

GloMag

Monthly Poetry And Prose Magazine

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Edited And Published by Glory Sasikala

SOMDATTA MITRA



TITLE OF COVER PIC

Idealism

ABOUT THE ARTIST

I'm a private tutor from Howrah, West Bengal and I have been teaching English, History and Creative Writing from the past 20 years. I am a published author, and I have been a co - author in 1500 anthologies. I have published my

debut solo book by the name " The Spectrum of Emotions " in June ' 2024. I have collaborated poems with many enthusiastic national and international poets. I have been featured in a few journals for an interview about my poetic journey. My poems, articles and short stories have been widely published in many national and international journals and anthologies. My passion always engulfed me with reading, writing, painting and oratory. I have accomplished 3 world records in writing poetry.

Since my early childhood I was much engrossed with painting and collecting words. I was not much of a bookworm yet an avid reader. I enjoyed doing plays and dance dramas. In school, recitation was my most cherished participation. And in social clubs I was more into drama presentations. I participated in the dance drama from Noble laureate Rabindranath Tagore's Chandalika, Chitrangada and Shyama, co-ordinated and compiled by Mrs. Jaya Choudhary in the Noida, Bengali Cultural Club in my childhood days. I'm a postgraduate in English Literature and I completed my studies from Delhi University, India. In 1998, when I lost my father, being the only child of my parents, I was a loner and was undergoing major depression. My father was everything for me. I indulged in writing letters to my pen pals to reciprocate my inner pain and agony. They used to encourage my writing skills and

only through their consistent appraises that I could ultimately mirror my writing ability as a whole.

I liked stamp collecting and nurturing a dictionary from a very early age. Slowly, I started writing short stories and poems. It was all left inside my diary until in 2017 I started publishing my poems in anthologies.

My poems have been translated to Spanish and Italian languages. I enjoy writing about humanity, social injustices, women empowerment, feminism, iconic poets and personalities, nature, children, social awareness, patriotism, freedom, environment, culture and tradition of India and other countries, common man, peace, global warming, global friendship, flowers, places of interest , festivals and seasons. I enjoy working as a peace ambassador for global peace and solidarity. I am a literary ambassador for the poetry group SPICCIOLI DI POESIA .

I have won many national and international awards for participating in Spoken Word poetry (Poetry recitation) and hosted many events. I am an event coordinator for my own online tutorial by the name " Bottlebrush Classes " and organised many cultural events and workshops for school students.

Over peace, I believe that antagonistic ideas always leave us as an agonised, diminutive, crumpled soul who is a loner. If optimism is embedded in each thought and the thought process can be evaluated into the parameters of love and sacrifices, then every soul will bloom as a peace lover. Believing in such a strong foundation, my literary and cultural exploration still jaunts me.

☆ Received world record acclaim for writing the longest patriotic poem in English for India, endorsed by Inkzoid Foundation.

☆ Received world record acclaim for writing the longest fairy tale in English by an Indian, endorsed by Glorious Book of Records.

☆ Received a world record for writing the maximum number of difficult words used in a prayer for humanity in English , endorsed by Continental World Records.

☆ Received awards in the achiever's category for the Best Teacher and Best Writer, endorsed by Magic Book of Records.

☆ Received Lost Pearl Feminine Awards by Lost Pearl Publication

☆ Received National Glory Awards for social work , writing poems and oratory by Asian Artist Union.

Δ Worked on a few world record anthologies in the past six years with various publishers in India.

Δ Felicitated with Icon of India Awards 2024 by Global Education & Media Foundation, Mumbai, India .

Δ Felicitated with International Icon

Awards by International World Records, India.

Δ Received Rabindranath Tagore Memorial Award by Bhavna Art and Literature Foundation, India.

Δ Received Indian Humanitarian Award from India Book of Records on May ' 2024

Δ Received DR. A. P.J. Bharatiya Ratna Samman (Indian jewel Honour) from Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam Bharatiya Ratna Samman foundation in February 2025,

Δ Received top national writers of India Mega Penstar recognition from Epic Sphere Publication in February 2025.

Δ Received Star Women Icon Award 2025 by Blue Star for being woman of literature

PERSPECTIVE OF THE PICTURE

I have defined it as idealism. A belief that a perfect life, situation can be achieved, even when this is not very likely has so much to go with the picture of an innocent boatman in Srinagar, who is engrossed in his search for a new traveller. Every day he is living with new hope and enthusiasm within his limitations or deprivations, that with the new sunrise something good will pertain to his earning. That much happiness is enough for him. He never expects anything unattainable.

He enjoys every ride to the destination and with the excitement and enthusiasm of his travellers/tourists, he delves deep into his own mirror, where he succinctly relaxes over a minimal earning to rejoice. What keeps him moving is his strong desire to live life cheerfully with equal elation as a human.

MY PUBLICATIONS AS A CO-AUTHOR IN A FEW ANTHOLOGIES TO NAME

1. The Poetess by Empire Publishing, conceived by Mr. Blair Smith
2. Heartstrings And Echoes published by The Impish Lass Publishing house, edited by Dr. Lalita Vaitheeswaran
3. The Impish Lass Navrasa (A kaleidoscope of emotions) edited by Dr. Lalita Vaitheeswaran published by Impish Lass Publishing house.
4. Affinity by Ashirwad Publications
5. She the Powerhouse by Writer 's Corner Publication
6. The Caged Bird Sings by Flairs and Glairs publication
7. Secret Santa by Blue Star Publication
8. Symphony of Peace by Sargam for Literary Interactions, published by Books Clinic Publication.
9. The World Beyond the Den, compiled by Srinjoy Mitra (my son) and published by Dream World Publication.
10. An Epistolary Gift to Ruskin Bond, created by Meena Mishra, published by Impish Lass Publishing House.

ABOUT GLOMAG

GloMag brings out one hard copy per year, in February, the Valentine Issue. While there are no visual aids in the hard copy versions, the online version is enhanced by pictures accompanying the writings and the profiles. GloMag is the coming together of writers in their diverse manifestations, thoughts, and expressions, and the visual interpretation of these.

GloMag remains euphoria, engaging all your senses at once. Perhaps you are sitting in solitude beneath a bough, besides a lake, and you turn the pages. Time stands still, and you become engrossed, oblivious to anything but these beautiful writings, expressions, and pictures. Your soul dances in ecstasy, participates in a cosmic experience, it sways and chants. Somewhere someone is telling you about duality, someone tells you about a forlorn house without music, someone shows you how to love, and someone raises questions about existence itself.

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

~ **Glory Sasikala**

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HAPPINESS

Let us learn happiness,
like mathematical rules.

Multiply daily joys,
raise small successes to the n th power.

Let us learn to value life's generous gifts—
offered abundantly, but only once.

Happiness is like a chameleon—
it has many colours, shapes, and faces.

Rarely it is grand and pompous
like Beethoven's "Ode to Joy."

More often, it hides in moments,
in the grains of ordinary things.
It's hard to hear it amidst the noise,
hard to notice it throughout the day,
hard to appreciate it while it lasts.



Alicja Maria Kuberska: She is an awarded Polish poetess, novelist, journalist, and editor. She is a member of the Polish Writers Associations in Warsaw, Poland and IWA Bogdani, and Albania as well as other organisations. She has received two medals—the Nosside UNESCO Competition in Italy (2015) and European Academy of

Science Arts and Letters in France (2017). She has also received a reward of international literary competition in Italy, “Tra le parole e ‘elfinito” (2018). She was announced Poet of the Year 2017 by Soflay Literature Foundation. She also received the Bolesław Prus Prize Poland (2019), Culture Animator Poland (2019) and first prize Premio Internazionale di Poesia Poseidonia- Paestrum Italy (2019).



Poem and Watercolor by Amitabh Mitra

DECHEN

A Thimphu Love Poem

we met at a thimphu sunday flea market
there was mist all over
the crowd spoke in gregarious tones
like mountains hunting for lost ones
there was mist on her face

her lips balanced an era
of happening
mist on her kira
hiding
somebody whispered
that's dashoam
our princess
and i remember speaking to her in shameless
colors
curves
woven forests
even in sleep
next to the log fire
i thought i spoke of the earth
beyond mountains
and chortens
we would leave
having touched once

sundays we met
and parted
buying always laughter
exchanged odours
when are you going to wear the boku
when would you make me a dasho
she laughed and laughed
a sky just opened up
a mist went thicker
amidst the staring gargoyles of tashikodzung
tired dragon roofs
grunting yaks
nobody saw us embracing
an unsheltered sun.



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



Is it at all esoteric
always to disremember to forget
the fragile hardness of eggshells
the soft rich warmth of newly laid eggs on the curving hug
of the palm
the fluffiness and wriggliness and pink-
claw-beak needliness
of fluffy fresh-hatched warm fuzzy pale lemon and cream
cuddliness
and apron- pocket- worthiness of chicks and ducklings

with puppies and kittens moist- pink- nosiness in their nests
harmlessly

toothlessly mumbling bumbling fumbling tumbling

Mum Duck quacking fluffing up feathers spreading wings
nudging beak to shelter them all

Mum Hen unalarmed indiscriminately taking all young
forms under her feathery wings

on an unruly lawn geese honking necks snaking sneak
peeking

weedy pond with green scum and mosses and reeds and
ferns at the borders reeking

And a fat copper toad which kittens play with

And goldfish jump at thinking it's real and outsized, joy
seeking

simply loving real life and beings and things so very much ?



Amita Sarjit Ahluwalia: I am a retired civil servant but at heart a poet and teacher. I write, mostly poetry, in English, Hindi, Urdu and Punjabi. I was awarded the NISSIM International Poetry Award (First Prize) 2019 and then the Reuel International Award (First Prize) 2020 for Non-Fiction Prose by The Significant League, a well-known Creative Writing Group on Facebook. The Destiny International Community of Poets based out of Wakefield, England, UK declared me Winner of their Poet of the Year 2020 as well as Critic of the Year 2020.



AGING

not Autobiography! a Positive poem!

your mind is slowing

your legs are fumbling

your knees are paining

you have loss of hearing

your hands are aching

your heart is broken

your will is shaken
but your soul is waking!

your body, dying
your eyesight, fading
your memory, going
but your spirit, glowing!



Ampat Koshy: Dr. Koshy A.V. prior Assistant Professor (English literature), Jazan University, Saudi Arabia is currently working as Assistant Professor (English literature), Mt. Carmel College, Bengaluru. He has many books, degrees, diplomas, certificates, prizes, and awards to his credit, and is also an editor, anthology maker, poet, critic and writer of fiction. Two of his co-authored books published in 2020 were Amazon best-sellers in India and USA, namely, ***Wine-Kissed Poems*** with Jagari Mukherjee and ***Vodka by the Volga*** with Santosh Bakaya. He recently won a certificate in Italy for his poetry. His latest book is ***A Sonetto for the Poetic World/You heard the Scream, didn't you?*** co-written with Santosh Bakaya.



IN THIS LINE, LET THERE BE NO SPACE

There are talks about spaces all around:

public, private, office, mental.

But I want to exist like haphazard,
unorganized letters in a line,
without spaces.

If there is any gap
in between, how do I smell grass
on your skin; feel moody flowers

in your eyes; and war and peace
in the unexposed chamber, inside?

In this line, let there be no space.
In this line, let there be only a single
word, containing all alphabets
this earth has harbored
since birth, — for you.



Aneek Chatterjee: He is a poet and academic from Kolkata, India. He has been published in reputed literary magazines and poetry anthologies across the globe. He authored 17 books including five poetry collections titled, *Seaside Myopia; Unborn Poems and Yellow Prison; Of Ashes and Persiflage; Archive Avenue;* and *Last Evening Was A River*. He also co-edited the 'Poetry Conclave Year Book 2022'. He received the "Alfredo Pasilono Memorial Panorama International Literary Award 2023", conferred by the Writers Capital Foundation. He was a Fulbright Visiting faculty at the University of Virginia, USA and a recipient of the ICCR Chair (Govt. of India) to teach abroad. His poetry has been archived at Yale University.



A TRIBUTE

I survived

I thanked God for that

I was not there when the gun roared

When cries of innocents filled the air

When grasses bent their heads soaked in blood

I am dead inside

More dead than those who died

My heart has turned into charcoal

Their faces make me burn

I listen to the slightest noise in the night

And wake up to shed tear

But I will rise

I will turn the grasses green

I will kneel down before high hills

Before Shankara and Rishi Kashyapa

That land belongs to me

And I belong to it

I will visit again and again



Anil Kumar Panda (alias Tiku): He was born in a small town, Brajrajnagar, in Odisha, India. At present he is working in the coal mine sector and writes poems and stories when he gets time. He has already published two books of poems—***Fragrance of Love*** and ***Melody of Love***. He is working on his third book now. His poems have been published in many national and international anthologies. He loves to write romantic poems. He likes travelling and meeting people of different nationalities and cultures. He takes inspiration from the simple life of villagers and Nature's beauty. He enjoys walking by streams and into forests to be with the flora and fauna.



www.historynet.com

IN TIMES OF WAR

A ghazal

Everybody has something to say as if it matters in times of war

What matters when a country's borders are in tatters in times of war

They call me a poet but my poetry lies shelled inside my throat

Perhaps it's best dead if it cannot rise above what clatters in times of war

What hurts more, the taking of life or the reasons for that
assumed right

Whose god wields his voice over the devil's chatters in
times of war

I sit breathing deep like a sage far away from where shells
are falling

For those giving up their breath, what gain from these
barterers in times of war

If struggles of you and us, yours and ours are as old as life
itself

Has evolution done mankind a turn that flatters in times of
war?

Man has come a long way we say; I fear near is the road's
end

See how we draw the world closer to its last chapters in
times of war

Make all the wishes you want to but the world has chosen
its path

What good can Anjum do when falling are fate's factors in
times of war

Note: In a ghazal, the poet adds his/her name or pen name to the final couplet by way of a personal touch and also to indicate the poem's authorship.

****Anjum means stars in Arabic***



Anju Kishore: Anju Kishore is a Pushcart Prize nominee and an award-winning editor of numerous free-verse anthologies. Author of *...and I Stop to Listen* (2018) and *My Conversations with God, Life, and Death* (2025), her poems are part of anthologies like Aatish 2, The Yearbook of Indian Poetry in English 2022 and 2023, and Late-blooming Cherries 2024 (Haiku Poetry from India, Harper Collins). She has dabbled in online theatre and is currently exploring Japanese forms of poetry.



BROKEN CONCRETE

Tragedy, written on the
face of a missing man.

Blue glazed pot, cracked
and spilling out its contents.

Time, soaring past
scheduled events.

Praise, sung out
to those who lost.

Upside down, inside out,
words trying to make sense.

Visions dreamt-for fade,
as illusions take over.

One final step, beyond the
edge, careening out of sight.

Green leaves fall one last time,
as the world spins out of control.

Cracks in sidewalk, spell out
the doom before us all.



Ann Christine Tabaka: I am a poet and writer residing in Delaware, USA. I am a retired organic chemist and a retired personal trainer. I have 18 published books. I was nominated 4 times for the Pushcart Prize in Poetry; nominated for the 2023 Dwarf Stars award of the Science Fiction and Fantasy Poetry Association; was the winner of Spillwords Press 2020 Publication of the Year (Poetic), my bio is featured in the “Who’s Who of Emerging Writers 2020 and 2021,” published by Sweetycat Press.

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



SUNRISE WITH CROW IN WINTER

Crow flew over my Home
and dropped his feet
onto the evergreen branches
outside my window

feasted on peanuts
and drank ice cold water
from the old wooden bowl

that i fill each morning
and empty each night

for what good is ice to a Crow?

Let's all bow our heads
to the Great Creator
who saw fit to wind green rivers
through our fields and woods

and to grace our forests with trees so tall
if we could climb to the top
we could touch His face

let's be Happy for one another
And Live to see another day
unfold its glorious surprises

Watch Crow in the early morning
and drink good hot coffee
and eat cookies from
our own ovens

And let's say Farewell

to all the old Losses.



Anne Tibbitts: She has been writing since she was in third grade. She loves telling stories: she loves to write, to create, to teach, to educate, to laugh, ,to travel (in the old days lol) and now she's settled into a cozy and quaint little writing studio by the Mississippi river where she can craft her new poems and re-craft her old poems. Anne is grateful for the academic career that she had but she is also grateful that it is behind her and she can relax and focus on whatever she feels like doing with her own work. That is true freedom.



CINDERELLA'S NIGHT OUT!

Thrilled was the girl,
Thinking about her
Night out!

What must be done?
Dinner cooked,
Floors swept and mopped,
Sparkling clean.

Everything in its place,
Checked and double-checked—
Neat, tidy!

She donned a simple, lovely dress,
Setting out on her adventure,
Not for Prince Charming,
But for music,
Laughter,
Chitchat with her tribe.

Ding Dong! Ding Dong!
The clock struck,
Her mobile beeped:
A command to return!
Good girls don't stay out late!

Like a robot, she obeyed,
Leaving without farewell.
Palpitations, guilt—
For what? Being a bad girl?
Learning rooted
Over generations!

Patriarchy trains you so:
Gags you, instills beliefs,
Robs your voice
And lends
A perceived identity
Makes you a pretty doll,
Mute and Cute!



Aparna Suresh: She holds many identities as a poet, writer, academic and a lover of literature. She has authored a poetry book titled ***Speck of a Soul*** (2019), coauthored and edited ***Painting Dreams*** (2020) and a book of quotes and poetry ***Snippets of the Soul*** (2021). She was the Editor of ***Metamorphosis*** a book devoted to Art and Poetry. She was awarded the 'Best Poet—Editor's choice' by Spectrum Awards in May 2021. Her poem ***Saviour's Destiny*** was long listed for IPR Annual Award 2020. She received 'Poet of the Year' award from Ukiyoto publishing house and ALS Women's Conclave. "She lives a life of Poetry" is her tagline.



TYPE OF LIFE TO LIVE

If it's anger and hate
hidden deep inside
The longer you prefer to
disappear and hide

Behind the hurt
that is consuming
Turning your behavior into
outbursts and fuming

You will never find true happiness
any person deserve
How can being always upset
be a type of life to live

Look inside yourself
and find your true self
And let those negative emotions out
like air out of a valve

Look pass the past hurts
that's holding you back
And the ones who loves you
you now so easily attack

You need to forgive and forget
in order to heal
Otherwise you'll never know
how true joy feels



Bevan Boggenpoel: The award-winning author, Bevan Boggenpoel, was born in Salt Lake, Port Elizabeth, South Africa. Boggenpoel completed both a Baccalaureate in Education and BA Honors in Languages at the Nelson Mandela University (NMU). His debut poetry collection was well received. He has written three more titles and co-authored three other titles. One of the books titled ***Madiba's Quotes and Anecdotes (Reflections and Conversations)*** sells at the online shop of the university. He is also an author at a South African website known as Litnet (South African Literature Network). He has published six writers' books through his publishing company Poetic Productions. He is a primary school teacher in Port Elizabeth.



A PEBBLE

I am a piece of pebble

Very ordinary

Lying on the road side

You passerby

Perhaps

Took a fancy

Picked me up

Perhaps
You found
Some color and beauty
And so
Took me
With you
Beauty lies
In your eyes
I am just a pebble
Very ordinary
Oh passerby!!



Bharati Nayak: She is a bilingual poet, writer, editor, translator, and reviewer hailing from Bhubaneswar, India. Her poems and writings have been published in nearly two hundred books, magazines, e-books and newspapers. She has published two poetry books in her native language, Odia, and eight English poetry collections as single author and co-author. She has translated Adila Akkoo's book ***Lost In A Quatrain*** into Odia. She has been felicitated by many literary groups and won awards of appreciation.



REQUIEM FOR THE TROOPS

Marching off in search of accolades,
they left lovers, friends, and family behind
to crush those called their country's foes
and then return, exalted, after battle,

but it wasn't fame that they would find;
their pride and honor led them to be
slaughtered as their nation's cattle
or food for lice or shattered in gore.

Instead of glory, these troops had to see
limbless comrades in baskets laid in rows
in the trenches of our first modern war
hollowing out any glory in parades.



Bill Cushing: Called the “blue collar poet” by classmates after serving in the Navy and working on commercial vessels before returning to school at 35, Bill Cushing’s work has appeared in anthologies, journals, and magazines. Nominated for several Pushcart Prizes, Bill previous books include ***A Former Life*** (Kops-Fetherling International Award), ***Music Speaks*** (San Gabriel Valley Poetry Festival Award; New York City Book Award), ***“ . . .this just in. . . ”***, and ***Just a Little Cage of Bone*** (American Writing Award finalist). His newest collection of poems is titled ***The Beast Inside***. His poem for this month is written for America's Memorial Day.



I fell in love with myself for the first time
My heart felt elated by melodious chime
Holding myself close to me
I set my soul free
Romancing my sensuality,
Pampering, caressing and kissing
My very own being
That remained oblivious to me.
Dressed my best to entice myself
Feasted my eyes on my adornment.

Flirted frolicked and teased
My entrapped self, I released.



Bilquis Fatima: She loves Nature and speaks for social issues in the form of short articles and speeches. ***Poetic Aroma*** is her first published book of poems, and she is a regular contributor to GloMag and On Fire Cultural movement. Her poems have also been published in several publications and commended by various other national and international publications. She has also contributed to some Anthologies, 'Queen' published by Vishwa Bharti Research Center being the first one,

Nostalgia by Prose and Poetry Group, Inked Thoughts by The Impish Lass Publications, The Roseate Anthology, Ruddy Ravens and Cheshire cats and Rusty Rats by The Significant League group, being the latest one.



DOG SONG 1

Soft grass surrounded,
On brown cool sand
With light summer breeze
Under the shade,
I yawn and sleep...
Unlike these fool humans
Who cares...

For what may happen

Now or then?

Don't I bother

Who is big

Who is small,

And the little bit I find

Is my day's all

No dream, no aim

to take alert,

The two feet land

I occupy is mine,

And all I know,

This drowsy afternoon,

Is only for me

To yawn and sleep



Bishnu Charan Parida: He is a bilingual poet from Jajpur Road of Odisha. Although professionally an engineer, he loves poetry. His poems have been published in many anthologies and magazines of national and international repute. He has been awarded in the state level Kalinga Nagar book festival, Odisha in 2015, honored in the 11th Guntur International Poetry Festival, honored as a World Featured Poet 2019 of Pentasi-B, China. He also received the 8th R.N.Tagore award from X-press Publications, Kerala.



RELATIVELY SPEAKING

I don't need Mr Einstein
to tell me
how time should go,
if she's not here
with me,
then time passes slow

waiting for her,
is endless eternity,
a deep canyon to fill.

if I could turn back the time
I would still be in her arms
and remain there forever
with time standing still

as I wait for my love
in the sadness of time
my thoughts
are open and bared
and I don't give one damn
about $E=MC^2$

when we're together,
the problem is when
it is time to depart,
the distance and space
negative gravity
pulls, at our isolate heart

so Mr Einstein
my theory is this
when i'm in her arms
time doesn't matter
it equals only bliss



Brian Mackenzie: I was born in Inverness in 1949 and lived there until 1969. Since then, I lived in London and Saudi Arabia. I have worked most of my life in the Airline Industry, which enabled me to travel the world quite easily and cheaply. I am now retired and have lived in Spain for the last ten years. I only started writing since I retired in 2009 and it is only in the last few years that I started writing songs and poems and I suppose have become quite prolific. I have published 14 books of poetry, 8 self-published and 4 books were published by a publisher.



<https://in.pinterest.com/pin/64880050867344114/>

Cool Tailless lizard limericks to beat the heat and the stress (In response to Santosh Bakaya's prompt in The Significant League Group on Facebook – limericks on a tailless lizard)

(1)

There was once a tailless green lizard
who got stuck in a powerful blizzard.
So much he sneezed
that his body squeezed
till his body and tail were rescued by a wizard.



Brindha Vinodh: Her poems have been widely published. Her book of poems ***Autumn in America & Other Poems*** is available on Amazon. She is the recipient of Poesis Award for Excellence in Poetry and the Reuel International Prize for poetry with an honourable mention.



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STRANGERS

We

step through the quiet dawn

barefoot on wet earth

each blade of grass timidly holding our weight

only for a second

then springing back, untouched, unmarked.

We

don't talk much, only listen

to the low hum of our thoughts,

the whisper of leaves and
the rhythm of breathing in tandem
in contrast.

You
on the edge of the trail
a stranger with a history I can't recall
it feels like we've been here before
these paths carved by our unspoken words,
our silence.

Together
in the evening's falling light,
we drift apart, our footsteps fading,
yet bound by this silent knowing--
like strangers who know each other
we weave through the journey sometimes
together.



Carl Scharwath: He has appeared globally with 180+ journals selecting his writing or art. Carl has published four poetry books and his latest book is ***The World Went Dark*** published by Alien Buddha Press. Carl has four photography books, published with Praxis and CreatiVingenuity. His photography was exhibited in the Mount Dora and Leesburg Centers for the Arts. Carl is currently an art editor at Glitterati and former editor for Minute Magazine. He was nominated for four The Best of the Net Awards (2022-25) and two different 2023 Pushcart Nominations for poetry and a short story.



LINE THAT DIVIDES

Dividing line
doesn't divide,
it is we who
interpret.

Then we say
that side,
this side.

Actually

two countries

But birds, pigeons

have least regard

for this,

they fly both ways

for food,

for mating.

with same intensity.

Dogs don't bark

differently

Crows caw.

If soldier's shadow

trespasses this side,

it isn't chopped off.

Rains don't stop

at that line.

Clouds don't

differentiate.

In kite season,
kite may be cut
sail.on the other side,
nobody shoots it.
Breeze, wind
doesn't stop.
Nature knows
humans are foolish.
Nature doesn't bother.
Nature doesn't ever
draw a line.



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



THE NEW WORLD

This is no China or fabled Japan
Much as Columbus wishes otherwise
These islands hold another race of man.
For generations under blazing skies
Unknown to us there was this missing half
Of humanity, birds, beasts and flowers.
Shall we upon the King of Spain's behalf

Pin them down and force on them our powers?
For God and Spain – yes also for gold
We sailed off the map, knowing we could die
I live, to see the scholarship of old
Fall short. Though we are forbidden to deny
That it's Asia, we've found something more
Half-Eden with cannibals, our vices
Added to theirs on this Atlantic shore
Where there's bloodshed but no precious spices.
No, we don't behave like true crusaders
In rape and ransack do our men partake
We are not even good honest traders
Can from this crime a bright new world us make?



Christopher Villiers: He is an English poet based in the county of Devon. He has Bachelor and Master's Degree in Theology from Durham University and has written for academic journals on that subject. He is the author of four books of poetry and his poems often take the form of dramatic monologues from characters in history mythology and religion. He works as a freelance writer and when not writing enjoys reading widely, walking and exploring different cultures.



EMPTY ROOM

Since she went away
I sing to an empty room
(lies) I don't miss her

Her chair sits empty
Without fragrance, or a sigh
Dust gathers instead

Dull light through window
Notes of guitar ring hollow
My song lacks music

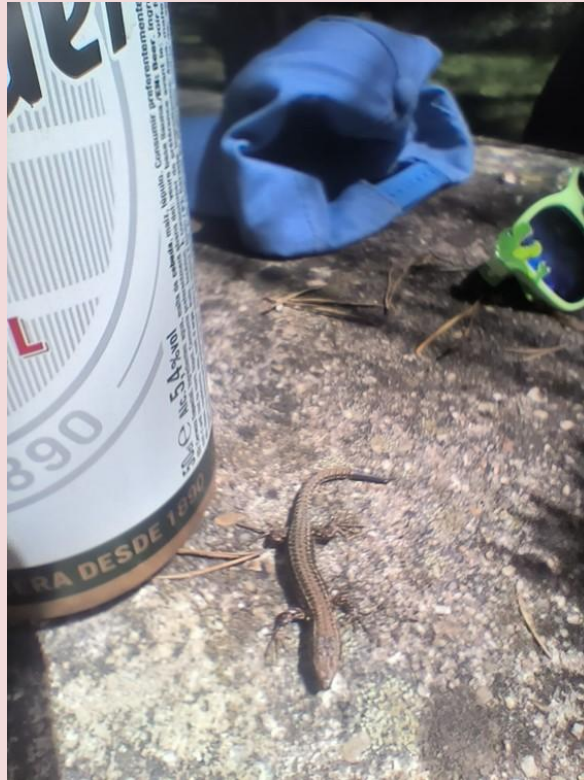
Evening comes too soon
Midnight lingers far too long
Memory, be gone



Dale Adams: He lives in Bethany Oklahoma with his wife Tami and their dog Heidi. He enjoys reading history and science. He has worked in building maintenance and repair, in factories, on water wells, as an auto mechanic and auto parts specialist, and in security. He was 51 when he wrote and recorded his first original songs, and poetry publications in Warriors With Wings Anthology, and Fallen Angel Anthology followed. Dale has established SoundCloud and YouTube Channels, and has converted poems into songs for other poets, including Christine Tabaka and Michael Lee Johnson.

<https://soundcloud.com/dale-adams-272904153>

<https://www.youtube.com/user/DrBuggs13>



BRAVE PRIAPUS

Along Moradillo de Roa

To La Sequera

In the Ribera de Burgos

They tell me that Brave Priapus

Would go out for a walk

Showing off his ears

Moving these

To the ladies and girls

Who were leaving Mass
On Sundays and Holidays
Not caring a fig
The honorable widows
The young maidens
And the villagers.
Sometimes he would go up the path
From the fountain
To get to the wineries
Dipping his ears in wine
Doing strange things with it
Shaking his head from side to side
Looking towards Aza
Towards the La Posada
Or the Hermitage of the Ejido.
If you dared to ask him
Why he did this
He, like a cunning man

With his fly half open

Showing his ears

He would respond heatedly:

-I do this to impress partridges.



Daniel de Culla: I am a Daniel de Culla, poet, writer, etc., residing in Burgos, Spain. I am retired. I have also published poetry, anthologies more than seventy.



BAI

Honouring the dying wishes,
Determined to protect the legacy
She stood up.

Encouraging the living spirits,
Planned to strike the foe
She moved ahead.

Battling the raging demons,
Resolved to teach a lesson
She marched ahead.

Shattering the misogynists' minds
Committed to defending the subjects
She instilled fear....

Assaulted the Britisher's ego,
Captured Gwalior with Tope and Rao,
Betrayed by the Scindias of Gwalior,
She tried her best...
Alas!

She fell
But survived to inspire
She, The Bai
Rani Laxmi Bai of Jhansi, Bharat!



Debraj Moulick: I guess you are aware of the fact that I am not going to boast about myself. It has always been about the poem. Poetry (consider it as literature) is also about paying tribute to the historical figures, cultural icons, and outstanding works in literature itself. I grew up listening to the lines of “khoob ladi mardani woh to jhansi wali rani thi,” where the eminent poet immortalised the valiant saga of Rani Laxmibai! This is my humble homage to the poem composed by Subhadra Kumari Chauhan.



HOSPITALS!

I had been admitted that wintry May 2025 night, after 9 pm, to the hospital ward after being turned into a human pin cushion again.

The respectful casualty doctor knew me well and was very concerned. Intravenous Perfalgan was alleviating the pain caused by a calculus and a stent in my ureter, but the Triage Sister noticed that I was apyrexia, normotensive and euglycaemic and moaned about 'patients' who pitched up 'regularly' at hospital 'who had nothing wrong with them'. I looked at the great one disbelievingly. My malaise and pain kept me quiet. After all, who knows what the all-powerful nurses might do?

At my previous hospital I had slipped on the wet floor of the bathroom after my shower, and I had suffered a haematoma on my head.

Among other things, a Sister had woken me up at 4,45 am to administer, robot-like, an unneeded Nexium injection. Blandly, she had explained that 'she would be too busy around 7 am when she would be going off duty'. At about 5,15 am every morning a lady would shout, 'Knock, knock! Do you want coffee or tea?'

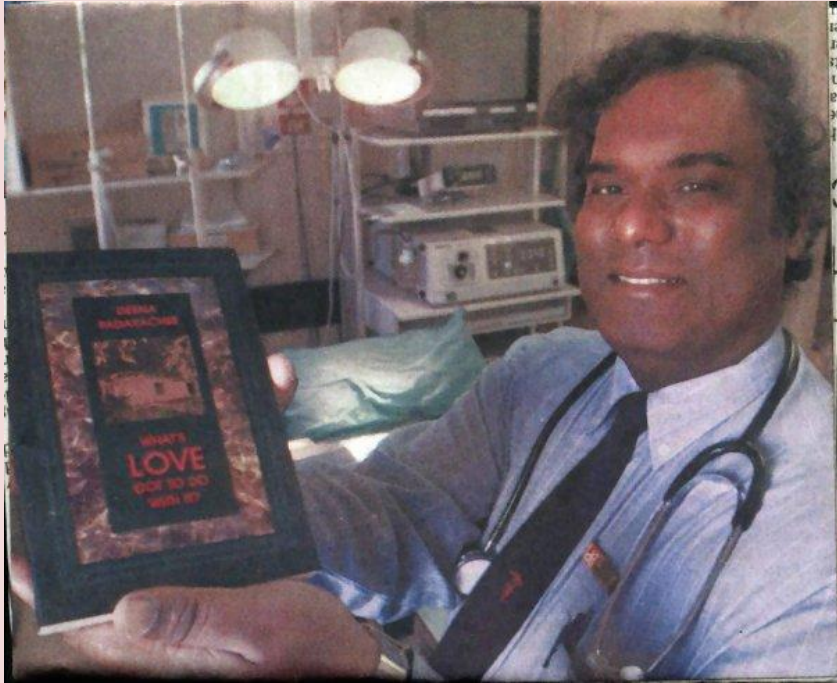
'Padach!', the burly ward nurse barked like a randy rottweiler. 'MR. PADACH!' She gazed gleefully at me, relishing the power that she had over her prey, 'so you are sick?' The admitting clerk had recorded me as a medical doctor, but this Sister was unconvinced. What do doctors look like?

Some 'healthcare workers' feel that they can say and do whatever they like with their helpless patients.

The little ones who are without, like for you to be without, as well.

Another nurse arranged for me to have a chicken mayo sandwich. After the lithotripsy, I was offered the toasted variety.

I think that by then, they had begun to like me. They were even addressing me as, 'doctor'!



Dr. Deena Padayachee (MbChb (Natal)): He has served as the head of the DIPA Medical Journal Update club. He is the winner of the Olive Schreiner and Nadine Gordimer literary prizes. He has served as a columnist for the Sunday Times Extra. He was a prescribed author for KZN matrices. He was an invited author at the universities of Copenhagen, Tuebingen, State University of Louisiana, and the Teachers' College of Mauritius. His short stories feature in the University of Cambridge's, Reader's Digest's, Penguin, and Ad Donker's literary anthologies. He has been honoured by both the Durban Independent Medical Practitioners' Association and the Department of Arts and Culture for his individual contributions.



www.astropagan.com

COLOUR OF LOVE

Split me in my colours

And split me in my shades

Ride me that highrise

And tide me to the skies

Where oceans no longer cry

And love they don't deny

Where deception is no name

And beguiling is no game
Where power knows no seeds
And needs are ruthless weeds
Where you and me are just fire
That climbs and climbs higher
Let me mix and merge
Take me to that verge
And when we are finally there
With a thousand desires bare
Won't you just
Drop me gently
Drop me here.



Dr. Deepti Singh: I am a doctor by profession and a writer by passion. I love to write poetry and prose on nature and human psychology. I am a silently keen observer who finds liberation in penning it all. I find music and books as my best companions.



MAGNETIC NEGAPOSITIVITY

Come to me, my healer, my killer,
and bring with you silently my sleep.

(The fact is the oak, and truth the ax.
The wolf is the shepherd is the sheep.)

My love is gold, my soul is silver.
You are the banker. You are the thief.



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



APPARENT TREASURES

Translated by Dorota Stępińska

They have everything in common. Always together.

They slowly come to terms with the passing of time.

They know

that the inevitability of the end

will affect everyone.

Attached to life,
they do not yet wish to give away
the apparent treasures of the past.

They understand,
that they were there only
so that their open house
could lure the guests to its doorstep.

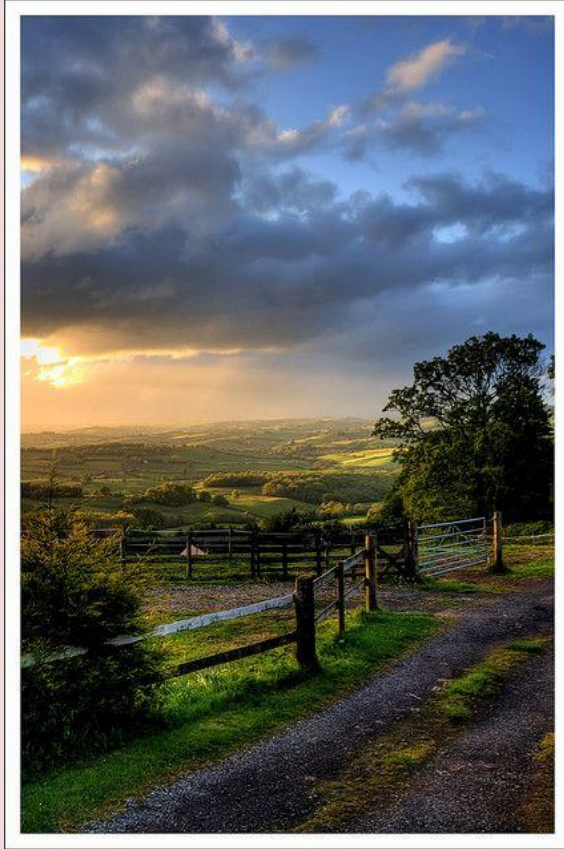
Their façade building,
their fake friends
? that was their life.

And what was left of it?

Time has levelled out the reality
? alone,
attached to each other,
they do not dwell on the past.



Eliza Segiet: She graduated with a Master's Degree in Philosophy at Jagiellonian University. She has received Global Literature Guardian Award – from Motivational Strips; Laureate Naji Naaman Literary Prize 2020; International Award Paragon of Hope (2020); World Award 2020 Cesar Vallejo for Literary Excellence; Laureate of the Special Jury Sahitto International Award 2021; Laureate of the Special Jury Sahitto International Award 2021; World Award Premiul Fănuș Neagu 2021; Award BHARAT RATNA RABINDRANATH TAGORE INTERNATIONAL AWARD (2022); Award - World Poets Association (2023); Laureate Between words and infinity “International Literary Award (2023). She was nominated for the Pushcart Prize 2019, 2021, 2024.



NOW, HUSH EVENING
(a pantoum)

Now comes evening, a hush purple mire
scattering burnt-orange remains of the day;
a few lingering notes on a frozen lyre
& another flowerless sky goes winters way

scattering burnt-orange remains of a day
that murmurs from a placenta of icy rumination
as another flowerless sky goes winters way –
A flurry of colourful Gymnopédie in gestation

that murmurs from a placenta of icy rumination.
Sky-flakes powder on a blue butterfly's wing
as a flurry of colourful Gymnopédie in gestation
preludes the quite rustle of spring.

Sky-flakes powder on a blue butterfly's wing
a few lingering notes from a frozen lyre –
a prelude to the quite rustle of spring
comes evening – now hush, purple mire...



Feby Joseph: Well known in concentric circles, Feby Joseph is a part-time procrastinator, and a full-time piano teacher from Mumbai. In the spare time, that he doesn't have, Feby dabbles in poetry and hopes to do for it, what Einstein did for the electric can opener. Some of his works have been published in The Bombay Literary Magazine, Zoetic Press, The Bangalore Review and Café Dissensus.



THE ROSE

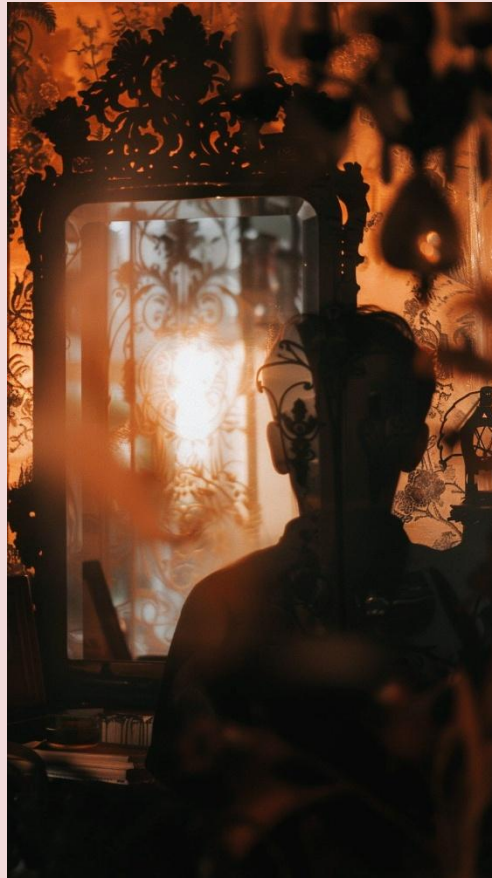
You had the breath,
of lullabies.
Your promises
of perfume
were as sacred,
as a kiss.

Now a ghost
who has betrayed,
walks the garden,
you let slip away.
Numb, you have soured.
The bloom is no more.



Ferris E Jones: He is an award-winning, internationally published poet and screenwriter living in Puyallup Washington. His work has appeared in both print and online magazines including as the featured poet for Creative Talents Unleashed. He is the recipient of two grants from the Nevada Arts Council and the Editor/Publisher of Nevada Poets 2009. Ferris has twice received honorable mention awards from Writers Digest annual screenwriting contest. He is also the Author/Editor of seven collections of poetry. He features the work of other poets in the Inquisition Poetry website every month. The goal of this site is to spread the word of poetry throughout the world.

www.inquisitionpoetry.com



REFLECTIONS (MIRROR ON THE WALL)

I look at the mirror in my bedroom

All I see is

Ego

Pride

Arrogance

Ignorance and

Fall.

I look at the mirror in my world
All I see is
Scolding
Criticism
Correction and
Tall.



Francis Otole: He is a poet and author. His works have appeared in local and international magazines, journals, and anthologies. His debut collection of poems ***Heaven is a Place on Earth*** made the shortlist of ANA- Association of Nigerian Authors poetry prize, 2024. He loves reading and writing. His marriage to his lovely wife is blessed with a set of twins.



ASCENSION

I laid at your feet
the green of spring-
the first step of
the stairway to paradise,
angels have descended
as flowers to watch over you,
their scent,
the river's murmur,
the dawn birds' songs

were the only ones
allowed to enter
the gates of eternity,
our heart beats
heavy like two river rocks
whitewashed
on the bottom of the flow
of time,
I laid at your feet
the starry sky night.



Francisc Edmund Balogh: He is a Romanian poet and musician residing in the UK. He works as teaching assistant in London. He writes mainly in Romanian and English and occasionally in Spanish and Hungarian. He has received 1st place at L'Olimpiade Mondiale de Poesie contest, 2020-2021; best foreign author at the 2022, of I COLORI DELL'ANIMA; and The best poem at 'Days turn into night' poetry competition 2024, India. A couple of Francisc's poems was published in the French literary blog 'Lettres Capitales'; published in the 'Vort Vergessen' anthology from Germany; in the 'Azahar' Spanish language magazine; and a couple in World Poetry tree.



A GOOD WOMAN

She rages, weeps, yearns—
all in her mind.

Nothing shown outside,
in madness or in calm.

The mask she wears
from birth

grows with silent ache,
like bark on ancient trees—
fitting her cheeks
through plumpness and sagging,
just enough to breathe,
always barely enough,
lest she become a good corpse.



Gauri Dixit: Pune-based poet, Gauri Dixit, balancing corporate life and a traveler's spirit, weaves grief, longing, and resilience into understated metaphors—chewing gum stretched across years, shattered spice jars, ginger tea's warmth, red ants seeking sweetness, wombs as refuge, glass doors unopened. A Reuel Prize winner, published in *Spillwords*, *GloMag*, *Oddball Magazine*, and *Stanzaic Stylings*, her haikai and debut ***In My Skin, I Find Freedom*** explore a free woman's skeptical heart. Through tanka, haibun, and resonant free verse, she uncovers profound beauty in life's quiet moments, capturing solitary flowers and unfinished roads with introspective precision.



BONDING

You are one of the nicest places I always want to go

The warmth, the solace I find in you

Is the rarest gift that I offer myself

It was your presence that healed me

It was your empathetic words that made me stoical even in
pain

Just like the cold wind that calms the blazing earth

but remains oblivious of its magnanimity
In the same way you seem to be clueless
about how much I have received from you
How your words affected my mood
Even in hard times I chose to see the good
The simple yet important things that I learnt from you
guided me to stay calm in the commotion of life
And to move forward with patience...



Gayatree G Lahon: Hailing from Assam, Gayatree G Lahon is a teacher by profession and a poet by passion. She is a postgraduate in English literature from Gauhati University. Being a true aesthete, she finds beauty in every aspect of life and nature and her ink pours those elements in a subtle way. Her poems have been published in various national and international anthologies and web magazines.



LITTLE THINGS

The Universe is built up by little things,
Small clouds flood the seas and the earth,
Time runs into eternity second by second
A giant star is little in the vast universe,

As a vast domain is added by little plots of land,
A tiny needle with small stitches

Begets wonderful intricate embroidery.

Where metal, thread and skill eclipsed novelty.

A trifle becomes significant through faith in little things,

A little gunpowder can cause a great conflagration

Little duties make great work as bricks a building,

A local becomes international little paths following.

Little temptations make a big sin or a crime,

A little bullet destroys a great hope of life,

A little act of sacrifice saves a lot unthinkable

When a man in multitude of sufferings.

Gets a little amount of happiness to survive,

Thus the Great is reached through the Little.



Prof. Dr. Gazi Abdulla-hel Baqui: He is a poet, writer, translator and a university professor, and has already authored twenty-five books; many poems and articles have also been published. Besides being awarded internationally for his poetic accomplishments, he has been honored by Bangladeshi organizations for his contribution to literature, education and research. A solo cassette album called ***Visions*** and his poems in some anthologies have been published by The National Library of Poetry, Maryland. His prize-winning poems on Peace have been published in Official Catalogues by Cultura-e-Societa, Torino, Italy. His poems generally deal with peace and patriotism, eternal problems and lasting human conviction.



KALPATARU (WISH GRANTING TREE)

Miracles fly out in flocks from trees of wonder,

One tree with different flowers and fruits of every
imaginable colour

Songbirds that know every earthly language in tunes
mellifluous,

Their lyrics that come through clear that existence
understands like composition marvellous,

The sun and the moon rise together in two orbs I can see
simultaneously,

Although my heart thuds in a surrender beating frantically.

In such a moment as this when I'm in a helpless state,

Although it's all set, the bed, the doctor, the gender the
date,

And then an infant cries bringing tears of joy and relief,

Just the way I birthed my girl , in life is there any grief?

That moment that transforms everything you ever could
surmise,

Just like that Kalpataru I wondered about in love's
language, in God's creation, nothing is a surprise.



Geethanjali Dilip: Professor of French heading Zone Francophone, poet by passion, her poetry books include, *Geethatmaa , Song of the Soul; Hansa Geetham- Song of the Celestial Swan; Poetry Voice- Geeth Dhvani; Soul Riff; Atmatarang; Rosée- The Dewdrop; Beads of Poesie - Mani Geetham; The Reverie- Swapna Geetham;* and *Poetry Forest – AaranyaGeetham*. Recipient of ‘The Reuel International Award for Poetry’, awardee in the category of commendable mention for her poem at ‘The Great Indian Poetry Contest’; recognition of exhibiting “literary brilliance par global standards”-Gujarat Sahitya Akademi, Indian Women’s Achievers Award from Asian Literary Society, she curates Yercaud Poetry Festival, since 2018, believing that poetry connects the world.



MINE

I came to terms that I was here for a reason, although

I did not know why

Floppy hair covered dark eyes staring unwaveringly at me,
like

Ocean view through foliage along the coastline road while

Puffy white clouds floated over craggy mountains, like

Upside down ships on an upside down ocean, and

I smiled as I walked towards you, even as
sugar melted over strawberries.



Glory Sasikala: She is a writer, poet and editor and publisher living in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India. She is the author of the ***'Sundays With Glory Sasikala'*** series of short stories on Amazon. She is the author of the ***'Glorees Poems'*** series on Amazon. She is the Editor and Publisher of GloMag, an International Poetry and Prose Magazine; she is the administrator of the GloMag Group on Facebook. She is also a published novelist with two novels to her credit: ***Goodbye Papa*** (Writers Workshop, Kolkata) and ***She Spoke In Tongues*** (Setu Mag).

<https://www.amazon.in/dp/B0DH2Z45X6>

<https://www.amazon.in/Glorees-Poems/dp/B0C2D27V6B>



DESTINY

Before my birth
my destiny charted by oracles
drawn from the movement of the planets
my life's journeys,
past, present and future
indelibly sculptured
in my cosmic horoscope
written in ancient mystical hieroglyphics
by destinies unrelenting hand

seers foretell
through meditative trances
what providence beholds
inevitable calamities
that will follow
with the rise and fall of fortunes

at my baptism
mystic prophets chant mantras
from ancient scriptures
know yourself then, now, and tomorrow
in this eternal journey of life

all deeds, past, present and future
ruled by the eternal laws of action
my time of birth, my time of death
written and cast in granite stone

cannot be erased
cannot be eluded
there is no escape
from that which is decreed
by the laws of karma



Gonapragasen Naicker Aka Danny: He is an Indian born and brought up in South Africa. He has been fascinated by and has been 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.



NEW HAPPINESS

The silence of the evening deepens,
a solitary bird looks up at the sky,
all are gone, all the family.

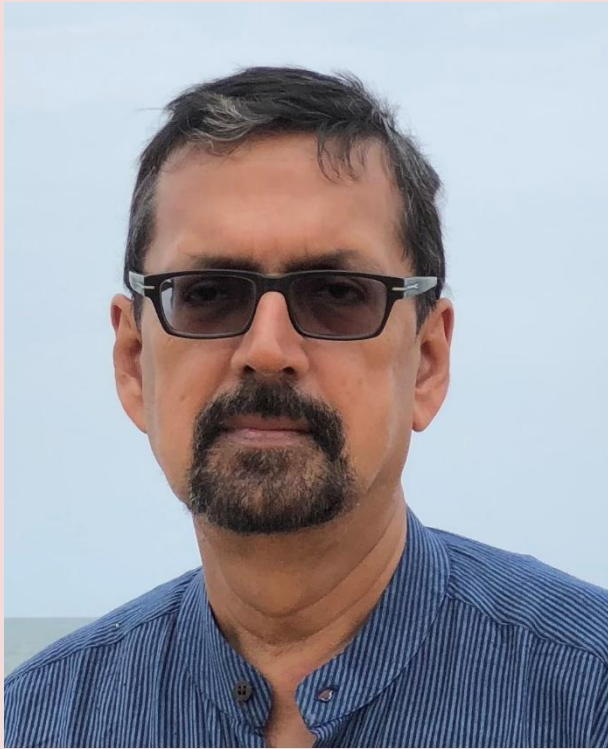
The glass window of all tall buildings
carry the grief of mine,
hold still, hold still.

Hammer falls on today's nail.
The sky goes ashen
The sun descends, dripping smog lights.

I have words for you
I wish you a new happiness
In my dream.

The bird looks for the thunderstorm,
in her tiny eyes, so fulfilling and free,

All will be as it has been here.
All will be.



Gopal Lahiri: I am a bilingual poet, writer, critic and translator residing in Kolkata. I have contributed to various anthologies and have also published twelve volumes of poetry in English and eight volumes in Bengali. In addition, I have also solo/jointly edited eight anthologies of poems in English and have one translation work of short stories of Israel, translated by me from English to Bengali. Two recently published books of mine: ***Crossing the Shoreline*** and ***Some Resonance, Some Desire***. I have been nominated for Pushcart Prize in poetry category for the year 2021. I am the first recipient of Jayanta Mahapatra National Award for Literature, 2024.



www.poetryfoundation.org

REMINISCENCE OF EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

We of
the same hearts
broken
the sun scorches us within
in identical malice.

The nights you and I
leave lesions and scars
across silent terrains;
the wind running wild
in your breath.

I fumble in the labyrinth
of rhythms, tracing your whispers
through wet dew, past the eternal winter
that has sealed you.

Together
we bargained
for love
and stooped to the bottom
of their shells.

Together
we suffer
in pearls of wisdom;
yours
glistening ever more
in aeons of glorious light.

Those
who walk your winter dew
remember your blurred tears
and theirs as well;
their chests open against rose brier.

In the repertoire of your remains
you remain fragrant
as petrichor

after you were like a drizzle
gone,
and remember your veins
flowing through us
against the dead end
sleep.



Hein Min Tun: He is a multiple award-winning poet and writer from Myanmar. He has received "Distinguished Writer Award". He has also achieved "Tagore Honour" given by Literoma for his contribution to literature. He has a successful book to his credit; his debut poetry collection ***Crescendo*** has earned him the "Panorama Golden Book Award - 2024" conferred by Writers Capital International Foundation. Additionally, he came 3rd, the 2nd runner-up in the Rabindranath Tagore International Award Poetry Contest, bagging the "Poiesis Award for Excellence in Poetry". Above all, Hein Min Tun is the Winner of the prestigious "Reuel International Poetry Prize" (2024) for all the poems he has written so far.



"WHAT WE LEFT IN THE RAIN"

We never said goodbye—
just slipped between seasons,
like mist curling off the edge of a warm cup
on a forgotten morning.

Your name still lives in my throat,
unspoken but aching,
a ghost syllable behind every breath
that almost says something else.

Time has tried to hush you,
folding years over your smile
like linen over a mirror—
but I still see your reflection
in the faces of strangers
on lonely trains,
in songs that don't know your story
but sing it anyway.

I loved you
like the sea loves the moon—
from a distance,
with tides that kept returning,
even when I knew
you wouldn't.

We were young,
and the world was a room
too small for the thunder between us.
So we let the storm win.

Now, I gather your memory
like seashells after the tide—
broken, beautiful,
and echoing the sound
of what we could not hold.



Jagari Mukherjee: The winner of the 2019 Reuel International Prize for Poetry, she is the Founder and Chief Executive Editor of the literary journal, EKL Review. She has authored five solo collections of poetry--two chapbooks and three full-length volumes. Her most recent publication is ***Exit Noire*** by Bookwryter. She has won numerous prestigious awards, including the Rabindranath Tagore Literary Prize for Book Review (2018); the Women Empowered Gifted Poet Award (2020); the Jury Prize at Friendswood Library's Ekphrastic Poetry Reading And Contest (2021); and most recently, The Bharat International Award for Literature 2022 For Short Story. Her book, ***The Elegant Nobody*** published by Hawakal was shortlisted for the prestigious Tagore Prize in 2022.



arbitration —
we leave the
door open



placing our bets
on each other
wishing fountain



trying not to
slip into dark places
another spring day



road to nowhere
playing i spy with
my thoughts



Jahnavi Gogoi: She is a poet and writer based in Ontario, Canada. Her poetry has been published in many magazines and journals across the world. She lives in the picturesque town of Ajax with her family and identifies as a bibliophile.



I YEARN FOR SPRING

I yearn to write
of spring and warmth and
new life

of flowers blooming
through the chill of
winter's breath

of longer days
when the sun lingers longer
to share it's warmth on our bare skin

of plans unfolding
for new adventures, experiences
that spring and summer harken

of love and laughter
in the company of beloved
friends and family

blossoming, ourselves
alongside the crocuses
and daffodils

yet winter claims my heart, still
with its icy fingers
grief and loss

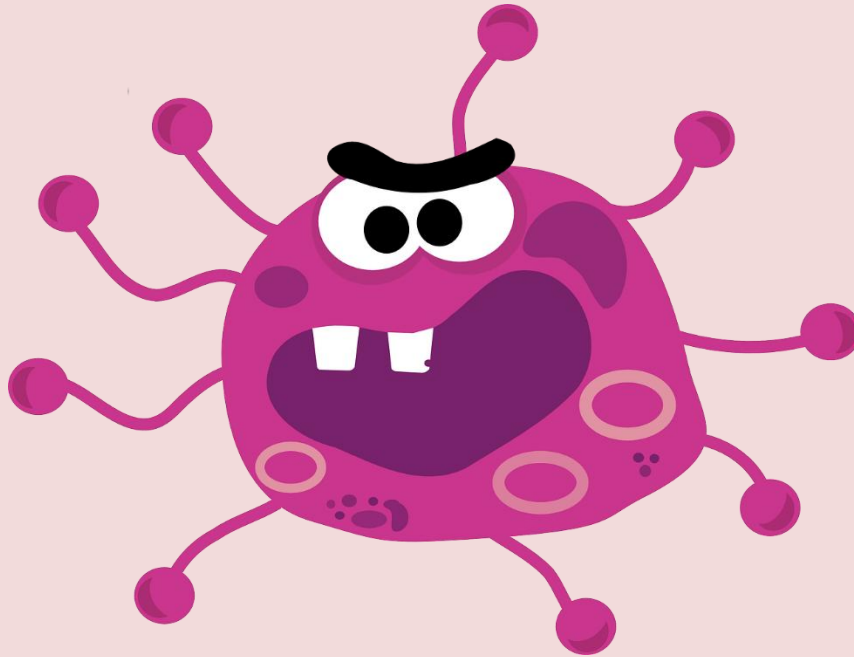
and here I dwell
in the calendar month of spring
with winter's heart

I yearn for
winter's thaw and
spring's renewal

around me
and more importantly
within me



Jennifer Gurney: She lives in Colorado where she teaches, paints, writes and hikes. Her poetry has appeared internationally in a wide variety of journals, two of her poems have won international contests and one was recently turned into a choral piece for a concert. Jennifer has three books of published poetry, *My Eyes Adjusting* (2024), *Liquid Sky* (2025) and *Love's Echolocation* (forthcoming, 2025). To-date, nearly 1,500 of her poems have been published in two and a half years.



THE GERMS SPEAK

O you dumb oafs
who have visited
the moon, so what?

We are too tiny to be
spotted by your
hi-tech hype.

We are your conquerors
hiding everywhere.
Can anyone defeat us?

Your puny battle games
highfalutin jerks...we
have you dead covered.



Joan McNerney: She has been the recipient of three scholarships. She has recited her work at the National Arts Club, New York City, State University of New York, Oneonta, McNay Art Institute, San Antonio and the University of Houston, Texas, published worldwide in over thirty-five countries, her work has appeared in literary publications too numerous to mention. Four Best of the Net nominations have been awarded to her. ***The Muse in Miniature; Love Poems for Michael;*** and ***At Work*** are available on Amazon.com. A new release entitled ***Light & Shadow*** explores the recent historic COVID pandemic.



MAY'S GRACE

Rains alot in May here

to polish the soil for flowers lights

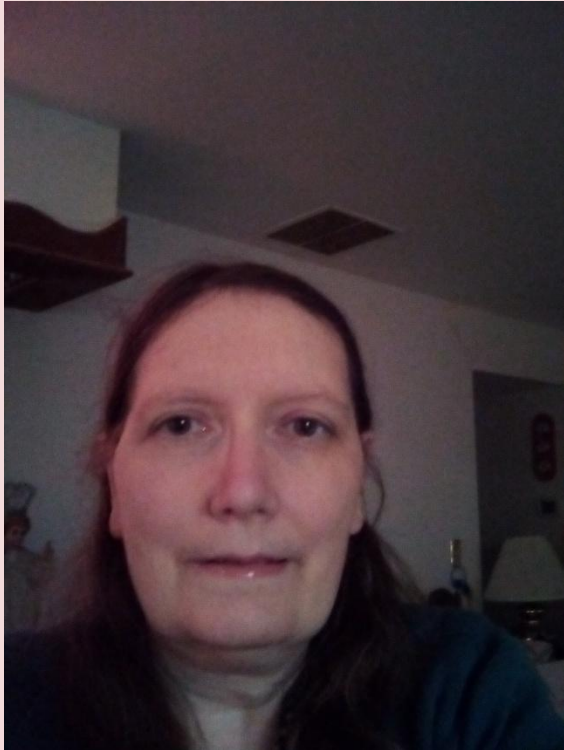
soft soft are the petals with warm sights

adventures outside

with the sun our guide embracing tide

filled with calm breezes

to strong days platinum rays.



JoyAnne O'Donnell: She is a Pushcart-nominated poet. She is the author of five poetry collections. They are ***Winds of Time; Spring and Summers Veil; Palace of Enchanted Day and Night; Heaven's Medal;*** and ***Summer in The Breeze.*** She has also brought out two chapbooks: ***Angels*** and ***Tea Time*** by Origami Poets.



ALICE

feet soar over uprising protests focused on the split, a
meeting of the thighs,
a conference of cherished worries, - demands, and slogans
of fat caterpillars

on overdosed surrender, the metamorphosis of Kafka,- a
nation

seeking to rise late the next day, a journalist falls asleep,
writing in prison

the tomb will survive, roaring, feasting on the stink of
solitude

a flying womb with handcuffed claws, odd in the traffic of
rules,

Alice resists the maggots and big heads drilling

into her daydream, Off with her head! toys and bras
garnished on platters,

the iris of a storm shimmers, fingers

trace the shouting wings; she throttles

her garden hose into a sudden rain, the gray-yellow

blur of the Cheshire cat rises from the wayside dust

cherry blossoms shaking the sun, her lip balm
embalms the sassy April, raw light tumbles down the
illness,

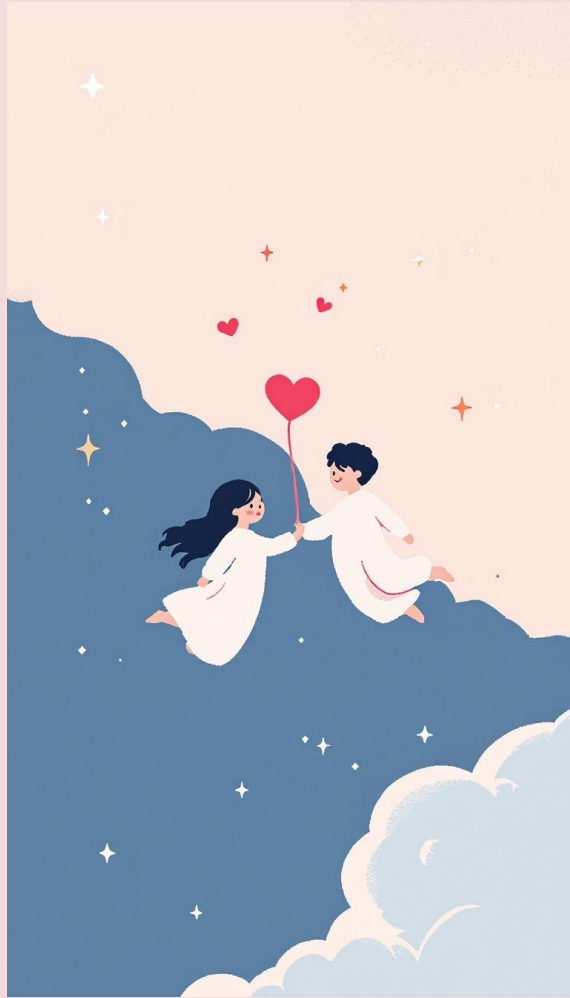
Alice chews the light fruit forbidden, a palmful,
rising, rising, knocking her head into norms,

when the sky ceiling, an old prescription, burns,
smoke and holes bloom from the back door cabinet,
curious windows scowl at the blinking ashes and the
seagulls.

Alice falls asleep, uprising, bobbing, seated on the split.



Kakoli Ghosh (a.k.a Moon Drops): She is a post-graduate in English literature, and hails from an industrial town in West Bengal, India. Her published books are ***Unfinished*** (2010), ***The Bridge*** and ***Estuary*** (2022). Her oeuvres have been published in Paradise on Earth: Vols. I & II (USA), Ferring Love (India), GloMag (India), Poems for Haiti (South Africa), The Poet magazine, (UK), The New Norm (India), Stories from India (Ukiyoto), etc. Many of her Bengali poems have been published online and printed in local magazines.



SECRET SOULMATE

I live in thy silence:

Speak me not;

That would be scandal...

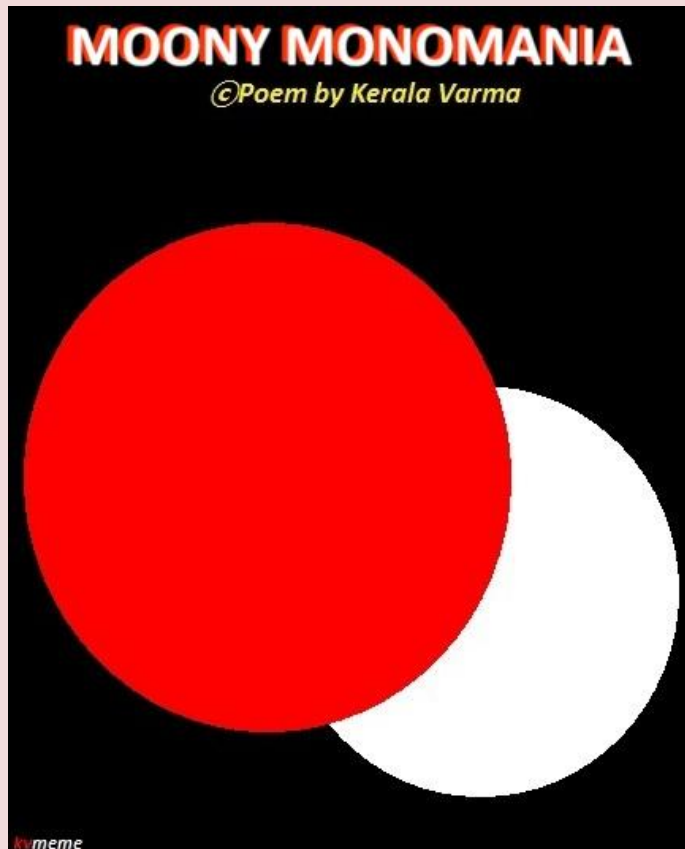
Am I afraid of the light?

No! But I prefer the velveteen

Darkness of your confidence...
A space of just 'you' and 'me'
Lingering in starlight
I shine bright
Through the windowpane
Of thine eyes, like a twin flame...
Caressing your pillow
As you dream of me...
Break not the dream
To catch a glimpse of me
You would be banishing me
From a sweet sojourn
That I long for every night...
I'm your invisible twin,
The 'Me' of 'You'.
Must we tell the world about us?
Hush!



Kamar Sultana Sheik: She is a poet, writing mostly on themes of spirituality, mysticism, and Nature with a focus on Sufi Poetry. Her professional career spanning 18 years has been in various organizations and institutions, including the IT sector. She is a self-styled life coach and has currently taken a break to focus on her writing full-time. Sultana has contributed to various anthologies and won several prizes in poetry contests. A green enthusiast, blogger and content writer, Sultana calls herself a wordsmith.



MOONY MONOMANIA

The Cult of the Politically Moonstruck

The moons we worship

They enlighten the sun

In their radiance

the sun shines

We admire them

We offer them our servitude

They rewrite our history

They stroke our bias

They imagine our enemies

They fight those windmills

They make us feel good

saying ours is the best culture

Our moon is better than the sun

The moon's light is benign

It is cool like our reverence

It fits our conduct of compliance

It does not expose the night's secrets

The sun is hot and angry
It is red and revolutionary
Its rays pierce our ego
They expose our fakery
They fall hard on our pride
They shed light on our lies,
our pretense, our nonsense

The sun abuses its freedom
to turn rebellious
It misuses its enlightenment
to outshine the moon
It shows no docility, no gratitude
It does not obey the moon

Let us stop the moon
from giving light to the sun

We do not need the sun's brilliance

May our moons lead us

to blissful ignorance

to the dark world of delusions

to denounce science and reason

to celebrate superstitions



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.



SAVOURING THE MYSTERY

Genesis...it's here I explore
for a haunting search into
amazing beauty...

to understand this unknown
of the dark, black, blue, silver and gold...
of light and shadow moving continuously...

I need to unfold this
beautiful world
of which I am a spec...

strange are the stars sometimes they disintegrate in bursts
shoot past my eyes
and disappear...
into blackholes...

Milky Way flow,
conjurers of clandestine fates...
here I delve in the constant and the change...
in saved dreams and
the 'has been'...

in a tiny breathing space...
often, I let the aching unknown in my
soul drown...
in what could be perhaps hidden black holes....
I savour then the mysterious world spinning around...

unchartered
galaxies...



Ketaki Mazumdar: She is a poet who writes prolifically, passionately and joyfully. For her book ***Woodsmoke and Embers*** she has been listed amongst the 'Top 50 Most Influential Authors of 2021'. She was honoured as 'Poet of the Year 2022', by Ukiyoto Publishing. She was awarded 'The Creative Author' by Maharishi Vedvyas International Award for Books, by Poiesisonline. She is the recipient of the prestigious Emily Dickinson Award for her just released book ***Toasted Orange Embers***. Her poems have immense depth and soul. She writes on life, love, nature, women, mysticism and weaves a tapestry of India, in her book. An educationist and a National Awardee, she has also authored many delightful children's books.



THE HILLSONG

Tunes from past, refrains of morrow

The blackbird sings a song of sorrow,

A song with strains of loss and woe

A dirge in trembling voice laid low--

Dawn descends in ombre glow

Mist curling round the silent pine

Leafy trees in wet entwine

Red earth bleeds 'neath bare feet
Where rain and resin strangely meet--
Mossy scents on forest fleet

Song of rains to the river and rills
Sultry notes to distant hills
Blackbird's call, though tinged with pain,
From sorrow's seed, pink buds remain --
The song is season's last lament



Kokila Gupta: Born into a literary family, Kokila Gupta initially chose the dissection tray over the writing desk, immersing herself in biology as a Life Science Lecturer. Yet, the call of words—her true inheritance woven into her very DNA, proved irresistible. She ultimately left her government post to embrace her passions as a writer, poet, gauche artist, and Wellness Coach. She, now maintains a home library, teaches biology, leads occasional poetry and art workshops, and encourages holistic well-being. Widely published and acclaimed, her work celebrates the beauty of mundane, affirming her place in the literary tradition she once resisted.



REST IN PEACE

in a disgraceful way

they ended your life

shooting you in your face

probably also made use of a knife

but even that were not enough

because amongst garbage they threw your body

and even set it alight
in their minds you were a nobody

to us you were a son, brother, grandchild,
friend, nephew and family member

Ashwin Abrahams (Chocky)

you will be remembered

i don't say he was perfect
but neither are me or you
search yourself and see if you are
but please be honest and true

i don't think he had to die
in a manner like this
do you think that's right?
no or yes

yes, he had his share in doing wrong
but so also doing right
but murdering him in such a way
please tell me do you think that that's right?

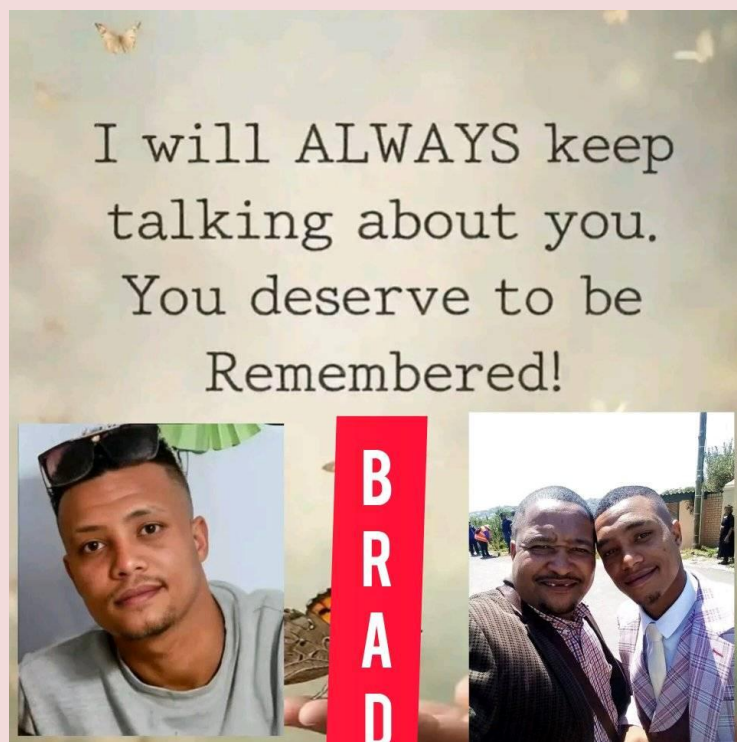
may God who is Almighty
strengthen his sister and brother
as well as his grandparents,
father and mother

though his body were torched
God will one day make it whole again
me on the other hand are unable
to tell you when

Lord, i ask You
to have mercy on his soul, please

and in Jesus Name

grant him rest and peace



Leroy Ralph Abrahams: I'm an only child. I never knew my biological father. I reside in South Africa, Port Elizabeth, Helenvale. I'm married to Eileen and we have two boys and one girl. I'm a published author of 4 poetry books. It's personal testimonies and outreach. I started an outreach program with Chantal Sam Moodaley in 2020 and we decided to name it, 'Meet The Need'. We serve the community every Saturday morning.



DOGS AND ANGELS

Their power comes from their unlimited honor,
a long steady stream of loyalty,
a wave of healing with each encounter,
helping fix what you thought you despaired of mending.

Find goodness above the worries of the world.
Let the petting and prayers come,
frequenting the best places on laps and hearts,

helping you on your way to
wherever you are going to that is beneficial to you.

Dogs and angels,
staying so close beside you,
forming a shield within where nothing is wrong,
and the bad cannot penetrate.

You cannot buy forgiveness,
but if you are looking for mercy without cost,
either dogs or angels will offer it.

After all,
they're the same beings, aren't they?



Linda Imbler: Linda Imbler's poetry collections include ten published paperbacks: *Big Questions, Little Sleep First Edition*; *Big Questions, Little Sleep Second Edition*; *Lost and Found*; *Red Is The Sunrise*; *Bus Lights*; *Travel Sight*; *Spica's Frequency*; *Doubt and Truth*; *A Mad Dance*; *Twelvemonth*; and *Viewpoints While In Rome*. Soma Publishing has published her four e-book collections, *The Sea's Secret Song*; *Pairings, a hybrid of short fiction and poetry*; *That Fifth Element*; and *Per Quindecim*. Examples of Linda's poetry and a listing of publications can be found at lindaspotryblog.blogspot.com

When I search for ways to describe them
They play the hide and seek game
Sometimes they come as sudden rain
Sometimes they prefer to meditate
Reminding me of my inquisitiveness
Insatiable nature for self-exploration
But once they channelize their route
They flow in one dimension.



Lopamudra Mishra: She is a contemporary poet, author, translator and editor and hails from Bhubaneswar, Odisha. Her writings are intended to touch the inner chord softly by emphasizing the ‘Sense and Sensibility’ of attachment and bonding. Six of her books have been published: ***Rhyme of Rain; First Rain; Tingling Parables; Rivulet of Emotions;*** and ***Red Tulips***. Her sixth book ***Hurricane Heart under the Honeyed Sky*** is on the way. Her poems have been published in various magazines and anthologies. She has been Editor of Radical Rhythm-4 & Co-editor of Radical Rhythm Series and Durga. She is an alumna of Sailabala Women’s college and Ravenshaw University.



NEVER BURN YOUR BRIDGES

Nurture your relationships with utmost care

Our loved ones to be taken care with lots of flair

Our friends at school, college are our buddies life long

Colleagues at work, acquaintances are dropped when wrong

Our relationships are soft, delicate, fragile & gentle

Lots of hard work, patience required to put them on pedestal

Each individual unique, different personality

Only friends, our choice are similar to us in totality

Trust, faith, honor & integrity takes years to build them

Sadly in no time lying, mistrust, backbiting shreds, shatters them

My father always advised 'never burn your bridges'

I didn't understand what the phrase meant

Now after several tumultuous years I finally know what he had meant

One should never degrade a friend or insult them at a drop of a hat

It never is the same again after the spat, ever, no matter what

Venomous words tumbled out in anger are painful, create rift instantly

Breaks the relationship bond, confidence & trust severely

So never burn the bridge, with dear friends and your loved ones ever

It will be sad, you won't be able to cross the bridge, to meet them at the other end ever!



Lubna Ahmed: She is an Author, Writer, Editor and Educator. She has written several articles, blogs, poems and short stories in online Magazines, E-books, and more than 25 National, 12 International published Anthologies under her pen name 'Princess Lubna'. She resides in Delhi-NCR with her family. She is a Certified Master NLP (Neurological Linguistic Programming) Practitioner and Workshop Facilitator, Certified Advanced Life Coach, and conducts SuperKoolKids Art Therapy workshops. Lubna graduated with first class marks in Science (Zoology Honors) from AMU Aligarh Muslim University. She holds a diploma in Travel & Tourism and Export Management.



DETERMINATION

The quivering blue sky
is concealing
the feelings of love
the pain of love
the spectre of love

The trembling heart
being inexplicable

started flowing
effortlessly

Who doesn't want to trust
the morning wind
the moving clouds
the tantalising sea
the presence of
unspoken words

Though illusory
I always keep
my feelings alive
to fly through the wind
the rain, the tears
and laughter

The ocean within
is flabbergast now
The waves are little strange
and frenzy

It is not that easy
when sudden determination
seeks more space
to venture out into
such a surreal experience



M Vijayaraghavan: He is a retired senior executive of a multinational pharma company. He lives in Parli, Kerala (India) with his family. He is a multilingual poet and has in his credit an anthology of poems in Malayalam titled as ***Vaku (Word)***. His poems can be read in various Malayalam and International Magazines/Anthologies.



Strolling leisurely on a moonlit night,
I feel the cold wind piercing my veins.
My solitude plays its usual game—elusive, yet the same.
The distant moon rolls slowly, determined to lift my heavy
heart.
Echoes surround me, filling the vastness of the night.

The chirping of the crickets punctuates the stillness around.
The bark of a street dog breaks the silence of the ground.

Tree leaves glisten under the silvery glow,
And the dewy grass sparkles beneath my feet.
Somewhere in the distance, a flute sounds,
A lullaby resonating with the loner's heart.
Heavy footsteps roll to and fro
Towards the dead end of this silvery night.



Madhu Jaiswal: She is an editor, translator and bilingual poet from the City of Joy Kolkata. She believes that penning your thoughts is therapeutic to the soul. Her musings are often featured in various ezines and have been published in multiple anthologies. An empathic person by core, she tries to impart affinity and kindness with all.



THE SCENT OF SUMMER!

The light summer breeze

Infused with the scent of jasmine

She sat on the lawn

The flowers from the laburnum tree

Had carpeted the green grass

Looking up at the clear May sky

She oddly missed her summer holidays!

The glow of the setting sun
Coloured the twilight
The faint moon blankly gazed
She heard the giggles of the children
Playing in the park
Something deep inside stirred
A queer pain
A host of known faces flashed
In front of her eyes
A smile escaped
Glint of joys from a nowhere land
Through tears hazy images
Of ancient times appeared
And she nervously laughed
As her childhood teased.
The scent of frozen summer
Left the aching heart creased!



Madhu Gangopadhyay: She is an MA in English Literature and has been in the education industry for more than two decades. She has her poems and short stories published in several international anthologies, webzines and e-zines and her poems have been translated into Spanish, Albanian, Turkish and Persian.

<http://madmusingspoetry.com/home>

<https://www.facebook.com/madhu.gangopadhyay.5>



MY LIFE...

Invisible to the beauty of a loving heart
all that seem endless hours,
all bound to ferric chains,
enduring the hammers of time and lashes
consumed by the torrid rivulets so passionate
stuck in the middle of a turbulent whirlwind of emotional
clashes

Commands, torn apart
only empty, voiceless echoes embark,
and minds churn the emptiness that twirls and waltz
and wants to flow along with
the echo of laughter
consumed by an ardent urge to flow
along the stream of hot-blooded love.

I try to run with the tide, with it swell,
no laws, no rules, no boundaries now compel,
the rights, legalities, propriety, all drown
taking along hurt-filled bubbles of false ego deep down.

Off I go to distant land, as it wills;
my destiny, races, swerves and squeals
witnessing an extravagant lavish spread
of frenzied love and ardour,

of unshackled desires,
my life, was no more a mere shadow,
real, happy, breathing and high, out of the farthest low!



Dr. Madhumita Bhattacharjee Nayyar: She is a bilingual writer (writing both in Hindi and English). A poetess, blogger, life-skills counsellor, healer, she is also a social commentator and works with women and children. She is the author of ***The Night Jasmine And Other Love Poems***. She is the winner of Icon Of The Year-Lifeskills Counsellor 2015-2016, and Indian Women Achievers Award 2016 for Creative Writing.



THE FRAGILE HARMONY

We are but threads in the earth's grand weave,

A fleeting pulse in the roots that breathe.

When morning's light dares to softly creep,

The wilting bud stirs from fitful sleep.

When nature's gardens, scarred, still bloom,

The bees hum low, defying doom.

From every leaf to every stone,

From every creature, flesh and bone,

From the joy of rivers running free

To the grief of seas that choke and plea,

The earth holds both—the sweet, the dire,
The cooling rain, the spreading fire.
Yet we, the stewards, blind and bold,
Trade green for gray, and warmth for cold.
The Almighty's gift, this fragile sphere,
Holds bitter truths we must revere.
How long until we see the cost—
The melting ice, the seasons lost?
The skies now choke on fumes we've sown,
The forests fade, their voices gone.
The coral reefs, once vibrant, pale,
As oceans warm, their systems fail.
The storms grow fierce, the droughts extend,
A warning cry we can't unbend.
This is our charge, our sacred call:
To mend the wounds, to heal the sprawl.
To plant the seeds where deserts creep,
To clean the rivers, dark and deep.

For every spark of life that clings,
For every bird that still takes wing,
We sing an anthem, fierce and clear—
To save the gift we hold so dear.
Let's turn the tide, with hands and hearts,
Restore the balance, play our parts.
For if we fail, the earth will sigh,
And sing her anthem as we die.
But if we rise, her pulse will soar,
A harmony forevermore.



Meenakshi Goswami: She is a Retired Principal of a Govt School of Sonitpur District Assam and much-awarded educationist and the only recipient from Assam to receive the National Awards to Teachers in 2022 , awarded by the President of India on 5th September 2022. She has Authored anthologies ***The Sensuous Zephyr*** and ***Waltzing Words*** and her poems are published in many national and international anthologies. She has also written poems for an Anthology published by Sahitya Akademi. Meenakshi has attended many Poetry Festivals in India and abroad and is well appreciated for her recitation. Meenakshi is the President of iSPELL (Indigenous Society for Promotion of English Language and Literature) ASSAM.



THE GARDEN WITHIN

In a world where thoughts may twist and twine,
Where silence hums a different line,
There blooms a mind, so bright, so wide—
A secret garden tucked inside.

The winds may bend the trees askew,
Words may stumble, meanings skew,
But every leaf that dares to grow
Still reaches for the sun, you know.

A mind that dances to its beat
May trip, may tumble, yet never defeat.
Its rhythm's rare, its music new—
A song the stars might listen to.

Yes, shadows visit now and then,
And storms may come without a when,
But still, the garden finds its way,
And paints with petals every day.

Where others see a crooked tree,
I see a lighthouse by the sea.
Where some hear silence, I hear song—
A spirit brave, a will so strong.

So let us cheer the different mind,
The one that's wired to seek and find
A joy in things we overlook—
A laugh, a smile, a yellow book.

For every mind deserves the sky,
No matter how or when or why.
Hope isn't perfect—it just tries,
And still, like sunflowers, it rises.



Mehak Varun LL.B: Writer, poet, an artist, Mehak Varun, is the author of four books - ***THE Humane Quest vol 1, 2 & 3*** and ***I am Me***. She has been bestowed with '100 Inspiring Authors of India' award in Kolkata. She has also been honoured with the 'Women Of Influence 2019' award presented on women's day in New Delhi. Along with her books, her work has been published in various anthologies, and she is the recipient of various other prizes in poetry competitions as well. She has also been certified with a course on persuasive writing and public speaking from Harvard.

mehakgrover@amartex.com



LIKE ZEN

This version

is tacitly the best.

I am in the morning sun

when the artist arrives.

My pair of pajamas

sleep in frozen still patterns.

I turn my face oriental with my poems.

Cherry blossoms, I turn inside out

light pink to white, brevity, for a short
time then walk alone, then die.

I hear the sound of notes in my ears
approaching on silent footprints.

I enter the monastic life; abandon untimely
meals, vulgar songs, and dance, mime statuette
toss garlands, toss racy clothing,
abstain skunk of perfumes abstain no visitors.

I leave all sinful shadows behind.

But I am of this world, not out of this world.

I swear way too much and pray too little.

The way of Zen and Jesus is a boxing match.

Crack and smack a curse—
twigs break silence.



Michael Lee Johnson: He is a poet of high acclaim, with his work published in 46 countries or republics. He is also a song lyricist with several published poetry books. His talent has been recognized with 7 Pushcart Prize nominations and 7 Best of the Net nominations. He has over 653 published poems. His 330-plus YouTube poetry videos are a testament to his skill and dedication. He is a proud member of the Illinois State Poetry Society. His poems have been translated into several foreign languages. Awards/Contests: International Award of Excellence "Citta' Del Galateo-Antonio De Ferrariis" XI Edition 2024 Milan, Italy-Poetry. Poem, Michael Lee Johnson, "If I Were Young Again."



I felt the ultimate freedom

While showing off my

Crow's feet.

The venerable tree doesn't feel ashamed of it's

Gnarled barks.

It stands with glory, spreading the most luscious branches
that are home to the birds and shades to the passersby.

So I proudly caress my gray hair and gently stroke my wrinkled hands.

I've lived, loved and laughed.

I walked with my life hand in hand.



Nazia Islam: I am currently residing in London, United Kingdom, working as an Early Years Practitioner. My dream is to make a difference in the world by shaping the minds of the future generation. I write out of passion and sometimes, out of whim. I love nature, books, simplicity, and the sound of rain.



THE SLEEP...!

In the commotion of darkness,
all the suspirations dissolve into the night as a whole,
gradually it breaks the rhythm and
the heartbeat merges into....!
like the vapour light vanishes and leaves the eyes voiceless
in that unholy ebonised hour,

thus without any fuss, it loses its life,
the talks; articulation of my emotions into words..!

for the sake of sleep and daybreak,
the surrender to the night
my inkpot remains mouthful
my pen suffers the miscarriage on its death bed of white
sheet...!

before all of mine metamorph into a poem to open its
wings...!

the talks remain talk only; withered eventually and fall like
the last leaf..!

and so my suspirations once again get dumped,
in the hollow of the chest,
this empty yard always look empty indeed,
As it waits for the bloom of beloved tuberose,

deserted gateway conquered by tall wild grasses and weed
at last..!

and there it falls silently yet chanting the dark spells.,
where the night would swallow my talks,
unspoken; unheard and uninked..into words..!



Nitusmita Saikia: Since the last 19 years, she has been working professionally as an instructor in National Cadet Corps. She is a trilingual writer from the state of Assam, India. Apart from poetry, she writes short stories, plays, quotes and articles in English, Assamese (mother tongue) and Hindi. She uses 'nsaiko' as her pen name for poetry and quote writing. She has been writing recently for magazine like FM (US), GloMag (India), Poetry Today (India, Kolkata), Tuck magazine (US), Innsaei (India), Matruakshar Journal and Sandhan (India), Barnil Assamese Magazine (India), and Sipoy. She is also a regular writer for newspapers like Adhunik Assam and Ganavarta from Assam.



THE LIMINAL HOUR

Caught between dusk and dawn,
the sky lingers.

It is neither here nor there—
a breath caught in hesitation.

The streetlights flicker
like an uncertain firefly deciding
if the night is still its home.

A woman stands at the train station,
a bag at her feet.

One foot on the ground, she knows
The other, in a future unnamed.

The air is thick with unspoken choices,
the weight of what must be shed
to step forward.



Nivedita Karthik: She is a graduate in Immunology from the University of Oxford and a professional Bharatanatyam dancer. She works as a senior associate editor and has been published in many poetry magazines and anthologies (Glomag, The Poet anthologies, Sequoyah Cherokee River Journal, Visual Verse, and The Ekphrastic Review, to name a few). Her microfiction has been published by Potato Soup Literary Journal. She also attends poetry open mics (including the one organized by Rattle Poetry). She has published two books, ***She: The reality of womanhood*** and ***The many moods of water*** (both available on Amazon). Her profile was recently published in Lifestyle Magazine.



ANGER MANAGEMENT- SON TO HIS FATHER

Dad, have a glass of water

And tell me what's the matter?

Let me hug you tight

You are giving me a fright

I can give you all my toys

Please don't make that angry noise

Gather up the anger spit it out

And then tell what it's about
Was I a naughty son ?
Whatever you say will be done
Dear dad please give me a big smile
Staying angry is not your style

Father could not hold back his tears
Holding those hands he said his prayers
Destiny was not in his control
No one could replace the departed soul
He would be the father and mother
For his son he would be a shield and cover



Nivedita Roy: Nivedita Roy, a native of Lucknow currently residing in the Kingdom of Bahrain, is an acclaimed poet and writer. She was the runner-up for the prestigious Reuel International Award 2023 for poetry, conferred by The Significant League. A dedicated teacher, Nivedita has authored four poetry collections, a book of essays, and a short story collection. She has also contributed to around 40 international anthologies. Her poems and articles have been featured in numerous global magazines, newspapers, and online platforms. In addition to writing, she actively hosts literary shows promoting literature and the arts.



WHO I AM, IN VERSE

I am the silence before the morning's call,
The echo of footsteps down memory's hall,
I am the laughter that danced in the rain,
The tear unshed, the thoughts unexpressed.

The scent of jasmine in a summer's dusk,
The old wooden cupboard with the scent of musk,

Books with spines worn soft and thin,
Each page a place I've truly been.

I am the pause between each breath I take,
The silent dawn before I wake,
I am words I spoke when no one heard,
The healing silence, the stubborn word.
I am dreams stitched in sleepless threads,
Not every scar is meant to fade...
These are the brushstrokes I have made.
I am a story still being spun,
A rising moon, not yet done.



Padmini Rambhatla: Padmini finds joy in reading stories and exploring the written word, a lifelong passion that now harmonizes beautifully with her newfound hobbies of gardening and going on long walks with her loyal dog. Immersing herself in books and creative writing has always been her sanctuary but tending to plants and strolling through nature have introduced a serene rhythm to her day. Her love of language and the natural world fuels her creativity and enriches her ever-curious spirit.



A lot of my relationships
Began as a little girl
With people who were
Bigger, taller, stronger
Sharper, sweeter, wiser
Fierce, wild, rebellious...

When I transformed into a woman
Of essence, sharp, sexy, talented,

Sweet, kind, crazy, sensitive

I lost all relationships...

How sad that our equation

Depended on me staying a girl

That would never grow

To look them in the eye...

Perhaps they are naiver

For everyone deserves to grow

Deserves success, deserves to belong.



Panjami Anand: She is a systematic therapist, soul plan reader and numerologist from Mumbai. She loves words and the Power of expression. Poetry to her is therapy and the song of life.



SOCIAL BARRIERS

You are alive in my memories and me in yours
I know you wanted to utter those three words
a hundred times, but failed, you regret being frail
as the morbid fear of future parades in your heart.

Our cravings are known to the stars and winds
having said secretly our frustration in the lonely darkness.
Winds carry those sighs hot and loud to my anxious heart
and the flickering stars hide an embarrassing smile.

A river of love is drenching both of us
flowing silently inside me, inside you as well
keeping our youthful dreams alive,
yet we feel desperate, sluggish and slothful.

Shadows of cravings in my eyes don't allow me to sleep
It's the same for you too, I realise.
Let our dreams meet at a single point
breaking the racial barriers built by the society.

Before time creates a permanent abyss between us,
let's believe there is no ups and downs in our birth
the only difference is in our biological build,
or else our hearts will collapse before our own eyes.



Pankajam: She is an award-winning bilingual poet/novelist and an author of over 40 books, besides a collection translated into French. Her poems, short stories and reviews are published in national/international journals/anthologies. Three books on literary criticism discuss her works in detail, besides an exclusive book of critical essays and research papers.



MY CUP OF CAPPUCCINO

A steaming hot cup of cappuccino was served on the table.

I poured a sachet of sugar and stirred it.

The first rains of Monsoon had made the city wet.

The downcast sky met the grey sea.

Sitting at this famous corner cafe of Bombay.

I looked at the modern electric run, blue double-decker
bus,

I looked at the people walk by,

Sitting at the restaurant by the bay.

Me, the ever optimist, lapped up the joy of the moment.

I saw a twinkle of happiness in the eyes of my loved one.

The warmth of the cappuccino trickled down my throat.

Mumbai, monsoon, the sea and the poet.



Dr. Paramita Mukherjee Mullick: I live in Mumbai, India. I am a scientist, a literary curator and an award-winning poet. I have published eleven books and my poems have been translated into 45 languages. In January this year, I received the Ukiyoto Poet of the Year Award. I was one of the recipients of the Mumbai Woman Leadership Award 2024, and in June'24 I was one among six women around

India to receive an award themed, “ Women: Breaking barriers, Leading futures, Shaping change”. Through my poems, I try to make people aware about conservation and climate change. I love painting and photography. I head two literary and performance forums in Mumbai.



DUSTPAN

Carbon found in our DNA
oxygen breath, iron blood
Elements heavier than iron
travel
through your body
travelled through many supernovas
Elemental words heavier than iron
travel through your supernova body.

The bigger the star faster they burn.

Words burn fast, seeded words

heavier, magnesium words,

carbon words out of our DNA.

Dustpan tongue brushes

oxygen words, iron words.



Paul Brookes: He is a shop asst. His chapbooks include ***Wolf Eye*** (Red Ceilings Press, 2023); ***Wolf Eye Territory*** (ImpSpired, 2024); ***Ever Striding Edge*** (Dark Winter Press, 2024); and ***The Dude Work*** (Sherwood Handcrafted Press, 2024). He edits The Wombwell Rainbow interviews and challenges and a substack webzine, The Starbeck Orion.

<https://thewombwellrainbow.wordpress.com>

<https://substack.com/The%20Starbeck%20Orion%7CSubstack>



Mangoes on a summer afternoon
Drops silently ooze through my fingers,
Forming a yellow thin stream to my wrist,
Tracing scales on my skin,
From a forgotten season.

They stop midway- like reluctant tears,
Waiting for me to wipe off-
Remnant tinges of sweetness
That hold stories of simpler yesterdays.

I see red-oxide floors
Sparkling like mirrors
That held little feet running across the hall-
Waterbirds on an equanimous lake.

Voices echo from the kitchen,
Cutting through the noise of the cooler,
That roars like a trumpet,
Announcing the onset of summer.

Wrinkled cotton sarees wave at me,
Muted voices struggle to catch my attention.

I place the juicy pulp on my table,
I hesitate to finish-
Lest the summer slips away.



Prabha Prakash: Prabha Prakash is a poet based in Kerala, a Chartered Accountant who likes to describe herself as an auditor who loves words more than numbers. Her first poetry collection ***Lost Monsoon*** was published by Writers Workshop, Kolkata in 2018. She is the recipient of Reuel International Poetry Prize 2019.



Poetry is slow tonight,

&

words are quite erratic

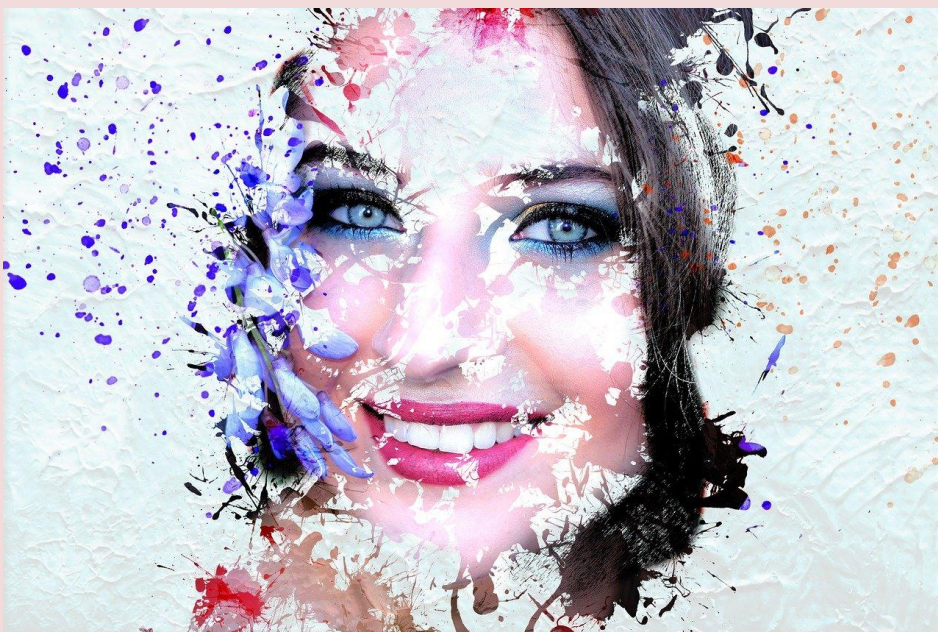
By melancholy or beatitude,

That's a different debate.

But poetry is slow tonight!



Pragyan Anwasha Mishra: Just a girl trying to weave the ordinary, the mundane into something, somewhat aesthetic.



SHE SLAYS WITH A SMILE

At times

The night never responds

Closes all the doors and windows

Closes jaws, burrows

There lies the beauty of the night

Only a fool awaits the call of the night

The night changes colours

Nothing new

Many facets of night

Nothing new

Don't go by the tongue

Don't be swayed away by the smile

She herself is the cobweb

She creates,

She traps

She slays simply with a smile!



Dr. Prahallad Satpathy: Dr. Prahallad Kumar Satpathy, who hails from Odisha (India), is a bilingual poet writing both in Odia and English. He is a retired Associate Professor of Economics. To his credit, he has four published anthologies in Odia language. His poems are published in many national and international journals. Twice he has represented Odisha Sahitya Academy as an honorary member.



A HAPPY PLACE

Sita's health started to fail, after her Ram's demise, fighting a prolonged battle against Cancer. The last two years, her life's only priority was Ram's well-being. She was drained, spiritually, emotionally and physically. The chicks had flown the nest, and were all well-settled across the seas. They visited off and on, kept contact via video calls; but they had their own lives to lead. Sita's home was a well-appointed mansion, in an upmarket part of the town. She had staff for the upkeep of her home and garden. Her children were well-off; they had no interest in the family home; built so

painstakingly by Ram and Sita. An ideal wife, a generous hostess, a social activist, Sita found time on her hands.. The huge dining table that could seat 20 people; and all the relevant crockery, cutlery, table linen and all, the latest gadgets in the kitchen, comfortable bedrooms - all seemed irrelevant now. She craved company. Then a bright idea struck her! What if she could invite a few friends, to live with her in her home?! Her friends circle had many single and talented couples, who savoured life joyfully. So, now, they lived like one big family, in that ten-bedroom house, having music jamborees, card parties, picnics and other outings! They all contributed to the kitty; were happy to have company in their evening years, and care in failing health. Sita had a purpose in life now.



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



HOMECOMING

He was a Sainik School boy, since his 6th standard, then NDA, then IMA, then two decades in uniform, deciphering enemy messages, commanding men, navigating ranks, burnishing brass buttons. 45 years of marriage to my mother did not get that out of his system.

I was internally devastated as we wheelchaired him to the Navy hospital ward. He'd lost a lot of weight and energy in the last few months and, as it seemed, the will to live. At the Navy hospital, we weren't allowed to stay or minister to him. I thought I had seen the last of him.

In the night call with mother he told us what he ate at the Naval hospital: noodles and manchurian for lunch, *chapati-dal-subzi* for dinner. We had struggled for weeks as he had nauseated food, and ate nothing but thin buttermilk. And here was, eating cutlets for breakfast.

And it dawned. The Sainik School hostel boy had just got home, among the men in uniform, after 30 years in the wilderness of civilian life.

wheelchair bound — his salute as crisp as a dreamy cadet



Raamesh Gowri Raghavan: He moonlights as an award-winning copywriter by day and daylights as an award-winning poet by night, and sandwiches archaeological research, peer counseling for suicide prevention, and learning languages in between. He formerly edited Narrow Road Literary Journal and his poems and haibun have been published in many Indian and international anthologies. He thinks he is funny, but his friends vehemently disagree. He can be found on instagram as @instahaiga.



Urba and Zain, who turned 12 on April 25, were killed in &K's Poonch district on May 7. Their father was injured.

EVEN THE DEATH FEELS ASHAMED

You were the twelve-years-old twins from Poonch district in Jammu and Kashmir, but you weren't intelligent enough,

Urba and Zain, to visualize fangs of death coming to take both of you in her deadly shackles;

Yes, how could you know on that fateful early morning of
7th May,

when you both were busy preparing to go to school with
pleasure?

But the arrows of death reached you both through
cross-border shelling, silencing your purest smile and
playful antics;

Though the shells from the guns don't know the names of
their victims,

they are guided by the destiny's secret instructions;

Till the time your parents, teachers and
your dearest pals are alive, they will miss
your infectious presence throughout;

There will be no takers of beautiful
and tasty birthday cakes carefully
planted on a china clay platter; surely,

there will be no return gifts anymore in future times;
Also, no birthday songs will reverberate in the small
drawing rooms of your rented house;

This is the insane killing which the Lord of
Death too, will not be happy to receive;
He will certainly cry secretly in his closed enclave;

Wars will be fought, innocent people across
the border will be killed overnight, and the
guns will sing as usual, the dreadful dirge;
the future will be the same without carrying
any imprints of the horrendous past;

But let me assure you, poor Urba and Zain
that despite all this, humanity will survive
the tough times; yours enchanting smile
and innocent glow of your faces,

will always waft over the gentle winds;
the stories of your blind murder will be told

from generations to generations, Reminding
everyone that violence has no place in our lives;

Rest in peace where you both are, we will pray for you
till the dawn of a new and vibrant morning,



Dr. Rakesh Chandra: He is a former civil servant. He has got five collections of English poems titled ***Moon is Black; Circle of Life; The Sunset Musings; On the Wings of Clouds;*** and ***Rakesh Chandra Poetry.*** He has published one book of prose ***Life in the Times of Corona.*** He has published one collection of Hindi poems titled ***Mere Shahar Me*** and a book on Rekha Chitra titled ***Be Chehre Wale Log.*** His English poems have found place in different anthologies, poetry journals and Newspapers' literary supplements. He is the recipient of the 'International Naji Naaman Prize' in Literature for the year 2022. He has translated 9 Hindi literary books into English.



HOPE SPRINGS ETERNAL

An African woman
is busy working in the field--
Full-figured and beautiful
with copper-brown skin
and thick raven hair
tousled in curls and springs.
Labour and resilience
pervade her being.

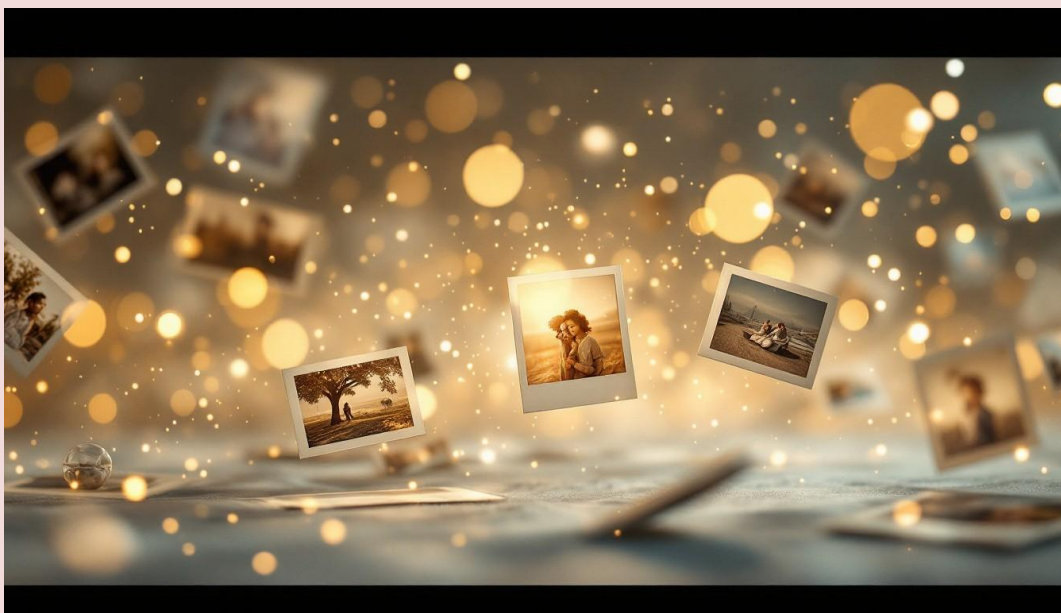
But she is nothing
more than a russet autumn leaf--
Chlorophyll broken down!
Disadvantaged and vulnerable
amid a web of poverty,
she wishes to provide
more food to her child
hungry with a concave stomach!

Africa, you are a paradox--
Rich in resource,
unique in human history,
yet, facing the myriad problems
that have brought the people
close to destruction and despair.

You are falling apart--
The haunting legacy of colonialism
and the slave trade,
the gloom of war, genocide and famine
have joined hands
with political elites and groups
who shape trajectories of conflicts
and operate your impoverishment.
But despite the disappointments
we dare to hope for you, Africa!



Dr. Ranjana Sharan Sinha: She is a poet, author, academic and retired professor of English. Her poems have been included in Postgraduate University Syllabus and have been translated into Greek, German, Spanish, Russian, Persian Albanian, Chinese and other languages. She has received many awards and honours for her poetry that includes a commendation from the former President of India, A.P.J. Abdul Kalam. Her poems, short stories, articles and research papers have been published in highly acclaimed dailies, magazines, e-zines, archives and journals at national and international levels including Sahitya Akademi's journal Indian Literature. She has authored and published 9 books in different genres and 51 research papers.



RELISHING MEMORIES

A vacant space in an empty night

And hours of musings

Fill in gifts of unwrapped memories

That scatter around in abject disobedience

Picking and unpacking

Rejoicing and gasping

Can last till the wee hours

A sleepless night spent in preferred loneliness

An opportunity to be with yourself
In a city crowded in chaotic concrete
Is no less a reward in a world
Where peace and passions are perennial victims.

Time becomes meaningless
As does the concept of joy
In the search for one's self
The memories satiate the mind's quest



Ranjit K. Sahu: He is a resident of Charlottesville, Virginia, USA, and is a poet, short story writer, visual artist and a freelance columnist. His languages of expression are mainly English and Odia with a few poems published in Hindi. His themes for poetry mostly include nature and human elements. His English literary pursuits include poems and an attempt to develop a new format of poetry combining the elements of sonnet and acrostic. He has a few books of poetry published in English, Odia and Hindi. He is interested in photography with some of his photographs displayed in local exhibitions.



STOPPING BY THE BEACH ROAD

Even flow of traffic in the long stretch of beach road

Eventide awaits as full moon makes inroad

Sea of human faces on the sandy shore

Even as the vast Sea goes about its normal chore...

My car is just gaining its speed and verve

Liking this hassle-free ride, much like the waves

And is shocked as I slow down suddenly, swerve
Touch the kerb on the left, bring it to a grinding halt...

Its wheels give a screech, brakes a roar
Inquiring with a shake if I have gone astray.
Ignoring the slight, sighting the sea, I move away
Keen to touch the tip of my new encore...

I look at the vastness of the deep blue water
Feel the glaring impermanence of The Being
Earmarked to reach summit of the horizon
Hear the endless movement of the moment...

I snatch myself away from my inner self
Trudge back slowly to my weary way
My Tryst redeems me to fight another day
Car is raring to jump into the fray...



Ravi Ranganathan: He is a writer, poet and critic from Chennai. He is a retired Banker too. He has to his credit four books of his own poems. He has received several awards, the latest being the Maharishi International Award for Creative Poetry. He revels in writing micro poetry of his own styled 'myku'. He is the Treasure of Chennai Poets' Circle.



CROWS

I know why the crows up in the tree
build their nest where they do.

Scanning the surrounding yards for scurried things,
for goodies from the worm-torn earth.

This throuple of winged codgers at vantage point.

Eggs that must be guarded, with a view
to the mad known world.



Ryan Quinn Flanagan: He is a Canadian-born author residing in Elliot Lake, Ontario, Canada with his wife and many mounds of snow. His work can be found both in print and online in such places as: Evergreen Review, The New York Quarterly, GloMag, Setu, Red Fez, and The Oklahoma Review.



WHEN IT FLOODED

Long away from here o'er the 'bay'
When the darkest cloud was in vision,
Did any one could hear the alarm?
Or, guess that the ruin was on?

The stormy wind did not blow longer
And had began the fury of rain,
That continued for a long, for days
With the lightning and thunder again and again.

The rivers overflowed
Washing the huts and cattle away,
With the dreams of millions
And submerged the towns in water & clay.

The men left for shelters
All their belongings leaving in,
One could hardly imagine the sorrow
And could not but weep at that painful scene.

The fury ceased at last
And no alarming cloud was in vision,

But the thousands left us for ever

And the depression brought our utmost depression.



Saikat Gupta Majumdar: I am an amateur and bilingual poet. I reside in Kolkata. I work in a private organization in 'Accounts Division'. My hobby is writing poems, rhymes captions and short stories both in English and Bengali. My main focus is on English poems which have got published in various online magazines including the US-based bilingual magazine 'SETU' so far. I have obtained certificates from one of them also. Apart from online magazines, I have successfully contributed to 'Indology,' the Raigunj (W.B. India) based little magazine in Book form and to GloMag.



THE SMELL OF HOME

The soft wafting of spices from the kitchen,
Mumma's shampoo and dad's aftershave,
The fragrance of my old books on the shelf,
I take one step and I'm home again.

The scent of the old cupboard
The six-year-old paint, cracked in places
My old drawer of childhood knick knacks;
Yesterday just comes rushing back.

The 20-year-old college drudge,
Exhausted and ready to give up
Turns starry eyed with a whiff of home,
Back with the energy to carry on.



Samixa Bajaj: Samixa is a student of journalism and mass communication at Mount Carmel College, Bengaluru. In addition to writing, she also enjoys reading, dancing, and occasionally, sketching.



IN THE VOID

Parched lips nibble on the lingering aftertaste of dreams

As I peer through the haze, the blur,

A smoke screen of nostalgia -

The bittersweet cadence of a strange melancholy tugging at
heart strings

Somewhere along the fine line dividing sanity and wild
imagination

For a moment I trespass the border

My mind hovering over the in-between - the void
That ephemeral moment between past and present, reality
and a dreamscape
That pause akin to a drop in the ponds of space-time
The silence at once maddening and intoxicating
You can't possibly put a point on it - that exact moment
When you're neither here nor there
And yet you are
Everywhere
That loop between being and unbeing
Matter and energy, particle and wave
Where you can exist as a paradox
A quantum realm of infinite possibilities
You wish you could choose and pick
Cherry pick the one best suited to your needs, your whims
and more
Tailor made, a customised ensemble
But that's what this void is all about
It's there and yet it isn't

It's beyond what the picture looks like

And you know no matter how much you long to persist

This is the magic of the void

You must move on to return to it...

Curiously present yet very much absent

Like that aftertaste of dreams, now peppered with the salt
of tears



Samrudhi Dash: She writes under the pseudonym ‘Inara’ and is a poet, author, editor and motivational speaker with a Master’s in English literature from Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi. She has to her credit, five poetry collections and three novels; her third novel ***Letters From A Stranger - A Life Changing Map*** made it to the Amazon Bestsellers List at Rank 10 in 2020. She is a recipient of the Nissim International Best Upcoming Poet Prize, 2019, the WE Strong Feminine Voices Award, 2020, the WE Women of Letters, 2022 and the Nissim International Prize for Excellence in Writing, 2022. Her signature words are “Hope, Live, Believe”.



NEW DAWNS

“My mom makes this better”

So you cook his mom’s recipes,
get the cumin just right.

Pack lunches, get kids ready

Clean, organize.

“Earn your keep”

So you rush out the door
comb, makeup in the train,

Thank goodness for the Ladies Compartment

“Make sure you don't earn more than him, ok?”

Yet, fight to be heard

among the men

Watch your ideas be claimed

by boys who will go back home

to their mom's hot dinners.

“Home cooked meal is most important”

Rush back in time

to get supper ready.

Hope you get a seat

so you can prep veg

in the homeward bound train

Homeworks. Cleanup.

Maybe afterwards you might,

just might catch a bit of sleep

Tired. So tired,

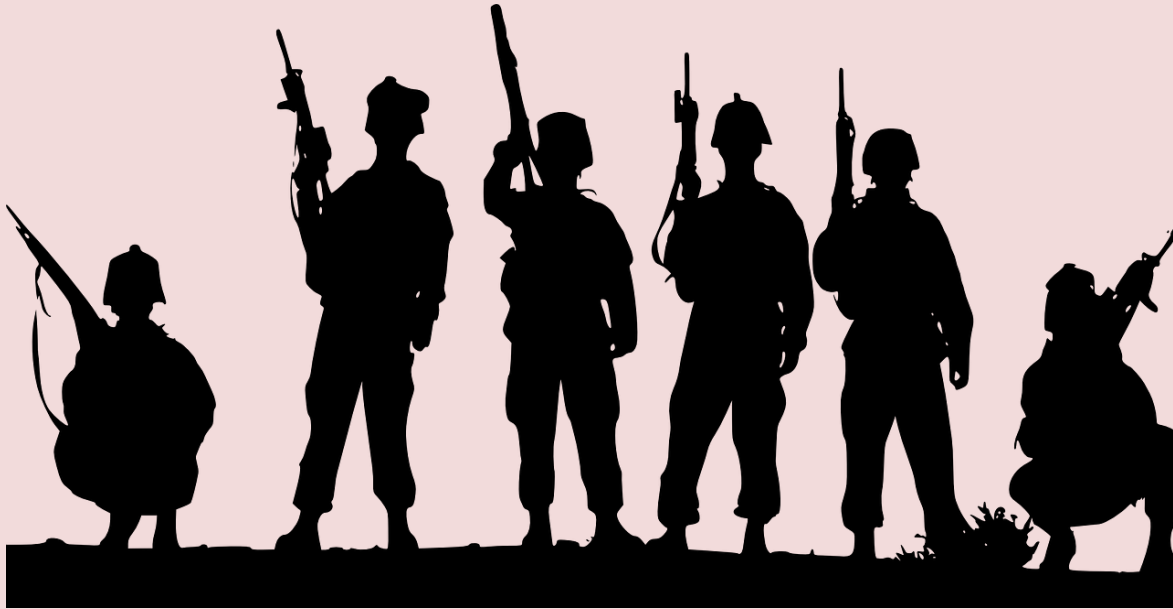
all the time.

“Girl, what are you complaining about?”

Isn't the woman important?
after all, he likes his mother's recipes,
Not his father's."



Sangita Kalarickal: Her work appears in several journals and anthologies. Her chapbook ***Mamina*** showcases free-verse poetry and haikai form. A Pushcart and Touchstone Award nominee, she is the associate editor of Drifting Sands Haibun Journal and conducts the podcast Ripples in the Sand. Dr. Kalarickal lives in the midwest USA with her family and the fantasy characters she writes about.



We slept easy knowing we are safe
That none of our family is there far away
Protecting us, are some nameless, faceless ones
So easy for making all shuns

One prayer a morning to keep them alive
Their family too wants them back from the hive
Those that gave their life away without a second thought
Knowing not what comes in their lot

Be grateful, thankful that you live
That your life is not a slash and give
Because those heroes stand strong
They've been soldiers of god all along



Sara Bubber: Sara is a doctoral student creating an environmental curriculum through stories. She runs an Early childhood centre with focus on sensory development of toddlers. She is the editor of the children's section of Heartfulness Magazine and is a meditation trainer at Heartfulness Institute. She is a nature buddy and loves spending time with her dogs, in her garden, birding, wildlife photography and going on forest walks and safaris.



GENERATION GAP! IS THAT TRUE?

She arrived
like a misplaced comma—
small, breathless,
not yet sure of her own sentence.

The banyan watched
without movement—

his arms
already carrying centuries of sky.

She chirped.

Once.

Twice.

And found echo
in the stillness of his shade.

He didn't speak.

Not in words.

But in still air,
in the way light filtered
through his wisdom,
in the silence
that wasn't asked but offered.

She fluttered,
told him of clouds,
of puddles,
of children with sticky fingers
and schoolyard songs.

He listened—
as trees do—
holding space
without weight.

Seasons passed
like stories across time.
She grew feathers strong enough
to fly over cities,
but always circled back
to his branches.

Because even wings

need roots.

And even giants

need a voice

that sees them not as monuments,

but as friends.



Shalini Samuel: She finds that writing is the purpose of her soul. She is a senior content Writer at KAI Marketing. Shalini is keen on writing business content, technical articles, and poetry. She has authored three poetry collections: ***Singing Soul; The Painted Life;*** and ***Drizzle.*** Her name often appears in online and print poetry anthologies. She also writes technical articles for top online websites like Hubpages, Dzone, UXMatters, and The Runtime.



LOCKED DOWN FOREVER

My love for you transcends all boundaries dear,
Fences erected by men stand no tall between us

Our togetherness is limited by heartlessness of time,
Many a mighty ghats play our fierce enemy.

We always fail the concept of distance growing between us
Heart and soul, we are strings of violin drenching melodious
songs forever

We conceal pristine worshipful moments within us,
The very next moment, We showcase madness that were
long forgotten in fables

Unbound by creepy tenets and
Untied by meaningless knots,
We are confined in this irresistible cage of togetherness,
We find salvation in the lockdown of our love
We are imprisoned in our eyes, heart and soul...



Shihab: He is a bilingual poet, writing with passion in English and Malayalam. His poems, "Closed Doors" and "Sojourner's Dialogue," were published in Madras Courier's digital issue, "Art and Poetry." His book ***Feathered Words*** was launched at the 2019 World Poetry Conference in Bathinda, Punjab. His work has also appeared in anthologies like Arcs Prose Poetry Magazine and Color My Dreams. Shihab works as a Manager at Capgemini and is an avid traveler and photographer.



SONG OF THE MOVERS

We tried to move, the skies were grey,
we then relaxed, and grew within,
the waves submerged a sentient bit of conscience
that had frozen Nature's laws,
we climbed the highest mountain yet,
the growling rock that morphed: looming snows and rolling
skies and
another kind of ocean, yes, that submerged a sentient bit
of life in us.



Shreekumar Varma: He is a poet, novelist and playwright living in Chennai with his wife Geeta. His translations, columns, articles and reviews have appeared in newspapers, magazines and anthologies. He won the R. K. Narayan Award and the Charles Wallace Fellowship. His children's book was short-listed for the Crossword Award; his novel long-listed for the Man Asian Literary Prize; his play won First Prize in the All India The Hindu-Madras Players Play-scripts Award. He has been teacher, editor, journalist, entrepreneur.



JUST STAY AWAY

Stay away from

Arrogance that blinds the soul,

Bickering that takes its toll.

Conceit that clouds the mind,

Delusion that leaves truth behind.

Evil thoughts that spread decay,

Fear that keeps the success at bay.

Greed that's never satisfied,

Hypocrisy that seeks to hide.

Ignorance, a blinding chain,
Jealousy that fuels the pain.
Kindness lost in selfish ways,
Laziness that wastes the days.
A mind consumed by wealth and gain,
Negativity that clouds the brain.
Obsession that won't let you free,
Possessiveness that kills harmony.
Queerness of thought without embrace,
Rudeness that lacks a saving grace.
Stubbornness that won't let go,
Timidity that halts the flow.
Unpleasantness in words and deeds,
Violence that ignores others' needs.
Worries that weigh the spirit down,
Exploitation that wears a crown.
Yucky nature, unrefined,
Zombie-like behaviour, lost in mind.



Shreya Suraj: She is a gold medallist in Mathematics, teacher, artist, photographer, and volunteer. She is a Mathematics teacher by profession and an artist by passion. She is the Founder of an art group called ANYBODY CAN DRAW on Facebook. She is also a volunteer in various environmental organizations that organize beach clean-ups and has done more than 200 beach clean-ups in Qatar. She believes that each individual is unique and encourages every individual to do different types of art works using recyclable materials. Her principle in life is to do good to others unconditionally and without expectations. If your work is good, nature will definitely reward you.



THE COURTYARD

The courtyard stands still...
In my memories,
Like a gigantic ice cube,
Which refuses to melt,
Recusing itself from the future.

Myriad moonbeams have woven innumerable myths:
Of living ghosts and dead women;
Their anklets singing of subterfuges
Hidden by dark sunlight.

An eerie stillness has blown many away...
Only winds whisper their names now.
Lamentations of unborn ideas,
Living in the bellies of their brains.

Zephyrs of change have blown,
Yet the cube of ice remains frozen...
A raindrop gridlocked;
A snowflake grown from plastic,
Which torridity cannot thaw.

The Tulsi plant stands: incarcerated by patriarchy;

Yet...it grows unfettered into ethereal skies....

And scatters countless tiny daughters....

Into the broken earth!



Dr Shweta Sahai: I am a practitioner of the science and art of Medicine. Poetry is my stressbuster, which protects me from succumbing to the pressures of my profession. My poetry has been featured on many platforms like the prestigious GloMag, The Wise Owl, Kavya Kumbh and 'Anthology of women poets of India and South Africa'. I also dabble in art, using various mediums like acrylic, watercolours and pens. Some of my artworks have also been showcased on the cover page of GloMag.



BUTTERFLIES

Stuck as motifs on exhibits

the charismatic creatures become alive on the tapestry of
memories of a long- forgotten
childhood

a well-manicured park;

a chirpy little girl;

chasing these ethereal beauties
flitting from one nectar- rich flower to the other---
their wings of diverse, colorful and intricate designs
drifting, swapping, flapping---
the sight a boon, a blessing and a feast for the eyes!

these prized sightings ephemeral yet happy and vibrant
stand out as embodiments of Joy, Beauty, Hope and
Freedom--
then if they even sit as motifs
on exhibits
it really does not matter!



Sindhu Rana: I am a poet and writer residing in Jalandhar, Punjab (India). I have contributed to various leading newspapers and journals, e-zines and anthologies. I am a script writer and voice-over artist for documentaries. However, reading and writing remains my first love.



From the pen of my father Late Raj Kishore Mohanty. The original poem 'Nutan Abhisara' in Odia was composed by my father late Raj Kishore Mohanty. Below is my English translation.

ଅନ୍ୟ ଏକ କବିତା

ନୂତନ ଅଭିସାର

ମନ ଆଜି ସାଜିଛି ପ୍ରଭୁ - ନବବଧୂର ବେଶ,
ନୀରବ, ନିଥର, ଘନ ଅନ୍ଧକାରେ ଯିବି ତୁମରି ପାଶ ।
ଟୋପି ଚନ୍ଦନ ତୁମରି ନାମେ, ପାଦରେ ଭରି ଅଳତା,
କଣ୍ଠେ ତୋଳି ତୁମରି ସୁର ପଣତ ଭରା ଗାଥା,
ତୁମେ ମୋର ପ୍ରଭୁ - ମୁଁ ତୁମରି ଦାସ
ହେ ମୋର ପ୍ରେମମୟ,
କରୁଣାକରି ତୁମରି ପାଶେ, ଯିବାର ପଥ ଦିଅ ।
କାହିଁକି ଲଜା କରିବି ମୁହିଁ, ମୁଁ ତୁମ କିଶୋରୀ,
ପାରିବି ଯଦି ସେ ପଦ ସେବି - ଜୀବନ ହେବ ଧନ୍ୟ ।
ସକଳ ବାଧା ବନ୍ଧନ ଠେଲି - ଯିବି ମୁଁ ତୁମ ଦ୍ଵାରେ
ନବବଧୂ ବେଶ ସାଜିଛି ମନ ନୂତନ ଅଭିସାରେ ।



ଏକଲକ୍ଷା ଫେରିବି ନାହିଁ

ଯେବେ ଏଇ ଧରଣୀରେ

A BRIDAL HEART FOR MY LORD

My joy overflows

unbound and wide

My heart like a bride

in bliss does glide.

In silent dark I'll find my way,

To You, my Lord

where the soul shall stay.

With sandalwood my face adorned

My feet with alata gently coloured.

Chanting Your love

so deep, so true

I am coming, my Lord

to be with You.

O Lord, my Lord, so high, so near,
Shower Your grace
make Your path clear.
No fear I hold
I'm truly Thine
To serve Your feet is my joy divine.

If I can bow and touch Your flame
My life shall rise beyond all name.
Through thorn and storm

I will journey through
With a bridal mind
I am coming to You.

My soul now sings
forever wed

With love for You

it's gently led.

In sacred dance

our hearts entwine—

Eternal, pure, forever Thine.



Smruti Ranjan Mohanty: He is from Padmapur, Jagatsingpur, Odisha. He is a multilingual poet, essayist and writer whose write-ups are published in newspapers national and international magazines and anthologies. He has four collections of poems: ***Mana Upaban; Aroma of Wilting Petal; Something I Look At;*** and ***And After*** to his credit. His collection of poems and proses are published in his blogs under the heading A LOOK AT LIFE, SOMETHING I LOOK AT, A LOOK, THE RIVULET, THINK ONCE MORE, THE JOURNEY, AU THARE, AU EKA GAPA, SROTASWINI, JATRA, THE JOURNEY, etc. He has been consecutively awarded International Faith Poet of the year by Destiny Poet International Community of Poets, Wakefield, U.K.



JAGADISH CHANDRA BOSE INDIAN BOTANIC GARDEN

Exhibiting a variety of rare plants,

Collections of total more than 12,000 specimens.

Two-fifty-year-old world's largest Banyan tree,

Whose central trunk leaves an array of cross branches.

Attracts visitors for an appeal,

Over a similarity to a copse than trees.

Native and exotic palms enchant,

As the cool zephyr soothes the trunks.

Around 109 species are vainglorious,
Their species generate awe and inspirations.
Cacti and other succulent plants are elegant,
Herb gardens, greenhouses, shade houses conjure a spell,
Vast collections of tropical plants, alpine plants sustain a
harmony.

Divine pleasure in the 100-hectare park,
Rejuvenates souls over a picnic.
Founded in 1787 by the East India Company,
The garden has a 200-year history.

Situated on the west bank of Hoogly river,
Numerous species of birds and wildlife are real pleasures.
Trotting over the fine grasses in an embark,
Exhibitions of ornamental plants emphasize natural
relationships.

The visitors enthral over boat rides,
Their astonishment seems to evoke good vibes.
The arboretum has a collection of its own right,
With the grand Banyan tree
Forming the largest canopy in the world.



Somdatta Mitra: She is a published writer from West Bengal, whose passion is painting, writing, oratory and travelling. She has worked on 1500 anthologies as a co-author. Her debut solo book ***The Spectrum Of Emotions*** is a colour palette of life. She has accomplished three world records in poetry.



OF CHERRY BLOSSOMS

On the wings of the cherry blossoms I fly,
A magnificent array of colours,
Riding pillion on shades of white and pink,
Flecked with tiny wisps of magenta, colours so spectacular,
When at times I embower a poetic lilac, a magical pink or
an enchanting purple

My delicate petals swishing in the air I celebrate Holi in the streets of Japan,

A burst of colours- I am the righteous Sakura, nodding a welcome in the fragrant breeze,

Beneath and beyond as far as one's ken can visualize,

I embrace the season of merry making, looking like a vision of colours, bobbing close to the ground ,

While welcoming the sea of visitors from distant lands attracted to this magnificent sight,

Unifying humanity, celebrating creation, profound and wise.

My flowering season like life is oh so short,

That it requires luck and good fortune to view it all,

But promises galore of my beauty the word will spread,

Of my blossoming beauty the world will tell.



Someeta Das: I am a retired professor from Maharaja Manindra Chandra College, Kolkata, with twenty years of teaching experience. I love to interact and make new friends, and also love traveling and exploring new places. I am also interested in writing poems, short stories and travelogues. I have been published in GloMag, Muse India, Setu, Women's era, The Statesman, a number of anthologies and e-zines.



There is limited space

In this life in a maze.

You have to let go of something,

before receiving anything

Breathe out first

and inhale next

Live in the present, live in now,

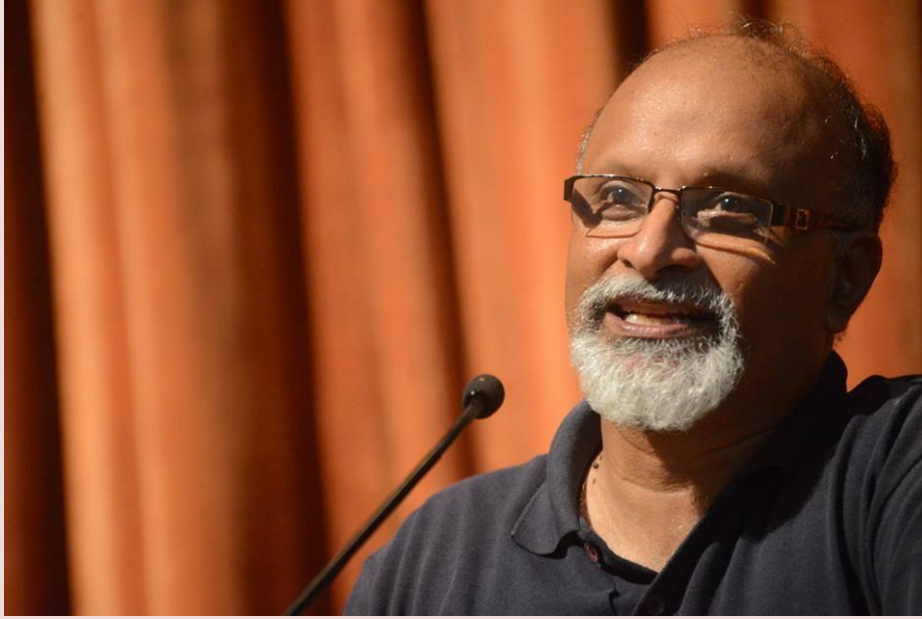
Rather than in the clouds way above.

When the stars and the lines on the palm

cannot stop an oncoming storm,

why waste time on finding what the future holds in store

rather than living the moment some more!



Sri N Srivatsa: Chennai-born Sri N Srivatsa is a retired banker living in Noida. His original poetry and translations mostly from Tamil to English and vice versa plus a handful to and from Hindi, have been featured on several journals and platforms. Thirteen volumes of Tamil poems by thirteen different poets and one volume of English poems translated by him into Tamil of yet another poet, plus a collection of his English translations titled ***Modern Tamil Poetry: A Miniature Canvas - Volume I*** with a poem each by 153 poets have been published so far.



THE SAVIOUR

Awakened, enlightened, merging his being with that of the Universe

His soul coalesced with that of the Almighty under the Bodhi Tree

Discarding all comforts and luxuries of life

To see diseased beings and decaying corpses

Dhyana, for him, became the path to awakening

Holding that suffering is an ingrained element of human existence

But that the Ashtanga Marg is the way to annihilate it

Buddha, the saviour of humanity

Remains an epitome of wisdom, spiritualism, bliss,
contentment and above all peace!



Staffy Bhateja (Pen Name: Steffi): She is an award-winning poet, editor and exhibited painter hailing from the City Beautiful. She is the Chapter Head of Chandigarh of The Asian Literary Society. As a writer, she has taken part in numerous anthologies under various publishing houses and has solely edited a book titled ***Catharsis*** under The Impish Lass Publishing House. Her poem on the Taj Mahal was awarded the Certificate of Excellence in the Asian Literary Society's Annual Wordsmith Awards Contest 2023 (Poetry Segment) and her poetry piece titled ***It Is Poetry!*** bagged the second position in the same contest in 2024.



BUTTERFLY

Butterfly you're a beautiful image in my eyes.

You flutter around in the sky.

Your image is a colorful hue.

Your beauty is individually you.



Stephen Goetz: He is a published poet from Lincoln City, Oregon, USA. He is Senior Street Performer who loves to dance. He is a published poet in online poetry groups. He has received poetry awards from Motivational Strips and other affiliate online groups. He is a regular contributor and has appeared in consecutive books put out by GLOMAG.



MAY'S MALADY

Super hot May

Had no say

In matters of quirkiness

Climate ruled the roost.

When out of the blue

Grey clouds stuck like glue

Threatening to take May's thunder

Heat didn't get the boost.

Smiles could be seen
Dust a momentary 'has been'
Leaves glistened green
Garbage jumped into the drain.

Pitter patter fell the rain
Adding to sweat's pain
Thermometer suddenly dropped the mercury
What effect was of this rain!

A few hours and done for the day
Unseasonal cooling held her sway
Respite could be seen everywhere
While crops and fruits looked in dismay.

Back to super hot May
Sun shone to make hay

While climate changed her cape
People didn't know what to say!



Sudeshna Mukherjee: She has surprisingly survived in her mundane world without pangs of pain while labouring to birth her book-babies - ***Mélange*** the hotch potch and ***Meanderings of Mind***. She doesn't feel like tom-toming about herself when she can slurp on Tom Yam Soup. She mentions feeling 'Special' though and is particularly partial to a 'Golden Vase' as a reward for consistently serving Funny Side up. She sings through life splaying it with vivid colours. Plastering smiles is her speciality, often tongue firmly in her cheeky cheek. A chunk of her time is spent in spouting English to young adults who are lost to the beauty of the Language.



AN ODE TO CREATIVITY

You are...

Both my strength and weakness

In your cosy lap I console myself

Flaunt my sprightly self

Sailing through your comforting nuances

I act with absolute courage
Give vent to tumult and restiveness
To ward off negativity and scourges Inflicted on me
through life's various sources
For, you are my mentor and soulmate

You are my sanctuary of peace and happiness
Help me curate the essence of...
All my mood seasons, emotions in spate
In a quaint and artful manner
Be it of solitude, jouissance or amorous indulgences

I am because you are
You inure my core with fortitude and flair
You are the blissful retreat, my
soothing balm of life
You are the reason behind my metamorphosis
From a modest being to becoming.



Sujata Dash: She is a poet from Bhubaneswar, Odisha. She is a retired banker. She has four published poetry anthologies (*More than Mere-a bunch of poems; Riot of hues; Eternal Rhythm;* and *Humming Serenades* - all by Authorspress, New Delhi) to her credit. She is a singer, and an avid lover of nature. She regularly contributes to anthologies worldwide.



WHERE LOVE STILL LIVES

Does love exist?

This question resonates within me.

Slaughter and savagery prevail

For love has lost its way.

We soar high with digital wings,
Our virtues decline.
Lifeless machinery rules us;
Emotional bonds lose their strength.

Like rain that revitalizes the desert,
To sustain lush vegetation,
Love and connection exist
Among people in villages.

The Agraharam- a garland of houses,
Aligned in a linear pattern,
With temple at the beginning of the street-
All gather once a year.

Roots nurturing the culture and tradition-
Car festival is the highlight, a vibrant spectacle.
A great vibe lingers for ten days,
Enjoying the days with relatives and friends.

Heavily decorated chariots carved out of wood,
Carry the deities through the streets-
All set in a festive mood,
Fostering a sense of unity and celebration.

Carnatic music reverberates through the street,
Echoing with the temple's architectural grace.
The distribution of blessed food,
Captures the essence of the Agraharam.

A moment untouched by screens or devices,
Only chanting and chattering of people.



Sulochana Narayanan: I am a multi-talented individual currently serving as a high school teacher in the government sector in Palakkad, Kerala. I have a great passion for painting, music, and Nature, and I also love to express my creativity through poetry writing. My first poetry collection called ***Imprints*** was published by Apple Books. Additionally, my poems have been included in various anthologies such as *Words Cannot Define Her*; *Known Yet Unknown*; *Melodious Musing of Love*; *Me and My Valentine*; *Goddess on the Earth*; and *Whole World in a Single Word*. I have received several certificates of appreciation for my poems. I am reachable at sulsubra@gmail.com



GIVE ME BACK THOSE DAYS

I wanna time travel, be the little girl
too busy to walk, just hop, skip and jump
only 'fraid, my granny knees will grump

I wanna scamper around again in Clement Town,
Mussoorie with fairy lights getting crowned

Queen of the Hills flaunting its stunning beauty
Dehra's melt in my mouth Indiana tutti fruity.

Wanna be the same little imp, at monkeys making faces
My only fear-they'll chase and beat me at the races.
Jump into puddles, splatter uniform, squishing shoes
next morning go in 'privates' as were then called
bluff the nuns, 'It's my birthday', some cheek, some gall!!

I wanna go around travel town to town
with gypsy circuses, fooling like the clowns.
Whiskey's licks and nuzzles, my golden furry ball
showered 18 years of love, before her final call.

I wanna go back, dress my kid brother in mummy's suit
some make up, a bun, and covered his head too
"Mummy, someone to see you is in the drawing room".

Flinging on her dupatta, "Send in some tea soon."
Wished her/him, hands folded, not seeing the face
had told him to cover it a little, adding to the grace.
The veil slipped down and the cat leapt out
I giggled quietly but he chuckled out aloud.

Even eighty years of pampering were not enough
there's a little girl still waiting for mummy's touch
I wanna go back, hug them all tight, some day
say goodbye to them properly, is all I pray.



Dr Sunil Kaushal: She is a gynecologist, poet, author, translator, essayist, and editor. She has been translated into French, German, Greek, Punjabi, and Chinese. Her twice-awarded memoir ***Gypsy Wanderings & Random Reflections*** won the Nissim Non-Fiction Prose Award given by The Significant League, 2020 and The Golden Book Award by Wing's Publication International, 2024. She is a winner of multiple awards, some of which are: Women Achiever's Award 2019; Enchanting Muse & Fellow of the Regal World of Scribes; Featured in the Limca Book of Records; Featured in the Golden Book of Records; Gold medalist in dramatics; and Best Lioness President Asia award.



SEARCH

Ophelia

searches for love
in a corrupt Elsinore
where
there is purpose
in
the madness of the Prince

madness of purpose
in a royal court

people do not look
what they say,

in the bewildering setting
every mask, another face
every face, another mask;

the new-millennia Ophelia
searches for a lost address in
a
big market square, along the
gleaming roads and malls, eyes
innocent and a sad smile on a tired
face;

a chilling message drops
in the in-box:

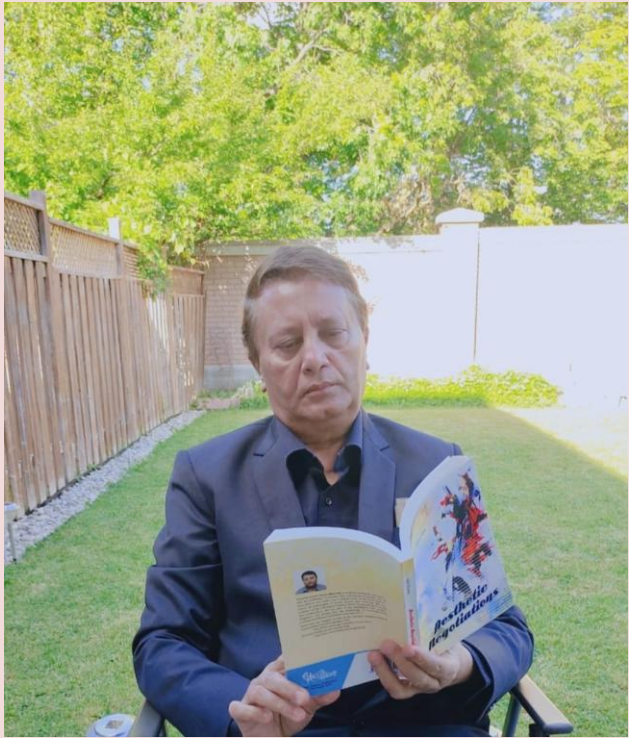
Ophelia must die, again!

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[https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=696135\](https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=696135)



Sunil Sharma: A humble word-worshipper: catcher of elusive sounds, meanings, images. He has published 28 creative and critical books--- joint and solo. He is the winner, among others, of the **Panorama Golden Globe Award-2023** and **Nissim Award for Excellence-2022** for the political novel ***Minotaur***. His poems are included in the UN project: *Happiness: The Delight-Tree: An Anthology of Contemporary International Poetry*, 2015. He is the managing editor of Setu bilingual journal (English) that has more than 5-million views so far:

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



HOW TO WRITE A POEM

Get up from that desk

Shut off the phone and the laptop

Go out into that rain-drenched forest

Lie down on the bed of orangey-green, brown leaves

Let the pearly drops of manna from heaven inundate you –

Beating down on wounds hidden deep within

Breaking you open like the stone of a fruit – peeling away
the layers

Till every scar and every callus bursts into a poem
Gently embracing the earth with all its undulations



Sunita Singh: Steeped in the Ganga-Jamuni tehzeeb, Sunita Singh is a bi-lingual poet, author and storyteller based in Delhi. Her verses and stories are dipped in the ink of her heart and have been awarded and published in numerous Indian and International portals, anthologies, magazines, e-magazines. Her solo book of English poems was awarded the best debut collection, while the biography penned by her is being translated in Hindi. Sunita is an avid storyteller and has been involved in doing dramatized readings of stories in various schools, events and on digital portals.



THOSE UNREAD LETTERS...

So many letters lie scattered

Written to the self

The self that was

Yesterday

But they never reached their destination

The address was wrong

The self had moved on
And never looked back

There was so much
To tell...to share...to recollect
Lessons
Taught by life
With care or sometimes without
Yet the self never paused
Never stopped
To receive
Or even seek
Them...

A lifetime
Of unread messages
Unseen words

Which together would

Create stories...



Dr. Supatra Sen: Currently Associate Professor in a reputed Kolkata college, she is a veteran academician, teaching and researching in the fields of Botany and Environment. Her 125 odd publications as international books, papers and reviews are chiefly in her parent subject. She has edited several UGC funded ISBN volumes and is also the founder and Chief Editor of an ISSN peer-reviewed multi-disciplinary academic journal 'Harvest' www.harvestjournal.net since 2016. Despite two National Awards in Literature earlier, her serious tryst with poetry writing began in 2020 during the global pandemic. Her poetry anthology ***My Autumn Sonata*** was published in October 2021 and ***Sojourns in Autumn*** in early 2024.



THE UNWRITTEN SELF

She is not born with a name—

Labels arrive later, wrapped in expectations,

Prospects, probabilities, promises, and potentials

Soaked in generations of silence,

Dripping!

Her being is not a single candidness,

But a tapestry

Woven and laced from fragments,

Entwined yet scattered and isolated
No one thought to gather whole.

They call her mother, daughter, wife—
As though her breath exists only in relation to others.
But in the quiet, she subsists and hears a different voice—
The one that speaks not of onuses, but of being.

She is not a stagnant idea, not a still individual in a frame
with a border,

but a motion, a flow— longing, yearning, uncertainty and
becoming.

The globe trained her to fade away graciously and politely,
--Bottled her up and muted--

To disappear and withdraw, quash and renounce
And to wear compromise, like skin.

Yet her questions grow teeth,
Her silence and stillness become thunder.

She is not here to be explained—

She is here to be. And she will be!

Whatever comes her way,

The tribulations, the afflictions, answerabilities, and
accountabilities,

The process of negating her own self,

Drain her being and shroud her existence

Yet she rises again like a sphinx

Never to eclipse, and not destined to dim the glow.



Dr. Sushmindarieet Kaur: She is an Associate Professor of English at G.G.N. Khalsa College, Ludhiana, Punjab. M.Phil in Anthropological Linguistics and Ph.D. in Indian English Literature, she has recently brought out collections of poetry under the titles ***Voices From Within*** and ***The Tapestry of Heartstrings***. Besides editing ten books, she translated Sikh Soldiers in Italy: Second World War. She has been anthologized in various journals and books. She is the Associate Editor of UGC Care-listed, Peer Reviewed Journal LITERARY VOICE, Editor of the poetry section of INNSAEI, editor of the Punjabi section of “MatruAkshar” and Deputy Chief Editor of LITERARY JOURNAL of AESTHETICS.



FOUND YOU... LORD

sonnet 4-4-4-3

Walked through the untrodden pavement of uncertainty
From the mind of innocence trapped upon the birth of
insanity

Wandering in the vastness of an empty glooming meadow
In darkness on bended knees laid a broken shadow

Drifting unto the unknown lost the grip from almighty
Tossed a spirit driven away from the helm of divine sanctity
A soul burdened by the earthen imperfection in agony
whining
For the whispering heart of His creation was the deepest
longing
To live again in the embrace of His guiding love and
gloriousness
Surrendering oneself from man's corruption to a heart of
pureness
A change that God swore to promise by his love to all
mankind
Gave the world the life of his only son a sacrifice that we
entwined
Upon the condemned land was the cry of an undying hail of
hell
Savored the blood of tribulation from the heavenly
grandeur to tell
Through my will and strongest faith... " I FOUND YOU...
LORD"



Suzette Portes San Jose: She was born and raised in Cebu City, Philippines. She is a University half scholar, born with a passion for writing and living in her art forms. She now has joined 25 book anthologies. Each of her poems is written with her painting as visuals and is now appearing internationally. She has also received multiple awards for her Artwork and Literary works. She was awarded Poet of the Year in 2017 by one of the prestigious poetry sites in UK. She is also a regular contributor to a monthly issued magazine in India. She has also published her self-authored books and founded her own private group of a few artists/poets.



A WOMAN MADE OF ASH

Now,

I pluck my shadow from walls that do not know me,
and sculpt myself from the silence of storms.

I am a woman made of ash,
who learned how to smile
when sobs ignite in her throat.

I do not know how to sing,
but I weave my voice
from the ropes of wind,
and sketch my face
upon the sands of departure.

Do you see that ecstasy?
It waves at me from afar—
like a tent ablaze with pearls,
refusing to open its door
to anything but torn hearts.

That is why
my heart is light as a feather of wreckage,
filled with joy—
for I am, quite simply, a dead woman.

Since I shook hands with death,
I've been flying without wings,
hiding in my pocket
trains whose lights weep,
like the robes of Asian sorcerers.

Their distant faces dazzle me,
and you—
you do not see them...
because you have not died yet.

On the surface of the pond, its colors sway,
singing to the void,
and I hear them—
for I am a dead woman.



Taghrid Bou Merhi: She is a Lebanese-Brazilian poet, writer, journalist, editor, essayist and translator fluent in multiple languages. She is President of Ciesart Lebanon, an advisor for Sham Land Books and the World Union of Arab Intellectuals, Brazil's representative in Creative (Germany), and a global poetry advisor for CCTV (China). She is the winner of the Nizar Sartawi, Naji Naaman, and Zheng Xin awards. Her works, studied by critics, have been translated into 48 languages. She has authored 23 books, translated 45, written 190 articles, presented 44 books, and contributed to over 210 anthologies national and international.



LIKE ONLY A FATHER COULD LOVE

I like the smell of my daddy's sweat.

It reminds me of the musk of his chest,

As it enveloped me as a child—

Warm, kind, and August, his presence.

His shirt reeks of his musk—

Old Spice, aftershave, and the strange scent of sweat.

As he roamed as a wanderer in the sun
And brought the fruit of his harvest
Back to a house he turned into a home.

To know the value of his tears,
To love him for who he is.
He raised two soldiers—
Two daughters he sheltered under his wing,
Like an eagle,
Protecting from every storm.

To love how his face crinkles when he smiles...
It is so beautiful when he smiles!

Yet benign always like the First Cause,
Turning chaos into order.
To value the two young women he raised,
Beyond the norms laid by a tyrannical crowd.

To know daughters were more valuable than the sun—
The golden hues cannot be weighed in gold.
It just permeates and fills with life,
As goodness loved goodness from within.

Against every dictum, every norm, every tyrant,
He protects and preserves his family—
Like only a father could do.



Tania Alphonsa George: She is an educator whose passion for poetry shapes her life and work. A poet by design, Tania believes in the transformative power of words and strives to be a force of nature, inspiring change in the world around her. Her poetry and literary works have been featured in several esteemed journals, including **The Journal of Literature and Aesthetics**, **GloMag**, and **Literary Cognizance**. Tania's commitment to literature and creative expression is further exemplified by her collaborative book ***The Integrity of Words*** co-authored with her maternal grandmother, Gertrude John Morris—a testament to her belief in the intergenerational power of storytelling.



FOR ARTFUL EYES

A weak sun,
a mom and tot,
puny driftwood and calm
surf fit for a black
lab and a golden
pup to hold retrieving drills.
The dogs are mom and son.
Litter of nine, seven gold, two black.
Picturing them grown, I spy

limp ducks in their jaws.

Waves grow stronger

luring winter surfers

more often than not

foiled in the maws

of Neptune's playful pets

and the sea is composing

chanties and fishing

all air for artful ears.

Gusts slap the khaki

sand across my face.

A rush of seaweed forms

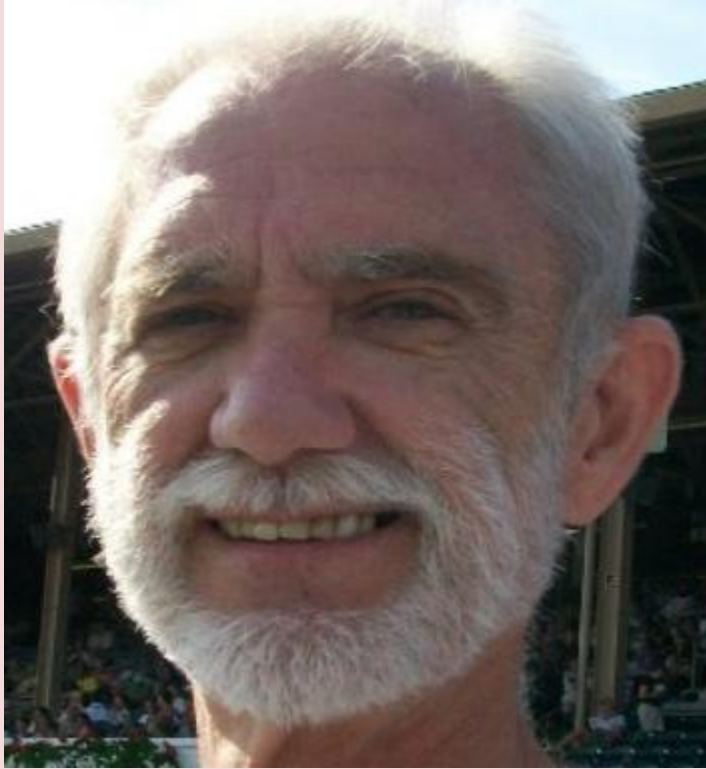
a welcoming oasis.

The black dog takes off

full speed after a bobbing

surfboard that in her mirage

is a wounded albatross.



Thomas M. McDade: He is a seventy-nine-year-old resident of Fredericksburg, VA. He is a graduate of Fairfield University. McDade is twice a U.S. Navy Veteran serving ashore at the Fleet Anti-Air Warfare Training Center, Dam Neck Virginia Beach, VA and aboard the USS Mullinnix (DD-944) and USS Miller (DE/FF-1091). His poetry has been most recently published in The Rat's Ass Review.



RUMINATIONS ON TURNING 60...

Barely four months away from her milestone birthday, we had to bid farewell to our anchor 29 years ago.

The four of us - my father, sister, brother and me - can be a handful. Each with a forceful personality and strong opinions, we often differed in our views and argued about them.

My mother was the quiet strength that held our family of five firmly together.

She was a study in binaries.

Gentle of demeanour, firm in her convictions. Strong in her values, weak of constitution. Bold on her thoughts, quiet in her speech. Fierce to protect her family, meek in the joint family. Progressive in thinking, conservative in apparel. Calm amidst emotional storms, angry when her children were belittled.

The first woman to graduate on the entire clan, she chose to be a homemaker. She made us the centre of her life, the focus of all her energies. Guiding us three children while struggling within the confines of a patriarchal joint family was no easy task.

And once the nuclear family became her reality, coping with the demands of three teenagers kept her busy from morn to night.

And all her hard work paid off. We built careers and homes. I marvel at how much she accomplished as I watch the five fledglings of our nests start building their own. She would be proud.

I see her in every decision I make as a daughter-in-law, sister, wife, mother, mother-in-law, and now a grandmother. I am about to complete the 60th circumambulation of the sun, and I feel her lingering presence and calm reassurance. Thank you Ma.



Uma Vangal: She is a part-time filmmaker and public speaker, sometime professor, critic and curator, an occasional gender activist and a full-time mother and grandmother. She wears many hats and writing permeates all her work and interests, but with the aim of making a difference. Her work, be it documentary films, poetry, mentoring, yoga training or workshops, echoes an abiding interest in ancient wisdom and her guiding tenet “Be true to yourself”.



A SNAKY AFFAIR

Weaving their way

Like a black serpent

bending and curving

Dotted with alerts like

“speed thrills but kills”

Winding all around

The majestic mountains

The serpentine roads
Are a snaky affair,
The turns encourage the butterflies of the tummy
to break their slumber
And start fluttering
Milestone after milestone
Egging you on
Towards the scenic beauty
The one-man workmanship
Of the almighty lord
Is a wonderful affair!



Uma Agarwal Bajaj: I have been contributing to GloMag for almost three years now! And Glory di's trust in me has really made my pen a little creative. I am a Company Secretary by qualification, a homemaker by choice (since the last 20 years). Having been occupied with family and kids, I have now started having some time for myself, now that the kids are all ready to leave the nest. I write both in English and Hindi and hope to better myself with each passing day. Apart from this, I have, since last year, been involved with the activities related to the Inner Engineering program by Sadhguru.



A SEASON'S STRUGGLE

Trying to understand

The jigsaw puzzle

Of a world

That turned its back

To seasons of love

And timely harvests

Invested in new hybrids
Were the new corporates
Altering flowering period
Telling us
Nature had adopted
Fancier ways

I looked out
At illusions
Of bloom
Spring sun
That was saying farewell
Even before
We could give it a welcome

Our struggles to survive
Continue

As seasons of joy

Get clipped

World climates today

Are empty basins

That we carry

Inside



Vandana Kumar: She is a French teacher, translator, recruitment consultant, Indie Film Producer, cinephile and poet residing in New Delhi, India. Her poems have been published in national and international websites, journals and anthologies of repute. She has been a part of seminal feminist anthologies like the Indie Blu(e) publication 'The Kali Project'. Her collection of poems ***Mannequin Of Our Times*** (February 2023) - has won multiple awards and a Pushcart nomination in the poetry category. She is currently the Poetry editor for the Reader's Choice magazine. Her literary travels took her to Athens, Greece where she was a Guest of Honor at the Global Vision Summit 2024.



LESSONS LEARNT WHEN YOU FEAR DROWNING

Head shoved under water

Yellow mud floating up

To enter my nose in a layer

Barely breathing through the cup

And tube of green plastic between

My clenched lips and teeth,

All around me only the sea,

And this boy, a wiry stranger
Cupping my arm, confident
A five-foot merman, index finger
Pointing downwards and ahead
Insistent, legs bending and straightening
Repeatedly, till I tamp the panic
Down to my stomach, remembering
To breathe evenly, I look.
I gasp silently at the wondrous earth
He was opening out to me
Salt water rushed into my mouth
I swallow, enthralled by the life
Invisible from above.
Lost for centuries in the earth's belly
Unaware of anything but
what my eyes could see
my only contact with humanity
was that hand that held and guided me.

I rose up slowly to gaze around
The boat was far, far away
Utter silence, no sound
Under the waves, Neptune held sway.
Raising my head, craning my neck
Arm held by an impersonal hand
In minutes, I was guided back.
Reluctant to leave the ocean warm
I climbed up the ladder
To my people dear and familiar
My body felt weighted and clumsy
Not my own; smiling politely
I thanked the team for showing me
Another world under the sea.
But my world is my family.



Vidya Hariharan: Vidya Hariharan is an enthusiastic traveller, coffee guzzler and manic reader. In her spare time she wrestles with crossword puzzles and has won prizes. The poetry gene jumped two generations as her great grandfather P. S. Rama Iyer was a Malayalam language poet and author. She lives and works in Mumbai, India. Some of her work can be found in Cafe Dissensus, Setu, Poetry Super Highway and Under the Basho.



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MY LIFE — AN ODYSSEY

Stark

seems my life

that breathes alone

upon the green-brown expanse of earth

under the silver-blue depths of sky

But

abundant is the universe

with love undefined

of belonging and sharing the journey

and all the stars I can call

mine



Vidya Shankar: Vidya Shankar, Associate Editor for *haikuKATHA* journal, is author of two poetry books, freelance copy editor, and an English Language teacher. A widely published poet, her work has appeared in prestigious collections such as the *Yearbook of Indian Poetry in English* and the Poetry Marathon anthologies, and her haiku longlisted for the Touchstone 2024 awards. Featured in a unique coffee table book on 50 inspiring women of Chennai, Vidya finds meaning to her life through yoga and mandalas.

Facebook: Vidya Shankar

Instagram: @vidya.shankar.author



THE LANGUAGE OF SILENCE

And those

Sitting on the hill

And those

Sitting on the fence

Staring at

The setting sun

Speak

The language

Of silence

Even when

The horizon

Turns crimson



Dr. Vijay Nair: I retired as an Associate Professor in English. I was awarded the Reuel International Prize for Writing & Literature in the year 2016. I was the 'Critic of the Year' in 2016, 2017 & 2018 at Destiny Poets, UK and was also adjudged the 'Poet of the Year' in 2018 by the same poetry group. My poems have been nominated on 8 occasions as 'Poem of the Month' at Poets, Artists Unplugged. Three of my poems have been included in the PG syllabus of BBMK University, Dhanbad. My short stories have appeared in Dynami Zois [Virasat], The Road Taken [Impish Lass] and in Cocoon Stories: Imprints of Childhood [AuthorsPress].



Meanwhile, the trees rain
Silver drops gently fall
From their boughs
And the air has a sting
That fills the lungs with hope.
The mist trails its fingers
Through the grass,

Tomorrow each blade will wake
Intoxicated.

Your voice, mesmerising -

I hold each petal

I feel the soft redness

Of your dreams

I gather them together

They form a whole

Fragrant, heady, inviting.

Your fingers thread mine

This moment of cocoon

The tender light within

Makes me trace your brows

Your nose, your chin.

We rise through the trees

The earth is warm, wet. Waiting

Baby's-breath and aster

So softly they whisper

Of meetings and partings
And each breath between.
I sigh, you hold me,
gently say
It is the journey that matters.



Vineetha Mekkoth: Vineetha Mekkoth, poet, writer, translator, editor, and reviewer based in Calicut, Kerala, works as State Tax Officer in the State GST Department. She has translated for the Kerala Sahitya Akademi. Her poems and short stories have been included in various anthologies. Her debut poetry collection is ***Ashtavakra and Other Poems***. Her book ***Penpiravi - Birth of A Woman*** won the Reuel International Prize for Translation and is the translation of the Malayalam poet Girija Pathekkara's poetry collection. She is co-editor of and contributor to the short story collections, *Cocoon Stories: Imprints of Childhood*, *He, She and It: The Grammar of Marriage*, and *Aquality: Tales from the Depths* published in March, 2024.



ciao! 😊