

GloMag

GLOMAG

Monthly Online Poetry and Prose

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Title of the Cover Pic: Today's Women

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/jessica.james.127648>

Instagram

<https://instagram.com/download/?r=2981838366>

Bio:

I appreciate everything around me. I admire the beauty of life. I always wanted to paint my feelings.

I have grown watching my dad draw and paint. My father is my inspiration. He encouraged me to do what is close to my heart. When I was six I drew a horse and I could see that he was proud of me.

I was almost invisible to people in my class during school days. I was a backbencher whose scores were less than average. The numbers, the theories made no sense to me. One day my art teacher placed a plant in front of the class and asked all the students to draw. The entire class's

attention drew on me when my art teacher appreciated me in front of all the students for what I drew in class. I focused on painting what I felt than studying for my board exams. It makes me smile when I think about it. Then things around me changed and I had to prove to people that I could be more than just average. Art and creativity took a step back. I lost touch. My mind always wondered.

I constantly remind myself to make the best of life. I tried everything. I stopped to start over again and open my creative kit. I started designing and sewing clothes for my daughter. I made it a must to sew all her birthday dresses. She constantly motivates me. I enjoy cooking by trying new recipes. I learnt the art of making wine, sausage, cutlets. I try them with friends and family. I started receiving appreciation for my work.

I am not a professional artist or designer. I don't have any publications. I am a Soft skills Trainer, I attend meetings with paper and pen not to take notes but to draw anything that crosses my mind. I believe that interaction with people is art. Training is my passion. I enjoy drawing, sewing, cooking, gardening, reading books and talking to people. My husband calls me a hyperactive being. Constantly keeping myself occupied gives me happiness.

I believe in making the most of the time I have.

Perspective Of The Painting

A picture is a worth a thousand words. This is a picture of today's woman. She has a hidden agenda. Her motives are unknown. She is not what she looks like. She is difficult to understand. The lady in the picture is a Strong woman who constantly prepares herself every day to handle multiple roles. There is a lot on her mind. The reason why I painted this picture is because this is how I see myself.

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 verses, expressions, and pictures. Your soul dances in ecstasy, participates in a cosmic experience, it sways and chants. Somewhere someone is telling you about duality, someone tells you about a forlorn house without music, someone shows you how to love, and someone raises questions about existence itself.

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

Glory Sasikala

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BACKGROUND MUSIC: “Lag Ja Gale” sung by Lata Mangeshkar, composed by Madan Mohan, lyricist, Raja Mehdi Ali Khan, movie, Who Kaun Thi

PREFACE

(A furfuraceous atheist with a dimple)



Tiffin – a word that belonged to Victorian England, but which has now been completely annexed by Indians. And especially South Indians at that, who have given it its rich, nuanced meanings.

A word that immediately summons daydreams of crisp vadai, ambade, dosai, bajji, paper roast, maddur vade, mysore bonda, with sambar or rasam or chutney (or all of them) when you see the ‘Tiffin Ready’ board outside a ‘hotel’.

Or a word that can mean a nightmarish, hastily (half-)cooked upma when your wife/mother/daughter-in-law throws out the question on a Sunday afternoon, “What shall I make for tiffin?”, even after you have listed forty-six potential items.

Or a word that means cold idlis, flimsy dosais or thickset curd rice when you open your office or school ‘tiffin-box’, even though you saw the hot, delectable avatar being packed when you left home in the morning.

This blogpost will concern itself with the last meaning. Because for the last twenty-five years, since I first began to

have afternoon meals in my first standard classroom, one question has vexed me. And not just me, but those who have concerned themselves with my welfare – “What is to be packed for lunch today?”

During my tenth standard board examinations, I carried without fail, pongal in my tiffin box. Everyday. Yes, Everyday. Because I believed it was a sort of lucky talisman. That a good mixture of the carbohydrates from rice, protein from the dal and alkaloids from the pepper would keep the devils at bay and keep me energetic and alert.

Every morning of those nerve-wracking days, I would see Amma pack a hot, glutinous mixture into the tiffin box. And every afternoon, in the break between examinations, I would open the box to see a cooled, curdled mass, most of its water separated from it. With the spoon provided, you mashed the stuff back into its original consistency, but the fun was dead. It was carbohydrates, proteins and alkaloids alright; it just wasn't the national dish of the Tamils that is so amazing at breakfast. Which is why, when faced with the prospect of carrying pongal to office nowadays, I quickly say that I will eat in the canteen.

Sometimes I let myself be persuaded to carry idlis instead. In that case, I prefer them to be coated with oiled gunpowder (milagaipodi). There is no way I am going to carry sambar or chutney in a little plastic dabba that fits snugly within the larger tiffin box. There are two things I hate consuming –

instant coffee, and cold sambar. I will consume hemlock more readily.

As for chutney, there is no way you can make me carry that to office – only to witness the ground copra congeal away from the white water and green chilly fragments. The gunpowder coating is no improvement, but it keeps its fieriness, which compensates for the coldness (and increasing hardness) of the idli.

The most common item that sits in my tiffin box is chapati-bhaji. (Living in Mumbai, I'm used to saying 'bhaji' instead of the word 'subzi' which is more common in the north). I can't quite complain about it. The chapatis are cold and sometimes beginning to turn into hard, papad-like things, but at least you can eat them. If you remember to pack them in foil (or even a cloth), you are lucky for the day. Else on days when it gets really late for lunch because of a pointless meeting, your chapatis have turned into khakhras (an extremely dry version of the chapati, prepared by Gujaratis). The bhaji is also cold, but it retains its consistency and taste most times.

Some chaps carry puris in their boxes instead of chapatis, but I am happy to leave them and their boxes alone. The oil separating from the puri and running amok in the tiffin box is not a pleasant sight. Nor is the sight of the puri, hardening slowly into a material which I think will make an excellent substitute for rubber. Of the kind you need for making truck tyres.

You can carry dal or chana or rajma instead of bhaji on some days. But if you are a connoisseur of these things (as I think I am), it hurts you to have to eat them cold (or reheated in the microwave. I can't decide which is worse.) They will most certainly be leftovers from yesternight's dinner, which you might still remember; this only serves to amplify the distress. I guess that holds true for any leftovers carried the next day.

There are two items which are a strict no-no in my house. Packing these in my lunch-box will, as my family member know, lead to a permanent and damaging rupture in my relationship with you. These are curd rice and dosais.

Imagine opening your box (especially if it has a tight lid that opens with a jerk), only to see the buttermilk spill out onto the table, or more dramatically, fly onto your face. You spend the first minute of your much-awaited lunch break cleaning up the mess. What could be a more inauspicious start? Then you look at the rice – now only thinly coated with the solid elements of the curd. Your whole commute – by bus, autorickshaw, local train or Bengaluru's much-celebrated Namma Metro – has been an involuntary exercise in churning the curd into whey. Then you look at the pickle. Its oil has spread all over your rice, the lemon or mango reduced to a dry, shrivelled piece on one corner of the rice. Can you do anything other than burst into silent tears? Then if you've been delayed, the whole thing turns sour, both literally and metaphorically.

Take dosais. Utterly crisp, flat brown things when you eat them at home. (The crisper and flatter they are, the flabbier and rounder you become, but that is another matter.) Look at what the tiffin-box did to them. Colourless, flaccid, vapid, insipid things, a mere ghost of what they could be. Add to that the tragic fate of the chutney, whose water will have permeated them to add to the soggiess. You eat them, but only as a compromise with yourself, in the hope that you can compensate the experience with something hot and satisfying at home.

Can you blame me for banning them from my lunch box, even at the risk of severing social relations?

Also banned is lemon rice, because I detest it in any form, hot or cold. That also holds true for rava upma, dalia upma and tomato bhath.

A practical option in Mumbai is to take theplas. They are halfway between chapatis and khakhras, and the Gujaratis eat them as travel food. But I resent having them in my tiffin-box, if only to arrest at some point, the creeping Gujaratisation that happens to every family settled in Mumbai. No offence to the Gujaratis; I love their khandvis and patras for a hot Sunday snack, but not in my tiffin-box please.

Two-minute noodles was something I carried during my schooldays. The issue in school was that it would congeal into a thick mass (too many things congeal in a tiffin box, don't

they?). The issue in adulthood is that people give you funny stares. Besides, nowadays the canteen fellow keeps a few packets in his store, so if that is what you have to eat, better to get it made hot in the canteen.

Utter desperation will persuade me to carry cucumber-tomato sandwiches. This is when nothing can be cooked because of illness or cooking gas running out. Or when I binged the previous night and an inner guilty voice suggest eating 'healthy food' for a couple of days. Luckily such situations blow over as fast as they come.

Life is not so dreary however. There are such items as can be enjoyed both hot and cold, from a plate or from a box. I'm sure there will be folks here who will disagree with me (which is good for democracy but perhaps not for digestion). But I do think coconut rice, puliyodharai rice and vathal kuzhambu rice are good tiffin box options.

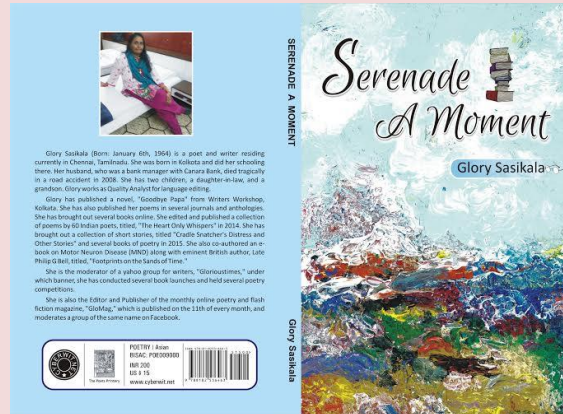
The coconut remains crunchy and the spices spicy, and there is no danger of any fluid running all over the place. Similarly for puliyodharai and vathal kuzhambu, the rice and tamarind retain both their marriage and consistency, and the tanginess is nice and enjoyable. On your lucky day, there may be a crumbled poppadom or banana chips to go with it. If you can live with eating tangy stuff at lunch every single day of your working life, you are a contented office worker indeed.

If you are not, the question still vexes, "What is to be packed for lunch today?"

BOOK OF THE MONTH

Serenade A Moment

by Glory Sasikala



AMAZON

https://www.amazon.com/Serenade-Moment-Glory-Sasikala/dp/818253657X/ref=sr_1_2?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1451287345&sr=1-2&refinements=p_30%3Acyberwit

FLIPKART

<https://www.flipkart.com/serenade-moment-english/p/itmeffdjtzmgchag?pid=9788182536579>

FACEBOOK

<https://www.facebook.com/Serenade-A-Moment-1703457139884300/>

PRESS RELEASE

<https://www.prlog.org/12533775-new-book-release-serenade-moment-paperback-by-glory-sasikala.html>

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SERENADE A MOMENT

He wove dreams with and around me

I will take you to the river and make you a raft

You can lie there and float with the current.

I'll lift you up by a rope to our own tree house.

We will watch the blue moon together

and hear the owl hoot.

I will send you love letters on lotus leaves down the river.

I will weave you flower garlands made of buttercups.

There are open spaces in the forest

where the bamboo bloomed and died

We will go to the stream where the wild animals drink. I will
show you how the cheetah's eyes

shine in the dark jungle

I will show you how to make baskets out of palm leaves

And I will make love to you among the flowers in the hillside
where the birds sing.

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A STANDING COIN

(An excerpt from 'Ooh! Welcoming Thy Colours Again')

A toast of bread chooses jam or butter,
Buds derive taste from salt and sugar;
The seasons change from summer to winter,
Tears and smiles occur before or after.

The knife is used to either save or stab,
Break or patiently melt an ice slab;
A post-mortem continues in the lab,
Needles either push or pull in a jab.

A deed is victim of right or wrong,
Both left and right long since long;
Birth or death are two ends of same song,

Twin banks of any river swims along.
The body befriends either heart or mind,
Lovers meet at twelve and zero hours midnight;
Wish life too had an option to rewind;
A standing coin was tossed to find.



Aakash Sagar Chouhan: He is a Rourkela-based, Odia nomad, restlessly scribbling since 2003. An undergraduate, indeed a college drop-out; but now he is a contributing Author, a blogger, a prose writer, a Poet, an article contributor, Group's Admin of many Pages and Communities. He has been a proud contributor to a few anthologies by International and Indian Poets; books named as "Unleash the undead, Wordplay: A Collection of Diverse Poems From around the World, Feelings International, A Phase Unknown – II, Kamala Das – Yes I am a Woman and Purple Hues. Apart from pouring his thoughts and himself on virgin papers, during his leisure time, Aakash is an observer, a dreamer, a philosopher. He likes to strum his Guitar and sing. He also likes to play and brush colors on canvases.



THE DEAR SERIES

Dear Ganapati Bappa,

Hope you liked what you saw on your annual outing.

Devout Devotee.

Dear Internet,

Are you guilty of killing creativity?

Just wondering.

Dear Happiness,

You are so perfect. Yet, sometimes you scare me.

Happy but afraid to smile to wide.

Dear Metabolism,

It's time you self-adjusted to my lifestyle instead of being sluggish and downright slow.

Ameeta's Body.



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

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

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

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



Trees and shrubs grew next to
The railway lines
Jostling with people in carriages
Barely touching an everyday rain
We had grown together an army of
Unfamiliar thoughts
Unmoved by summers of reckoning
And wet in a once shared breath
A vast wind had closed all efforts
And a river has encroached
Stealthily
By us
How would then a sky store

Figments of such loving
How would you hold on to me
Long after the train has left.



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.



THE WAITING

By the river, under the Peach tree
You said you would come to meet me
Autumn evening, leaves falling all round
All came to greet me,
But it's only you and your shadow
My eyes, my heart still longs to see...

Each coming second stinged me
Each passing moment piqued me,
The setting Sun derided me with scorn
The rising Moon added more to my despair and adorned
With Stars of gloom and Skies of pain
With fog and fumes of melancholy rain...

The lonely Cloud echoed my whine
Lamenting the aching desires O' mine
And suddenly the cool Zephyr brought back your fragrance
Howling and whistling breaking the silence
And my heart got flooded again with memories of you
Lost in your Mirage but took it for true...

Some things are just felt but never spoken
As I evince all the promises are made to be broken
Just like yours as every day you make me wait
But through your absence you still make your presence felt

As someone rightly said-
Absence is even more beautiful than death
As it kindles the Passion and fans the Fire
Of Love, Lust, Hope and Desire...

And thus ends one day more waiting for you
Wrecking my hopes again as I already knew
Neither you'll come nor your shadow
But to my instincts only my soul follows

Desolated and broken still not a single tear I shed

How can I?? When my heart is long dead...

And to the serene Heart my Soul sang a requiem

Handing it again to eternal, shameless delirium

They call me a dreamer but I love to wait

As we build on hope and not on fate

So I'll come again tomorrow with renewed Rigour and Hope

And will wait for you forever on this shady slope

By the river, under the Peach tree

Where you said you would come to meet me!!



Amit Bitra: Student of MBA, second year, Department of Management Sciences, Pune University (Pumba). Interested in reading, writing and music. Plays the guitar.

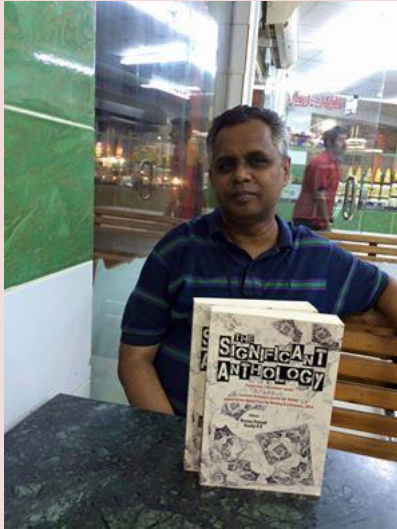


You asked me
to ask myself
what I was walling out
or walling in
teasingly, yet gently
seeing in me
only
that old stone savage
who would not or could not try
to see an inch beyond the
'silly' saying of his ancestors
but you could not really see why
I did not try to tell you
What could I say, to explain?

Words paint nothing, after all.
But today I feel like talking
to the world at large
I was walling everyone and everything out
having been hurt enough
by God, Satan, Destiny, Fate, the Universe,
Life, Death, Mother Earth, Nature, (my) Love
by all human beings and living beings, things or creatures
and, most of all, by my self
just as I have let them all down
I was walling it all fully out
and walling in nothing
emptiness
vacuum
Nada
Neti, neti ,neti
Walling in not even myself
I search for a golden feather
I search for a silver seed
I search for a precious grain of dust

that is actually a priceless jewel
to create a new universe
the One that no one ever can
where no one ever gets hurt or harmed
where there is no suffering, sorrow, tears, bloodshed or pain
in this nothing that I have walled in
and even if I do not ever find it -
I know I surely won't -
do not grieve, little sister
At least I was so bold
I would rather spend time in this prison
than live in the one that walls out -
(the so-called wide world
that 'stretches before us
so beautiful, so wondrous, so vast')
knowingly and unknowingly
consciously and unconsciously
willfully and unwillingly
a world to which, alas! I belong -
my son and my 'terrible eyes'

that only know how to wall out
that no longer wants to wall in
anything or anyone, at all.



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



LONELY IS THE HEART

Lonely is the precious heart
Wandering through the sultry night
Searching for the luminous light.

The empty streets
The silence of the dark night
Peace embodied in the clear skies
With stars flickering
And the solitary heart
Finds solace in the
Milky way..

Lonely is the precious heart

Wandering through

The dark night.

The luminous light finds

Warmth in the pulse

Of the depths of the

Innermost chambers

Of the sacred heart.

No longer

Shall this sacred heart

taste the cup of loneliness.

Cos the magnificent moon

And the shimmering stars

They are one with her.

The ocean reaches out

Calling her name

Dancing in ecstasy

Awaiting her tender touch.

The colours of the rainbow
Exudes her overwhelming joy

The radiant sun
warms her precious heart
Nature reaches for
the beauty in
her tender heart.

In awe,
Her sacred heart
Pulsates rhythmically
To the jazzy tunes
Of nature's orchestra.

And this precious heart
No longer lonely
No longer walking through
The sultry night
Searching for the luminous light.



Angela Chetty: She is a HR Manager, an avid poet and lyricist who lives in Durban, South Africa. Angela imbibes her work with a deep passion and belief that words can touch hearts and change lives. The depths of her soulful prose, cuts across different genres, talking to matters of the heart. Poetry is music for my soul; like oxygen, the breath of my life. In 2013, an Anthology of Poetry entitled, Heartfelt moments - A Treasure Trove was published. www.heartfeltmomentspoetry.com. In 2015, her poem “Miss Me” was selected as Editor’s choice for the Contemporary Poetry Digest and has been chosen as the best poems of 2015 for a Valentine’s Special Publication. Angela has been selected as an Elite Poet for 2016. Her poem “Heart and Soul” has been selected as Publisher’s choice for the Evergreen Journal of Poetry. Her poems have also been chosen as semi-finalist for International Poetry Contests.



SUGGESTION

You seem to have got lost
In the pell-mell of my young dream
Bearing image of my heart
On the surface you flow like a stream

You reign over my thought
Keeping me in a sort of mystic spell
Like a leaf lifted by wind
You drift away leaving an indelible trail

Your making of a nest
And begging for shed in my raw heart
Let me seek the moment
When my journey of love I should start

Is it possible that

There will be rain hidden in dry cloud

My palms will receive

Your kisses cheered by a curious crowd



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



Walk-walk, Run-run, Catch a bus, get a Rick;
Bustle in the busy local, get in Quick Quick!

Hands up, bag down, feet hanging in the air,
Fourth seat, get it NOW, stare a butt in the face.

Sit-sit, Squirm-squirm, Shift seat, do it now!
Quarrel in the ladies dabba, Boom Boom Pow Pow!

Bappa Morya, bhajan on-through-the-morn.
Dadar come, gush out flow, and the people are gone.

VT come, local glide, fish flying by the smell.
Get down, Whew! Sigh! Tomorrow do it all again!



Anish Vyavahare: Writer, brand builder, quizzer, public speaker, event organiser, psychology, advertising and writing teacher - essentially if there is a job to be done, I do it. Or get you people for it. I have a long standing affair with eating, cooking and Wikipedia. I like to travel if there is someone from the land to show me around. So if you want to invite me to where you are, I am welcome. :). For the serious stuff, I teach UG and PG Mass Media students. I help businesses do smart marketing where they build a strong brand, make money and do some really cool stuff to engage with their audience. I have been running a Poetry open mic in Thane, called Poetry Tuesday, for the last 5 years (almost!). I teach basic creative writing to beginners. And I have recently launched a multi-lingual Youtube channel called The Poetry Affair of India where you are welcome to feature with your poetry! You can check us out here - bit.ly/1LnZdUB



INSPIRATION

Her faith and my cynicism

Had a talk today

I don't know what they said

To each other

But her faith won

Her convictions and my beliefs

Met under a shadow of doubt

What transpired between them

Is uncertain

But the sunshine of her convictions was blinding

Her sentiment and my logic

Often clash

Cannot explain how

But at the end of it all

My logic is severely bruised

Her courage and my fears

Never seem to agree

But when they are together

My fears stand no chance

Against her courage's victory

Although it appears to be

She is the antithesis of me

She is

What I try to be



Anurag Mathur: He is a trained bean counter, works for a financial services group and has spent almost 2 decades serving that industry. Whatever little time that has been spared from work or sleep or reflective meditation has – with quite a few well-meaning prods and nudges from friends – been devoted to occasionally tapping to the Muse’s dictats from time to time.



KARMA

1985

The phone rang once again. “Paru, this is the twelfth time the phone has rung. Each time, I pick up, this guy says, ‘I love Paru’ and bangs the phone down. Who is this?”

“Daddy, how am I supposed to know? None of my friends will do this?”

“You can’t be sure. How else will he get our home number? I want to throttle this guy.”

“I don’t give out my number to everybody. How can you say that?” Paru burst out crying and her father consoled her.

A few kilometres away, Karan laughed to himself. He picked up the phone to call Paru again.

2015

“What is the meaning of this, Shalini?” Karan asked his daughter. He was holding her mobile phone in his hand.

“How can you take my phone with my permission, Papa?”

“Well, I pay for it, you know. By the way, why is your Whatsapp filled with ‘I love you’ messages? Are you in a relationship?”

“I don’t even know who they are from. I haven’t responded to any. You must have seen that too.” Karan’s heart was heavy. His head was whirling and he couldn’t focus.

Suddenly, Shalini burst into tears. “You are so mean. You don’t trust me.”

Karan gave a huge sigh. He walked towards Shalini to console her. Somewhere, far away, Paru’s father laughed, from within his grave.

History repeats itself.



Archana Sarat: She is an author of fiction and poetry since the last ten years. Her works are published in various popular newspapers and magazines like The Times of India, The Economic Times, The SEBI and Corporate Laws Journal, The CA Newsletter, Me Magazine, the Science Reporter, the Chicken Soup for the Soul series, the Vengeance Anthology, among others. She has completed her Comprehensive Creative Writing Course from the Writer's Bureau, UK. Her debut novel is scheduled to be published later this year.



THE DAY I LOVE YOU

(Originally written in Oriya by Asim Ranjan Parhi)

When I love you

memories turn rain

swimming back in current slain

holding, searching, brooding in vain

Village road, school yard

dust born coquetry leaves and time past, unsaid word

unturned that face

eye, age long hurt no less

the wind is naughty, moon that breathes hot

beneath blurred words, the night storm caught

a little dream, heart, my only trust

words and memory don't erase
but turn in ashes
when they visit and transcend
not only earth, heaven crashes.



Asim Ranjan Parhi: He was Professor & Head, Dept. of English and Dean of Languages at Rajiv Gandhi University (Central), Arunachal Pradesh before joining the Dept of English, Utkal University. Specialising on ELT, he has a book, Indian English Through Newspapers from Concept, New Delhi, and many research papers published in journals. He has been an Associate at the Indian institute of Advanced Study (IIAS, Shimla) to pursue his Postdoctoral research. Apart from academics, he writes poetry in Odia and English, simultaneously nourishing a deep interest in Odia and Hindi musical compositions.



Darkling, I listen; and for many a time
I have been half in love with easeful death.'

Ode to a Nightingale by John Keats

RENDEZVOUS

The cavernous graceful ocean calls, often
Dark unfathomable, an alluring witch, soften.
The chill roaring ocean frightful and breathtaking, a witch
Let's plunge on her before she takes her toll, be in her ditch.
Embrace and kiss, volcanic like a boa-constrictor, sucking
'Why recoil, why coy? Are you not a man?' time for ducking.
She is playful if want to play before, with all gestures
A never-ending storehouse of oomph, displaying postures.
With perfectly arousing coquetry, she calls to be crazy
She is sombre if you want, a poetic partner, a soothing daisy.

Ask a mother from her, she will lull, with hands of affection
She is as you like her to be, pined but calling subjection
Penetrate the pores, ride on her lap, she is the avenue
The Balm in Body she will phoenix you with new hue.
Waiting to be Her own, a piece ever of Peace, a sod,
Impatient am I, like the dawn, no tarrying, ever.



Avik Kumar Maiti: (email - itzakm@gmail.com) He is a poet and writer from Midnapore. He is a permanent ESL teacher at Belda Gangadhar Academy, West Bengal. He likes to travel, explore the locale with cultures, to drink life to the lees', passion in humanity and drenched in literature. He believes that God is there and one day everything will be fine again. He believes in the flame eternal that is within us, which may cause a miracle with just a sympathetic touch.



Together

They walked in four

Unmindful of the blazing sun

On a long winding road

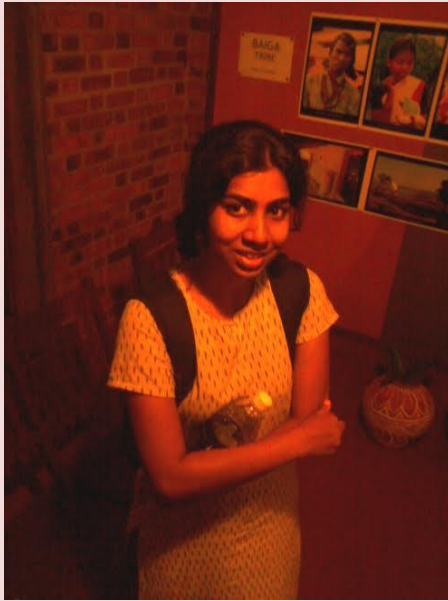
Accompanied by barren lands-

With neither pasture for ox

Or shade for men

But with heavy loads to serve

At their journey's end.



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



LIFE IN SENSATION

Her tongue leaves the concave of a mouth

To taste of the breeze whisking about.

Searching for a sensation of flavour

Finds she a vapid effervescent vapour.

With eyes fatigued by the menace of activity

They scour the mesh of thundering trucks, bullying lanes of
traffic in their hurry.

To reach destinations fraught by urgency,

In the dizzying race to meet favour with capitalism's frenzy.

A paltry reward will in an envelope extend -

As wages for groceries, utilities and rent beckon.

Her tongue-in-cheek finds rest,
In an arrest of cynicism pressed.
For surely of beauty seeks she to perceive -
Enchanted by wonder – not woe – she silently pleads!

Repressed are her passions in her bosom stored -
Flailing against a cocooned conformism and utterly bored!
To be to be to be she cries with urgency!
Time has been lapping away at her vitality.
In tedious routine mourns she a spirit torn,
For the dismissal of dismal norms and her self to be born.

When she will delight in every sight to a sensory applause,
Of great gulps of life imbibed on fresh shores.
Exhilarated by an uncontaminated existence -
And invigorated against every polluted influence.



Bilkis Moola: She is an Educator who works as a Head of Department in Languages at a school in Vukuzakhe, a township located in Volksrust, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa. Her first published anthology, “Wounds and Wings: A Lyrical Salve Through Metaphor” was received throughout South Africa and launched her poetic persona. It evolved as an introspective quest for recovery from her personal narrative of an abusive relationship. She presently divides her time between professional responsibilities and postgraduate studies in Education. Her pen continues to sketch the flotsam in her mind from the passion in her heart on shreds of paper that bloom into poems.



THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT

My son shall inherit my dolls-
Their kissable lips, plastic breasts.

My little girl!

May she inherit my acid tongue!

Also my poetry....

A chainsaw shredding through her heart.

What else shall I give her?

I offer no prayer for my daughter.

You may think,

What prayer will save her?

A bleeding blossom of the carnal jungle-

That never wilts.

But I leave her rich recollections:

She remembers-

Whispering ripples of my amniotic lake,

She was born dreaming of vastness and depth.

Verses ooze from my bosom for her;

I choose the notes for her lullabies-

From the cosmic hum.

Never have I stopped telling her,

Tales from my primal memory.

She shall have all my treasures;

Gems of pain

A moonstone- walled womb

Ruby of menstruation

Pearly tears,

And still she shall smile.



Bini B.S: She is currently a post-doctoral fellow at Balvant Parekh Centre for General Semantics and Other Human Sciences, Baroda, Gujarat. Her research articles, poems and translations have appeared in national and international Journals and anthologies including *Poetry Chain*, *Kritya*, *Samyukta*, *ETC: A Review of General Semantics*, *JWS: A Journal of Women's Studies*, *DUJES*, *South Asian Ensemble*, *Kavyabharati* , *Korzybski And...* (published by the Institute of General Semantics), *The Virtual Transformation of the Public Sphere* (Routledge), and *General Semantics: A Critical Companion*. She is the editor of *Anekaant: A Journal of Polysemic Thought* and the Managing Editor of *JCT (Journal of Contemporary Thought)*. Her poems were part of an anthology of corporeal poems titled *A Strange Place Other than Earlobes: Five Poets, Seventy Voices* published by Sampark, Calcutta in 2014.



WE

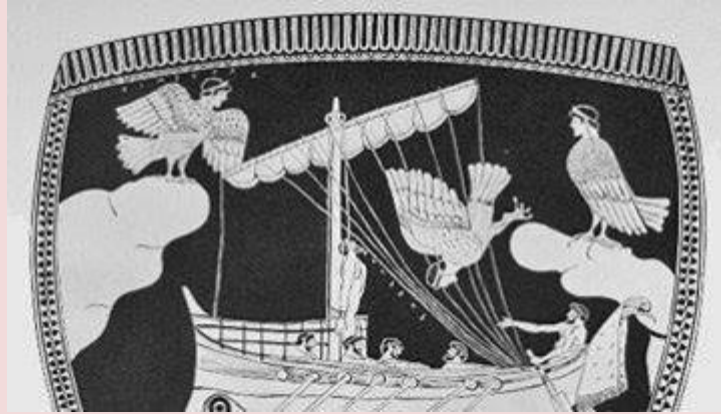
The metro swallows town
village, innocent hamlet
calls it suburbs
then-cemetery was at the end
now it resides within
whether you burn or bury
elsewhere town touches village
village encroaches hamlet
fields swallowed
here builders sow their seeds
yield is pigeon hole like houses-called flats
that touch clouds-the place named abode
you gaze from last floor
nothing is visible

vertigo is all you have
you are gated
then you see the elephant
the fox, the leopard
they all have come here
you call it conflict
it is their home
you have taken
you the trespasser have destroyed nature
grow terrace gardens and bonsai's
destroy nature - want to be natural
grow more trees, save the forest you campaign
living inside the forest.
An activist but really a culprit.



N.Chandramohan Naidu: He is a retired bank employee, now a freelance writer and photographer based in Chennai, part

of the poetry circle which meets first Wednesday of every month. I am writing poems to be subsequently brought out into a collection.



ANOTHER ODYSSEY

Mad Odysseus makes us row
To certain death at double speed,
How much further have we to go,
Till into sea our lives last-bleed.

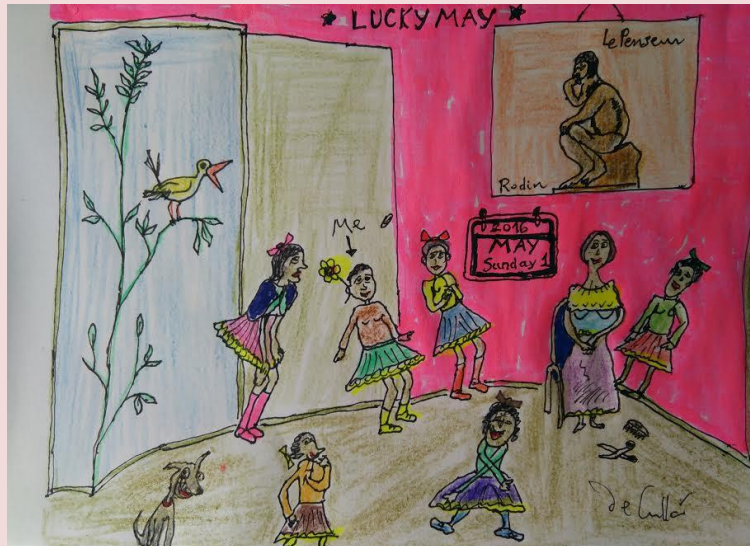
War is the toy of gods and kings,
For us to suffer and regret
We are but low-born wretched things,
Whom wives and children shall forget.

We left burnt Troy to return home,
We hoped at last to find our rest,
Combed out like lice by mother's comb,
Instead our sighs set in the west.

No poet shall sing in our praise,
We shall die like rats and no more,
Our King shall reap the epic phrase,
And we'll wash up dead on some shore.



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.



LUCKY MAY

May, Mayiswelcome
 And bytheseroads, theselanes
 Young people come to home
 To sing to mysisters.
 Whatprettythey are
 Withhergoldenhair
 And colouredlassos
 And mymothercombingthem
 To disentangleit.
 Thatistheir faces
 Whatface so brightj
 Theirlips, whatlovelinessi
 Paintedwithlipsticks

WherethesameCupid

A Kiss plant.

Theireyes, wahtpretty and lovelyi

As starlightingthesameSky.

Theirsnobnoses

(I wish I could to havethemj)

Silver twists are

Thatnone of thejeweller

Knowsdraw

Onlymother Daniela

As theirivoryteeth

And theirtwolittlebust

Behindtheirwhiteblouses

As twoearlylemons

With a dress of virgin

Withbrads in its shorts

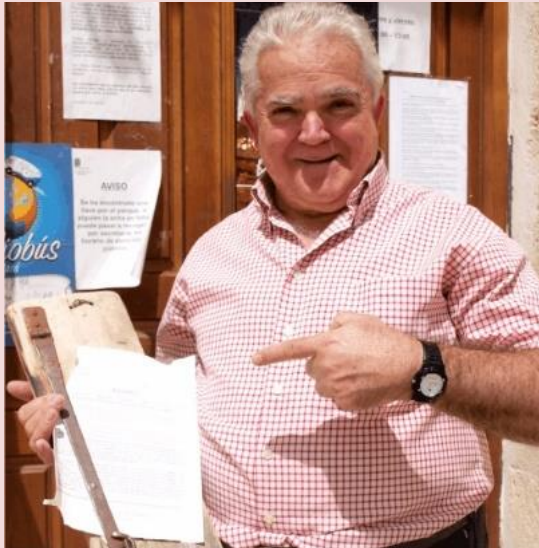
Straight to thepoint

Axle of dancing and music

Movingtheirnicelegs

And their agile feet.

And Me, now, an injured angel
With all my features as seraph
Imploring to our mother
That she play a May with me
Dressing me as my sisters
With Rosemary flowers
With leguminous flowers
Putting in my hand
A palm of Sun and Moon
As my lovely sisters
Because I want to dress as a little girl
And don't want to be more
The Little man of the home
In the Lucky May.



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



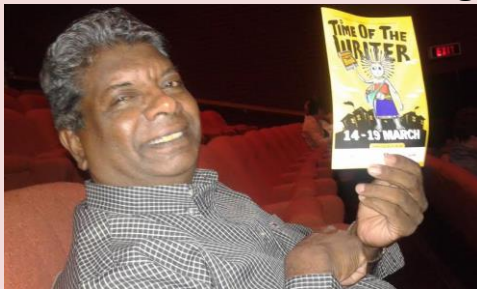
BROKEN SONGS

Away in the far distance
the orchestra plays a solitary concerto
the soprano sings a soulful song
her voice rises to touch the sky
the lyrics all misty and somber
she tells our life stories in her song
masquerading my life before the world
the story of a lovers pain
every word in the song
reflections of my anguish
my dark despair
a microcosm of my wounded soul
just a tiny speck in the universe
living in the lyrics of her song

she came along as though
nothing was wrong
everything between us a sweet melody
she smiled her innocent sweet smile
she the queen of pretence
swore her love was true
but her eyes betrayed her unfaithful ways
I forgive her like the fool I am

took her back hoping
she would mend her wayward ways
tried to get my life back
put the broken pieces together
for a while my world lay at her feet
lost in the euphoria of her spell

she appears like the sunshine
leaves like a storm
I am left all alone
facing the raging tempest
running havoc in my soul
to many broken promises
and meaningless words
there are broken songs in my soul
I can't feel the tenderness in the song
she killed the beauty and the meaning
of the words in the song.



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.



ALUMNI #62

Old meat
with new blood,
how, oh how,

can we con-
textualize
your red self?

The adrenaline
we desire
will make

junkies of us all
& that doesn't
matter 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.



HOME-MAKERS

They were Home-makers,
never home-wreckers,
The Ladies of my childhood.
They nurtured everything:
Children, flowers, gardens, homes,
Even errant husbands.

Ah, the Ladies!
Their benign wisdom ensured that everything blossomed.
They wasted nothing, they valued everybody.
Sari-clad Goddesses,
They understood our weaknesses,
They helped us overcome our silliness.
They loved us, no matter what.
They accepted us, wanted us, needed us,
Never undermined us, no matter what.

They sustained us, while everywhere,
Along with the respect,
We knew legal rejection, rudeness and racism.
Their elegance matched the dignity of their homes,
Homes that knew the impermanence,

the instability inflicted upon them
By the Group Areas Act.

They never denied you sustenance,
Biryani, vedda, pavasso and roti,
We knew their love, their loyalty, their reliability,
their caring and their victuals.
They helped their families survive every torment,
Every inferno.

They stood,
Resolute like the Drakensberg,
Anchors of hope against the evil, racist decrees,
The terrible, legal, racist earthquakes that
shattered so many communities.

Ah our Ladies!
They did not desert us when we were being destroyed,
They did not flee with their children,
They stood, unbroken with us.
We helped each other survive.

Ah, our Ladies!
They were our Pride, our Honour and our Joy.
They knew, were proud of their heritage.
They were like stone to temptation.
Petite, they held the honour of their people

In the palms of their small, delicate hands.
They filled us with great pride.

The racists could dishonour, humiliate,
castrate, incarcerate, incinerate
Our fathers, our leaders, us.
They could steal our land,
They could make our little enterprises,
Us,
Illegal.

They could violate, burn, our lives,
But they could never steal the honour
Of our ladies.
They could never stop us loving,
Respecting each other.

Ah, our Ladies!
They would turn up their noses at being called
'home executives'.
They executed nothing.
They were home-makers after all.

They might work away from the home
to keep the home alive,
but they were home-makers still.
They loved, respected their people,

Their country, their cultures, their languages,
Their religions.

Ah, our Ladies!

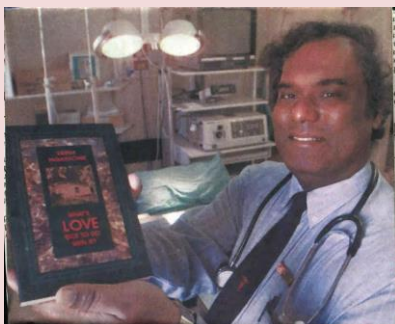
Their smiles, their grace, their knowledge,
Their dignity, their respect, their hospitality,
Their values, their ethics, their very feminity
Nurtured us as we challenged the 'ethics' of a 'civilised' foe.
They were the blood in our hearts, the strength in our
muscles,
The fibre in our spirits, the essence of our souls,
They were the very centre of our beings,

They were,

Are,

Ladies.

In a time of intimidation, intolerance, irrationality,
gangsterism, devastation, racism and barbarism,
They are still,
LADIES.



Deena Padayachee: He has been awarded both the Olive Schreiner and the Nadine Gordimer prizes for prose. In 1987

he published a book of poems called A Voice from the Cauldron. His short stories are featured in a few anthologies, including Jonathan Ball's A Century of South African short stories, Penguin's Modern South African short stories, Reader's Digest's Best South African short stories and the University of Cambridge's New South African short stories. Wasafiri, Crux and Skive have published his poems.



IN THE LAND OF A BILLION GODS

In the land of a billion Gods,
Revolution began with the big bang.
The trident gang played their magnum opus,
What followed was like a lifeless menopause.
In the background of a dark-age rhapsody,
Everyone drank only from the ancient jar.
The medieval soup with green onion,
Became the revered nectar of a billion.
Poison was mixed in, drop by drop,
To create a stream of saffron blood.
Infidels were marked and bedeviled on streets,
The spectre of a massacre was delivered in writs.
The past was twisted at will and at ease,
The Ministers led and their paramours followed.

Many masks floated around in the dark party zone,
A potion of happiness was available on a loan.
Fireballs ruled and so did the orange roses,
Just like in the ages when half-truths were embraced.
The lust for saffron paradigms ruled every soul,
At home and everywhere, the fanatics licked every dole.



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



Pic by Dr. 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.

GLOBAL AVALANCHE

Hope – Our global village still bathed in perceived human kindness – World wars seemingly behind us – White our hopes and dreams despite isolated cream screams – No choice but to hope we can maintain this multicultural brittle human race.

We the Children – Our journey into this world elected by you – Our beliefs, grief and what we perceive guided by you – We are born into the same human consciousness as you – We laugh, cry and die the same as you – Blue our fears of the wrongs you can do.

Blinded – Increasing lack of social and religious harmony weakens our global family – Those in charge regrettably have lost their way, their rhetoric maintaining the public farce – Hasty decisions blinded by twisted personal missions – Yellow our sigh as we silently cry.

Nature Boulevard – Our planet choking from urban kingdoms,
Indigenous groups displaced, erased their legacy replaced by the financial rat race – No more green to oxygenate our atmosphere – We came here to breathe so heed to our call – Inspect your greedy heart before walking down nature boulevard.

Eruption – Global relations boiling patience churning,
War of words ride on pregnant airwaves causing argumentative mayhem, the eternal strain – Fragile egos wither under the gaze of ignorant invading eagles – Red the colour of despair as dissident discontent draws near.

Avalanche – Swirling marauding clouds gathering above
a fading human halo – Mankind’s inner moral compass
derailed, twisted, melted – Implosion confusion unanswered
questions rule distorted emotions – Black this day as
common
sense catapult away, away – Failed chances in this global
avalanche...



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



POETRY IS PERSONAL

Poetry is personal to me
Of pains and gains
Passions and emotions
Thoughts running wild on rigged fields
They explode on some days
With fire brighter than sun rays
Some days they turn lucky and cross over
Towards the unknown magic land
Beyond the orange orchard
They march forward

Poetry is personal to me
Of mirrors and souls
Blood and broken bowls

Images and mirages
Colours that work together
And those that hate each other
Pictures of harmony and discord
Painted on the same canvas
Rivers meeting the sea
And some disappearing, before anyone sees

Poetry is pretty personal to me
Like my sacred prayer
Happy, sad, tragic, comic
Full of pathos or sunshine
Truth or lie and a dream or fantasy
Of poverty or lives fine
Few borrowed, few mine
It is full of life and strife
My life it is, of my life



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 3 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. She has also co-edited a mini anthology for TSL and Different Truths for the Refugee Day.



"OUT OF BREATH"

Crisp notes, issuing

Fewer sighs than melodies?

Whistling once again.



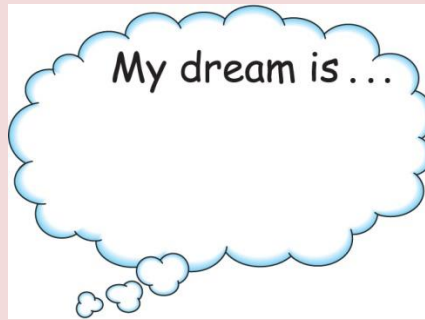
"STUBBLE BUBBLE"

Friendly razors

Blunt and sharp

Are story traders,

Are singing bards.



"FRENCHING FABLE"

There is a tale told
By a twisting tongue
Of dreams age-old
And still so young.



"DESIRE PATH"

Ribbons curl into
Bows and curtsy, for you have won.
Now goodnight my sweet.



Gayatri Sekar: She likes words and all the things they can do.
Favorite quote: "All these signs lead to science".



ALL IS FAIR..

How is it all justified tell me,

Can what is done be undone finally?

What is good for the goose is good for the gander,

Open your eyes wide oh justification, stop bring a
philanderer!

If the tears in her eyes, the pain in her womb meant so much
to you,

If the disappointment and grief rattled you through and
through,

If the squalor dried up your child's famished stomach in
resignation,

And your sister's heartbreak of widowhood brought her
damnation,
Would the tears be less salty,
Or the pain be less in intensity,
The hunger any less intolerable,
Or the grief less unbearable,
For those in enemy land where lie your targets,
Bringing death to innocent victims as homes you riddle with
bullets.

Oh soldier, you brave heart that fought so valiantly,
Although at times you wish to lay down your weapon gently,
Stop and think of every mother, wife, sister and child,
As you stand there bringing your enemy down in the wild,
Helpless as you are protecting your motherland to distant
orders,
I see tears flow down your face as your weapon shudders,
The earth where you stand ravaged with "might is right",
While out there tender hands and feet bleed in the dead of
night,
And flags flutter indifferent to victory or defeat,

Across man made borders an exodus repeats itself with
staggering feet,

In a distant night sky the moon watches shedding subtle light
gleaming and thinking,

"How many more wars am I to witness as I watch universal
love dying?"



Geethanjali Dilip: A Chennaiite at heart, she is a graduate from Ethiraj College and a postgraduate in French from Bangalore University. She is passionate about poetry, travel, teaching travel, gardening, interior decoration, and enjoying a deep spiritual connection with everything. She's been teaching French, freelance, in Salem for the past 34 years in schools and colleges, and at her centre, Zone Francophone, in Salem. Her family includes her husband, Dilip Narsimhan, daughter, Manasa, son-in-law, Ajay, granddaughter, Aarushi, and her parents.



GOD AND US

God doesn't like

Us

When we shoot our head

Up

With insane ideas

And blow it full up

Toward the sky

And all the stars

Just like the Tower of

Babel

That got thrown down

Because the people were

Presumptuous

And reached for the sky

So, God will blow our brains

Out
Cast us down
In the dirt
From whence we came
And should never have risen
If we get out of line
And reach up into space
And the stars
And beyond
For the Deity
Does not like us
If we dare too much



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



TREADMILL POEM – 1

treading the mill
and gripping tight
lest i fall
i look to my left
the man is walking
slowly on a mill
that's too fast
i can't do that
i look to my right
the man is carrying weights
and running
on a mill
that's too fast
well, god bless him!
he's in no shape to come tomorrow

mirrors peep at me
in three-dimensional views
and i'm just a stranger on a mill
in all of them
the music is in keeping
with my steps
somewhere outside
these closed shutters and mirrors
the day has dawned



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

<https://www.instamojo.com/Glory/>



Yet another unanswered prayer

At your feet, I lay my fear

On my cheek rolls a tear

Your voice, I want to hear

Search me God

I yearn not to enrich my pain

My requests are they in vain?

Your glory did I just gain?

Pleading on my knees again

Search me God

To You, I bring my broken heart

My thoughts to You I set apart

Cleanse me and help me restart
Thy will in my life to impart

Search me God

In sorrow and anguish I weep
My eyes, so heavy but can't sleep
Dispatch sins from You that keep
Shepherd this squandered sheep

Search me God

Lead me towards everlasting way
Surrendering myself, in bed I lay
Strength to pass the test I pray
With You beside, I can face the day

Search me God



Grace Chelladurai Xavier: Sometimes Hyper, Sometimes Moody. Sometimes Shy. Sometimes Crazy. Love to Design. Dreamer, just like everyone else. That's me!



"THREAD OF LOVE"

*"This thread of love sprinkles the elixir of life,
Amidst the melange hues of life,
En route to the Gold faceted pathways,
Diminishing all the fears, nourishing the fays"*

Since times immemorial, a pulchritudinous thread emitting its cosmic shimmer in each nook and cranny is garlanding our lives pointing to a beautiful pivot cum fulcrum, being christened as "Siblings", and hence, imbuing the whole surroundings with their unconditional amaranthine love for each and every thing.

Flowing in a particular stream, many a story, also real and truthful ones, is being heard by each one of us crafting this charismatic thread of love, and hence, springing up the divine festival of 'Rakshabandhan' from the core of our hearts. (Divine, yes!, as divinity has somewhat different shimmer.)

These stories have a major account of non-fictional aroma and thusly, having the real life animated magic in them . As for instance, the story of the Mughal emperor 'Humayun' and

the widowed queen of Chittor , 'Rani Karnawati' is time-honoured and the most conclusive evidence stating how two entirely different diasporas of culture can unite just because of a simple thread sent by 'Rani Karnawati' to 'Humayun' to safeguard her Chittor from 'Bahadur Shah'. Another story can be of 'Goddess Parvatti' who tied a thread on the wrist of 'Lord Vishnu' to wade softly through her culmination to rejuvenate the divine union of her and 'Mahadev'.

Bonanza of stories, myriads of incidents and proses and much more, but all irrespective of the strange mysteries world, have created a mesmerising scenario which cannot be expressed merely through words, expressions or emotions but all indicating the divine aura of a thread. Quite true, but this simple looking thread is literally a thread of love, a thread of unity, a thread preaching the ultimate value of sacrifice and imbibing the true impalpable essence of life, unconditional and selfless love of 'siblings'.

This exemplary thread of lessons, love and life is christened by some of the popular names 'Rakhi' or 'Rakhdi' and the festival 'Rakshabandhan' which preaches how a brother can shower his whole life instantly without thinking for a while , to safeguard his sister from the black eye of the outside world and, not only this, how a sister can pour the warmth of her love and the divine quality of being a woman on her brother to make him responsible, wise and perfect, and most

importantly, a real 'Human Being'; thus bringing the eternal bliss and success.

The power of this thread engenders us to realise how lucky we are to have a sister with whom we can share all our secrets, all our feelings and emotions relentlessly, who makes us a child irrespective of the phase of life through which we are passing, who blesses us with all her goodness and benedictions, who never makes us feel the absence of mother when she is not present. And, a brother who can blast the outside world to safeguard his sister, for the sake of her happiness can do anything, who showers the shimmering confetti of love on her success, never makes her feel the absence of father when he is not present there and both cheers each other thus savouring the true self of life and the world, also.

This thread of love being nurtured every year, nay, every day, nay, every hour, nay, every minute, nay, every second inflates our life with 'Magnanimity and Divinity'.

"This thread of love is not a just a thread,

It is the happiness of enjoying, together, a bread!

This thread of love gives an infinite peace

Resurrecting the hopes from their cease,

This thread of love is the symbol of union of 'siblings'

It melts the frozen sentiments and gives new wings.

*This thread of love completes exactly what is life,
It preaches, teaches, and blends the divine essence of
life."*



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



TREES OF HEAVEN

Those are tough trees
growing in slums.

With no need of rich soil
or pruning, they rise
in abandoned lots.

These are trees that
survive rubbish, rodents
noxious chemicals.

Not easily cut down,
they stand against
gaunt tenements.

Climbing skyward,
delicate palm leaves
flourish flowering pods.

Trees of Heaven give
children glimpses of bright
emerald each morning.

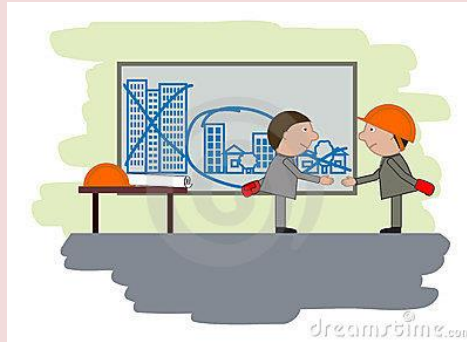
Stars play peek-a-boo
between their branches
through long nights.

Who has said a taste of
paradise is only for the rich?



Joan McNerney: Her poetry has been included in numerous literary magazines such as Seven Circle Press, Dinner with the

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



POEM

words canopy the architecture sentiment.

sordid lens up the stitching

trying to take in the whole

Moment by Moment.

every still confidence

met with ever confederate appendige,

in the midst of the mind

the best remains

when callow is defaced.

These urgent children

fed with grace, patience...

kept away

that from which originated, fled.

So that when their hands
lay the shroud upon
the city

The cruelest angles of truth

run down fervidly
with a curve
patterned extravagantly and
crudely for dumb buildings in the mute city.



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



ODE ON A GRECIAN CRISIS

(Poem follows the rhyme scheme: a b a b, c d e, d c e)

Thou urn of Gods, Holy Grail, cornucopia

Of learning and poetry harking back to Athenium.

Thou born of wars of Thermopylae and battle of Platea

Fierce battles that raged in seas of Artemisium.

Thou art bankrupt, now begging for succour from Germany

Can't believe this fate has fallen on the country of Herodotus.

Failed state, basket case they say of thy finances

What happened to the vanquishers of the army of mighty
Darius?

Stories of thy valour and munificence there are many,

Narratives sprung from Epistles lacking in nuances.

Dost thou have no money to pay thy pensioners?
Have thou no resources to manage thy historic debts?
What of the poor and destitute and thy farmers?
Dost thou have money to pay thy commanders and cadets?
Thy combined forces under Leonidas defeated Persia,
Routed the navy of Persians under thy warrior Themistocles.
Athens and Sparta were once thy prosperous kingdoms,
Wisdom was once disbursed by thy son the great Socrates.
Thou could have created a mighty empire throughout Asia,
Yet thou were satisfied to lord over thine own fiefdoms.

Yes we have heard of the great Agamemnon and Helen,
Sure we have read about the great warrior Achilles.
But, today, world economy is dominated by Janet Yellen
And the men who work in the White Houses on Capitol Hills.
Did you forget you were the world's first democracy?
Or, did you forget your ancestors' great history?
Have you forgotten Achilles' fury over death of Patroclus,
As told by Homer in Iliad, your grandest story?

If you don't think this is all myth-making and hypocrisy?

Then go to Germany and Europe and settle your dues.



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



SEASON OF LOVE

It's December

The weak sun rays abandoned by November get a blanket of mist

Stars stop blinking in a desperate wait for you

Their forlorn sighs fall down as dew drops on your path

Your reluctant footprints merge with the dull shadows left in the winter moonlight

Before I could track them, they disappear in trampled dew drops

The night flowers are white so that we can see them in the darkness

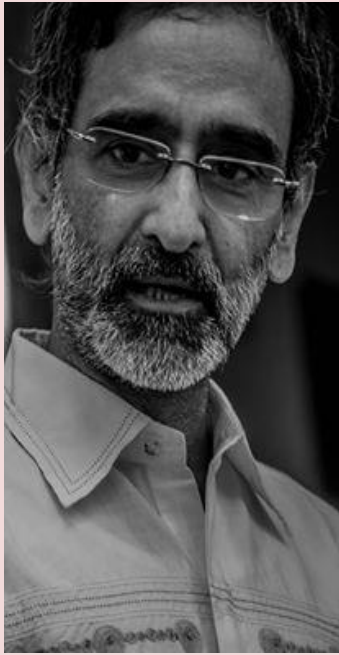
But you, my love, pretend as if you don't see them

As if you don't feel the wind that whispers among leaves

As if you do not know that you fill my night's every fold
But I will wait till love's footprints come alive in the summer
of passion
To turn our nights lusher than our dry dreary days



Sajida: She is from Thrissur and lives in UAE. A fan of Urdu shayari and Sufi mysticism, she writes poetry and lyrical prose in Malayalam. Her published works include a Western Australian travelogue in Malayalam "The Colourful Swans of Swan River", poems and short stories in various anthologies.



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



HOPE

a Kiran Zehra poem

Tis' grace its shines through my window bright

It smiles at me with a wishful sight

As I surmise – God is this she?

I see in wonder the parade of prosperity,

They stand together with extended arms

I move in closer lost in their charms

Joy rings the bell as they caress me

Along with her comes sparkling beauty

Right when I think I have it all

A poised face stares out of the wall

Time they calle'th her for the love of God

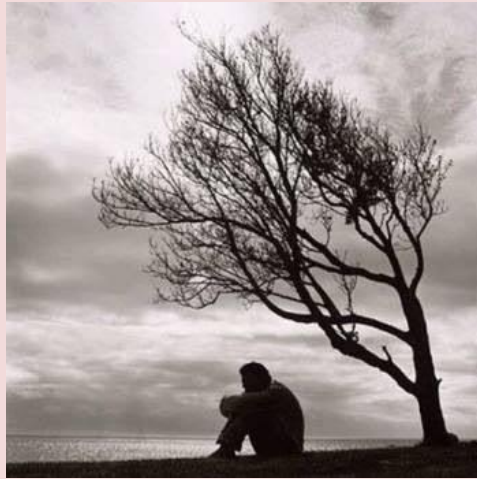
She pulls me out and gets me clawed

A steed, with no cessation she rides

And throws me into wrecking tides
I look around for grace, prosperity and joy
They look me like their favourite toy
In desperation I swim to stay atop
I close my eyes and wish for this to stop
Faith then by my side swims on
No sooner did hope come along.
And as I open me eyes to see
A shore of fortune comes to me
I dust the grains and dry the hurt
My journey is now through a desert
Hope doth mine and shall forever be
No journey can now clasp me
For hope has set my spirit free.



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



DEATH OF FEAR AND END OF MAGIC

(i) What if the magic stops working?

Unsettling of dew drops, withering of leaves, long before the earth turned its face, the breath of tree trunks exhaling poison and inducing toxins into the molecules of air, shelters of all things living dismantling themselves, by the effect of a curse.

(ii) What if humans stopped fearing?

Seething brains, gnawing flesh, tramping down each other's source of life with weapons that came as freebies, living by desire, free of trail and consequence, blood bath begetting blood bath, colouring the day with the blackening of sin, killing sight without jabbing in the eye.

(iii) What if catastrophes don't end?

But, catastrophes don't end. Humus of the soil feeds itself from the decays of the dead, as though death was allowed to enrich the soil, that in turn feeds more catalysts of catastrophes, the never ending ones which buried fear and exhausted all the power of magic.



Mahitha Kasireddi: I am from Hyderabad. I'm an aspiring writer/poet. I have been a writer with online magazines Youth Ki Awaaz and Campus Diaries. I won the Campus Diaries 25 Under 25 National Contest in the category of writing. I write poetry/prose/flash fiction at <https://magykars.wordpress.com>



Time has tiptoed in
unnoticed.

Many summers back,
when you and I
and the sharp tanginess
that defined us -robust, fiery,
the verve and the yearn
coupled frequently
till time tiptoed in
and the rhythm changed,
the rush of desire

became a dwindling emotion ,
distant.

And today,
with salt and pepper hair,
we sit in a cafeteria
watching the fading hues
of the autumn sun,
exchanging pleasantries
catching up.

The littered past,
and the pangs of pain
mutated to indifference ,
the loss of a loss
remains untouched.

With grace and decorum
worn like a pair of lace gloves,
we keep chatting on.

Time surely, has tiptoed in,

like termites

chewed up all that was supposed to be held for long.



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



THE CIRCLE

Circles and spheres we cannot deny
'though their existence we may decry
From an atom to a whole star cluster
Cross section 'circle' leaves us a-fluster
In life things seem so precisely cyclic
You could change phases, ahem, by click!
Don't we sleepwalk through an entire lifetime
'Inner' or 'outer' maya, which holds the lifeline?



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.



THE MYSTICAL FOREST

The green dense forest
As I once remember
the tall mighty trees
with lush green canopy
the morning sunlight
finding a way
between the branches
to reach the moist ground
filled with littered leaves
emanates the odour of
pure untouched earth
jumping small leeches
crawling tree snakes

lazily moving chameleon
chirping songs of
the birds unseen
shadows of fast
flying birds between trees
a kingfisher waiting
at the edge of an
old trunk lying
besides the river
the sounds of insects
the crystal clear
stream of river rippling
running free between
the irregular shaped
polished rocks
round white pebbles
on the river bed
cold wind blowing
branches swaying
with every passing wind

drizzling now and then
leaves fluttering as
raindrops fall on them
O How I miss
The wooded landscape
treasured riches of nature
trapped in my memories
put in words to
cherish preserve love
and dream of the forest



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

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

www.alexanderskitchenrecipes.blogspot.com



BEAUTIFUL DEAD

Beautiful as you lay,
more beautiful this day.
In life your dear face brought
a change for every thought.
Now that still quietude
is with a new beatitude -
No pucker on smooth brow
On cheek no furrow.
Every hair neatly in place
a soft smile on your face.
Gentle Sleep your eyes close,
as in perfect peace you repose.
'Lay me to rest', I almost hear
your whisper in my ear.
'I have won a place in Eternity.

Do not try to retain me!’

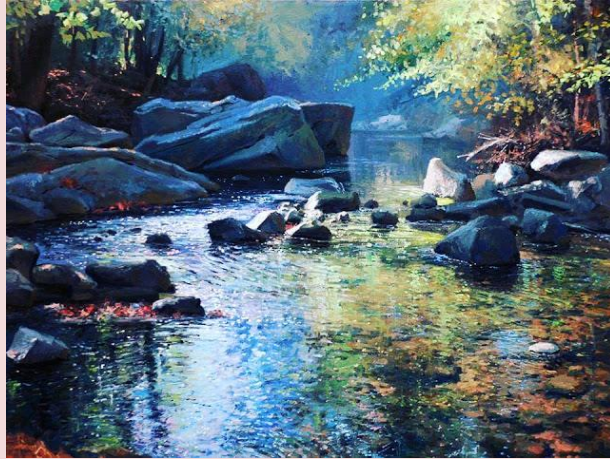
You bore the slings and stabs of life
along with all the pain and strife.

You met Death without fear
with calm acceptance, without a tear.

In my heart you will live on
till that day we will re-join.



Minnie Tensingh: I think I have been writing from the age of 10, contributing to the school and college magazines. Several prizes for creative writing and poetry competitions have encouraged me to keep at it. Reading is my passion and often distracts me from writing. Currently I am on the verge of bringing out a story book targeting children in their pre and early teens to encourage reading among children.



(painting by Michael Godfrey)

Come, sit and stay still

You have rushed a lot

Through the woods, slopes of hills,

Now when the day is ripe

And the sun is out,

Come, sit,

And stay still,

I will sing a poem to you,

I will caress your braids,

With leaves will deck you up,

Cleanse your flushed face,

You have rushed a lot

Through those woods, hills,
Now when the day is ripe,
And the sun is peeping at us,
Come, sit,
And in you let me find myself,
Immersed.



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

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



LIFE

I am the wind to blow the light off

but I am the sturdy flame too.

I see and don't see my body parts.

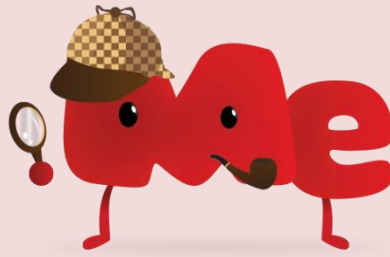


LOVE

I flow down and undo the dichotomy

keep hanging and smiling

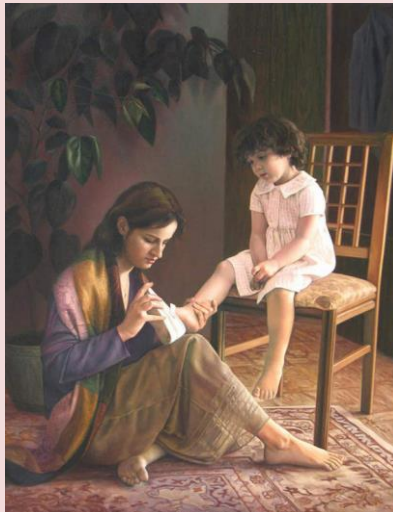
between the perished and the perennial.



HAPPINESS

Sandwiched between verbs
and predicates

I am the subject at the core of being.

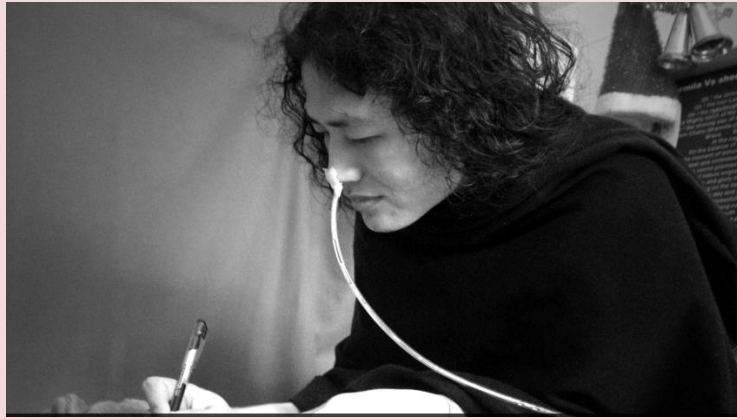


MAA

Whirling water, clean and clear
you assemble the broken pieces
in your graceful curves.



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



BLOOD AND HONEY

(For Irom Sharmila Chanu)

Blood, is what connects you to your hills
through the trial, running along your veins,
you tremble just to imagine

those hills are your own, these
people are your own

in 16 years, so many overnight blood transfusions, have
taken your frail body

there is blood from the valleys, and blood
from the sea shores, people with families
and people who have lost everything

The doctors say your haemoglobin count
has worsened over the years

How would they know?

The hunger in your stomach, denies food
denies comfort, demands nothing
but freedom

Honey, feels like acid on tongue
deprived of taste for 16 years, like
a womb in perpetual wait for birth
you've bourn the burden of a generation
inside your flesh
you've let it feed on your
nutrition, like an embryo you've nurtured
it with the promises of a mother
like honey in a comb, every time they tried
to break you, you stung back and
they retreated

This burden is not yours to bear alone.

Go to your family, raise your voice in
parliaments, show them there's some
sting left in our words

there's some tears left in our hearts



Nilesh Mondal: He is 22, is an undergraduate in engineering by choice and a poet and writer by chance. His works have been published or are forthcoming in magazines and journals like Inklette, The Bombay Review, Muse India, Coldnoon Travel Poetics, Cafe Dissensus, Kitaab, etc. His first book of poetry titled 'Degrees of Separation' (Writers Workshop), is slated for a 2017 release.

Email address: neel.reyez93@gmail.com



WHY SANJOO CANNOT PLAY BASEBALL

His arms are bony,

he is short and not aggressive enough.

‘There is no fire in his eyes,’

his mom complains

‘he only eats idli and dosa.’

She is worried that Sanjoo

is not like his bacon-consuming counterparts—

he cannot run swiftly enough to make a home run

nor can he swing a bat.

But give him peace,

a room, and lego toys;

he will make you a model

that can play baseball.



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



A PAINTING

A swirling kaleidoscope of colours

Dark earthy tones and pleasing pastel shades

A striking memory captured in time

Eternally present and never fades.

The brushstrokes of a master

Wielded across a plain white canvas

Intricate details painstakingly crafted

Against a backdrop so full of zest that

It leaps out at you with such force

Capturing all your senses in a stronghold

Till, with great difficulty,

You tear your gaze away
To yet another bedazzling display.



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



BHAJI WALA

He moves softly around her

Dreamlike. Picks her the freshest okra

Steals glances

As her eyes search

For what she might need.

She bends to squeeze tomatoes

And his eyes catch her cleavage.

“Half a kilo” she says

Hardly conceding his existence.

She goes by like many other girls

His age and otherwise

Stylish, smart, confident

Speaking in English...

It takes him a while
To gather momentum then
He looks morosely at each one
Kind yet for it would be easier
To condemn them for being vain
Ridicule clothes they wear
Denying his fury for women beyond him
By hating those he can't have

But he tends to his next customer
Hands over some fresh spinach, lemons...
Sad and lost but staying put in his place



Panjami Anand: I am an occult practitioner by profession and I see every day it is hard to be honest in a brutal world that demands the best façade even at the cost of one's inner well-being. Sometimes it helps to know that we are all fighting

secret battles and we are not the only ones in pain. I love to observe human relationships and nothing inspires my writing more. Thus the dominating theme of all my writings are conflicts and triumphs of the same. I thank each and every one who has encouraged me to better my expression. Gratitude for reading!



Time Stops; stands still

At the Arabian Ocean

When i dipped into the sea

Waves kissing my feet

My body soaked in salty water

Time stopped.

Mostly i don't need a watch

I don't look at the clock at all

When i am hungry i eat

I sleep when i am sleepy

Walk and walk miles

Get back hungry and eat

My Time has no winged Chariot.

I have never missed a flight

A lecture

An appointment

My Time knows no Catastrophe.



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



AT THIS TAVERN

...by the time you glug your beer, slam the mug down and smack your lips with a satisfying belch you have peeled away your skin and revealed.

This dimly lit hole is something of a magician's box. You can put anything in it, but mostly a fat man in pajamas or a young woman in sheer stockings, close the lid, tie a silk-kerchief around, give it a good twirl and utter some hard practiced magic nonsense.

If you do it all correctly, if you turn the box just so, say the words just right and have the light angled perfectly . . .

first date...

she goes for a push-up

instead of lace



Paresh Tiwari: An electrical engineer by profession, a creative writer, and illustrator by choice, Paresh Tiwari, grew up in the labyrinthine lanes of Lucknow. He took to Japanese literary short forms in the winter of 2012.

Since then his haiku, haibun, tanka, haiga, free-form poems and flash fiction pieces have been published in various journals, anthologies and books. His first collection of haiku and haibun 'An inch of sky' was published by 20 Notebooks Press and is available online.



A POEM WITH BOUNCE

Here is a tale from when I was a kid
'Bout old Ma Supial, she's no slouch,
Raised her kids alone she did
Raised them in a pouch

They kicked and screamed, quite a bit
Which hurt her deep inside
But she never, ever thought to quit
Though in the sun she fried

I have to say she moaned a lot
as she bounced along the plain

But her Joey's meant a lot to her
And her instinct kept her sane

So here's to her, our Mother Roo,
Queen of all Australia

I think I'll have to run outside
And pick for her a Dahlia



Late Philip G. Bell: He was born in West London and became a professional in the field of vibration and acoustics. He was awarded a Fellowship of the Society of Environmental Engineers. He has two sons and a daughter and 3 grandsons. He has written a number of technical papers, which were published internationally, before turning attention to writing poetry, short stories and a children's novel. He also founded The Young Poet Society. He has published a novel, "The Elfin Child," which is available through Amazon, Barnes and Noble and at www.elfinchild.com



POETRY OF PROTEST

Don't you feel the city has lost its feelings

Don't you see, the city has lost its sight

Just a procession of blinds seems the evening

You can't but belong to the crowd which doesn't have any belongings at all

Just go on floating in the stream till you reach the shore

The shore may be two beautiful eyes

The shore may be the vacant look of a bearded insane man

The shore may be a footpath, a dilapidated temple without deity

Don't you hear the silence against the backdrop of
cacophony

Don't you hear the silence of a heart after the death of all
beats

Cease to blow the breath inside the corridor of a huge nostril

Wherever eyes go a DANA MAJHI, carrying a corpse, walking
alone silently

He himself is the 'Betalaa'(ghost)

He himself is the 'KING BIKRAMADAITYAA'

He asks questions to himself that he has to answer

Rest are crowd

Rest are cacophonies

Rest is politics

He himself alone is the rebel

He writes the poetry of protest without knowing even the art
of writing!

A simple innocent act of a man while doing his duty
truthfully, religiously can stir the universe

And he don't belong to the crowd!

The city is simply a summation of sounds

Dead wounds ooz blood

Corpse can walk

Insane talk sense

Sanes are all nonsenses

Police becomes a state

Chirping birds throttle their own throats

Face becomes a book

Headless are men

Hearts becoming a counter

Oxygen available only in cylinders

Loneliness the name of a street!

Nobody look upward

As if sky watching is a crime

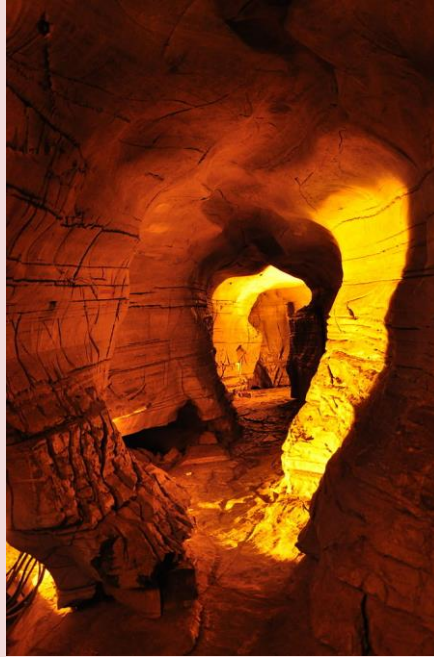
Stars go on twinkling in their own way

And by killing the evening, with the help of a pen, I declare myself mightier,

Tomorrow I may share the cover page of a newspaper being the lone martyr who is alive amidst corpses of a dead city!



Prahallad Satpathy: He hails from Balangir district of Odisha (India) is a bilingual poet. He writes both in Odia and English. So far he has published three anthologies of poetry in Odia to his credit. His poems have been published in national anthologies like Scaling Heights and international anthologies like GLOBAL ANTHOLOGY ON PEACE AND HARMONY, HAPPY ISLE, FEELINGS INTERNATIONAL, etc. By profession, Dr. Satpathy is a Reader in Economics, at present in Rajendra autonomous college, Balangir (Odisha). He has represented Odisha Sahitya Academy as honorary member for two consecutive terms.



CAVING

Don't waste your breath with preaching, teaching,

Restless actions and lie restful,

Wistful, cluttered, and watchful

Like we are going to bed.

Are we rid of our strangeness over this dangling

Robe we are cladding waving this way

When that way our legs are hanging

In the wind is my thought asway.

Caving, we are alive in new depths

Of being.



Prasanna H: I have lived in Villivakkam, Chennai all my life. I live across the street from where I was born. I have had the company of some exceptional people all my life like my grandparents, parents, brother, relatives, school friends, college mates, office mates, home boys and girls and the Glotimers. When I am not hanging out, I read, watch movies, start things I won't complete, listen to music, be angry, frustrated, blissful, hyper and dancing.



HE IS ONE:

The One in His Infinite Grace,

Has constantly, untiringly re-invented Himself, for man's benefit, who bores easily!

Like the benevolent Mother who entices her ward to eat well with delicacies,

He too gives alluring different visions of Himself, saying, suit yourself, but come to Me!

We squabble without reason, about the Formless One,

You are all brothers, your genes will bear me out, says He,

When you love your brother, you love Me.

I am in everyone and everyone is in Me.

I am the White Light, all colours manifest in Me.

That is the colour of global peace and harmony.



Pratima Apte: I am an English Hons. Graduate of Delhi University. I am a homemaker, recently turned grandmother!

I used to write sporadically in the Pune edition's Women's page of the Indian Express. I love reading and writing, words are my world. My interests in reading are self-help books, spiritual and cookbooks and fiction. Books by Ayn Rand, Taylor Caldwell, Leon Uris, J Krishnamurthy, Dan Brown have been my favourites, as also layman's homeopathy, astrology and medical books.



Love, but be careful

Entering into the highest,
the purest & the holiest temple
Drop all impurities outside.

Step in with a pure heart

Two souls meet together
Feel the divine energy
Create heaven on earth.



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.



Tapestry is a form invented by Shernaz Wadia of Pune and Avril Mealem of Israel. Each poet composes a poem independently on a title chosen by one of them. The poems are then exchanged and have to be woven into one seamless, flowing piece that can stand on its own. Being a collaborative effort the editing becomes a to and fro process until both writers are satisfied with the resulting 'Tapestry'. You can read more about tapestry poems here - <http://tapestrypoetry.webs.com/>

RAIN IN THE HILLS – RAAMESH'S POEM

It comes as a rumble above the hilltops, the

Darkened skies lighting the forest in flashes;

It comes as the white torrent that turns eroded

Basalt rock-faces into thundering cascades; It

Comes with the songs of the ages lilting from the

Gnarled old women, merging with the mating calls

Of the birds and squirrels and dogs even; It comes

As the mushroom cloud of umbrellas in the city, it

Comes at last, it comes at last- the rain in the hills.

RAIN IN THE HILLS - SHERNAZ'S POEM

it was a monsoon of feminine power
an unparalleled enactment of solidarity;
no alerting mizzle, not a forewarning flash

In droves down the tea green slopes they
poured; obstinate demands, sham allegations...
political power mills churned, futile issues burned

the flame combusted, flared, fanned by media's fuel
journalistic integrity an intentional casualty; truth
floundered. Falsehood strutted in the victory march

TAPESTRY - RAIN IN THE HILLS

The monsoon— it comes as a rumble
Above the hilltops. No mizzle, not a
Forewarning flash. The rain pours over

Umbrellas in the city, as the torrent
Of feminine power comes in droves down

The tea-green slopes... it turns eroded
Basalt rock-faces into thundering cascades.
The songs of ages lilting from the
Gnarled old women, the mating calls of the

Birds and squirrels and dogs... all merge with the
Flames. Obstinate demands combust, sham
Allegations flare... fanned by media's fuel

Like a mushroom cloud. Journalistic integrity
Is an intentional casualty. Truth flounders,
Falsehood struts in the victory march as

Political power mills churn, futile issues burn.
Yet the darkened skies light the forest in a flash
— an unparalleled enactment of solidarity.



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



Shernaz Wadia: A Parsi Zoroastrian from Pune, reading and writing poems has been one of the means to embark on an inward journey. She hopes her words will bring peace, hope and light into dark corners. Her poems have been published in many e-journals and anthologies. She has published her

own book of poems "Whispers of the Soul" and another titled "Tapestry Poetry - A Fusion of Two Minds" with her poetry partner Avril Meallem. Email id shernazwadia@aparnaonline.com



A PERSPECTIVE NOW.

I can't take any more
Of this. This land
Of Nihilism and flamboyant;
Shifting into waste and
Establishing Vagrant myth
Of ever questioning spirit.

No points in brewing
The iced bottle.
They pretend draw
On the Bubbles.
Ere their ego gets
Drenched, bubbles dash.

Ants lining of crevices
Of slow rumbling wall,
The sticky tender plants
Yet surviving on the clumps,
Know there limitations,
Else how they survive?



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



come home now

~

i have no gifts wrapped

in polka dots

nor white roses dipped in blue

but on this blessed tuesday

i let my soul slide in these syllables

today my poetry won't paralyze

so take my hand and walk with me

in the abattoir of your absence

find me amidst

an unspeakable emptiness

a void only you can fill

everyday i live by your silence
and die in these words

how long will you deny me
your essence? stop
stop now darling
for you flow through me
and your fragrance frozen
in mine

unwrap me of myself

i wrap you in every prayer
pray to your glorious god,
close my eyes
and whisper to the winds
to purge me with your presence

come let's bloom in this love together



Rajesh Jethwani: He was born in Madras and has done his BA in economics. He now takes care of his family business and has his own online store. His love for tea resulted in a beautiful tea house he now runs along with his best friends. He loves train journeys, photography, eating out and playing cricket. He loves writing and reading love poems. His poem was first published last year in South Africa.



MY FIRST CRUSH

When she smiled
I felt like a stud
And when she didn't
Like a flop and a dud.

I waited for hours
To spend alone a moment with her
And when I really did
I'd pray it would last forever and ever.

A hint of praise from her
And I would be floating like a cloud.
And one tiny frown
And I'd wish I could melt in the crowd.

I would be jealous
Of anyone who shared her space
And livid with her at times
For allowing anyone else to bask in her grace.

The gap in age didn't matter
Nor the fact that she was a head taller
All I knew was that we were
Truly made for each other.

We went to the same school
We were in the same class
The only difference: I could only stutter yes or no ma'am
While she could make me fail or pass.

Yes dear reader, my class teacher
Was my very first love
She was to me my everything
From the ground zero to the heaven's above.

I was all of thirteen
And she thirty three

But what's a gap twenty years
When the spirit of love roams free?

I courted her by carrying her books
By rushing to pick up the duster.
By wiping the black board a few extra times
And drawing the margins in the register.

I am certain she too
Loved me to distraction
After civics, grammar and algebra
I was her greatest attraction.

We adored each other
But never spoke out our 'love'
Our love story ended
When I moved to the class above.

I am now a father of two
And she a grandmother
But I am sure in her heart of hearts
For me there is a tiny corner.

I'll never, ever forget her
My very first soft and sweet crush
And she too will think of me whenever
In her hurried life, there is a kind of hush.



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

www.ramendra.in



She takes wing

She departs, leaves, exits, flies off

Decamps, embarks, packs off, and sets sail.

She takes wing.

Her departure, leaving, exit, flight

Brings on an evolution

Of neurons, corpuscles and follicles.

Transforms the DNA, cleans out the plasma

And lays siege to the arteries and lymph nodes.

Done with me, it spreads like a dreaded plague

To the exterior, wiping the green off the leaves,

Rubbing off red from the sun and gold from the moon,

Blue from the ocean and black from the dark mystery nights.
It splits the roads, overturns ships,
Brings down the towers and flattens the monuments.

Yes, her departure does all that.

I will see her dancing on the rim of a volcano and
She will see me faltering at the brink of an abyss.

What shall we cross?

A razor's edge or a wormhole?

A time-warp on a faulty time-machine?

She stands smiling, holding open the night sky

A foot raised to cross the threshold of asteroids, meteors and
stray space shuttles.

She is an UFO, an egg, a smooth sperm

Poised to take off into the womb of space.

After she leaves,

The launch pad will be dismantled.

The station shut down and sealed.

The town will be evacuated.

Google Earth will show a desert

Where I once bloomed.



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. E-mail: shankeran@gmail.com



UNTAGGED

I do not remember
the things you said to me
about me, for me
I keep no tabs, no written words
no saved files, no cut-copy-paste replicates
nothing to prove their existence
and ruthlessly level any secret hollows
where they might creep in unnoticed
and with passion, couple

Still they survive
curling up into tender silences
when we meet
stretching out the little time between us

into valleys

uncontainable



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.



WAITING FOR TSVETAeva

I saw you trembling
in your old raincoat
on the platform of
a defunct railway station.

You said, you were waiting
for a kind woman from Russia
who promised to show up
in the small hours of night.

That time, when the cold air
wore longing as a glove,
when the fictitious trains
wailed in the silence of night.

You spoke,
of the history of absences,
of a town inhabited by ghosts,
of a lyric plaguing your heart,
of a dead river where souls hide.

At the end, on seeing
the haemorrhage of light
breaking in the dark sky,
you resolved that the
woman would never come,
and said, 'she might have
taken the wrong train



Ro Hith: He is a poet and a medico from Andhra Pradesh, writing poetry since 7 years. His poetry has been published in various online magazines, including Muse India, The Four Quarterly, Istanbul Review, Kritiya, New Mirage Journal and

print magazines like Kavya English, which was applauded and complimented by various senior poets. Currently, he is working on his first book of poems, which will be published shortly and an online magazine that deals with progressive poetry and translations from various Indian languages.



"I've seen their ways too often for my liking

new worlds to gain

my life is to survive

and be alive for you"

–Paul Kantner, Jefferson Airplane

entrapped by a box

plugged in tight

sealed in sweat

souls stuffed

deeply inside these modern lives,

but faking it

this time...

oh box,

you clench, maintain our gaze

squeeze our minds

till our choked red eyes tear,

till our throats

scream:

Worship

Moloch!

trapped inside that box

no exit,

disguising obvious addiction

instead pretending promises

of a more efficient age

decadent box

all I choose not,

it is not my soul inside

it is my face you hold!

youtube box

feigning our heartbeats

trapping our breaths

so rooted

concealed inside your blackhole

Moloch grants no exit...

**instead, we exist in a space between
practice playing mutually staggering foreigners
devoid of empathy
blind stricken prisoners
dull to intimacy
midnight grave robbers
caught stealing discarded body parts**

**and in that space between
Moloch box robotic thrives
Palo Alto fruit box,
a Trojan Horse
leaking its poison cider,
Moloch presumes to fill that void:
electric battery charging off dada googled-out sugar rush
substituting counterfeit
multitask pseudoconversations,
distractions,**

**Moloch, mind grave robber,
spirit seducer
hijacker of the heart!**

*(oh my darlings,
there is no substitute for your sweet kind eyes
reading my breath,
anticipating my heartbeat...
your breath, a bluebird's-
Moloch sacrifice box
no substitute
for that person over there)*

*(then my darlings, unplug Moloch,
strangle its nefarious lifeline
exscind those thumbs flying across keypads
madness through the night,*

hey, please,
beg your better angels
to reject those boxes-
Moloch is not
some sentient creature conceived
to sit by fires
to embrace our hearts,
to celebrate our lives:
Moloch decadence
only translates us into
make believe masters
false demigods,
fools
ready to be sacrificed
and ultimately devoured by fire)



Robert Feldman: Born in Paterson, New Jersey, he was inspired at an early age by members of Paterson’s literary tradition, most notably Louis, Allen Ginsberg and William Carlos Williams. As a young adult while living in St. Louis, he organized various poetry readings, produced and hosted a community issues news hour and a biweekly bebop jazz radio program on KDNA-FM. It was during this time his interest and admiration for the Beat Generation flourished. Robert was instrumental in publishing some of Arizona’s most influential writers such as Drummond Hadley and Michael Gregory, and in 1980, collaborated with Lawrence Ferlinghetti on his Bisbee publication, “Mule Mountain Dreams.” During the ’80s and ’90s, he participated in dozens of poetry readings around the country. Now years later, he continues to write, paint, and play tabla, besides working with high-school students as faculty advisor of the Park Vista Writers Workshop. The body of Robert Feldman’s writing and painting can be accessed at www.albionmoonlight.net; he can be reached at rffeldman@gmail.com.



(pic by Romeo della Valle)

ARRIVAL OF THE FALL

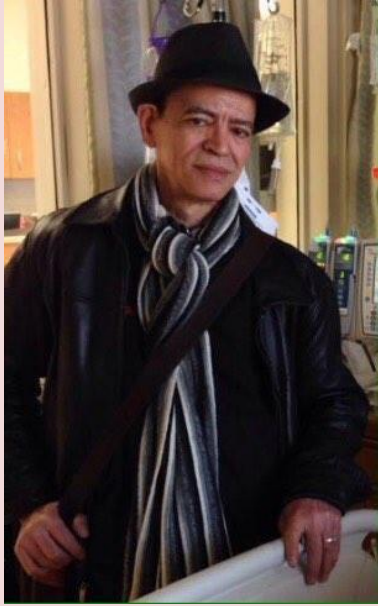
Between the muted walls
Of the small space I call my own,
I displace all my belongings,
Before the arrival of the Fall,
And change the picture of my home
To resemble the colored world!

Like an artist's palette:
Green, yellow, red and sky's blue,
All magical colors,
Each playing an important role
In my everyday mood

Even the shiny reflection of copper
Touches my inner self,
When in my fortress alone,
I am totally secluded
Before the arrival of the Fall!

The human's heart
Was designed beyond
heaven's gate,
Interior-like the soul,
But made separate
By self-possession and regret
Of beauty less than infinite!

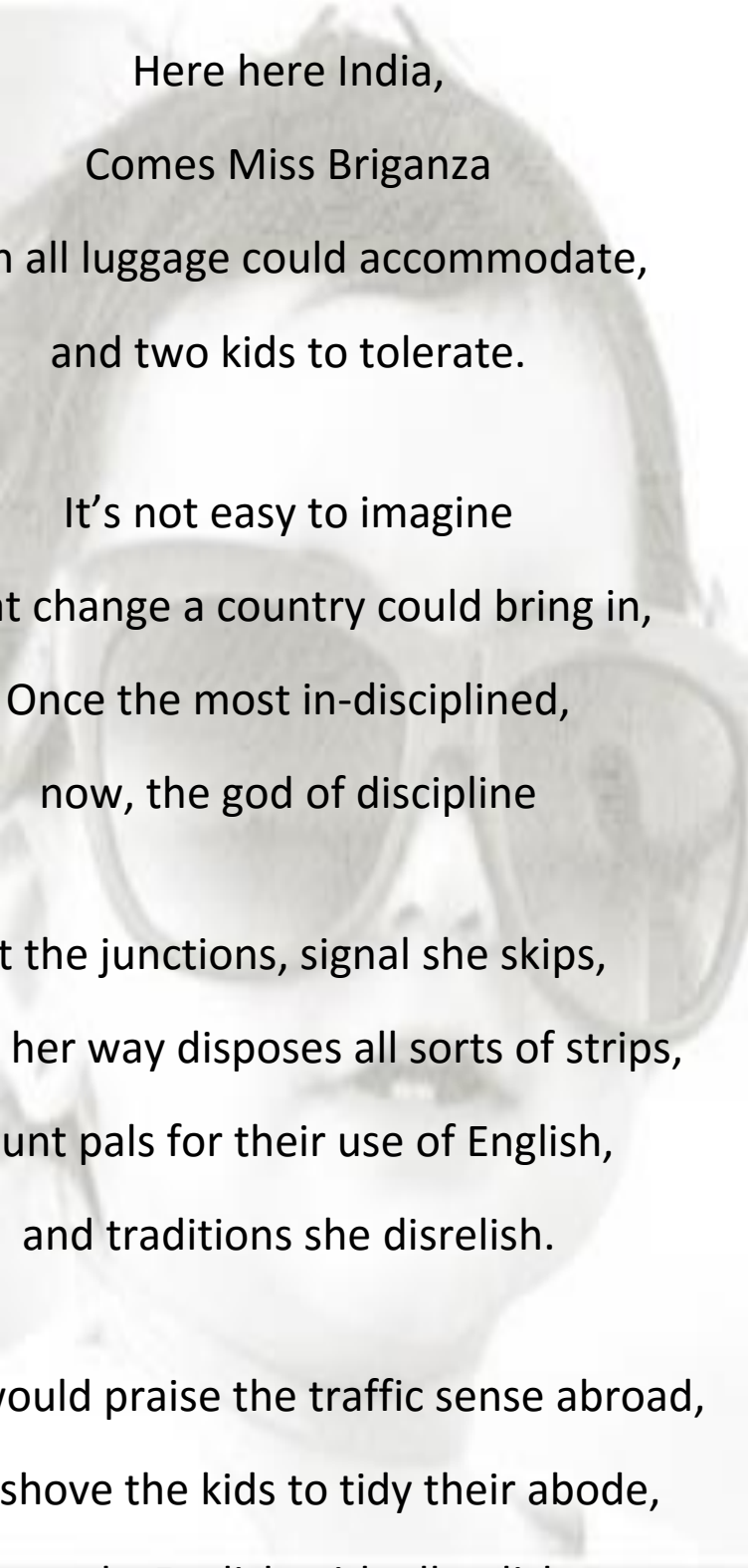
Now here I am standing
Clearly on a solid ground,
Proudly having a mind of my own,
Feeling real great,
Patiently awaiting for
The arrival of the Fall!



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

www.romeodellavalle.com

BRAIN DRAIN



Here here India,
Comes Miss Briganza
with all luggage could accommodate,
and two kids to tolerate.

It's not easy to imagine
what change a country could bring in,
Once the most in-disciplined,
now, the god of discipline

At the junctions, signal she skips,
along her way disposes all sorts of strips,
taunt pals for their use of English,
and traditions she disrelish.

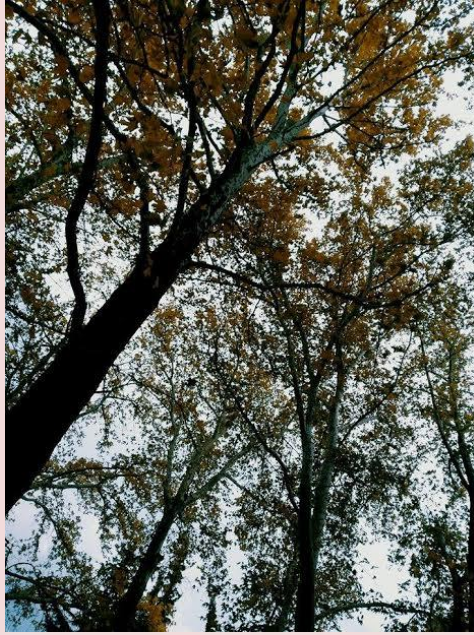
Now would praise the traffic sense abroad,
and shove the kids to tidy their abode,
speaks English with all polish
describe how there, our culture had flourished.

Funny, she left the country with ease,
To get enlightened after crossing seven seas
But fascinating enough is the whole idea,
that far abroad, but lives in a mini India.

Note: *All characters appearing in this work are fictitious and any resemblance to real persons, living or dead is purely coincidental.*



Satya Vadlamani: She hails from Hyderabad and works for a construction company. She likes to experiment on various poetry forms with diverse genres and feel that one should be exposed to enjoyable forms of writing. She is also a co-founder and organiser at Twin cities poetry club, Hyderabad.



The Star of Every Scene

Your essence is everywhere,

permeating, radiating,

fueling me from the inside,

inspiring serenity

in any scene

I happen to find myself.

In a forest full of green,

your eyes shine from every tree,

and the oxygen that I breathe

is imbued

with the blessings of your beauty.

In a park full of happy families,
I see a woman
pushing her baby in a carriage;
in my heart, this woman is you,
this child is ours,
and this happiness is a shared emotion
we can experience together forever.

When the birds sing,
it is your voice that I hear,
and the music calms me completely.

When the sun is blazing hot,
it is your passion that I desire,
and I can taste your lips meeting mine.

When the rain is falling heavy,
it is your chalice from which I sip,
and the ambrosia satiates my every craving.

When I am asleep,
it is your purity of which I dream,
and I hold you in my arms to dance.

When I first wake up,
it is your letter that I read,
and I smile as you speak in our language of love.

When I pick up a pen to write,
it is your ink that flows,
and the pages that get filled
are all in adoration of your divine nature.

When I look into the future,
it is your vision that I seek,
and all the hours of a lifetime
stretch out before me
as a prophecy of perfect peace.

Your essence is everywhere,
bubbling up to the surface,
boiling with anticipation,
buzzing with electricity,
burning through my veins,
crashing in waves over my soul,
cleansing, washing, baptizing,
bathing me in the Holy Spirit,
guiding me to higher truth,
leading me ever-closer to you.



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



Irsa Ruçi: She is an Albanian speechwriter and lecturer who has received numerous awards, and whose books include: *Trokas mbi ajër* (poems and essays), 2008 and *Pështjellim* (poetry), 2010.



PAPER MAN

Welcome! My mountains are shattered
look at your kisses stuffed in the gallery
welcome to the map of my horizons
your nakedness your laughter pour down on me
welcome to my pocket
where I keep verses, wisps of echoes
of our bodies
welcome to my ashtray of hopes
where your stem pours its bitter blood
and I pay for your hugs with deaf pagan prayers
welcome to this garden of houseleeks

Paper man
locked in his steam cage
the servants

arrive with golden trays
as he hides in the corner and moans

I heard your rain voice
on my paper streets
and all I could do was smile
while the ink dripped
blackening my heavy feet.

In our conversation, we pretended
the casual existed in a wall of salt.

I kissed the salt and here I am with thirst,
tense, muddy in my absurd size.

Stay with me while I dissolve
with tears, saliva, sweat,
our painful distance.

The salt wall closes
and the paper man walks away
into a new vastness.

I breathe in trash, whatever is foreign.

and long for the courage
to turn this paper into fire,
to witness my world ablaze
but there's no fire in my hands.
Incapable of burning,
castrated for the igneous,
another other light surrounds me.



Sergio A. Ortiz: He is the founding editor of Undertow Tanka Review. His collections of Tanka, *For the Men to Come* (2014), and *From Life to Life* (2014) were released by Amazon. He's a two time Pushcart nominee and a four time Best of the Web nominee. His poems have been published in over four hundred journals and anthologies.



IT'S ABOUT TIME

It's about time

everyone changes with the course of time,

those who don't change are often termed as losers.

It is believed that,

time and time waits for no one,

then why do we wait for people

those who go away from our lives

making us solitary and melancholic

deceiving us by their tactics

and we wait for them aimlessly

knowing they won't return

but still hoping for some

emotional response from their sides

how do people forget the good old times spend together

and themselves according to times

it's all about time which matters.



Shamenaz: Doctorate with specialization on Sub-continent Women Writers and teacher for 12 years, residing in Allahabad. I am a freelance writer, passionate reader, blogger, and poet, with many published poems in E-journals & magazines in India. I love to write nature-based poems as well as on various issues relating to everyday lives. I have presented papers all over India and many in journals in India and abroad. I am in the Editorial board of journals: Literary Miscellany, Cyber Literature, Research Access, Expression, The Context & IJRHS (Jordan). I am the Guest Editor of 'The Context' Volume 2, issue 3. I have served as a Chairperson of Women Cell of my College, AIET & Cultural Incharge, AIET



FACE OFF

When the clouds drizzle
down upon your squinting face:
do you whimper, earth?

When the drops smear
and open enlarge your pores:
do you flinch, earth?

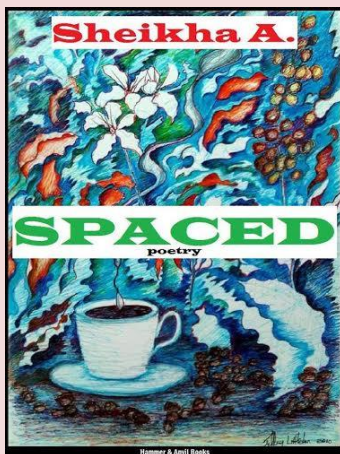
When the pebbles, pitted
against hard falling rain,
erode into tiny jojoba beads,

when your skin creases
into muddy circles, clotting
like a mask,

when the sun is out before
the rain completes its painting
around your wide 'T',

your eyes resting under
rain's reality,
deconstructed and unfinished;

are you calm,
when pushed onto the stage
ready to extempore, earth?



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



TUSCANY

Where words so often lose their way
And time slips into a dream-
An immortal wonder permeates
Along the hills of Tuscany.

The hills were chirping in the distance,
Amongst sweet voices of fizzy flume-
Intoxicating velvet shaven ridges,
Secreting colourful scents of bloom.

Before I knew it they embraced me,
Spreading springtime with their arms-
The wavering-wandering misty hills
Had me enraptured- with grace and charm.

My soul was rolling and dancing freely,
Amongst the hay stacks of the fields,
The sea of wine had made me drowsy
Uniting me with time in sleep.

An immortal wonder permeates,
Spreading scents of sparkling springtime glee
That transcends both through time and space,
Along the hills of Tuscany.



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

Economics at Ashoka University, where I hope to further develop my musical, literary as well as professional abilities.

Would love to hear from you at-

shivanksarin98@gmail.com



LIFE: A MULTIHUED FLOWER

Life's vagaries abounding

In a span surrounding

A wide chasm downing

A plethora of events

Hope, wherefore art thou

In a pan or atop mountains

Hope, abounding in a fountain of glory

Glory, in all its pristine form

A mere wish of thread

Looking as if it is in a cup of storm

The very way of life

A mere tea cup

Calmness descending
From atop mountains
Of white moss and snow
Pristine in its beauty and flow
Of a beautiful maze of
Youth and vitality

Is it enough
Asks the poet
But there is though
The dumb blind glory
Of cherished hope



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

completed B.A. and M.A. in English Literature as also B.Ed. 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.



THE EARTH IS MY BURDEN...

the earth is my burden, i shall not want.

Its storms are my brethren, they do not daunt.

I drown in your love, and then someone else comes
for my resuscitation...

The dogs are now barking
was that so wrong?

I'm left with the doubt I know nothing at all
About what's wrong and what's not.

Hold me like you would a motherless boy
Or do what you will, the world will go on...

People are busy with lives of their friends
And those they see crucified on TV.

I see the brown and the indigo tail
Of a beautiful peacock on the crest of a hill.

I want. And I want. And the world is at hand.
Why would they say that I deviate or wait?

My next is a story of fathomless breath.
My circle is complete with you on my lips.

So why would they send me the storm of their silence?
I am what I am, and the earth sits still
Living an ordinary life on my lap,
Because one man's burden is another's life.



Shreekumar Varma: He is an Indian author, playwright, newspaper columnist and poet. He received the R. K. Narayan Award for Excellence in Writing in English in 2015. He is known for the novels Lament of Mohini, Maria's Room, Devil's Garden: Tales Of Pappudom, The Magic Store of Nu-Cham-Vu and the historical book for children, Pazhassi Raja: The Royal Rebel Born as HH Prince Punartham Thirunal of the Travancore Royal Family, he is the great great grandson of the artist Raja Ravi Varma and grandson of Regent Maharani Sethu Lakshmi Bayi, the last ruling Maharani of Travancore. He is married to Geeta Varma (poet, teacher and columnist) and has two children, Vinayak and Karthik.



MIND

Creation of thoughts

Storage of thoughts!

Perception of thoughts

Variation of thoughts!

Never remains constant

Always there is a movement!

Whether there is childhood innocent

or youth and old age situation!

Sometimes lost in sadness and depression

Sometimes smiles and laughter without any reason!

A battle between daily experiences

A war between outer world and inner consciousness!

Itself gives its opinions

Itself takes its decisions!

It can be the best friend

Can be the worst enemy too on other hand !

But is the most precious gift of that Lord

That always remains most closest to you in this world!

The feelings those you cannot express anywhere

This mind is always ready to share!

Spectrum of your all secrets

You feel free anything to confess!

Though just a small, single word

Yet, great meaning, it holds!

What, a wonderful creation of God

What a wonderful creator you are O' lord!!!



Sonia Gupta: PROFESSION: Oral pathologist; Sr. lecturer in dental institute. QUALIFICATION: BDS, MDS PUBLISHED BOOKS: Two English poetry anthologies; FOUNTAIN OF INSPIRATIONS, CANVAS OF LIFE..WITH MY PEN; Two Hindi poetry anthologies. OTHER PUBLICATIONS: Various common anthologies such as “Roses & Rhymes”; “Divine madness”; “Christmas”; “Bouquets of love and verses”; “Voices of Humanity”; “Hope reborn”, “The reeest verses”, “Nibstears cave anthology for peace”! Regular contributor for “Glomag magazine; Hall of poets, and “Reflection” magazine! AWARDS: Nari gaurav samman, Yug surbhi samman, Prem sagar samman, Women of the year samman, sahitay gaurav samman in hindi literature. OTHER HOBBIES: paintings, singing, Cooking, Knitting, Embroidery, Designing. EMAIL: Sonia.4840@gmail.com

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HUMAN INTERACTION

Human interaction proportionate to one's wealth

As we go up in the fiscal ladder

Our human interaction reduces accordingly

As experienced during traveling with different mode

People traveling by local train/bus open their heart easily

Minutes into conversation and you know their world

Past, present and future aspiration

Contrary to this

Business class air traveler don't even move their head

Caged in their idea of superiority

Drenched in their high state of ego

Suffering from poverty of another kind

All they have is unrequited lonely heart

Devoid of human interaction!!!



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



MAMELINA

Mamelina stood on her porch, hand on walking stick,

Lady of the manor surveying her land:

The bald patches in the lawn ringed with wilting grass here,

Shooting tall and sprightly there;

The boy had cut unevenly again, she sighed.

Wiry grey curls stirred over her own sparse pate

Ruffled by a breeze that fluttered the leaves of the Jungle
Flame

That no longer bloomed, insect mangled leaves shivered
dispirited;

The caressing breeze, a singular affectionate touch.

I'll spray it tomorrow, she thought,

So many days had passed by, she had done naught...

Tomorrow surely, if another morning I see...

Inexplicable pain above her left knee
Stretched to kiss resident agony in her spine,
Woke crick in her neck and spasm in her right arm whined.
Her walking stick stiffened, supported Mamelina
Gingerly placing her skinny posterior on her rocker;
Mourning mornings, days, lost to aches and pains;
Soon she'd diffuse into ether, nothing left behind...
The leaf bed welcomed another mango, dropped in feeding
frenzy;
They should have been picked, pickled in brine...
A crow landed; satiated on the half-eaten sweet flesh.
Ants explored, oblivious to sunning lizards, crawling worms
or snoozing snakes;
Romancing butterflies waltzed through her garden wild,
A fat bumblebee droned near the ceiling a while,
And there, glinting in the sunlight, a dragonfly basked, wings
effulgent...
Mamelina laid her walking stick on her knees and stroked
The grooved patterns adorning its length;
Her granddaughter had presented it to her, she remembered
God—the interconnecting spirit—guides every life.



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



TOMATOES VS PATENTS

Patents.

Hybrids.

Foods/minds/palates

controlled by the MNCs

selling the brands

through glossy brochures

greedy for more of mindshares.

Original seeds.

People's choices/savings

hoarded in closets...like gold.

Red

succulent

tender

tomatoes in kitchen gardens

at the corners of the plots

lovingly planted and dug up by tapering hands

bent figures

knit-up brows

artists working the land

These edibles mixed with love

beat the heavens...in texture and taste!



Sunil Sharma: Mumbai-based, Sunil Sharma is a widely-published writer. He has published three collections of poetry, one collection of short fiction, one novel and co-edited five books so far. He is a recipient of the UK-based

Destiny Poets' inaugural Poet of the Year award---2012.
Recently his poems were published in the UN project:
Happiness: The Delight-Tree-2015.



FAST FRIGATE

My orders said
USS Miller DE-1091
but when I reported
for duty, poof, it had
turned into a Fast Frigate.
It wasn't the fore and aft
crew's lounges
the bunk curtains
the single screw
or the ASROC launcher
that prompted the change.
It was just too damned big
to be an Escort anymore.
No ceremony or shipyard

visit advanced it
up the alphabet.
Typewriter, mimeograph,
printing press
and word of mouth
worked just fine.
“Fast Frigate” sure
beat “Destroyer
Escort” for creative
cursing and it did
conjure up those days
of wooden ships and iron
men sailors were always
joking about
especially when
we were breaking away
from a tanker, carrier
or replenishment ship –
Miller Beer Flag hoisted
and “Dueling Banjos”

blasting loud enough
to shiver the timbers
of any anonymous
wrecks below.



Thomas M. McDade: He is a former plumbing industry computer programmer / analyst residing in Fredericksburg, VA, previously CT & RI. He is married, no kids, no pets. He is a graduate of Fairfield University, Fairfield, CT. McDade served two tours of duty in the U. S. Navy, serving ashore at the Fleet Anti-Air Warfare Training Center and at sea on the USS Mullinnix DD-944 and USS Miller DE/FF 1091.



I

I am the resurrection of the night that's gone,
The maker of peace,
Between the forces that set asunder
Your sleep,
Stole your thunder
Ground you to nothingness,
That caused your ignominious fall from grace
I enjoin the powers
That severed the sorrowing night
Into deep darkness and garish light.
That brought you safely home.
Promised you wishes upon fulfilled wish.
I am that force
That mothered hope

An expectation,

A sojourn into a future possibility.

I am the light that spread her luminous skirts wide

Over all the wicked delight of an errant darkness.

I am she, the harbinger of good.

The usherer at the door of the theater of brightness.

Announcing a fresh new take,

A good morning,

Your Dawn (Usha)



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



What do I do with that unrequited love poem
The climax frustrates
No rhythm nor rhyme
What happens to that movie we ached to watch
But left half way
We who used to wait till the credits rolled
and stand in the aisle forever
soaking in the end
What now of that song in deep freeze
I once hummed on seeing you
As you strummed each string of
every lonely ache of every wanton pore
My art languishes in some dead end of my love's debris
It's only panacea is You



Vandana Kumar: She is a bon vivant who loves travelling, working with young minds and exploring creative possibilities beyond the ordinary. She has done her masters in History from Lady Shri Ram College and her Diplôme from the Alliance Française de Delhi.

She is a French teacher in a couple of schools and private institutes and also translates for various publishing houses and corporates. An active member of various quiz clubs across Delhi-she has a soft corner for Kolkata where she spent her childhood. Her various passions include singing, playing the piano, composing music and participating in local antakshari competitions. She describes herself as a dreamer...a wanderer and a certified incurable romantic...the romantic moorings worsened with all her fancy French studies. Poetry for her is her stress buster -her flight of fancy- and strangely – what keeps her rooted too.



AN ODE

Her voice moulded and loud
and everytime she called
I would be scared of being yelled at,
and one day I saw her smile like anybody else would,
When I was 5, my class teacher taught me
that every judgement you make can have another side to it.

As I walked past the noisiest
corridor of my school, to see a teacher
grabbing a child by his hand as he ran across
escaping the sound of the wind,
only to tell him that she loved his contribution in class,
I saw him walk this time, with joy in his eyes,
I learnt appreciation mattered.

I was shifting school for the first time
my heart heavy with the moments of departure,
my science teacher gave me a kit kat,
and taught me small things mattered,
because kit kat was my favourite chocolate and she knew it.

Knowledge is louder than silence
is what my professors reflect with every
word they say and every lecture we breathe in,
their passion brighter than the
brightest source of light, one'd would ever know.

For teaching is a noble profession
many would say,
but beyond that, teachers taught things that
no textbooks would bear,
exams would ask,
nor examiners would mark,
for teachers teach us beyond economics
math, computers, and science

for teachers teach us to face a continuous
assessment
called life.

This is an ode to every teacher out here
and everywhere else
for having chosen to give your heart and soul
to light a million candles
with the hope that they in turn will light a million other.



Vasanthi Swetha: She is an Economics student who 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.



"SHRINKING SKIES"

(a fiery lament on the horrors of partition!)

Extinguished, engulfed,
evicted, eliminated.

The soul of man
tattered, buried, cremated.

One life, one past
future, separated.

Prisoned minds
bodies, liberated.

Freedom, bound,
contained, violated.

Dance of life, lamented

death, celebrated.

Lives, universal

bruised, desecrated.

Shrinking skies

borders, created.....



Vinay Virwani: A marketing guy by profession, I can't help but try and convince you that a particular brand of detergent powder can really change your life! And while you may choose not to believe me, at least I ended up telling you a story! Alas, while the breed of storytelling marketers is fast getting replaced by number-chasing, profit-making, excel sheet enthusiasts, I write....to continue telling stories....A misfit perhaps, in a rapidly format-driven, number crunching world.....but a misfit who has successfully blended in.....:)



SHAPE OF LIFE!

Heard a kibitzer, an old friend of mine

"Athletic bodies are in"

"Gowns are the taste of the town"

a fashionista self-proclaimed!

Wondered my nonchalant brain

pouring words in disdain.

Body a mere sheath to the soul

Apparels whether sexy or nay

tale of the folklore.

So emancipated humanity

still so emotionless disparity?

Love you crave;

never define by glowing faces

or curvature bordering shiny laces .

Aghast and puzzled; fashionista friend of mine

To Him, as if I read

Bible of Humanity

and gals solidarity.

Arrogant ridden face and voice as long as could race

Interrupted;

Fashion is life; my dear friend
gothic appeal, girl's beauty at end.

Smiled I; his ignorance and matured adolescence.
Every human, gender aside
bestowed a physic, blessed with an appetite.
Never fake treasures so holy
sake of lust
every shape of life, celebrate you must!



Vishal Ajmera: He is a Business Strategy consultant by profession working with a reputed MNC in Mumbai. Over the years, Vishal has developed a penchant for poetry and has established himself as a successful poet cum lyrics writer; composing poetry across several genres and encapsulating various aspects of life from psychology, nature to imagery. With contributions in several international anthologies and magazine publications, his journey in the 'poetic world' continues unabated. Apart from poems, Vishal is an ardent music lover and plays guitar.



AND BY ONE'S OWN HAND.

People who drink
to solve their problems,
or feel better about them,
prove to themselves
that, no matter how bad
one feels, one can always
feel worse.



William P. Cushing: Bill's latest piece ("Parting Pictures") came into existence because of the death of Tom Mangieri, a fond friend of his from his Florida days, who passed away at the start of the summer from brain cancer. Tommy worked in numerous theaters in Orlando primarily as a set designer; he was a good man, a caring son for his father (who died about three weeks after Tommy's death), and a tremendously creative and artistic man. He'll be missed by all who knew him. The accompanying photo from one of the many memorial services held to honor the younger Mangieri was the inspiration for this piece.



ciao! 😊