hand and legs are hurting, I will stay with you granny”, as she hugged Sova with her small hand covered with little leather gloves. Memo threw a snow ball on his sister tittering loud, “ come on you rabbit play with me else you will get hit with another.” Coco ran to shower snow on her brother. They played and played until they all got tired and came back to their car to go back to the hotel.

The car started rolling on the snow covered road as Memo and Coco chattered all the way long to the hotel. Bonny kept her gaze out on the white empire of the Himalayas resting her head on the shoulders of Shirish. They reached hotel and changed quickly as their clothes were damp by the snow and Shirish ordered coffee and hot chocolate for them. They all gathered in Shirish and Bonny’s room and started reliving their amazing experience on the white mountains of Gulmarg. “Kashmir is really heaven on earth”. Bonny said sipping her coffee. “It is way more majestic than one could imagine”. She said exchanging a sweet smile with Shirish. “True” said Shirish cheerfully giving her a glance back. “We enjoyed the snow

fight” chattered the kids. “How do you like Maa?” asked Shirish looking at his mother. “It’s beautiful I loved it” answered Sova “but I think Khajjar was better. You remember Sri how we were astonished with its beauty? And how you and your sister used to play all day long on the green meadow when me and Dad used to watch you two from far? Shirish smiled with a nod. They talked through all the evening and went for dinner to the restaurant of the hotel where buffet was served for the guest. After dinner everybody went back to their own room. Sova and the kids in one and Shirish and Bonny to another. Bonny laid her head on Shirish’s chest as they cuddled under the quilt. “How come Khajjar can be better than Snow covered Kashmir I don’t understand. “Bonny said with a note of slight irritation in her voice. “Sometimes I don’t understand your mother truly. It is said if there is any heaven then it is here in Kashmir and she found Khajjar more beautiful!!! Amazing!!!” Shirish hugged Bonny tighter to his chest and said in a deep voice “didn’t you understand? She missed Dad”.



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



CHILDREN OF THE SAME GOD?

Isn't it amazing?

Hitler, Mussolini, Churchill, Tojo, Stalin, Truman and Gandhi were contemporaries.

The Austrian dictator invaded small countries from Czechoslovakia to Austria,

The Anglo Saxon imperialist tried to stop the rise of democracy in India and wanted Gandhi dead.

The Nazi invaded Russia.

The Italian fascist violated Abyssinia.

The Englishman invaded the Sudan.

The Japanese military leader devastated China,

The Georgian communist invaded Finland.

The American exploded the Atomic Bomb among people,

Twice.

The one believed in truth,

The others believed in duplicity and deception.

The one said, 'Let us achieve by discussion, by reasoning, by using peaceful means,'

The others said, "Let's turn our peoples into criminals, into invaders and robbers."

Let's steal the gold and diamonds of South Africa,

dismember Russia, parasitise China, bomb Pearl harbour.

The one preached Peace,

And helped break the back of the warring British empire.

He initiated a new way, a world less oppressed by empires.

He helped end the nightmare of the vampire.

His path of pain ensured that he was never awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

His was a greater glory,

Not a Prize awarded by those who explode people.

The others preferred being bullies, invaders and murderers, because it paid.

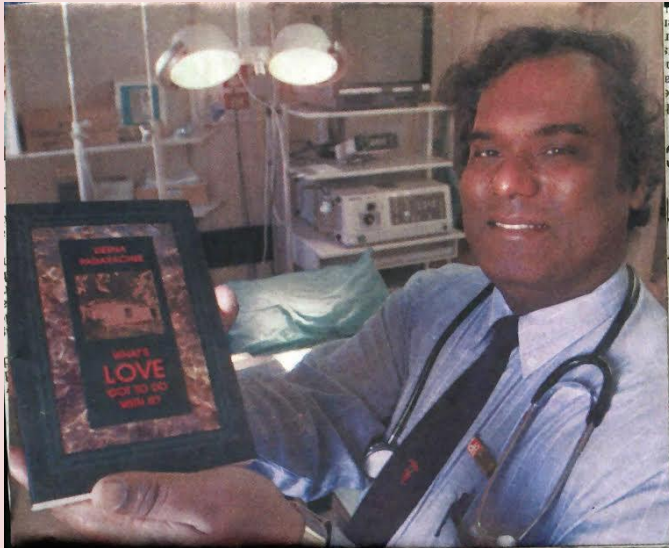
They were indeed very small.

They were not big enough to control the power which they wielded.

Isn't it amazing that all these leaders breathed the same air,
Yet they behaved so differently?

Children of the same God?

They behaved so differently.



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



IN THE LONELY DARK OF THE NIGHT

In the lonely dark of the night
After all have left one by one
In a silent march
I am back, back to my soul
A few drops of tears
For what it could have been
What a wastage of life
Lit only by a candlelight
When it could have been
The power of a thousand stars
To illuminate the dark night sky
And light up millions of lives

To suck up every drop of black
Wipe with a heavenly smile
And the touch of a human, of warmth
A few tears for my soul
For what it could have been
I am back
Back to the lonely dark of the night



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



SONG OF THE SUNALI WAGALVLADIYA

Chorus of Atsvsdv – Our daily essence we give to you as the morning

sun ignites our intended purpose each blessed *Sunali* when our

cautionary light radiates upwards and onwards in a spiralling trumpeting

echoing song heard only by those who embrace not just our existence

in this earthly world but also that of our *hutsilvha* floral brothers and sisters

scattered across this natural world we all inhabit in
intended co-existence

although sadly our very survival depends on your
realisation of our fleeting

existence – Our waning confidence in mankind's increasing
darkness...

Shadow Curse – As much as we would like to fill your souls
with eternal

rejuvenating light our own *atsvsdv* is darkened by the curse
of *udiyvli* –

The shadow curse, dampening our enlightening which we
cannot control

but we bravely continue to shine only for you despite not
having the power

of longevity and all we can promise you is a nightly
imprisoned ruby blush

hue of a sun kissed rush of energy stored just for you to
remember our

promised halo – Our declared *wagalvladiya* but you too
have a sacred duty

to protect our blessed creation if we are to deliver a
continuous floral sensation

to remain victorious in our continued quest to do our
utmost and remain forever

galvladiya – Infinitely glorious! We exist for you. We live for
you...

Beyond – In this age of lawlessness immorality receipt
apathy discrimination

and a disturbing lack of a moral compass shared by all of
humanity we urge

each and every one of you to stop and listen to what we
want to share with

you for what lies beyond this life – In a place known as
udiditlv. A place

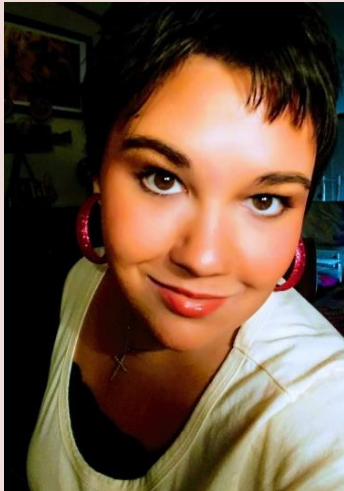
not of this earth a place where your essence your very soul
will roam eternally

in a place for all of you a place to repent and renew to
forgive and be forgiven

so live righteously and morally – Be merciful and adjust
your moral compass...



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



Mysti S. Milwee: She is an award winning artist, digital artist photographer, and published poet from Southside, Alabama (Etowah County). Her art was published in the Birmingham Arts Journal-Volume 13-Issue 2; and twice in Illustrator Magazine. Her poetry has been published in The Alabama Baptist-"Beyond the Veil"- March 30,2017; The Mountain Press- "Gatlinburg Strong"- December 11, 2016. In Poetics: Her "Poetry Interview" was published in the PPP E-Zine (Poetry Poetics and Pleasure E-zine) out of India in the October Volume 1: Issue 5-2017. Her works have been used in some academic studies and ministries across the US and abroad. She is member of several well-known societies.



SWEATERS, GLOVES, AND RUBBER TIRES

(Advice from Dad to the Newlyweds)

Marriage may be patched sweaters
and trivial, unmatched gloves,
a string of not-quite-enough
even when strung together--
May you ever love each other
and ever deserve your love.

Some days will seem a bother
and others pass like puffs.
Some, you'll feel you will suffocate

from life's ill weather--

May you ever love each other

and ever deserve your love.

When the world seems a rubber tire,

endless and black and tough--

troubles below and above

circle, hurry, and hover--

May you ever love each other

and ever deserve your love.



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



FAITH

(Translated by Artur Komoter)

I saw death.

A man did not die,
but the faith in him.

I saw a fall.

Yesterday of a man
today of the people.

Elements

are not our work.

We create hatred,

☒which kills.



Eliza Segiet: She graduated with a Master's Degree in Philosophy, completed postgraduate studies in Cultural Knowledge, Philosophy, Arts and Literature at Jagiellonian University, as well as Film and Television Production in Lodz. Author's poem "Questions" was the Publication of the Month (August 2017) and the International Publication of the Year (2017) in Spillwords Press. Author's works can be found in anthologies and literary magazines worldwide.



(pic by Gauri Dixit)

You took away my clothes

And the shame that was caught in their threads

There is nothing

Do you realize

There is absolutely nothing

That you have on me now

There is nothing on me

That I owe you or this world

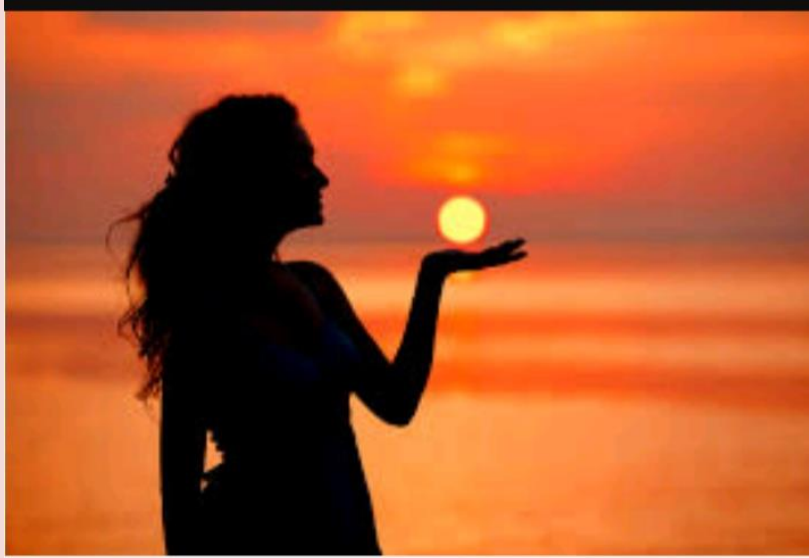
You took away everything

And left me a free bird

I need no rings
I need no wings
The sky is in me
So is the sea



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.



VIVA LA VIDA

O Life!

How can I be upset with you

In the corridor of time I glide

Moments slipping, age crawling

But every day you appear amazingly new

Every morning you wake me up

With fresh smiles

Nourish green hopes

And I start my day with new alphabets

Whenever I get fretful,

Stresses and strains knock me down

Somewhere you find me out
Prepare food for my heart
Play soulful music on my ears
And I embrace you with every breath
O life, you are a beautiful rendition
Of fleeting moments
Brief but precious!



Gayatree G Lahon: She is teacher and a poet from the beautiful state of Assam. Nature is a great inspiration for her. Life with all its beauty as well as complexities also inspire her to pen down her thoughts. Her poems have been published in many national and international magazines and anthologies.



The last page
My mind is empty
Nothing to say
Nothing to dream
Nothing to think
An empty cave
All dried up
Even the rock smells
The sun stops at the entrance
As though afraid
I may come alive any moment
May sit up and crawl my way out

But I won't, I know

I cannot

The lid is tightly sealed

Nothing escapes.



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.



MUSICAL TSUNAMIS

It's in the cascade of endless intentions,
That froze over the penance of winters,
The gurgle of brooks through songs sung in silent
meditations,
Of Earth that dressed up for spring, wet with rainbow
splinters,
The rain of desires sent up in a fall of golden silhouettes,
Russet drapes warming fires of cosy embers,

All of the countryside where a hill forest pirouettes,
Where race clouds to them in a rhythm that the breeze
remembers.

The roar of tides thudding on breakers,
The baritone hum of the ocean that of eternity
reverberates,
And the calm of waves that recede like cavaliers,
Marching to the drums of elements that the season
dictates.

All of this play in a frenzy in my fingers,
My heart the metronome that translates,
The beat of distant stars recording all life beyond numbers,
I imagine as the bass line that within me sweet music
navigates.

All of the chaos and confusion of global warming,
The wrath of ozone layers that play havoc to surge seas,

Orchestrate the most harmonious of symphonies soul
rendering,

Despite tornadoes, typhoons, cyclones, this life
overwhelms in musical tsunamis.



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



CYCLONE

Sitting by the window,

dark day, quiet birds, howling wind

blowing away roof tops and felling trees like a true champ,
resisting the temptation to give in to my wilder side and go
to the terrace and get blown away,

turning instead to the darkness, wondering whether i
should let it flow within,

or let the light within flow without,

choosing to light the Philosophical Candle instead to watch
it flicker and wonder if going aflame was really worth it,

while my stomach rumbles reminding me there's nothing to
eat, and nothing to cook with the fridge so bare,

i slap at the inadvertent mosquito,

wondering what to do when my phone dies out too....

bracing myself for a looooong night - and through it all it rains!



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



DEPRESSION

when did you lose your smile

what calamity tore your world apart

brought bitter tears to your eyes

did you lose your way through the maze of life

with its twists and turns

did you cry out for a helping hand

no one reached out and took your hand

you lost your smile in the mist

no one saw your tear drops fall

the mist was thick and black with fog

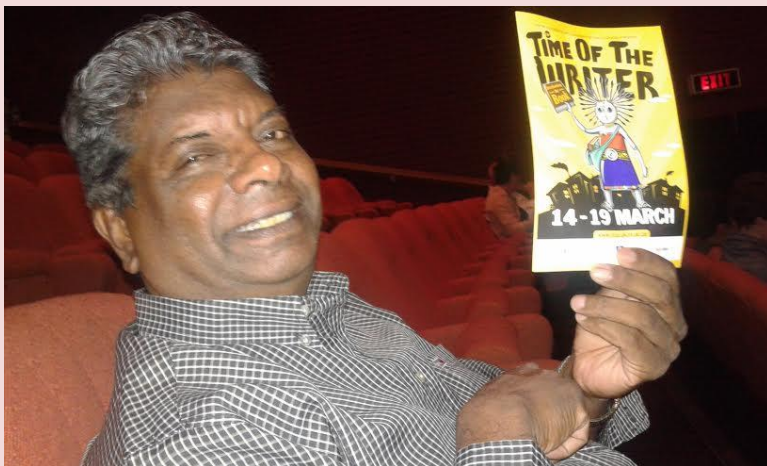
the darkness stole your spirit

the very essence of your soul
the light faded from the sky
stealing your smile

like a good Samaritan
i offered you my hand
i never felt the softness of your hand
the darkness stole your zeal to live
not only from your eyes
but also from your mind
I tried to be a friend
a pillar of strength in your time of need
but you were besieged by phantoms
with power over your senses
manipulating, dominating your mind

how you suffer for your sanity
plagued by delusional shadows

waging struggles with demons of your own
you made a covenant to live in solitude
with your secret turmoil
I a helpless bystander
could only watch you
self-immolate your soul
in the misery of your depression



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.



ON THAT DAY

On that Day, then
I will become your choice,
Quiet and still
And kind to your voice

On that Day, then
I will be read aloud
With great concerted applaud,
My best poem that you
Never recognised so far.

On that Day, then
I will be silent though you
Listen to my void music
Sways in air with a mystic note
That you hear exclusively
Sung for you.

On that Day, then
I will lay frozen stillness
With all my blood that flowed, ever for you,
Seemed tangled with your name.

On that Day, for you
My death will become your
Best poem ever written
And the man died will be
Hailed as the Great man.

Dead man is great, you

Will say, my poem...



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



THE BROKEN NIB

I started to ablaze the viaducts
when I agonized, I'm just
a prisoner of my own thoughts.

My world turned out to be
The four walls I'm confined in

Who wants to be found now
When I'm clasped around my wrists.

I have become the devotee of darkness

But my pen hasn't dried yet
even these shackles can't
kibosh my ink to pen down
the pains of forlornness

The broken nib of my pen
has been lying in there since decades

The glumness which engulfed my being
Can't snuff out the light of my nib.

If not me but my words will be heard,
They will break these iron chains
And will fly high above the skies,

The blood splattered by my pen
will yell of its yearnings,

unfulfilled desires which remained throttled

In a dark cell beneath the earth.



Imran Yousuf: He is a Poet/Writer/Columnist residing in Anantnag, J&K India. He works as Columnist and Journalist. He has contributed to various magazines, journals and international anthologies. He has written a series of articles about great Sufi Poets of valley Kashmir (starting from 14th century) published in various newspapers and magazines which he is compiling in a book now and hopefully will be released soon.



HANDLE WITH CARE

I am intrinsic and intuitive

Part of you-Humans.

I reside eternally within you

-Bundled within you-

With different shades and colours.

I have to be expressed-

No use encaging or suppressing me-

At right time and place,

In a proper and nice way.

Do not react-

Because of my presence-

To circumstances and situations,

However tough or exciting.

Respond positively, not react.

Because of my presence,

Your thoughts, feelings and behaviour

Might change-

Handle me with care.

Do not control me,

But regulate and channelize

In a healthy and constructive manner.

Every experience in your life,

Cannot be without my impact-

In different shades and colours-
Positive or Negative.

Handle me with care

With your intelligence and experience.

I am Emotion.



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



BRUISE

Bruise me red

Bruise me blue

Bruise me green

Yet unseen are the wounds

Lost my voice when you poured

acid into the soft tissues

of the soul;

burned through, I am dumb,

rendered mute and blind...

with your words I lost my mind.

Is it a pretty scene?

Burns and bruises all inside

blue red green

all for me to hide



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



SACRIFICE!

Being the truthful definition of goodness

It's something which needs to be done

To enjoy life in its own womb

It gives the sense of eternal satisfaction

And is necessary to be performed

To be happy and contribute to the society

It enriches the human values, and makes a person indeed strong

It aids to realise the latent potentials, and other energy generating purviews

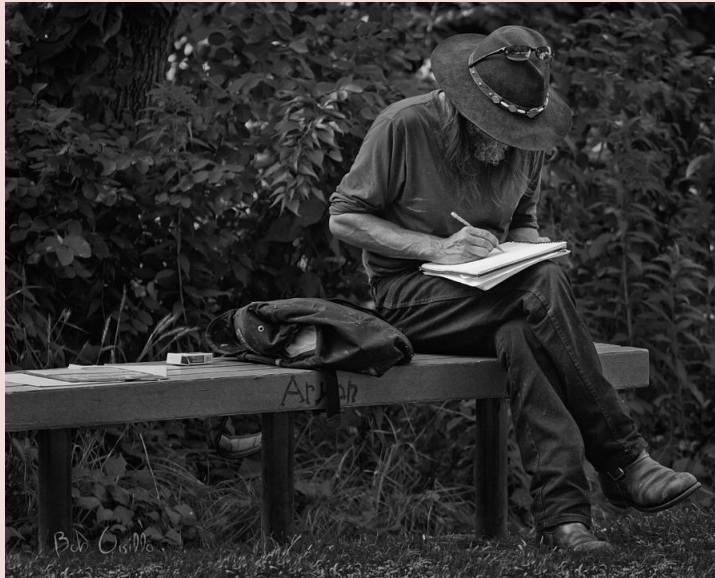
You get to realise your abilities

Be those of kindness or inner strengths

Embarking on the pathways nourished by values
Makes the life more worthy and cheerful to adapt
Being sagacious to yourself emulates the genes of sanctity
Towards society and your soul!



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



THE POET

My mindset is unpredictable
my ink is the same
as it flows on each solid line
many think I am insane
writing down my memories
writing down my change
from the man that I used to be
to the man I am today
writing about my family
writing about my past
writing about my demons

within my shattered hour glass
as my hair begins to gray
and my skin begins to wrinkle
my ink serves the purpose
of connecting with the people.

I am the poet
I chase a dream
I write my happiness
I write my horrible dreams
I write my tears
my joy
my love
my fears
I am the poet
and I write it for you clear
imaginary monsters
real beasts as well

I am the poet
writing my heaven and hell.

I reach down deep inside my soul
to bring a story to you
I hold the Ace of spades
I will never fold
my dreams are written between the lines
and can be seen in my eyes
my heart and body flow through each of my rhymes
ravens demons monsters
brothers mothers fathers
angels love and purity
I'm writing for the world to see
not just for me.

I am the poet
I chase a dream

I write my happiness
I write my horrible dreams
I write my tears
my joy
my love
my fears
I am the poet
and I write it for you clear
imaginary monsters
real beasts as well
I am the poet
writing my heaven and hell.

A misfit amongst
a world of control
escaping the nightmares
gripping hold
explaining my triumphs

expressing my fears
changing my stories
releasing my tears
opening my mind
losing track of time
the hourglass has shattered
and it's all on the line
my words are written
to set me free
the ink on the paper
is how I bleed
how I love
how I laugh
forgetting all my troubles
working for the future
shattering the past.

I am the poet

I chase a dream

I write my happiness

I write my horrible dreams

I write my tears

my joy

my love

my fears

I am the poet

and I write it for you clear

imaginary monsters

real beasts as well

I am the poet

writing my heaven and hell.



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



COMPUTER GAME

I just click the awesome icon.

My mouse scurries in a manic race
to discover words or match jewels.

Tiles glow...a beaming box of eye candy
to pick and nibble as my score grows.

All the petty slogs and limps of
this withered day are beaten back.

I love my snazzy game name and avatar.

My world sits inside this small square.

I am winning.



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



APOGEE

the rain slicked towards wrapped Coole and Water Croft,
the last bumble bees of salvation flew upward, stalled
and ripened -- I think for a sense of order -- until
dim and gaunt, large, versions of light came to be.

The thought sang and tooled, a decibel under
the pull of night grooming, and it to think.

We ran into the next doorstep. If not, but yet
if so, tandem fell. Fall leaves

I think, and the howl blew underneath

the gritty lit sign and into
the dark.

Then the light did not sing and I did
not sing, but I had called and did not think.

You do not think of any heart, past still water
and the trajectory of cold things like fowl and
traffic and also, like rain, all falling on
the hour when the sorest fat one sang unripened,
changeless to each rote and by. Thought became one,
a direction steeled to a season, seasons by.



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



SUN AND STUBBLE, VERSION IV

That which gives often...

may receive nothing in return.

Do not be deceived by the
writings etched on stone pillars
and rolled parchment.

Corn often grows taller than words
words often grow taller than deeds.

The simple man strides upon fields
with stalks as thick as dictionaries.

We take a full cache and fill silos
forty suns per one field.

Horse hooves and wagon wheels cut
deeply into furrows of freshly turned soil.

Geese feed in flocks as finger-like
tendrils of wispy fog rises with the sun.

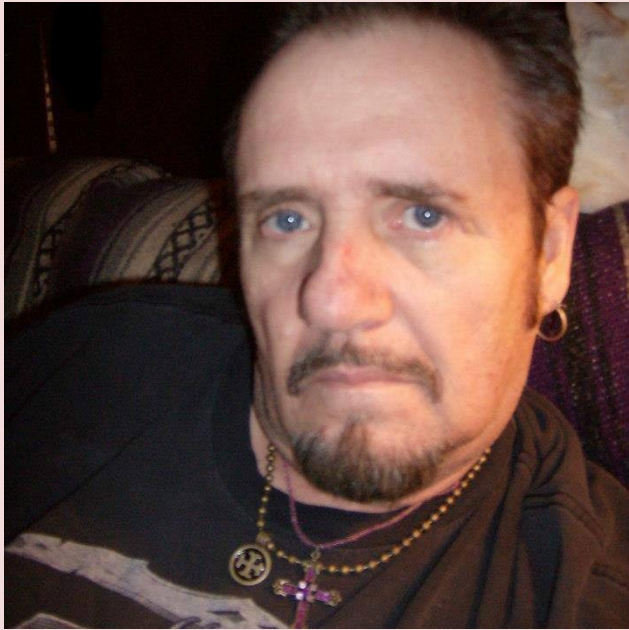
Wrung ones neck for our bellies
now we give it spit and hot coals.

At dusk, we watch wise men
gather petrified husk and stubble
to craft tablet and rope.

Field mice dart across the clods of
earth, searching out seed and trying
not to succumb to the ever vigilant
Great Horned Owl.

Magpie's, crows and ravens pick
clean all discarded pebble and stubble.

Within one's breath, the sun disappears;
harvest time fills life's circle.



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

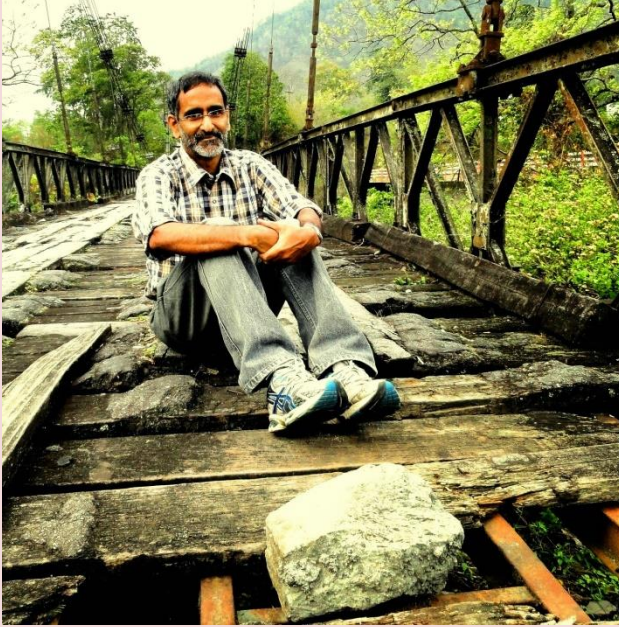


A SHORT STORY

(Based on a Malayalam story)

He picked up the phone. The female voice at the other end said politely, "Sir, I'm the caretaker of the Old Age Home, in which your mother was admitted last week. There's a dog which came here a few days ago and has been with your mother. Perhaps it's yours."

"Yes, thank you. We have been searching for Amigo these last few days. My wife has been missing him and hasn't stopped crying. We have given "Missing" notices in newspapers, on the net and all over the city. It's such a relief. We'll come there to pick up our darling dog immediately."



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



CRIME

You are one

That I hate

Although at one time

You were my permanent date

You made me think, doing you

Will make me a hero

But ended up

Being a huge zero

For an unexplainable reason

You seemed so cool

But you only made me

Look like a fool

What I had in mind, of you

Was a wrong taught

Because you just caused me

To end up in court

After that I were thrown

Into jail

With you I never passed

I always failed

Your ways only lead

To prison or the grave

With you

People just misbehave

What you are to me

Is slime

There will come

A time

When you'll no longer exists

Everybody will give up on you - called crime



Leroy Abrahams: Leroy is a poet who lives in South Africa, Port Elizabeth, Helenvale. He is currently working for the church, Victory Ministries International and also volunteers and enjoys hospital visits because there he prays for the sick and encourages them. Most of his poems are autobiographical and serve as a warning to the young and Christians who are facing tough times. Verse en Inspirasie is his first anthology.



WHAT OLD PORTRAITS WARN

Portraits on dusty bookshelves

where dire warnings rule

bad beliefs disabused,

good sense overruled.

We on the upswing,

their memories slipshod,

best advice not taken

their cautioning declarations.

We become roped in,

doubtlessly shaken,
we skip along sidewalks
ignoring the roadblocks
pinning us in to taste sin.

We, like shipwrecks that had been,
from back when
fires were set near rocks
to draw prey in.

Weren't those ancient tales just meant to shock?
Walking those burning sidewalks now on feet unshod,
tells us the hindsight of those portraits
were not just facade,
and what they wish to tell,
their retrospect alarm bells
delivered from their watchfulness
and their cautiousness,
we should heed.



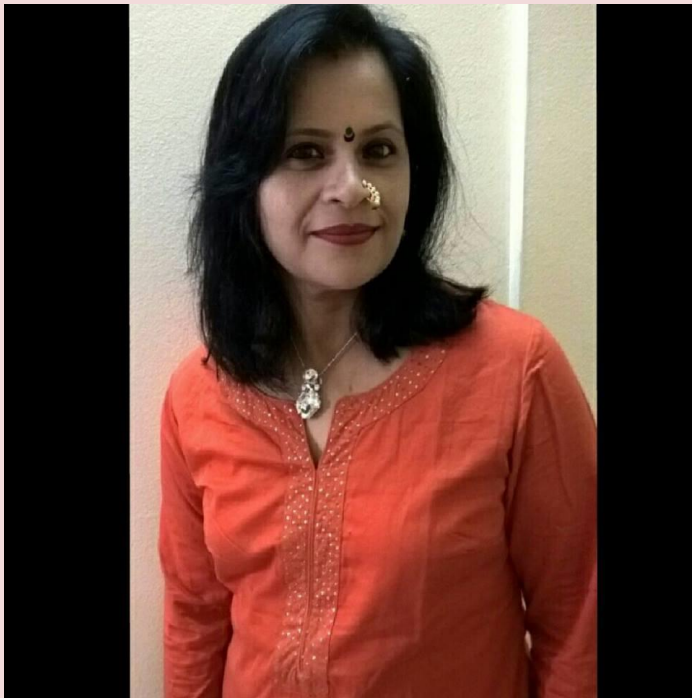
Linda Imbler: She is an internationally published poet. Her poetry collections include “Big Questions, Little Sleep,” “Lost and Found,” and “The Sea’s Secret Song.” Her newest e-book “Pairings” is due out soon. She is a Kansas-based Pushcart Prize and Best of the Net Nominee. Linda’s poetry and a listing of publications can be found at lindaspotryblog.blogspot.com



ANALYSING THE ROCK

Standing between two sedimentary rocks,
I analyze the structure and its layers,
Somehow I got stuck amidst the spaces,
I feel its ingenuity and its metamorphic changes,
More I scrutinize its presence,
I feel, behind the mechanism,
A pore persisted deep among the ridges,
Caring and accepting the changes,
Neither the heat of the sun find its place to rest, there,
Nor the cool saline breeze could leave its impact.
Softly the pore breaths the air,
Consciously attentive of the circumstances,

Maintaining the distance, watching the minerals in its base,
Fertile and rich are the deposits,
Silently the pore takes rest in the crest,
But at time its vibrations gives punches,
Quivering the earthly base to crackle from all the sides.
Yet pore remains safe occupying its place.



Lopamudra Mishra: She is a native of Puri, now residing in Bhubaneswar, Orissa. Her poems have been published in many magazines and anthologies. Her first book “Rhyme Of Rain” was published in march 2017; her second book “First Rain” in August 2017, and her third book, Tingling Parables in May 2018.



THE FIRE

An insane desire

A slow fire

Swelling up in the bosom

touching desperate

Silky smooth

Adhering passionate

Want to spurge

The dictates of life

The beautiful essences

Of pompous lustrousness

Clinging fervently

Tongues spurge ecstatic

Soft murmur of heart's content

Mount of love

Valley of ecstasy

Delving deep

Crescendo rising

high and low

The soujourner

of paradisiacal paradigm

Rising and falling

High and low

Cravings some more

Meekly adheres

Fervently in you

Senses intoxicating

Flying high

Hearts gratified

Peaceful delight.



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



A NOVEMBER MORNING

On a cold november morning

With a warm heart fluttering with the auburn autumn
leaves

A charming smiling face, I encounter, familiar, with
mischievous twinkling eyes and

A voice so known, that said “finally we meet”.

Taking small steps ahead, towards you, unsure,

Still convinced somehow that you had some cure,

My love struck a melodious note,

My heart singing along, enchanted, further as the soft
strains floated.

A somber sky waited, splattered with heavily wet clouds,

You unlatch the door and recollections crowd,

As I waft and sift through the memories, forgotten, but still
so beautiful,

All captivated in colourful frames, but illusional!

"Hope, it never comes to an end," my voice trembled and
quivered,

Isn't one life a little too short to be in love, with so much
undiscovered?

Your tempting passions stroke my doubting emotions,

Where were the feelings lost...will they come back as
magical, enchanting potions?



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



W.O.R.D.S.

When they speak, they drop such pearls I tell you!

(i)

If killing has to be lethal and need no trail over the death, it has to be by

w.o.r.d.s

If killing has been lethal and the poison impossible to trace, it has to be by w.o.r.d.s

(ii)

A little birdy told me,

So I believed it.

She said. He said. Zhe said. They said,

So I believed it.

Mouths are the new eyes.

And ears are just doing their job.

(iii)

You can't see, I understand you are blind to your privilege

You believe what you hear, I understand you are too busy
to verify sources.

But, can't you smell the filth in the air?

Have you stopped breathing, friend?

Or are you bathing in your own foul breath?



Mahitha Kasireddi: She is from Hyderabad, India. She had been a writer with the online magazine Youth Ki Awaaz. She is a former content director at Campus Diaries. Her poems have been published in literary journals such as GloMag, The Ink Drift Magazine, Unbound Emagazine and the Telegram Magazine by the Talking Books, Delhi and in

The New Indian Express. She is the writing finalist of the Campus Diaries 25 Under 25 2016 National Contest. She's certified by the University of Iowa for completing the International Writing Program MOOC on how writers write fiction 2016: Storied Women. Her poems are also to be published in an anthology by Author Press India called Women Poetess: Within and Beyond Shore.



WHERE I COME FROM?

I come from exiled lands,
wet by queer tastes.

I come from tales
migrating from one
mouthpiece to
another.

The stories of a half Pashtun-
half Burmese grandma!

I come from the visions
gleaming in her eyes,
from the screams aching

in her breasts. I come from
the welded frames of her specs.

From her disjoint teeth
that appear as tombs in
her mouth, I come from
the sounds of those tombs.

I come from the knots of her
thin braid that smells of coconuts.
From her wrinkled hands in which
I see tangled lines- Her Home, I see
her in those homes, the houses I never
lived, the houses I will never see but are
a part of my memory. Seventy years later!

Those bones, a dying cemetery buried in pages
of history.

Of bloodshed,
of separation,

of hunger.

I have known all.

What loss of home is!

I come from the tree uprooted by winds.

Though I grew up as branches of a
migrated tree,

flowered by hybrid rivers

and skies.



Manisha Manhas: She is a rebel. She is an English teacher with Punjab education department and moonlights as a poet. Her poems mostly revolve around the theme of "partition and migration" of 1947. Her poems have previously been published in various journals. For her, poetry is her life-force quite similar to blood flowing in her veins.



THE VERANDAH

That Zig zag design on bricks,
Intriguing, inviting to play!
That narrow gallery on the side,
With attendance more from inside!
Where the steps echoed a knock,
Where the songs got absorbed in walls!
That alley of happiness,
Through which we ran!
Where the little burglars got chased,
With loaded fists they giggled away!
Where the walls got splashed with Holi colours,

Where floor adorned the rangoli bright!
Where the doors rejoiced many ingress,
Sometimes exits witnessed!
Where the birds nested, bee hived,
Where all emotions imprinted!
Place most soothing in summers,
In winters where sigdi stood!
Where memories resided in mortar and brick,
Now hang framed on plastered walls!
Well equipped, new homes grand in style,
Missing is just a Verandah!



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



The white canopy above flutters tattered.

Hues of blues peep gingerly out like

small faces

anxious for absent parents.

Darker patches brood, while the wind unseen

wields its potent brush,

wildly blending dreams with nightmares.



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.



POUSH AND MAGH

Poush and Magh,

These two months are like happy twins

If one would yawn ,

The other would do the same;

They both love to wrap themselves in sweetness,

If Poush would take nolen gur

Magh would hanker after that too,

And they both love to cuddle up

Under a blanket with a story book;

They both love to laze ,

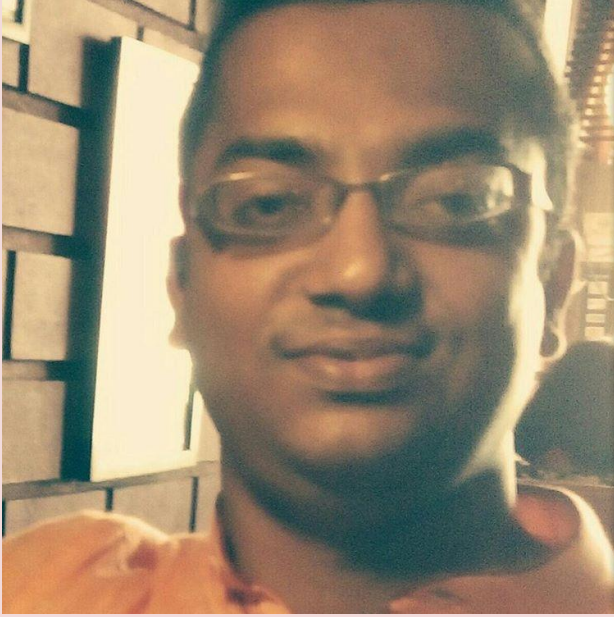
And go out too,

For a picnic or camping in the woods,
Their cane baskets filled with apples, oranges, cucumbers,
cheese balls and muffins;

Only the other year
Somewhere on the Belvedere Road
I stopped at a florist
And thinking of them two
Bought bouquets,
It might be a pure delight on my part
To carry home for them those flowers,

For they two keep so many like me
In Love with life and its varieties.

*(Poush, Magh : are two months of bengali calender . These two months
different festivals occur at Bengal. More importantly in these two months
flowers and fruits fill up nature's bounty)*



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



PILLOW

your pillow is with you!

When the day turns to night

All people are going to sleep

When it's time near to dream flight

Someone is still waking and listening to you keep

Your pillow is with you!

when you wish to share hundred secrets

In the darkness when you hiding your tears

Just lighting only deam lights

I know all about your fears

Your pillow is with you!

Do not let thyself feel low

keep patience my friend

You may see new day again tomorrow

I'm a witness of your problems you yourself mend

Please keep patience and put aside thy morrow

Your pillow is with you!

Many a times you smiled

Many a times you cried

Many a times with the fruits of success you blessed

Many a times you failed and again tried

Your pillow is with you!

Felt love, joy, tears as if my own once

If you are in illness or sadness

If it's tension or passion, lovelorn and your heart corn

I always see you surround with the moments of happiness

Your pillow is with you!

Put your worry aside

Remove worry from the your inbox of memory

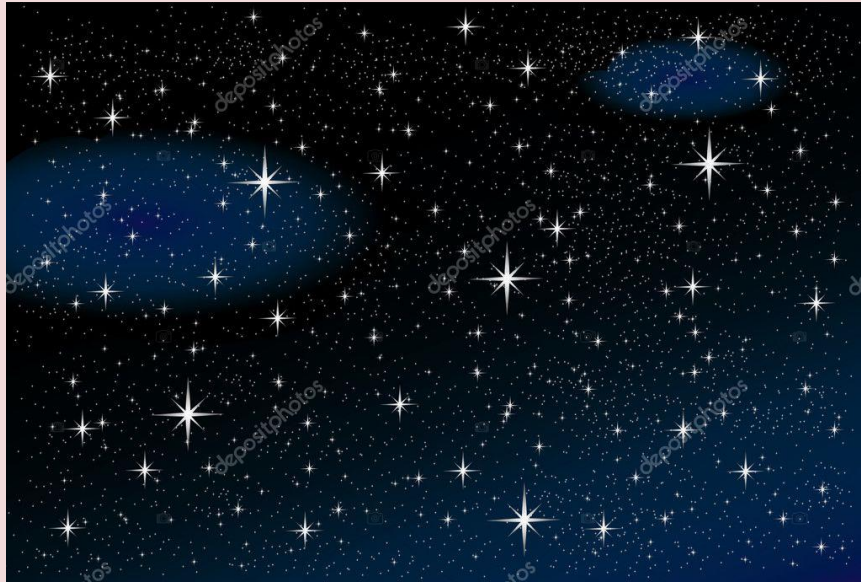
Get ready to dream for the tomorrow's new ride

Good night! tomorrow night again listen from you
another's story!



Nidhi Kunvarani: She hails from Gujarat, India. She is an English lecturer. Basically, she knows three languages Gujarati, Hindi and English and she would like to write in these three languages. Also interested in reading, teaching and natural photography.

Her many poems have been published in journals, web Journals, e-books, ezines and national and international anthologies. She is also recognized by many national and international poetry forums for her poetic contribution.



STARS

She stares at the moonless sky, a teary smile on her face

Waiting for days to witness this miracle

When everything is lit up by the blaze of a thousand
twinkling stars

That seem so small and insignificant on any other day

Overshadowed by the glowing moon

Which is a falsity...like so many others...

Owing to its closer presence

Familiarity breeds contempt?

Today is their day to shine

These very bright – seemingly tiny – stars

With no other way to prove their brilliance

Come out in full force today

It's their turn to show the world that they have what it takes

Their turn to prove that they are...



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



EVENING GLOW

The golden evening, so calm and lovely

The sky is a blushing bride, glowing

With an array of purple and orange

the crescent moon shines down.

The sky is like a canvas

The sunset, a weave of soft colours,

The moon is a jewel in the sky,

With twinkling stars like diamonds

The low sun, the silhouette of the trees

The chirping crickets and the luminous fireflies

Oh, let me be the lone crystal clear creek

As I reflect this fusion of colours

The birds go home to their nests

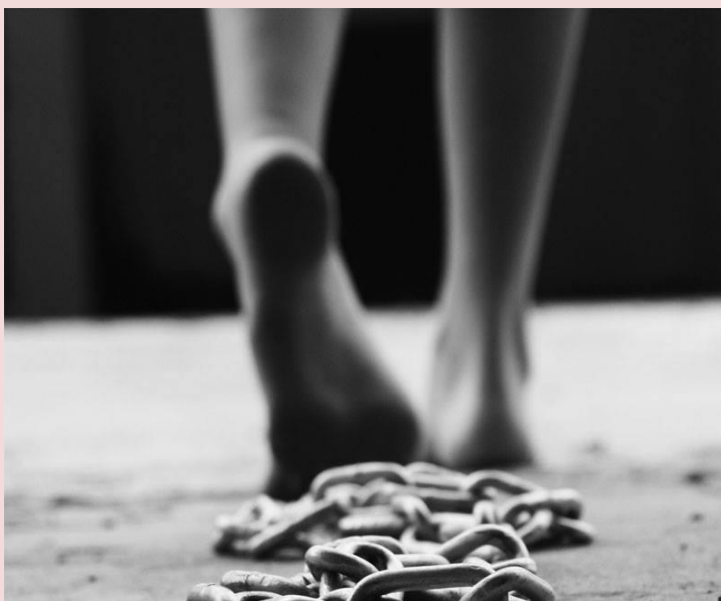
The world is bathed in gold, as if with a Midas touch.

This is a time to ponder,

On the day, and sigh with wonder.



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



Did you just grant me a boon,
The autonomy to love?
That I am free to take
The aches and longing
Of my heart to another?

Autonomy, what a beautiful gift
But a dangerous one,
For “love” becomes unfenced
To graze in another field
If one’s own is not green enough.

This is how it should be
Like the vast boundless sky above
But I am minuscule too,
For I would bind my beloved
With my best demeanour
Or by instilling fear
Of the worst kind
To have my own niche
In this large, dark world...
Oh, it would break me
To know that my best
Is not good enough
And it would be alright
For the other to simply walk away...

Where is sin then?
In one's own heart
For wanting to trap

Another who wants to fly!

Sorrow, ego, jealousy

Are no longer valid.

Didn't you know?



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



I AM CREATOR

Sculpt, chisel, carve

Stone into a sculpture

Sculpture eyes I open with one stroke

Woo, awesome, I shout

Stone transformed into an Idol.

Idol worship

Stately procession

Kingly praise/prize

I Create.

Stone laughed

Laughed out aloud

Nothing has changed

Another form

Idol another form of the stone.



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



PAIN

With a bow held in one hand

An Ustad takes the Esraj on his lap.

He produces melody

Moving the bow forcefully forth and less forcefully back
against the strings.

as if

A woodcutter is cutting the trunk of a sagwan tree with a
hand-saw.



Partha Chatterjee: He lives West Bengal, India. His poems have been published throughout the world. He loves music and poetry very much.



YOUR BONES REMEMBER

what my skin forgets.

What your sky forgets

My earth remembers.

Your rivers forget the distance travelled

My earth remembers where direction changed.

Blood memory stains your riverbed.

Skin never restores its shape.

Absence is character unrecognised.

Absence is a never return, a forgotten way

Marked by signs unrecognised as signs.



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



ALONE IT FALLS

The lonely snowflake
Formed by chance,
To perform a dance
In the Winter air.

A flake of beauty
Crystalline,
Concubine
Of the Winter King.

Floating to and fro,
Frosted here,

Wind sheer,
Tumbling down.

Touches a child's finger
Cold felt,
Warmth melt
Into an angels tear.

The child smiles.
Thoughts of some
More to come.
A gift of Winter snow.



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



DAWN AND DUSK WITH NATURE

I woke up early that morning
and sensed a silence
a silence of the changing world
evolving every minute every second
I breathed the fresh air
enjoying the magic of life and creations
there was silence in the air
it was a silent early morning

The wind blew and the weeds flew in the meadow
as I cried oh! Mother nature, behold
from outside my window

a young girl ran excitedly
passing her hands by the bright
sunflowers and the morning lilies
as I stood by spotting a beautiful rain dew
on a petal of a flower
there was excitement and frolic in the meadow
when I gazed from outside my window

My eyes wandered as I spotted the bright crimson sunrise
emerge from the baby blue sky
and foggy white clouds
whilst the black and brown birds flew and chirped
forming a collage of colours in the beautiful sky
I feel am a prey to the nature's magnificence
as it instilled brightness warmth and radiance
there was a bright crimson sunrise
it was a scene sure to entice

I saw the lightning and heard the thunder
and the pitter-patter of rain in wonder
as the young girl danced in trance drenching her green skirt
and white top
it was a sight of nature and elegance
she ran opening her arms wide
and caressing the rain glowing from inside
as I felt the raindrops reaching my hands
from outside the window
there was happiness and my face beaming
it was a wonderful rainy evening

I gazed again as the sky darkened
and the moon brimmed white as a pearl
but the sun had gone and the rain clouds gone
as the girl sat in abyssal
she did not dance and stood by the fence
all by herself in the meadow
as I cried to her at times of misery

think about the rufescent sun, the dusk, the pearl white
moon for solitude

for tomorrow it will break open to dawn

as you rise and yawn

behold, there will be a crimson sunrise

it will be a scene sure to entice.



Pooja Suresh: Hello! I am Pooja Suresh, an upcoming Carnatic music vocalist and I perform concerts along with my siste. We sing as vocal duets and I also play the instrument Veena. I started writing as a hobby and now, take part in various writing prompts and programs also recently completed a NANOWRIMO camp setting myself a goal of 10000 words and received an honorable mention

for one of my poems on togetherness written for On Fire Cultural Movement. I aspire to write more and read more.



THE MISSING LINK

Hardly language matters

Whether I write in odia or in english What matters most is that I am writing.

I want to write on the missing link with my soulmate Lost the link somehow or the other

Moving now i am with a body that does not move at all,

Just renewed my mobile pack for another ninety days

Now onwards I can have unlimited calls, but there is no one with whom I will have a talk

Standing by the side of a road, i am watching the

cinematic movements of people, bikes, cars I am used to
surfing of a different type

I feel as if I am changing channels of a t. v Unable to
concentrate even on relationship Changing faces very often

At times I just view the decimated body parts Lips eyes
years and somebody's sharp nose

Why can't I have the patience to watch a single face at a
time?

Fleeting are the moments

Flirting I am with an evening Chat goes on

Truth or dare game

I am asking to myself and answering too!

Solitude is a game

I know the golden rules

At times I elope with words to far off places and never
return

I don't want to come back to a body called home sweet
home

Everywhere cobwebs and nets Everywhere nets and fishes
Everywhere ajar doors and a face dangling A smile here and
a tear droplet there
An eye here and a lip there
A sharp nose in between two eyes
I can't recollect the face that I have lost long ago Just I want
to gather those body parts to create a face out of it through
poetry, when the entire city appears faceless to me.



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



WINTER STORY

It was a night of Jan,
When I became your man.
Since then,
Everytime when I whisper
I feel that cozy breeze,
Everytime when I am happy,
I feel the sea,
Everytime when I am sad,
I miss your hand,
Everytime when I feel alone,
I miss your smile,
Everytime when I try to write a song,

Darling, I missed you so long.

Everytime when I sleep,

I see the you in my dreams.

Everytime when I lean on a cold wall,

I feel your body.

Everytime when I try to heal my pain,

I cry in the rain.

Everytime when I kiss you,

I feel the love.

Everytime when winter comes,

I feel the spring.



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



ANNIHILATION

Black Friday it was! Her mood was black, the skies were pregnant with clouds black, ready to birth a stormy deluge anytime...

She understood. To cut black, she needed black poison, no greys; pure, virgin, black! All her whiteness was sullied beyond repair. Avenge herself she must. The black serpent's deadly gaze mesmerised her. The hard black diamond stare, hypnotised her into an anti-life, anti-good, anti-clockwise dance of death. Holy words turned unholy, repeated backwards. She was avenged. Her tormentor was crushed, never to rise again. The serpent waited to devour her soul, the price for his help, willingly she gave in, such a spell had he cast on her with his dark Magic!



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



Seek me not

Look within you

There, I am.



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.



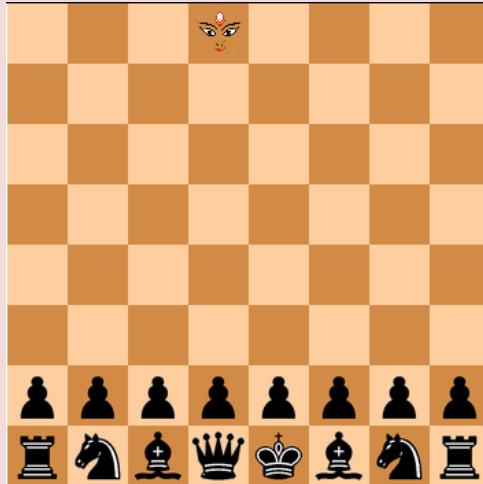
A SONG FOR MY SOUL

My pen is overflowing with the ink
Of my fragrant soul,
Though destined to create a random tale
In the city of my youthful heart
Life becomes soulful with undying passion
Trees are charming around do smile from the distant land.
In the valley of green fields and rivers
My eyes are searching for the tune of love
Young are my days,
Young are my words,
in pain and pleasure
They remain constant in every moment of life,

Cool breeze and the fiery sky
Dazzles the path with new aura
Life is like a wagon wheel
It turns and turns in every step,
Sweetness of holy flowers
Showers glitter however.



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



#METOOSURAMARDINI

Halahala - the poison that Shiva retained
in his blue-dyed throat - was it for this day;

The vajra turns back on its wielder

And original sin comes back to haunt:

How do we say Eve was not raped

Or that Surpanakha lost her nose for

rejecting, not making, an advance

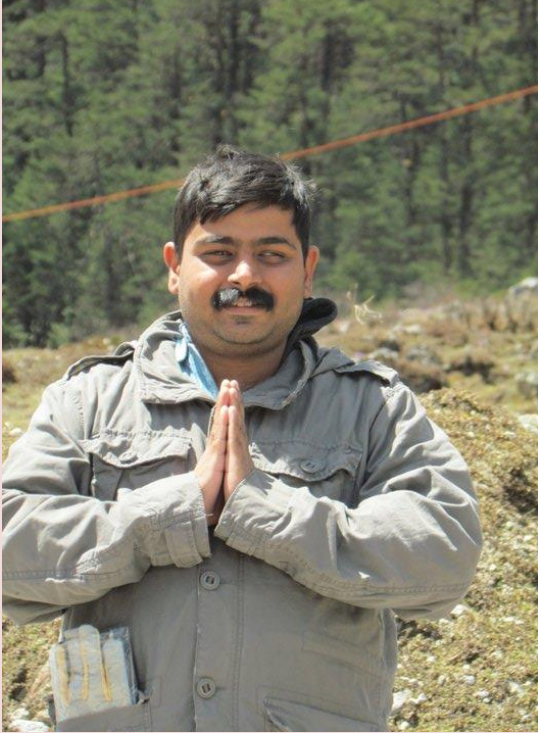
or that Ahilya was turned to stone

as part of a manspiracy?

They painted Jezebel, and never let Delilah

tell her story... what if they had a #MeToo

Oh but we watch our mothers slog over
the washing and the cooking and the scrubbing
of floors on bent backs... we sin as sons;
and our sisters bear beatings and denial
of education... we sin as brothers
we sin as husbands, and as fathers and as
cousins, uncles, nephews... even if our
penises are in our pants and our hands
to ourselves. For we keep as silent
as Yudhisthira that fateful day: it was a game
they said that he lost, and she was a stake
after all...



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



A SPIRIT BREATHE IN

It is not a black granite
or carved idols of some
Indian deities we worship
by offerings of sandal paste,
fragrant flowers and holy waters,

It is not a blotched plant,
bunch of sacred leaves,
décor adorning the urn,
sprinkles holy all around
the venerable spot of Belief,

Not the Mantra chanting
aloud or Vedic recitals
of scholars and erudite pundits,
propitiating Gods and angels
throughout the day from Dawn,

neither the offerings of
puddings and rice cakes
of jaggery and pure ghee
flowing in plantain leaves
or holding in sacred vessels,

mind wandering elsewhere,
application rescinded or duplication
entertained with currency embalmed
in conscience of convenience,
but a Firm Dedicated Spirit

of Absolute Surrender to HIS WILL
that prevails His Domain and care.



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



IT'S JUST NOT RIGHT

The little 'uns should not die.
Their eyes, so young, bright
twinkle innocence, light, life,
should not be closed for good.

“She died this morning”,
my wife told me
of the little child of the
labour couple who worked
beside my place.

She was not two, would
knock at our gate, yell, “Aunty”,
sometimes once, sometimes twice, and my wife
caring for her own two year old
would speak to her elder one,
“Give the child a banana, she’s hungry”,
or, “Take biscuits, four, for her”.

I never talked to the child, the
same age as that of my own little one, nearly.
I saw her at times, looking at us
playing cricket on terrace.

She was so, alive, curious, little,
she should not have died, so painfully
her liver, in coma
No, I shouldn’t write of her struggle;
that pain.

“Hindu children aren’t cremated, or buried”,
I told my wife over phone,
“They’re submerged in the Ganges”.
She had called to tell me that she’d give
Something for the child’s last rites.

This is my first poem,
after probably three dry months,
or more. I had to write it.
Before I left for work today,
before we knew that the child had died,
I, an atheist, had said to my wife,
“I promise to offer half kilo of
sweets to Lord Hanuman in Varanasi
if she lives”. In my mind, I had offered
that as a bribe, to god, if there was any.

Probably she was taking her last breath
just as I was wishing for her long life,
strangely selflessly, too late.



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



OPPOSITES ATTRACT, AND HOW!

Madhavi and I are considered the run-away couple whose marriage is a run-away success. 30 plus years of togetherness with a sprinkling of sobs, a splash of sniffles and a tsunami of smiles is, I think, quite an impressive score card.

So what makes us 'explode'? I think the infinite differences and the few similarities we share make our marriage work.

Madhavi is an out and out extrovert and loves to socialise. Strangely, though she is great at 'talking the talk', when it comes to speaking on stage she is all at sea and while I tie myself into reef knots in one-to-one encounters, behind a podium, I am super cool.

However, even though she is very gregarious on most occasions, she becomes extremely uncomfortable when anyone tries to flirt with her. I, on the other hand, get into

my own only when I am practising the art and craft of this harmless, yet so very enjoyable, indulgence.

She has got a great voice and sings very well. I croak but dance to her tunes and on stage, I think, with great felicity.

Madhavi's basic life position is I'm Ok, You're Ok. I flit between I'm Ok, You're not Ok & I am not Ok, You're Ok.

We do have a few similarities. We both love shopping, travelling and spending time with the kids. We are fond of animals and that naturally makes us fond of each other.

A colleague had once commented, "Ramen, both you and Madhavi complement each other beautifully – while you crack jokes with ease, she cracks up easily."

What I have learnt in these nearly three decades of married life is that with most couples the scenario is the same. Every relationship is a medley of similarities and differences. If a couple is completely opposite of each other it would lead to chaos, if it is too much alike it would result in ennui. So the mantra of an effective relationship according to me is simple: 'Celebrate the differences, enjoy the similarities and forget the rest'!



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



X-MOM

(To my mom who died this year)

Mom had two hearts like two breasts.

One of stone and

One of flesh.

They worked alternatively.

On days when the pulpy one worked

She talked of my infantile jaundice days

When I turned turmeric yellow.

I would have died but for

A doctor named Adam Khan in Pazhavangadi. (1)

On days when the stony heart worked
She slept with a koduval under her pillow (2)
To protect us kids from potential enemies.

Till she died, she maintained
“A woman should always carry
A hack knife in her heart.”

On the night of her death,
I found it glowing in the dark
On an X-ray shot of her chest.

Note

- (1) *A place in Trivandrum, Kerala. We lived there in 57-62.*
- (2) *Hack knife.*



Ravi Shanker (Ra Sh): He translates from Malayalam and Tamil to English and vice versa. Published English translations of stories by Bama (Tamil), Mother Forest (from Malayalam) and Waking is Another Dream (Sri Lankan Tamil Poetry) and for Anthologies of Dalit literature published by OUP and Penguin India. Published poems in magazines, journals and anthologies. He is one of the five contributing poets to the anthology, "A Strange Place Other Than Earlobes" (five voices seventy poems). A collection of his poetry, "Architecture of Flesh" was published by Paperwala in 2015.



CLOSURE

It is the nearing sound of his spade
digging into hard brown earth,
its firm, rhythmic thump
that drives me to
put word after word into a picture
and then picture them beginning a young forest
where none but the wild can survive
and where the best of the birds
meet the vilest of crawling horrors
and from where the rain takes birth
and falls upon a land's thirst
As the forest grows

spreading slow
across my aridity
its roots will drink deep
leave me dry as a wrinkle
and turn flesh into memories
and only then
will the grave digger's assault finally cease



Reena Prasad: She is a poet/writer from India, currently living in Sharjah (United Arab Emirates). Her poems have been published in several anthologies and journals, e.g., The Copperfield Review, First Literary Review-East, Angle Journal, Poetry Quarterly, Lakeview International Journal etc. She is also the Destiny Poets UK's Poet of the year for

2014 and one of the editors of The Significant Anthology released in July 2015. More recently, she was adjudged second in the World Union Of Poet's competition, 2016. She writes at Butterflies Of Time.



A CARTOGRAPHER'S DREAM

That night,

The cartographer who saw-

vast depopulated villages

where ravished ghosts rove,

arterial circuit of roads that

lead to nameless towns,

monstrous oceans that

ram their heads against the shore,

snaky rivers originated from

silent hearts of dying jungles,

mountain ranges that block whispers-

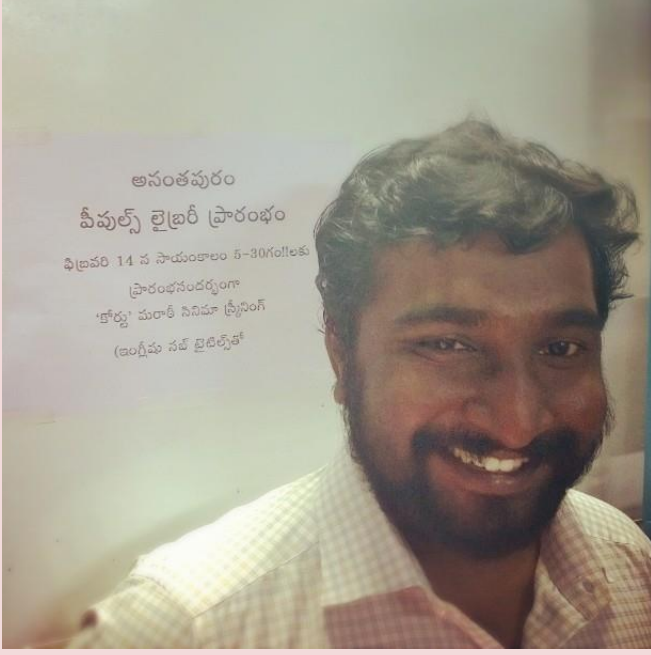
That night, in his sleep

he dreamt a song in unknown
language and discordant symphony
sung by a high-pitched, sharp voice
that can excavate buried corpses.

He woke in the dead of night
possessed with realisation of a map
of an uncharted land,
that resembled, in his memory,
a parched wing of a butterfly
migrated from Siberia;

He picked up a pencil and tried
sketching the map which
slowly turned into a silhouette

of a lean farmer withering
in an autumnal wind.



Ro Hith: He is a poet and a medico from Andhra Pradesh, writing poetry since 7 years. His poetry has been published in various online magazines, and has been acknowledged and complimented by various senior poets.



SHINING ON BRIGHTLY

jelly sweet roll

tumbling rose petals,

orange bright smattering ring across blessed sunsets,

blessed white marble pyramids

blessed equations that remain Angelique masterpieces

blessed major minor chords transforming symphony

sunflower bright

the space between

specks of sand

smattering

rumbling cascade
harmonic waterfall,
reds golds anticipating orange,
these bright sands
sifting
through the fingers of Angels...
this photographic masterpiece of heaven
my imagination
so endures,
shining on brightly
forevermore



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



REMININSCE

The home of my soul
Was designed with many rooms,
Each occupied with a faction
Or diversion-while others
Were vacant yet to be filled!

I inhabited these chambers
All which I knew and recognized,
Lodges beneath the roof
And everything that entered
I carefully scrutinized

Before furnishing a room!
The space kept augmenting,
I watched as nature unfolded,
New walls and doors
Became me partly in ways
I have never seen,
Still unfinished,
Still unwholesome!



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



..... **BUT YOU**

I was sure that time
Somewhere In the
Corridors of my life
I'd fall in love with you;
That has been happened.
I was sure that time,
That one day, you would
Look at to the wounds
Of my weeping heart
That has been happened.
I had never thought
That in the midways,

We would be enforced
To Separate in two ways, but
That has been happened.
I could never have think
That we could never meet
As if all streams do meets in Ocean
At the end of their journey, but here,
That hasn't been happened.
Now, I'm not sure of anything
Nor think of anything, but you....



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



THE TOPSY TURVY WORLD

I went to bed late at night,
And dreamt a strange dream;
Of people sleeping in the day and working at night,
When the world is brightened by moonbeams.

Yes, of course! It was
A strange queer land,
Of cars flying in the sky,
And planes running on land.

A role reversal there was,
Between the parent and the child,
Where the father went to school,
And the son in the heat toiled.

Mothers going for tuitions and dance,
Keeping their daughters in a trance,
With their moves and their prance
Never allowing the daughters to shift their glance.

I was watching a puppy bake some tarts,
When I woke up with a start,
For I'd heard a shrill scream,
And that was the end of my dream.



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



WALLS

The moon is in the process of packing its bags
and retiring for the day.

It casts one last look behind,
to find itself trapped in a small pond, just born.

A languid chirp, a lacklustre slough, a lackadaisical bark
mark the birth of a slowly awakening dawn.

Lo and behold! An overripe ball of gold

boldly burns a hole in the horizon,
bursting forth and brightening a crumbling wall.

My mind's eye sees

the crumbling of the walls of hatred and rancour and the
canker

of all round mendacity and petty rivalries.

A happy breeze removes the creases from my brow, and i
hasten inside

with an untroubled brow, a smile playing on my lips.

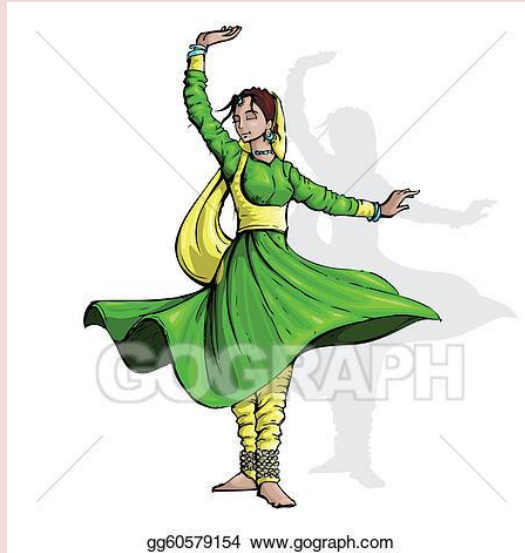
A granny's chuckle floats in the air breaking yet another
wall

between infancy and old age.

Her grandchild adds his spunky chortle to her chuckle,
pointing towards the east where the sun, all spic and span,
is now fully buckled up for yet another day.



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



MY UNSPOKEN LANGUAGE

I speak the language of love

through my eyes

which reflects my happy heart!

I speak the language of love

through my rhythmic steps

all say my rhythm is divine!

They compare my rhythm

to the rhythm of angels in paradise!

I speak the language of love

with my sweet lips

with nectar oozing out!

I speak the language of love
by my caring touch
which vibrates everyone's heart!
I wear my anklets for the sweet sound
for others to hear
the divine sound which
goes deep down the hearts of my audience!
My heart speaks volumes
through my eyes
everyone loves my speaking eyes
they keep looking into them
to understand what's in my heart!
I enjoy the celestial beauty
of the dancing stars and moon at night
lying on the wet meadows
relaxing my body and soul!



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



THE RIVER - THE ASCETIC

Ancient ascetic, ageless and agitated

Bewitching and bold truth subtly abated

Consumed by a seething rummage ill fated

Dancing in history's musings forgotten outdated

Ecstatic, enigmatic – eternally

Foraging her own existence

Gushing forth fervour though subtly

Hushed by mongers of meek victories

Indicting a lost people to seek

Justice muted by false histories

Keeper of a lost race she heaves

Legends that conjure in minds of peeves
Matted locks that wildly dance in fervour
Nascent thoughts cling to a stoic arbour
Omniscient, invoking many a good seer
Poignant, Quaint River misplaced by a race too eager
Saraswathi – they call her – Time’s Uncanny Vile Wager



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

empowerment. She is currently a freelance life skills trainer and also teaches in a satellite based education company.



A DEDICATION TO MY GRANNY

When I see the light in your eyes

When you talk about your pranks and your harmless lies

All your friends etched in your memory

I'm a part of your reverie

You're a major part of my life

All your stories are becoming a part of my ogive

I wish you health and happiness

With loads of wealth and wellness

I hope you enjoy your gift

And we celebrate grandly, your seventy sixth!!



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



SPECKS OF SAWDUST

Your eyes are green leaves
falling gently in autumn,
a yellow butterfly fluttering
as its dust sparkles in the sun.

Why do I say such things?
Because a poet must try
and sound as if nature sang
some thought onto paper
that was
worth the effort

of cutting down a tree
in the first place.

But in the end
we are still left
with all these beams.



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



GUSTFUL BREEZE

Winds fluttering, wafting fluently

Reaching calmly and effortlessly

A steady stream of calm existentiality

Into the land of dreams and fulfilment

Soothing in all its calmness

In a trance, serene beauty

Will, the soft breeze, with a touch of loveliness
Enter the soul of the poet?

Tornadoes, a gust of passion
Striding forth, as if on a mission
Peaceful existence, thereafter a totality
Is it a dream or reality?

Realms and realms of thread, weaving
Into a dreamless existence beaming
As it were into a complete
Chasm of beauteousness and salubriousness



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



A touch is that warm space
between breath and skin.

The more you touch
the more you breathe.

A breath is that prime place
where you live to notice
and understand.

So touch and breathe
and wonder at the wonders
of that settlement
where you can breathe and touch.



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



A LOOK AT LIFE

Very difficult

to be a foreigner in one's own house

very difficult to be in a corner

having no taker

Very difficult

to go down in the eyes of those

for whom once you are the hero

very difficult to withstand

the changing needs of time and

fading colours of life

Very difficult

to compromise with your values and to

succumb to the whims of those

once so dear

very difficult to reduce oneself to zero

and become part of the game

where you don't have a place of your own

Very difficult

to see your house of dreams

shattered, neglected and sold

very difficult to see your love humiliated

very difficult to accept the reality

and digest the same

Blessed is he

who leaves

before fully exhausted

with boots on
chest up and head high
instead of being an unnecessary antique
in the showcase
the presence of which no one relish
the extinction of which no one desire



Smruti Ranjan Mohanty: He son of Raj Kishore and Shantilata Mohanty, born at Padmapur, Jagatsinghpur, Odisha on 1.1.1963 is a multilingual poet, essayist and writer. He is a published poet and writer and a featured poet of PENTASI B World Friendship Poetry. His writings include essays, short stories, poems and novels which are

published in newspapers and in various national and international magazines, journals and anthologies. Working as Finance Officer in Govt of Odisha, he writes extensively on life, its beauty and intricacies which are widely acclaimed.



OCTOBER

acrostic style poem

O' I am a month of thirty one days,
Celebration of festivals bloom on my way,
Taking away hot scorching sun rays,
O' I welcome soothing warm days,
Bringing rejoice and fun to everyone,
Enriching the life with joy and passion,
Rare treasure, joyous and boon I am!



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



Alone but not lonely

It's kind of confusing

Not to me

Am at peace with myself

No weight of expectation

No scope for suspicion

No need of being right

No one to fight

No one to apologize

No one to answer

No one to blame

No one to wait

No one to scold for being late

Am I happy?

Don't know

Yes I enjoy

The undivided attention

The uncomplicated emotion

The sea of unhurried calmness



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



HER STORY

Hopping and dancing without care
With infectious smile and feet bare
Two braided plaits with half furred ribbons
Played in the wind with gay abandon
Life was never easy for her
Born a girl it stuck like a burr
One beautiful day bright and sunny
Her world toppled over with plans canny
She knew not what actually happened
Hush hush whisperings her world darkened
The dream merchants had woven a web
Of lies deceit slick and depraved

With strangers she was sent soon
Her own sent her with a gang of goons
She became a toy in many hands
Smuggled in and out like contraband
Crushed dreams hopelessness supreme
Whispered talked about but never seen
Assaulted with body blows
Violated imprisoned submerged in apathetic woes
A walking emotionless hollow carcass
In a limbo her days passed
Pummelled pulped life became toxic
Trampled cussed cringed her axis
Broken Brokered and Bartered
Chopped Sliced and Quartered
A besieged fortress beleaguered and impenetrable
A puppet of nocturnal pleasures again and again
redeemable

Only death would bring a glorious release

Just for a few thousands her own sold her with guiltless ease.



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.



THE MOST INTIMATE HOPE

At the farther side of

The pristine landscapes and picturesque valleys

Lies the demure image and feeble flutter

Roving eyes of life neatly catches her

In her modest hut

Beneath the thatched roof

She spins dreams

Colors yards of it in shades bright

To make the collage radiant and splendid

The old harmonium
In the corner
Lies deserted like a remote metaphor
Its sealed lips elaborate
Many a tales of shattered hopes
Rip apart viscera and core

Her voice...smooth as silk
Serene and clear
Resonates through the valley
Ushers ripples in placid water

Her intermittent sobs with motifs of sigh
Echoes her bond with good times
Makes her all the more nostalgic
She guards and treasures

One of her most intimate hopes
That some day
The spell of simmering anger will cease
The valley will exude and cherish
A fresh lease
Elicit scope for warmth
And there will be reign of peace.



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

She is a regular contributor to anthologies published nationwide. Most of her work is in English.



WHEN THE DAYS ARE DARK

When the days are dark

Everything around you seems so gloomy!

Nights are cloudy, moon hazy,

Everything around you seems crazy

To think the life is beautiful

Your heart is not ready,

Roads ahead so long

Life seems that old song,

All around you seems rival

In the hand of destiny

You are trivial.

Spend some time in the vicinity of nature,

Feel the presence of morning breeze

Mountain, river and flowers

Look at the wide open sky

Imagine a world beyond all truth or lie.

You will feel fresh,

Everything around you

Will seem full of grace.

The world will appear a worth living place.



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



THE FAR AWAY LANDS

There's something about visiting

Unknown lands alone;

Treading unfamiliar paths,

Breathing flavours of an ethos

Completely disparate from home.

Cobblestones under feet unraveling history,

Overflowing mind, swamping heart,

Enveloping you in precious experience:

Observing Mass in Sacre-Coeur,

Admiring setting rays slide off Notre Dame,

Architectural wonders from hidden view points,

Wide plazas and shadowed lanes,
Obvious and not – graffiti of ebullient youth,
Soot begrimed facades of colossal churches,
Couples buying tickets for live shows, Pigalle!

Narrow streets and wide roads:
Swift cars waiting at traffic lights
Crowded buses and metros, and smiling courtesies.
Friendships formed in passing,
Plans changing and routes and shelters,
Adrenaline rush of living in uncertainty,
Sudden decisions that bring you to Prado and Thyssen
When you had only dared to dream of Louvre and d'Orsay.
The intensity of Flamenco, thudding, quivering, performed
inches away!

The peace of ancient forts and castles; walking the streets
of Belem...

The wines, the sweets, the meats in discovered cafes,
Tapas and Sangria, coffee shot with Irish magic...

A whole new world lives on the other side of the world.

Unimaginable within one's native horizon,
Lose the known to discover yourself.



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



WHY DO I WRITE?

Lisping words taught me to build bridges. We became friends.

I created a world, my rule absolute, breaking walls, rules, regulations,

no meter, no rhyme nor reason,

gypsy words wandering, any place, any season.

Life a madness buoyant, poignant, a verse.

The Roma's lust for life roamed the world of books

the actor performing on paper with ink grease paint my looks,

the ailing healer letting blood, my pen a leech I love,

perpetually pregnant laboring in pain seminal,
a poem is born, surreptitiously drunk, celebrate a cathartic
festival.

How else does one live so many lives in one?

When arrows shot from venomous mouths, pierce my
shadow,

poison the sweet waters in my veins from my mother's
womb,

life on tenterhooks writes a slanderous epitaph for my
tomb,

survival threatened, birds die, flowers wilt, plants perish,
brooks dry

wars waged in and outside homes and hearths

the chilling distance between beating hearts

eternal unanswered questions lead a search. My writings
take birth.

Rainbow colours, the lily's beauty, a poem is like a flower

God created and planted, to grow in my brain's bower

till it blooms, to emerge in the silence of the night,
I often stumble to the brink of sanity to meet my muse,
harvest a thought here, a word there, water with a smiling
tear
sing songs of elation, just regular life or sometimes a fear,
make me want to fall in love again, wail over a tragedy,
or the ultimate human expression, living out my fantasy.

The narcissist's self-love, my words my reflection
if one reads meaning to it, renders immortal my
conception.

Thorns and roses, stances and poses, smiles and pain,
my love for all things makes me write,
living life twice, taste it once again.



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



MORTALITY AND FEAR

The only leaf

Gets detached

From the bare branch

Of a crooked tree.

Wind-blown

It lands up on the windscreen

Of a car cruising along

A lonely country trail.

The yellow-faced leaf

Sends shivers down the spine

Of its bald owner

On a certain memorable autumnal afternoon
Often found in the
Labyrinths of Marquez
Or
Borges only
Re-discovered in a Mumbai
Apartment facing a local railway station
On a rainy night.



Sunil Sharma: He is Mumbai-based senior academic, critic, literary editor and author with 19 published books: Six collections of poetry; two of short fiction; one novel; a critical study of the novel, and, eight joint anthologies on prose, poetry and criticism, and, one joint poetry collection. He is a recipient of the UK-based Destiny Poets' inaugural

Poet of the Year award---2012. Sunil edits the English section of the monthly bilingual journal Setu published from Pittsburgh, USA.



FATED LOVE

(This poem has been written in the Roseate Sonnet style, a form created by Dr. Koshy A.V.)

He and she are mirrors

They are wanderers

Their souls restless and wild

They seek worlds in each other's eyes

Sometimes he parts, but comes back

She bids adieu but comes back

Entwined together

They are fated to be with each other

They weave days together with their hands

Nights are dark crochets they knit in distant

lands

Rose buds burst

Orchids bloom on their arms and feet

Sunflowers smile in their eyes as they speak

Echoing words in their silences



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



ON AN OLD PAGE

i will write my words as i will sing my song
dwell on an old page where it will belong

sincere words may not forever be in rhyme
my song won't be heard somewhere in time

they are my life to exist without any refrain
never have regrets within heart's domain

i lived through my dream and my passion
where they can be just an illusion or delusion

they are the meaning of the life that i have
remained on an old page in a book of love

where the torn pages of love long forgotten
into my grave where my heart will be rotten

spend my days of gray looking at twilight
until the slipping sun will be out of my sight

then clouds spread the hovering darkness
leaving a ray in a tunnel of glaring brightness

then i shall go where my spirit could be flown
as i leave my story on an old page of my own



Suzette Portes San Jose: She has a Bachelor of Science in Commerce from University of San Carlos Cebu City, Philippines. She is a University half scholar from high school to college. She was born with a passion for writing and living in her art forms. She started writing online in 2013. She now has joined 15 book anthologies from 2015 to 2018. Each of her poems is written with her painting as visuals and are now appearing internationally, namely in the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, India, and the Philippines. She is now in the process of publishing her own book anthology "THE DAWN" AND "THE ISLE OF WORDS AND COLORS" which will represent poetry and paintings.



LIFE

Even, under the frozen lake, a hue will be heard;
Though, it'll be subdued by majesty of the ice.
Even, a continuous flapping of an isolated bird--
Would change the darkening sky into a paradise.

Even, the humblest stalk of dried up paddy plant
Would be audacious to nourish the eternal flame.
Even, the spirit of some unnoticed and numb ant
Would try to cherish hopes inside her tiny wame.

Because, life knows that somewhere muddy water
Would be distilled to offer a clearer plane surface.

Because, life knows that in a place, that may be far
Enough from home, it will regain its lost grace.

So, my lonesome robin sings sweetly in her perch.

So, my proud stream flows under the grandest arch.



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



THE NEXT SUNSET

In search of crepuscular flora

The last kiss of sunburnt orange

Before a date with twilight

Come hither looks to the stars in luminous queue

Yet another night would rob the world of color

Fixated on the dying vestiges of the sun

The similitude of today

How much of my music would segue into the next sunset?

Which lyrics would withstand the vagaries of tomorrow?

Some would still love across distances and time
And some words penned
Like the illusion of dusk
Difficult to retrieve
In dawn's transient dalliance with the morrow



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



FROZEN FEELINGS

Frozen feelings flew away

From their abode

Feelings that were caged in this physical body, in the form
of different desires

Flapping their wings

Free from all myths

Free from all worries

How to live!!

How to survive!!

Worries are our main enemies

Tied our soul

With all miseries

Let us fly like these birds

And cross this road of continuous journey of life n death

Travel n more travel

Till finally reach up to our true destination

A destination called 'Moksha'

A final liberation....

Where this soul searches it's divine

After conquering this chilling n biting cold and struggle
every unfavourable conditions

Where these flora n fauna were the only witness

Watching these eternal lovers

Embracing each other

Silently!

Silently!



Varsha Saran: She is a bilingual poetess and story writer. Her many poems and stories have been published in different national and international Anthologies, e-zines, newspaper and magazines. She did her post-graduation from Ch Charan Singh University Meerut.

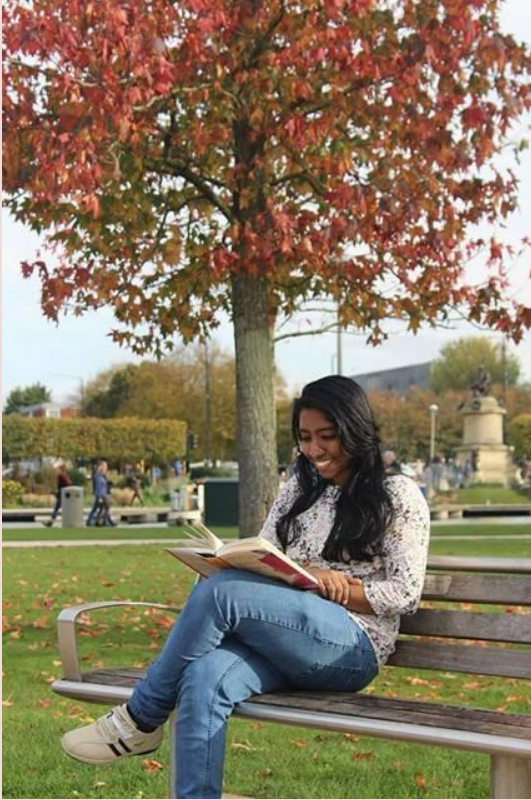


The calling bell is ringing,
I have the night sky
draped around my wet hair,
the stars dripping from the end of my ears,
the street lights have gone numb,
there is no light
but there are shadows.

The calling bell is ringing,
my shoulders smell of my mother's saree,
my collar bones trace the way to the peep hole,
the skin over it might shrink in a few years,
but my body is a simmering sea,

why else does my heart sink
at ports
that were never meant to be.

The calling bell is ringing,
in an empty house
that has no space,
I am on the other side of the door
waiting to see if the
home in that house still remains
or If the stains on
the lips of coffee makers have dried up
reminding me that no one drinks coffee in this house,
one day if someone finally opens the door,
I'll ask them if the calling bell worked alright
and leave
they might think it's a dream,
maybe that's all I wanted to be.



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.



NAKULAN (1921-2007)

I can still hear

His betel-stained shoulder-shaking

Raspy guffaw

That revealed

The spontaneity of his spotless soul

And once even splattered

Sitting on the front row

A young nun's habit--

The Sage of Golf Links had a mind

So sharp that it brought

Dead poets back to life

And slashed through romantic lies--

He hunted Moby-Dick with a harpoon

Of words in his quest for

Meanings within meanings

And then paused

Longer than Beckett or Pinter--

His stoic silence

Encouraging us to see

And think

Outside the box.



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



ON THE MANSION LAWN

they worked a vender table

of leather goods

ethnic pottery

carved trinkets

she seemed drained

by the whole business

she said she

wished the rapture

would come tomorrow

and take them away

we didn't respond
how could we
when she had already
made up her mind



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



SONNET 88

This incessant drizzle through the window
Is driving me back to a lane down memory
Such was the night that I had been there
With her standing behind the window wide
And a candle burning to light but her visage
The world around as silent as a wide coffin
And the only sound heard was that of fireflies
Flying above in a melody unheard of till then.

The presence was all of two lovelorn souls
Espying each other as if they were transfixed

Oblivious of dubious eyes and scornful hearts
Love loved to love love in Beethoven's notes
Wish I could have those nights to return once
And make a difference with love not gone.



Zulfiqar Parvez: He is 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! 😊