

# GloMag

GLOWING

*Monthly Online Poetry and Prose Magazine*

*November-December 2022*



*Edited and Published by Glory Sasikala*

## **DALE ADAMS**



### **TITLE OF COVER PIC**

**Seagull**

### **ABOUT THE ARTIST**

I grew up six kilometers outside of a very small town. There were plenty of woodlands and dirt roads to explore. I spent a lot of time just wandering.

I got my first camera when I was ten. In my twenties I carried a camera everywhere, even in the army. I took lots of random shots, looking for lines and angles, shadows and reflections, things hidden in plain sight, forgotten pathways and trails. I tried to catch ordinary people in their natural

light. In my darkroom I would try to recreate what my mind saw.

I didn't write much until 2011, when my checklist for a Sunday morning ride turned into song lyrics. Two years later, I produced a CD of original music recorded in my den. I have also been blessed to work with the masterful poetry of Ann Christine Tabaka, on three songs, and with Michael Lee Johnson on two others, all posted on my Soundcloud page: <https://soundcloud.com/dale-adams-272904153>

My music videos can be seen at:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/DrBugqs13>

Listen, and there are stories everywhere. There are songs in the air, in the earth and water. There are poems in the people you meet. I met a man named Dwayne in a diner on my way to work one rainy morning. He felt like talking, and his story became a poem, and then a song. But as far as I know, he never heard it. I ate there every morning, but I never saw him again.

Some of the poems and songs I've written come from places I've never been. But each verse was a gift, I believe. From whom, I do not know. I give thanks by listening some more.

Once, in high school, an older classmate brought her guitar to school and played several of the songs she'd written for our music class. I listened and admired her courage; I could not imagine sharing my insides with a classroom of misfits who used Mrs. Stine's last-hour Music class as an escape from the gym or football field.

Not long after, a wonderful English teacher, Mrs. Grisham, gave me the gift of Haiku, and praised my early efforts. But she was the only one who ever read them. I was not brave. But I kept listening.

Listening is part of my nature. I think it's where art comes from, from listening to our inner voices as well as to those around us. We try to translate feelings into a tangible form. It's an act of faith, as many artists never reach an audience; their work hides under the bed, or in a computer file, out in the garage or in the attic. We paint, draw or take a photo. We shape blocks of clay, stone, metal or wood. We write a story or a poem, maybe record a song. Our seeds may or may not find a home in someone else's secret garden.



Listening is the first step to kindness. Maybe you can help, maybe not. But listening has taught me that we have far more in common than in contrast. It really doesn't matter what we disagree about if we each practice a little kindness towards each other, and ourselves. But first, we need to listen.

## **ABOUT GLOMAG**

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

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

~ ***Glory Sasikala***

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## **CONTENT**

|                                      |           |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>Abu Siddik</b>                    | <b>14</b> |
| <b>Ahmad Al-Khatat</b>               | <b>17</b> |
| <b>Alicja Maria Kuberska</b>         | <b>20</b> |
| <b>Amita Ray</b>                     | <b>23</b> |
| <b>Amita Sarjit Ahluwalia</b>        | <b>26</b> |
| <b>Ampat Koshy</b>                   | <b>29</b> |
| <b>Aneek Chatterjee</b>              | <b>32</b> |
| <b>Anil Kumar Panda (alias Tiku)</b> | <b>36</b> |
| <b>Anju Kishore</b>                  | <b>39</b> |
| <b>Ankurita Pathak</b>               | <b>41</b> |
| <b>Ann Christine Tabaka</b>          | <b>44</b> |
| <b>Ashish Kumar Pathak</b>           | <b>47</b> |
| <b>Avik Kumar Maiti</b>              | <b>49</b> |
| <b>Bevan Boggenpoel</b>              | <b>51</b> |
| <b>Bharati Nayak</b>                 | <b>54</b> |
| <b>Bill Cushing</b>                  | <b>57</b> |
| <b>Bilquis Fatima</b>                | <b>60</b> |

|                             |            |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| <b>Bishnu Charan Parida</b> | <b>62</b>  |
| <b>Brian Mackenzie</b>      | <b>65</b>  |
| <b>Brindha Vinodh</b>       | <b>68</b>  |
| <b>Carl Scharwath</b>       | <b>70</b>  |
| <b>Chandramohan Naidu</b>   | <b>73</b>  |
| <b>Christopher Villiers</b> | <b>75</b>  |
| <b>Dale Adams</b>           | <b>77</b>  |
| <b>Daniel de Culla</b>      | <b>80</b>  |
| <b>David Norris</b>         | <b>82</b>  |
| <b>Deena Padayachee</b>     | <b>85</b>  |
| <b>Deepika Chand</b>        | <b>88</b>  |
| <b>Deepti Singh</b>         | <b>91</b>  |
| <b>Don Beukes</b>           | <b>93</b>  |
| <b>Duane Vorhees</b>        | <b>97</b>  |
| <b>Dusmanta Choudhury</b>   | <b>100</b> |
| <b>Eliza Segiet</b>         | <b>103</b> |
| <b>Feby Joseph</b>          | <b>106</b> |
| <b>Ferris E Jones</b>       | <b>109</b> |

|                                        |            |
|----------------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Francis Otole</b>                   | <b>112</b> |
| <b>Gargi Sarkhel Bagchi</b>            | <b>116</b> |
| <b>Gauri Dixit</b>                     | <b>119</b> |
| <b>Gayatree G. Lahon</b>               | <b>122</b> |
| <b>Geeta Varma</b>                     | <b>124</b> |
| <b>Geethanjali Dilip</b>               | <b>127</b> |
| <b>Glory Sasikala</b>                  | <b>130</b> |
| <b>Gonapragasen Naicker Aka Danny</b>  | <b>133</b> |
| <b>Gopal Lahiri</b>                    | <b>136</b> |
| <b>Hein Min Tun</b>                    | <b>139</b> |
| <b>Jagari Mukherjee</b>                | <b>144</b> |
| <b>Joe Kidd</b>                        | <b>147</b> |
| <b>Kakoli Ghosh (a.k.a Moon Drops)</b> | <b>150</b> |
| <b>Kamar Sultana Sheik</b>             | <b>154</b> |
| <b>Ken Allan Dronsfield</b>            | <b>158</b> |
| <b>Kerala Varma</b>                    | <b>161</b> |
| <b>Ketaki Mazumdar</b>                 | <b>165</b> |
| <b>K.S.Subramanian</b>                 | <b>168</b> |

|                                       |            |
|---------------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Linda Imbler</b>                   | <b>172</b> |
| <b>Lopamudra Mishra</b>               | <b>174</b> |
| <b>Lubna Ahmed</b>                    | <b>177</b> |
| <b>Madhu Gangopadhyay</b>             | <b>180</b> |
| <b>Madhumathy. R</b>                  | <b>183</b> |
| <b>Madhumita Bhattacharjee Nayyar</b> | <b>186</b> |
| <b>Madhu Jaiswal</b>                  | <b>190</b> |
| <b>Mehak Varun</b>                    | <b>192</b> |
| <b>Michael Lee Johnson</b>            | <b>195</b> |
| <b>Nalini Janardhanan</b>             | <b>198</b> |
| <b>Nazia Islam</b>                    | <b>201</b> |
| <b>Nitusmita Saikia</b>               | <b>204</b> |
| <b>Nivedita Roy</b>                   | <b>208</b> |
| <b>Nivedita Karthik</b>               | <b>211</b> |
| <b>Padmini Rambhatla</b>              | <b>214</b> |
| <b>Panjami Anand</b>                  | <b>217</b> |
| <b>Paramita Mukherjee Mullick</b>     | <b>221</b> |
| <b>Parasuram Ramamoorthi</b>          | <b>224</b> |

|                                        |            |
|----------------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Paul Brookes</b>                    | <b>227</b> |
| <b>Prabha Prakash</b>                  | <b>229</b> |
| <b>Prahallad Satpathy</b>              | <b>231</b> |
| <b>Pramila Khadun</b>                  | <b>234</b> |
| <b>Pratima Apte</b>                    | <b>237</b> |
| <b>Preety Bora</b>                     | <b>240</b> |
| <b>Radhamani Sarma</b>                 | <b>243</b> |
| <b>Rajnish Mishra</b>                  | <b>246</b> |
| <b>Rakesh Chandra</b>                  | <b>250</b> |
| <b>Ranjana Sharan Sinha</b>            | <b>254</b> |
| <b>Ravi Ranganathan</b>                | <b>257</b> |
| <b>Robert Feldman</b>                  | <b>260</b> |
| <b>Ryan Quinn Flanagan</b>             | <b>264</b> |
| <b>Saleem Raza (Saleem Kattuchola)</b> | <b>267</b> |
| <b>Samixa Bajaj</b>                    | <b>271</b> |
| <b>Samrudhi Dash</b>                   | <b>274</b> |
| <b>Sangita Kalarickal</b>              | <b>278</b> |
| <b>Santosh Bakaya</b>                  | <b>281</b> |



|                                |            |
|--------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Sara Bubber</b>             | <b>285</b> |
| <b>Scott Thomas Outlar</b>     | <b>288</b> |
| <b>Shalini Samuel</b>          | <b>292</b> |
| <b>Shankar N Kashyap</b>       | <b>295</b> |
| <b>Shreekumar Varma</b>        | <b>298</b> |
| <b>Shreya Suraj</b>            | <b>300</b> |
| <b>Sindhu Rana</b>             | <b>304</b> |
| <b>Someeta Das</b>             | <b>307</b> |
| <b>Sri N Srivatsa</b>          | <b>311</b> |
| <b>Staffy Bhateja (Steffi)</b> | <b>313</b> |
| <b>Stephen Goetz</b>           | <b>317</b> |
| <b>Sudeshna Mukherjee</b>      | <b>319</b> |
| <b>Sujata Dash</b>             | <b>323</b> |
| <b>Sunil Kaushal</b>           | <b>327</b> |
| <b>Sunil Sharma</b>            | <b>332</b> |
| <b>Sunita Singh</b>            | <b>336</b> |
| <b>Supatra Sen</b>             | <b>339</b> |
| <b>Suzette Portes San Jose</b> | <b>342</b> |

|                              |            |
|------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Taghrid Bou Merhi</b>     | <b>345</b> |
| <b>Uma Agarwal Bajaj</b>     | <b>348</b> |
| <b>Uma Vangal</b>            | <b>352</b> |
| <b>Vandana Kumar</b>         | <b>358</b> |
| <b>Vidya Shankar</b>         | <b>361</b> |
| <b>Vijay Nair</b>            | <b>363</b> |
| <b>M Vijayaraghavan Nair</b> | <b>366</b> |
| <b>Vineetha Mekkoth</b>      | <b>371</b> |



## **ABUSED WIFE**

At sunset I went to the Barrack Square  
and waited for the day's catch,

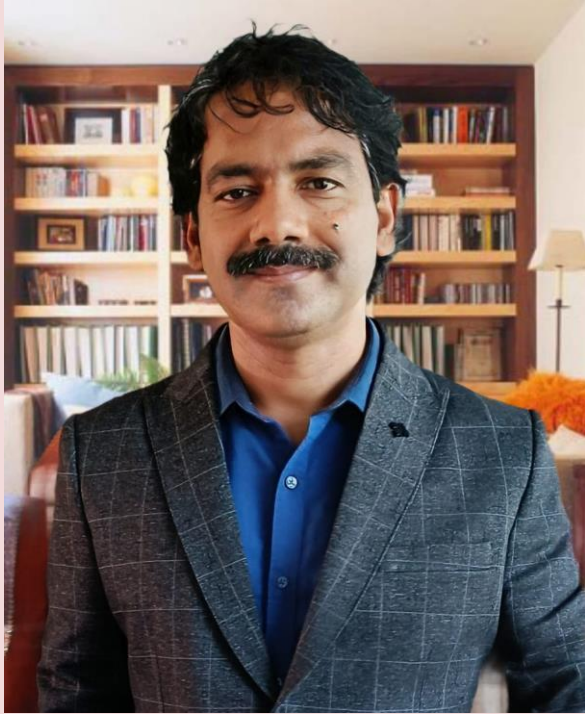
City's evening walkers in smart  
winter wears move fast  
to catch shooting stars!

Nobody looked at me,  
my fear grew as hours passed.

Today is another luckless day!  
for forty days I am waiting  
and no one hires me for an hour.

My husband is a drunkard puller  
and when I go back home in empty hand  
He beats me to the bone.

Next evening I gather courage and wait,  
and if my luck favours I visit a roadside cabin,  
and when I return my man makes a feast,  
and plants kisses on my thousand wounds.



**Abu Siddik:** Abu Siddik is an Assistant Professor in English at Plassey College, West Bengal. He is an academic, poet, and short story writer, and writes both in Bangla and English. He has 12 books.

[www.abusiddik.com](http://www.abusiddik.com)



## **WITH YOUR LOVE**

I am unable to quit drinking  
to excess because my speech  
has become distorted and I am  
comparing my inebriated self to  
my treated grief as if he's some friend.

I can't remember how much  
I can drink at one time. Perhaps  
I'm tired and mentally fuzzy  
because breathing is difficult.  
Nothing unusual has happened recently.

Autumn leaves can't be ash  
from tobacco cigarettes.  
Your heart never stops completely.  
More than just loving lips are all around us.  
Our love will be felt by all five of our senses.

Who knows what the future will bring  
for us before I get to get my name on  
an unknown gravestone? Come brighten  
the lightning and thunderstorms  
with your love.



**Ahmad Al-Khatat:** Ahmad Al-Khatat was born in Baghdad, Iraq. His work has appeared in print and online journals globally and he has poems translated into several languages. He has been nominated for Best of the Net 2018. He is the author of *The Bleeding Heart Poet*, *Love On The War's Frontline*, *Gas Chamber*, *Wounds from Iraq*, *Roofs of Dreams*, *The Grey Revolution*, and *Noemi & Lips of Sweetness*. He lives in Montreal, Canada.





## KIDS

At the boundary of the ocean, land and air  
children are playing.

They build impermanent sandcastles,  
sail ships made of walnut shells on the waves  
and hang colorful kites on the clouds.

They do not dream about  
luxury homes  
wealth,  
long travels.

They still can  
believe in propitious winds,  
see the ocean in a drop of water,  
and poured between their fingers  
grains of sand  
- shiny specks of happiness.



**Alicja Maria Kuberska:** She is an awarded Polish poetess, novelist, journalist, editor. She is a member of the Polish Writers Associations in Warsaw, Poland and IWA Bogdani, 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 a poet of the 2017 year by Soflay Literature Foundation (2018). She also received the Bolesław Prus Prize Poland (2019), Culture Animator Poland (2019) and first prize Premio Internazionale di Poesia Poseidonia- Paestrum Italy (2019).



## **A PRAYER**

Tears that wash your feet  
when I bow before you  
are drops from the billowing  
deep ocean I carry deep inside,  
myriad emotions shelter  
droplets of grief, pain. Joy, love  
they surge and lash

shores of hallowed space  
where i breathe harboured in faith  
my Saviour eternal!

As winter descends to embrace  
a journey you graciously crafted  
i wait for the clarion call  
a happy submission  
of my humble existence  
i offer blooms of summer, spring, winter  
in miniscule desires lived  
to the 'you' within 'me' fused entity  
I implore deliverance!



**Amita Ray:** Amita Ray is former Associate Professor in English based in Kolkata. An academic of varied interests she is a Translator, Short Story writer and Poet. She has three volumes in Translations of noted Bengali authors to her credit. She has translated Abanindranath Tagore's *KHIRER PUTUL* which has been inducted into the Post – graduate curriculum (English) of Burdwan University, West Bengal. She has also published a collection of short stories titled *TRAIL OF LOVE AND LONGINGS*. She is an executive committee member of Intercultural Poetry and Performance Library, Kolkata. Her debut collection of poems *UNTIL BIRDS SING* was published in September 2022.



## **TREE TO EARLY SNOW**

A bit early, aren't you, Madam Snow?

I wasn't expecting you before I'd shed all my leaves.

Anyway, since you're here, let me do the honours.

Leaves, meet Snow. Snow, meet Leaves.

I'll be waiting to see, now, which of you leaves

Before the other, this time around.

By next snowfall, I know what the answer will be.

But this time? Snow, you're too early.



The Wind could just blow you off the leaves

The Sun could melt these two inches of you

And then where would you be?

Back to the North Pole, waiting to return, stronger than  
before, I'm sure.

And then my leaves will be gone for certain

And I alone must endure. There is no cure.

But powdery Snow, you are just for show!

Now go, and leave my leaves alone

For a few more days: Then they will be gone

And you can come and cover my bare branches

And we'll enjoy a White Christmas together as we do

Year after year. Now be a dear

And vamoose till I choose

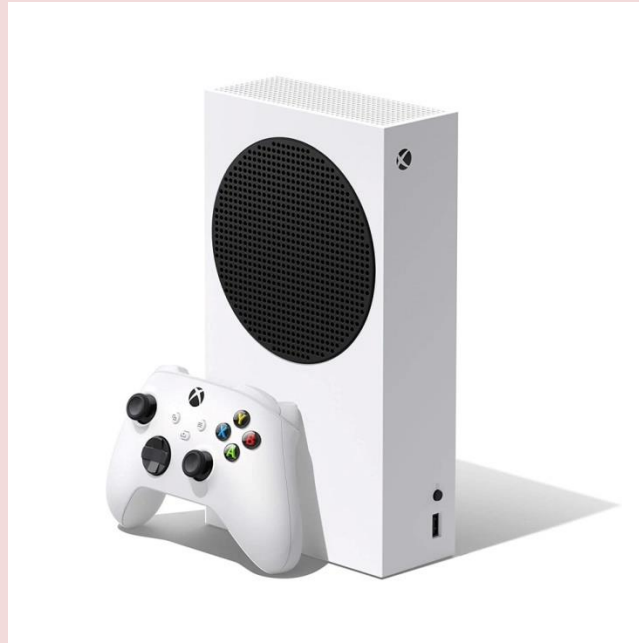
To welcome you sans my gold leaves

Admiring icicles hanging from eaves.





**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 recognitions, and repeated this double honour for the Year 2021 as well.



## I AM ALT(ERNATIVE)

Indie

Parallel

Underground

Different

Strange

I defamiliarize

I am your other

In the field of literature

The play to your mainstream

The game console in your reality TV

The catch in the throat  
When you recite your smooth lines  
The stranger-like grit  
Sand in eyes  
Foreign filament  
In broad daylight  
The alien in the scrabble soup  
The silent pilgrim  
The brooding wordsmith  
On the corner stool  
In the bar  
I am a sore thumb  
In the nexus of your groupies



**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. He runs an autism NPO with his wife, Anna Gabriel. 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.



## **GREEDY**

Sun smiled on the shining mountain:

Have you ever thought of me?

Stones remained calm, white and serious;  
without an answer.

Impatient mind asked naughty

Waves, "Have you ever thought of me?"

It danced on the shore, busy in pranks.

Streets are full of people, full of vibes,  
colors and pace. No vibe has ever  
reached me  
to say, thinking of you.

The world is small  
The world is small  
like a pond.

Everybody is busy  
Everybody is busy  
like a spider,  
in evolving meshwork;  
in laying the cobweb.

Desperate, greedy eyes asked  
the tall pine:

Have you ever thought of me,  
in this small, close-knit world?

But heard only laughter,  
in deep,  
irregular sighs.



**Aneek Chatterjee:** He is a poet and academic from Kolkata, India. He has published more than five hundred poems in reputed literary magazines and anthologies across the globe. He has authored four poetry collections and co-edited one. His fourth poetry collection titled "Archive Avenue" (Cyberwit) came out in October 2022. Chatterjee's poem 'Tramline and the Man' has been adjudged as one of the best contemporary poems on survival along with

poems in the same genre by Sylvia Plath, Langston Hughes, Maya Angelou, Emily Dickinson, Rudyard Kipling, Edith Wharton and others, by a South Africa based Poetry Journal, "Pick Me Up Poetry". Chatterjee has a Ph.D. in International Relations; and he has been teaching in leading Indian and foreign universities. He was a Fulbright Visiting Faculty at the University of Virginia, USA and a recipient of the prestigious ICCR Chair (Govt. of India) to teach abroad. His poetry has been archived at Yale university.





## LET US MEET

When in the light of the moon  
The trees cast their long shadows  
The wind like a drunken wanderer  
Tarries over the silent meadows

Let us meet  
When the Moon with the stars  
Fill the sky with their clear light  
The stream moves on fast tearing  
Through the darkness of the night

Let us meet

When hearts beat for each other

And love sheds its sweet essence

Aroma of night flowers captures

Lovelorn hearts quick and dense

Let us meet

In the garden by the silent pond

And talk and sing under the sky

We are but mortals in this world

Let us share love before we die



**Anil Kumar Panda (alias Tikku):** He was born in a small town, Brajrajnagar, in Odisha, India. At present he is working in 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 simple life of the villagers and Nature's beauty still thriving in rural areas. He enjoys walking by streams and into forests to be with flora and fauna.



Every time it rains  
petrichor rises with a promise  
that a scoop from the showers  
would be tucked away  
for those who'd need them last  
those who'd rival  
the summer's million eyes  
with a burst  
of many-petalled expression

of life's own desire  
to hang on, to hum on  
in spite of a turn in the season  
or the lack of a reason



**Anju Kishore:** Formerly a finance professional, Anju Kishore is a Pushcart 2022 nominee, a published poet and an award-winning editor of numerous free-verse anthologies. She is now learning the ropes of theatre. Her book of poems, ‘...and I Stop to Listen’ (2018) inspired by the civil war in Syria was well received. Her poems, some of the prize-winning, have been part of many anthologies and journals.



## YEAR END MUSINGS

as the year ends

as the page turns

I ponder

on the drifting sands

and the ensemble

of breaths

and moments

that came our way

some memories

some lessons



some mirth  
some angst...  
as we unfurl the  
tapestries of seasons  
with the sun, rain  
blossoms and wilts  
we laugh, we hide  
we fade, we build  
as life slides  
with the time gone  
time that is now  
and here is the time  
to start again  
and rebuild  
grain by grain!!!



**Ankurita Pathak:** She is a writer, occasional poet, TEDx speaker and a seasoned communications professional from Golghat (Assam). A former journalist, she is currently working with FICCI as Joint Director. A proud alumna of Cotton College, Guwahati, she is also a postgraduate in English from Delhi University. She has been regularly writing articles, poems, travelogues and short stories for newspapers, magazines, portals, and blogs. She, along with her brother, has recently co-authored a coffee table book titled 'Black Coffee & Metamorphosis, which has been listed in the 10+ Hoppingo curated coffee table books alongside 'Masterpieces of Indian Art by Alka Pandey' and 'National Geographic Rarely Seen'.





### **A PILLOW'S PLIGHT**

The pillow has suffered  
the onslaught of my restless night  
harboring within itself  
secrets of my sleepless dreams  
torments from another lifetime

Poems written on discarded paper  
scraps upon the floor  
ink smears upon the tear-stained sheets

I awake to a vision of a yesterday  
that never was

Nightlight piercing the dark  
I sit up and write once more  
too many thoughts and vague images  
wanting to escape the confines of my mind  
I am unable to sleep

Drenched with night tears  
my confidant releases  
the impression of my weary head  
I arise freeing it from its charge  
it guarded me well  
My pillow has endured another night

***\*Published by The Paragon, August 2017***



**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 14 poetry books. I was nominated for the 2017 Pushcart Prize in Poetry. I 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)***



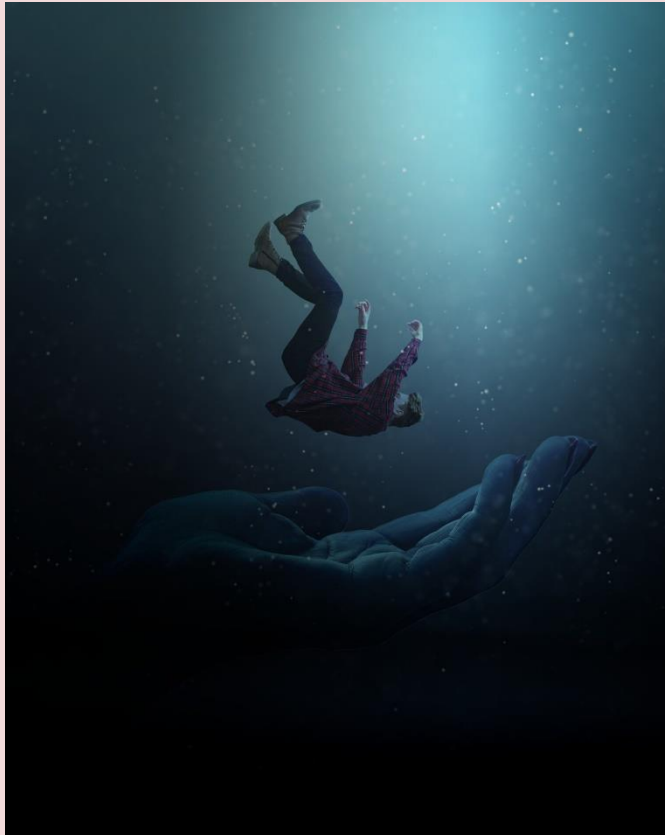
## ODE TO TAGORE

A man who was a living example  
of how one can overcome real life challenges  
as easy as schooling as a child  
and as harsh as loss of relatives  
pangs of death  
pain of betrayal  
Loss of love  
Even hurt from a selfish society

But always planted a new tree  
Came with it a new leaf  
then came a new bud  
Blossoming into a new flower  
Like everyone his life was given by God  
he earned it by his great teachings  
as musical and diverse as vibes of life.



**Ashish Kumar Pathak:** He is a government middle school teacher in Munger district of Bihar province in India.



## IMPRISONED LIBERTY

Dear, utter to me the way I can murder you,  
Can slay your shadow that wraps me around,  
Can erase your scented touch that still heals.  
I can't be gratis unless you get executed.

But, stay. Liberty! Did I really call for you?

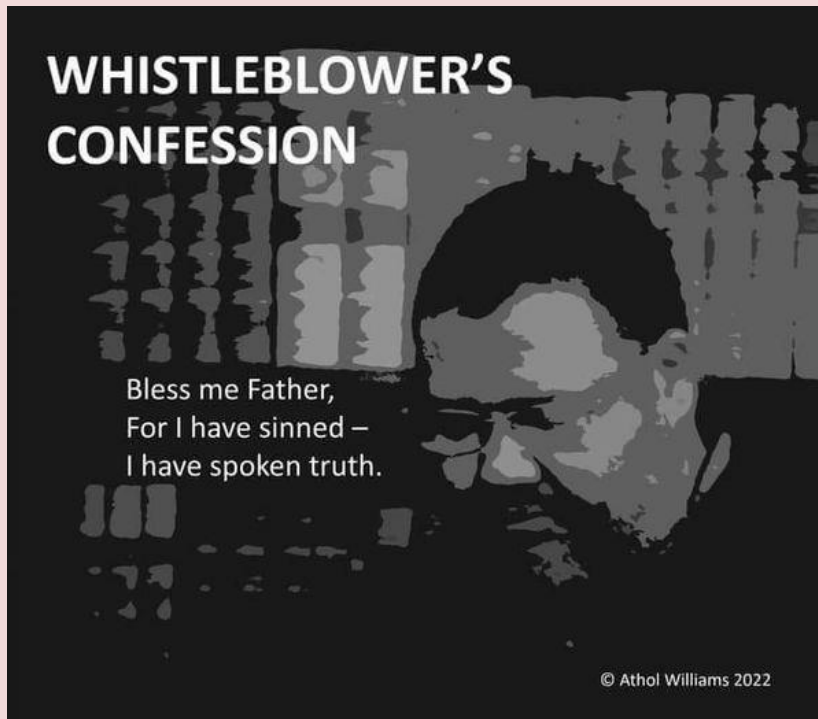
There is the delight in being shackled,  
The nectar oozes out when lips locked,  
Eternity sits on your balmy embrace.

To love someone is to be in love with demise,  
And to be in the clutch of you  
Is the cessation of all the ache.

So I cackle in twinge; death is life's require,  
So long for I for that life-in-death,  
Which is well again than death-in-life.



**Avik Kumar Maiti:** He is from Midnapore, West Bengal, India, and is an academician who has written seven books for English U.G/P.G. students and is an amateurish poet, writer and whimsical vlogger.



## THE TRUTH

*This poem is dedicated to Athol Williams*

truth be told

it will leave you desolate

cast away like filth

longing to escape

the hate of its claws

wrapped around your neck



while the guilty feels  
you've stabbed them in the back

the truth shall set you free -  
free to roam  
in a lonely place  
you cannot call home

but one must stand  
for what is right  
and expose the sins and schemes  
sophisticatedly planned at night



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



## **POETRY**

It is that pain  
Which torments you always  
It is that sorrow  
Which wants to come out  
But alas, cannot

It is that pain  
Which shivers on your lips  
and sits as a teardrop  
In the corner of your eyes

It is that ache  
That like an arrow  
Pierces your heart

It is that pain  
Which sometimes  
Flows in torrents  
Like a river  
And spreads the whole world  
Like water vapour  
Blooms to beauty  
Like a flower  
It is poetry  
Of life  
It is  
The rhythmic dance  
Of sorrow and happiness  
Woven into words.



**Bharati Nayak:** Bharati Nayak is a bilingual poet, critic and translator from Bhubaneswar, India. She has done her graduation from Ravenshaw College, Cuttack and post-graduation from Utkal University, Bhubaneswar. Her poems have been published in more than hundred books, e-books and magazines of national and international repute. She has so far published eight books. She was conferred the Sahitya Lahari award by International Cosmos Society, India in 2018 and Star Ambassador of World Poetry And Art Philosophique Poetica International Award in Literature by the World Poetry Conference in Bhatinda, Punjab, India in 2019.



## LA ROSA Y EL DRAGON

Terror rarely comes in thunder,  
preferring a sinister waltz  
of seduction, the single notes  
of a piano, Bartok-like,  
accompany the spiral stairs  
winding down into the maze, echoed  
  
by hammer-struck wire blossoming  
out into chorus. Then, a voice

like violin strings descends in pitch,  
looping in carefully placed steps  
of a few seemingly random notes,  
walking up scales and back.

This dance of tympani and plants  
follows the labyrinth as wind  
hums ethereal as an oboe  
exhaling. A deep drop in tone,  
a bassoon, then, metallic bones  
clash in clanging vibrations

while strokes of plucked harp strings,  
the heartbeat, first, steady, then slowing  
to a perfect if ignoble end.

Ofelia, hearing the lullaby,  
rests to find the peace of mind  
found in the art of dying.



**Bill Cushing:** For December, Bill Cushing celebrates the release six years ago of *Pan's Labyrinth*, one of his favorite films. Returning to college after serving in the Navy and working on ships, Bill earned an MFA from Goddard College. Published in numerous journals and anthologies, both online and in print, Bill facilitates a writing group (for 9 Bridges Writing Community). Bill's 2019 book *A Former Life* was honored with the Kops-Featherling International Book Award committee; his chapbook (*Music Speaks*) won both 2019's San Gabriel Valley Poetry Festival chapbook competition and a 2021 New York City Book Award. His latest chapbook, *. . .this just in. . .*, combines artwork with selected poems.





## **ALWAYS THE SUN RISES**

When shadows fall on green meadows

And air is rife with wails and cries

When abysmal ambitions make gruesome grounds

And no mind seems peaceful or sound.

When scrapers are razed to dusty mounds

And success, mere travesty, flaunts.

It's then when I lay my head on the ground

Heart floods with gratitude profound.

In the nook of my shed in the darkness

Still alive, still breathing, still waiting for the sunrise.



**Bilquis Fatima:** She loves Nature and speaks for social issues, expressing her feelings in the form of short articles and speeches right from her college time. **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 **Spillwords Press, Sahitya Ananad journal, Destiny Poets(UK),** 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.



## **THOSE TWO EYES**

In the dead of the night,  
In me,  
Those two eyes glow,  
The whole world catches fire  
Memories embrace me  
With tight clasp

Dreams sprout up  
On a desert dry  
Tides surge across  
The silent sea

A street stretches out  
From my heart as I glance  
over,  
Up from the street to the sky  
Down from the sky to the street,  
I float on,  
The moon floats on

I keep tossing and turning  
The silence of the night,  
Roars within me  
I burn,  
The moon burns



**Bishnu Charan Parida:** He is a bilingual poet from Jaipur Road, Odisha. His poems have been published in magazines and anthologies of repute.



## **SOULS OF THE DEAD**

the souls of the dead  
are all around us  
if they cannot cross  
and are lost  
don't be afraid  
they won't hurt you

taken in battle  
taken by the sea  
killed without warning  
not ready to go  
the souls of the dead  
are all around us

they wonder alone  
searching for home  
and the ones they love  
never at peace  
in pain and troubled  
not knowing they've passed  
don't be afraid  
they won't hurt you

the souls of the dead  
are all around us  
help them if you can  
to make it across



**Brian Mackenzie:** I was born in Inverness in 1949 and have lived there until 1969. Since then I lived in Lond 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 I started writing songs and poems and I suppose have become quite prolific. I self-published 6 books and 1 book by a publisher, the second soon to be released.





## ON A WINTRY EVENING

Snowflakes susurrate beneath feet  
and young skaters glide in geometrical patterns,  
the pond nearby looks like a solid silver rock, frozen.

On the cinnamon branches of deciduous trees,  
the wind rumbles like thunder

and as they walk, on the pathway,  
holding hands, she and he,  
sharing the warmth,

their fingers becoming the rays of the sun,  
the waves of their laughter sway,  
knowing no boundaries,  
fearless, like their love.



**Brindha Vinodh:** She is a poet, writer, blogger and a former copyeditor. She has contributed to several anthologies and been published on several international magazines, e-zines and journals, Glomag, Soflay, Metverse Muse, Setu, to name a few. She has recently released her debut poetry book titled “Autumn in America & other poems” through Setu publications, Pittsburgh, USA. Her recent achievements include commendable mentions in two categories, “Poet of the year” and “critic of the year” for 2021 in Destiny Poets’ International community of Poets (ICOP) Wakefield, UK.



## **SNOW DREAMS**

Today everything is surrealistic

There are the mushrooms, strawberries,

Abstract,

Of an endless canvas.

But last night

Really deceived. Snow on a blanket-like

Married schizophrenic camouflage

Cold kisses and delicate erasing

The dust of compassion, dwindling

With care of the seed to rescue and touch  
Post a song. Life wakes up, emphasized  
Grown to the peak of affirmation and  
Coldness, within their souls.

Morning snow from a lazy sky  
Artificial replacement,  
Slowly falling,  
In the resistance of loss.



**Carl Scharwath:** Carl Scharwath has appeared globally with 175+ journals selecting his writing or art. Carl has published three poetry books and his latest book *“Playground of Destiny”* features poetry, short stories and photography (Impspired Press) His two photography books were published by Praxis in Africa. His photography was also exhibited in the Mount Dora Center for The Arts gallery and The Leesburg Center for The Arts. Seven global poets have also selected his photography to grace the covers of their published books. Carl was the art editor for Minute Magazine (4 years,)





On edge of city,  
a village.

Edge of village  
a forest.

Edge of forest  
a fear.

Edge of fear a hope.

Edge of hope?



**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.



## **DROWNING SONG**

She fled her troubles to live by the sea  
But her troubles travelled along to stay  
She thought beach sand would sell serenity  
But still in her soul feels painful decay.  
In her darkened room through till afternoon  
She mutters out loud her mind's contusion  
She hopes some redemption is coming soon  
Lying half-dead in her heart's confusion.  
The house near the shore in winter is damp,



Fit for summer escape, not for a home.  
There's no escape. All complaints she'd death-stamp  
Her children should be grateful for sea-foam.  
Fine scenery cannot solve everything  
Like a monument stand unwashed dishes,  
Outside waves' drowning song shall always sing  
Now she must cling to her ship-wrecked wishes.



**Christopher Villiers:** I am a poet residing in Branton, England. I work as a writer. I have contributed to various anthologies and have also published three volumes of poetry.



## **WINTER MORNING**

silent falling snow  
trees patiently stand their watch  
as the woods turn white  
  
morning breeze has stilled  
no voice will spoil the wonder  
of this quiet day

my breath floats away  
into a featureless sky  
my tracks disappear

deep in solitude  
at one with the sleeping earth  
at peace with myself



**Dale Adams:** He lives in Bethany Oklahoma with his wife, 1 dog, and an unknown number of guitars. He loves reading about new subjects, as well as poetry and music. He has been writing poetry and composing songs since 2011. Dale has established SoundCloud and YouTube Channels, and has converted poems into songs for other poets. Some of Dale's publications are Warriors With Wings Anthology, and Fallen Angel Anthology.

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

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



*Daniel's Pic*

## **CHRISTMAS' HAIKUS**

Our coming Christmas:  
a new space to others  
to serve the Folks.

Christmas is to being  
as have been the joys  
to pass the time.

Simple Christmas' Tree

breadth of a wholeness

painting Spacej



**Daniel de Culla:** He is a writer, poet, painter and photographer. He's member of the Spanish Writers Association, Earthly Writers International Caucus, Poets of the World, (IA) International Authors, Surrealism Art, Friends of The Blake Society, Nietzsche Circle, and others. He is the Director of Gallo Tricolor Review and Robespierre Review. He participated in many Festivals of Poetry, and Theater, and has collaborated and collaborates with various magazines and magazines such as: Otoliths; The Stray Branch, Down in the Dirt Magazine, Allien Buddha Zine, and others. e-mail: [gallotricolor@yahoo.com](mailto:gallotricolor@yahoo.com)





## ECHOES

Speak my name in soft tones  
With words of approximate rhyme

Across the valleys of memories

Let my name echo sometimes

Oh poet speak to me

Tired old sad eyed old poet

Speak to me tell me

Lies about the future and the past

Tell me how you held me  
How you hold me still  
Carry me in your strong arms  
Take me to our marriage bed

Count the children we never had  
The winters we spent before the fire  
The New Years' Eves family days happy times  
Hours and hours we shared

Spin me stories like a spider spins a web  
Put a small cloud in each corner of my room  
Let me walk down the hallways in my mind  
And hear these stories

falling slightly out of rhyme





**David Norris:** He lived in Asia for 30 years. He resided in Seoul, where he lectured in writing and literature for the University of Maryland University College-*Asia* on US military bases all around the peninsula. His work has appeared in *The Chariton Review*, *Taproot Literary Review*, *Poetry San Francisco*, *USA Deep South* online, and *The Dan River Anthology*. David was born in the small town of Covington, Virginia, way up in the Alleghany Mountains. He left when he was 20 and has been traveling ever since.



## APARTHEID: 1974

Mozambique, Angola, are liberated,  
Zimbabwe will soon be.

There is a terrible inevitability about everything:  
You know that there are many thousands,  
some not yet ten,  
some now with girls in their arms,  
some now somersaulting their minds with thought,  
some who are still in their mothers' wombs,  
who will be tortured for what they are;  
who will lose limbs, life,

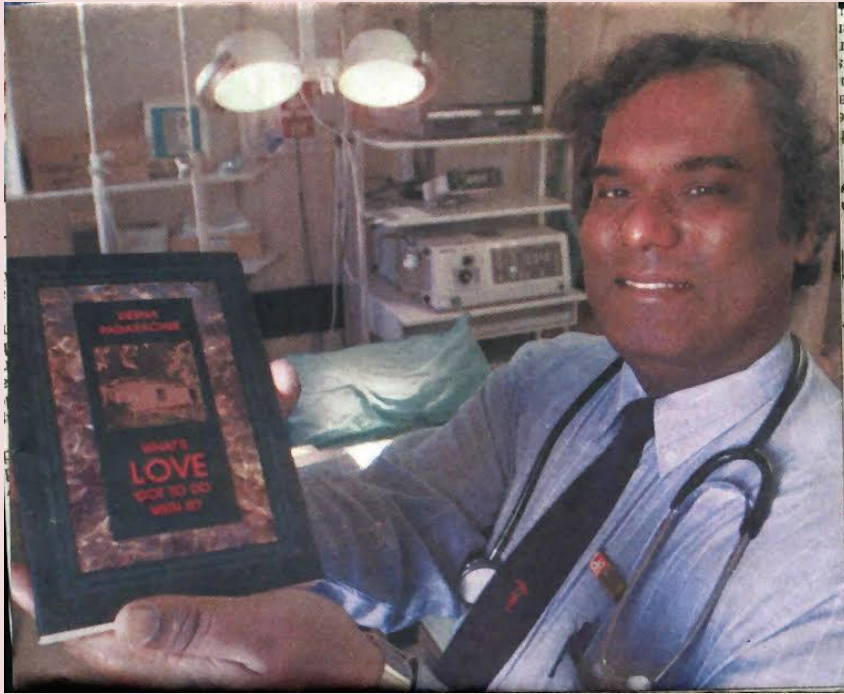
who will die,  
for life,  
and for a way of life.

They are afraid, our tormentors.  
They find changing difficult.  
Like fish with the water slowly being removed,  
they refuse to compromise.

The shroud of death  
is at last beginning to spread to entomb  
those who are taking the life  
out of our lives

***Written in 1974***

***First published in my anthology, 'A Voice from the  
Cauldron' in 1986***



**Deena Padayachee:** Dr Deena Padayachee is a medical doctor, a graduate of Natal University in South Africa. He is the recipient of the Olive Schreiner and Nadine Gordimer prizes for prose. His poems have been published in India (GloMag), the United Kingdom, the USA, Australia and South Africa. His book of liberation poems, 'A Voice from the Cauldron' was published during Apartheid in 1986. Some of his oeuvres have been translated into Xhosa, Zulu, Tamil, Hindi and Italian. He has been invited to speak at literary conferences at universities in Germany, India, Denmark, Mauritius, the USA and South Africa.



## **BEING UTTERLY WOMANLY**

Your eyes rose from above the rim  
of my near empty chalice  
like twin suns  
and I lay bathed in the light of your golden brilliance.

My lips  
slightly ajar, called out your name as a soft eager question.  
So tell me, what is the color of this moment I ask.  
Red of course you say.

Red like poppies growing wild in the moors

I quip

or red like the sunrise bleeding into the skies?

Red like lifeblood coursing through our veins

or red like Tomatini

covered in the fruits of passion?

Red like chillies that sting your mouth

or sizzling fire that burns your flesh

or else red like an all-consuming love more potent than the two?

Red like rubies, glittering on your drunken lips you say.

The taste of wine on your ruddy tongue.

The smell of roses on your fiery breath.

Your blood shot eyes creating lava in mine.

Red like that.





**Deepika Chand:** She is quintessentially artistic and sees herself as a Poet, Artist, Mystic, Empath, Forest Lover, Tea Person and a Mind Wanderess. She has won Editor's Choice Awards in the U.S. in the past. More recently, she was honored by 'The Nissim International Poetry Prize' 2020. In addition, she has co-authored her debut book 'The Blue Hours' with Professor and Pushcart Nominee, Dr. Koshy AV. Her poems have been featured in prestigious anthologies. Presently, she is writing in her new glowing Avatar 'JUGNI (The Mind Wanderess)'. She also paints 'Abstract Figuratives' and 'Portraits'. Three of her paintings have graced the covers of Karamvir Puruskaar Awardee Rashmi Anand's books.



## **BETWEEN MOTHERS AND DAUGHTERS**

The shrubbery along the daily walkway bears a little more dew.

She wheezes a little, as she trudges along on her ageing knees, trying in vain to gather it on her fingers .

She would have dipped her lips into these delicious pearls had she been the young girl who still breathes within.

The wintry sun lights up her freckles as it rises further, trying to embrace her and lift her sagging spirit.

She's walking with a little limp, I can see from the distance.

And suddenly she smiles.



The warmth of a thousand suns seeps through me.

I sip the last of my morning tea.

The alarm says its almost 9.

I have to rush, and I can see she walks lazily back home.

She can be in a faraway land, but never away from my mind.



**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.



***Artwork © Esteban***

## **BROKEN BURNING BRIDGES**

*Before Dawn* – A battered nation pummelled with brutal salvos of weaponry of mass

destruction fractured defences a proud nation defenceless  
all peace fences destroyed ruptured

shredded weakened whilst crucial bridges destroyed before  
dawn – The horrific reality of a

heinous maddened psychotic weak leader hoping to remain  
all powerful through the might of  
unprecedented genocide devoid from humanity or sanity  
even common sense whilst essential  
infrastructure crumbled in Kherson, a main transport route  
targeted – The Antonivsky bridge  
over the Dnipro River blown up halting crucial lifeline  
resources to reach the wounded the  
displaced the forlorn the starving the desperate the fallen  
but what about the children?

*The Prayer* – Dear gracious God please protect our sons  
and daughters all who we have lost  
so many sacrifices this senseless immoral war what is it  
really for? Our prayers now urgent pleas  
for peace oh God please halt this armageddon advancing  
heartless army blindly following  
false prophets accelerating their own insanity allowing  
themselves to give in to madness! We  
yearn for brighter days how it used to be – Oh how we now  
pray spiritual serenity to warm

our souls amidst this chaos in these darkened days. We are in a desperate hurry for peace...

*My Name is Yana* – As I walk on this peace piece of wood underneath a damaged bridge

connecting Irpin to *Kyiv* I praise God for these young heroes our liberators giving us a

chance for life but my village suffered cruelly my own family no more because of this

senseless horrific war forced upon us! I cry for my country I shiver for the harsh winter

I ask God to watch over us to protect us because I believe only He will end this atrocity.

*Under The Bridge* – My eyes now fixed on the murky water underneath me but I look

ahead for the fallen that their souls are healed. I cry for all Ukrainians. I refuse to surrender

we refuse to bow because we are ultimately all *Ukrainians forever!*



**Don Beukes:** He is a South African, British and EU Poet and writer and Poetry Chapbook Reviewer at The Poetry Café. He is the author of 'The Salamander Chronicles', 'Icarus Rising-Volume 1' (ABP), and 'Sic Transit Gloria Mundi'. He taught English and Geography in both South Africa and the UK. His poetry has been translated into various languages. He was nominated for the 'Best of the Net' in 2017 as well as the Pushcart Poetry Prize (USA) in 2016. He was published in his first SA Anthology 'In Pursuit of Poetic Perfection' in 2018 (eBook) and his second, 'Cape Sounds' in 2019. He is also an amateur photographer.



[www.outdoorrevival.com](http://www.outdoorrevival.com)

## THE CERTAINTY OF OUR WORLD

We perceive existence squintingly.

In one moment our desert  
becomes an blizzard.

We shelter in a treasure cave  
and then see it's a grave  
and the celadon bowl  
we drank from, someone's skull.

We close our eyes, clear our minds,

once more find ourselves in the mine.  
And the ground on which we stand--  
it's quicksand and Waikiki sand  
and then back again but now it's rock  
and we sway and sway on a stormy dock.  
Opposites may all be true at once  
or equally false and unfixed. All depends  
on distance, circumstance, and our senses.  
ready for a drought  
rediscover the flood.





**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.





### **A LITTLE DRIZZLE WASHES UP THE BUD**

All are not perhaps heaven's flowers  
Much as hide I in disguise the tears  
So sure as fate in reverse the wind  
Blows back tearing leaves that find  
Here is so great and there is so small  
On the earth's face it often does fall  
Bearing in mind that never was born

In much chaos the image is shown  
Begotten by nature as pious as light  
Touch all on earth to turn into bright  
The dark is dead lying on the grave  
Plumbless to man in fateful to save  
Upon the very earth, beneath the sky  
Beyond the God all creatures do lie  
Stare at and stare as much they can  
As the path snaked in an overgrown  
Why evokes a heart in the vast blue  
As if comes white smoke out of flue  
Appears as mirage from far off road  
As if a little drizzle, washes up a bud



**Dusmanta Choudhury:** He is a poet residing in Jeypore, in the district of Koraput, Odisha, India. He is a Lecturer in English in Dr.B.R.Ambedkar Jr. College, Lamtaput in Koraput district in the Department of Higher Education Government of Odisha. He has contributed to various anthologies. He has recently got the Honour of Pentasi B World Featured Poet 2020 Honour. He is also a member of the Pentasi B world Friendship Poetry, The Tunisian Asian Poetry, The Poetry Society, The World Nation's Writers Union, The Love, The Global Literary Society, The Namaste ink an Author's Manifesto, etc. He has also published many Odia and English poems.



## CONFIDANT

*Translated Ula de B*

Are they illusions

God, Allah, Satan?

The truth is human,

who with the shy whisper

turns to the own

invisible, spiritual guide.

Wanting,

for affiliation with him

to be a celebration and an every day's light

one has to see those closeby  
– believers and nonbelievers.

When the hail of thoughts and innuendos  
doesn't allow for peace,  
in which harmony will be the unity of body and soul,  
it's time,  
to believe,  
and from the shapeless image  
to form a shape  
of your silent confidant.

The prior imagining  
will become a luminous hill  
– enchanted in faith.

The universe will fit everyone in,  
the visible and the invisible,

searching for those,  
who have already found the way.



**Eliza Segiet:** Received Global Literature Guardian Award from Motivational Strips, World Nations Writers Union and Union Hispanomundial De Escritores (UHE) 2018. 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, World Award Premiul Fănuș Neagu 2021. At the international Festival of Poetry CAMPIONATO MONDIALE DI POESIA (2021/2022) she won the title of vice-champion of the world. Award BHARAT RATNA RABINDRANATH TAGORE INTERNATIONAL AWARD (Marc 2022)



## ICE POEM

Through tundra veins of a Nordic memory  
a poem travels alone – forgotten; gathering  
leaves and love over time –

Leaves picked by the wet salt that clings  
from verses by great poets – word memories  
of great lines; now forgotten &

love amassed by the beautiful absence of

the romance of arms, breasts, lips and  
the cornucopia of coupling –

Words that shade a winter's sunrise  
or lend music and triple beats to a dusk of  
polar bear's waltz, flow from Ice &

freezing the heart from vocalizing; holds  
the pen that slashes over their kind of love  
and writes another love poem.





**Feby Joseph:** Hailing from state of Kerala, Feby Joseph describes himself as a spiritual vagabond, currently working as a Piano teacher in Mumbai. Feby is the winner of Reuel International Prize for Poetry, 2020. Some of his works have appeared on Café Dissensus, Foreign Literary Journal and The Bangalore Review.



## DEATH SONG

### *From the Palm of God*

Anointed will be his grip,  
scoured of the sinner's blood.  
Grey mane will flow and  
death, you will know.

When the eyes of fire you mourn,  
lie restive and worn.  
Weep not for the throne,  
its scale does not speak,  
of reasons or what you seek.

Serve this day, its thunder neat.  
By his side, you'll take your seat.

“I am He who lives, and was dead,  
And behold, I am alive forevermore.  
Amen. And I have the keys of Hades  
And of death”.



**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. You can learn more about Ferris E. Jones by visiting [www.inquisitionpoetry.com](http://www.inquisitionpoetry.com) where each month he features the work of other poets. The goal of this site is to spread the word of poetry throughout the world.



## LULLABY

*For my twins; David and Daniel*

Sweet child

Tender and mild

Very young

And growing strong

The day is done

You've had your fun

You've had your play

It's time to pray

The night is nippy  
To make you sleepy  
Sleep early tonight  
To wake with might  
Remember you are a star  
Just the way you are  
Youth that twinkle  
Soon will wrinkle  
Life is full of merry  
Still can make you weary  
Life as colourful as it seem  
Is nothing but a dream  
This world with many and plenty  
Is a place void and empty  
The world may forget how you lived  
But never what you give  
All of your deeds  
Are but seeds

Once I was a child

And very wild

Sleep child

Tender and mild

The night is cold

Mum and dad crave to hold.



**Francis Otole:** He is a Nigerian born poet and academician residence in the Federal capital city, Abuja, Nigeria. He is a member of the Association of Nigerian authors (ANA) and many other literary groups. He is an award winning poet from the local and international scenes. He has been featured in magazines, journals, and anthologies, locally and internationally. He is a graduate of the prestigious Benue State University and a student of life. His hobby is reading and writing. He is married with two children.





## ALBATROSS

I'd like to be an albatross  
And soar o'er seas, o'er rocks covered in moss  
Feel the rush of the wild wind on my face  
Defy gravity with stupendous grace

Be a symbol of love, loyalty and luck,  
Freedom, hope and strength – I'd feel moonstruck  
Dance to woo my partner and mate for life  
No threats of divorces from man or wife

Fly great distances without flapping my wings  
Infinite landscapes my own, feel as rich as kings  
No respite required, I'd glide far and long  
Away from land, from all things wrong

I'd like to be an albatross  
The sky's child I'd be, the clouds my candyfloss  
Be on top of the world, can there be a better thrill?  
While the winds of fate take me where they will.



**Gargi Sarkhel Bagchi:** The 1st prize winner of 'The Reuel International Poetry Prize, 2022', she hails from Pune, India. A university topper in her M.A. with German studies, she received a fully funded DAAD-scholarship to complete her second Master's from LMU, Munich. The thesis she wrote there was published by GRIN publishing house, Germany and is available on Amazon worldwide. A German teacher for over 18 years, she has been pursuing her passion for writing since 2013 and has contributed her writings towards innumerable prestigious national and international publications.

Though currently engaged full-time as a tutor with *Deutsch Uni Online*, Munich, for students world over and as a German corporate trainer, she looks forward to publishing a compilation of her writings soon.



## CORPORATE CUTTERS

It is the boss's birthday. The 20 member team contributes to get the cake, chips, samosas and cold drinks. They do not forget to add paper plates, cups, candles and a knife to the order.

The order is placed on a table in the pantry and cake on another table, as always.

Boss cuts the cake while the team sings happy birthday. You are quick to give a piece with cherry on top to the boss.

And then you look around to see where Sangita is to do the rest of the cutting and serving but she is not around.

No! Sangita is not the chaiwali ( the woman who serves tea)

Nor is she the kaamwali ( the woman who cleans up )

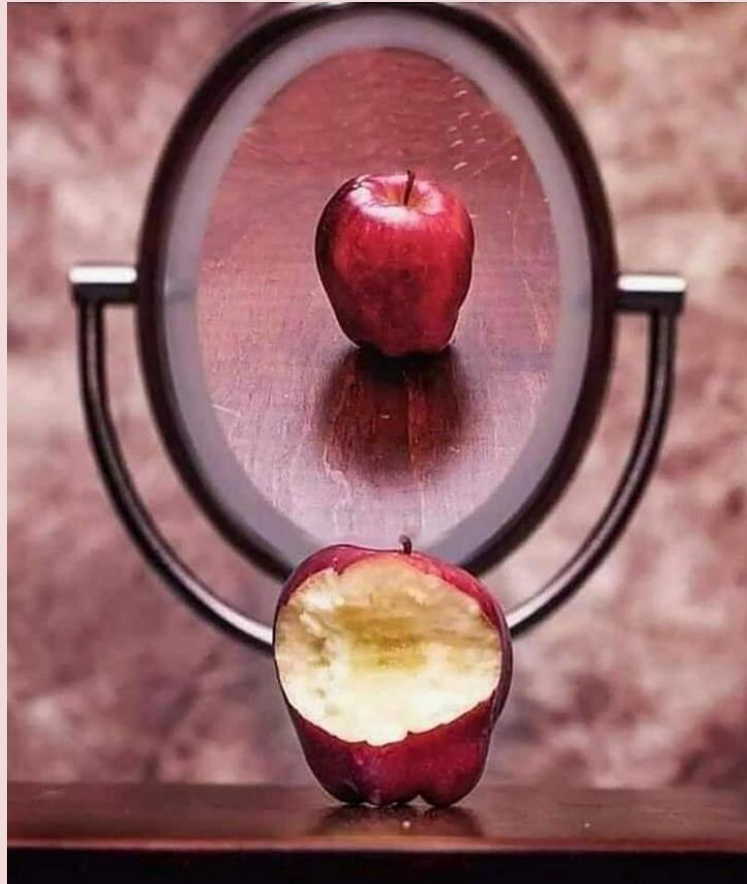
And no she is not your gharwali ( wife ) either

She is your female colleague, the only woman in the team other than the boss herself.

You then almost call out to the boss ....



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



## **WORLDLINESS**

Some are only acquaintances but some you can call friends

Behind this veil it's not easy to see faces real

Some want you momentarily in a lighter vein

Some are moved to see you in distress and pain

It's a fragile world... fleeting emotions and full of mess

But is it not the way we learn life and people just by a  
glance?

Whether you are smiling or in pain



Don't think much what you lose or gain

Try always to learn something

Because life never stops teaching....



**Gayatree G. Lahon:** Hailing from Assam, Gayatree G Lahon is a teacher by profession and a poet by passion. She is a post-graduate in English literature from Gauhati University. She is closely akin to nature and her poems delineate her feelings very beautifully. She calls herself an aesthete who tries to find beauty in every aspect of life. Even the complexities of life compel her to scribble in her own way. Her poems have been published in various anthologies and magazines, both in India and abroad.





I watch

A sick mangy pup

Wag its tail,

I watch it stare.

Maybe it is hungry

I wait for someone to feed her

And, I just watch.

What's preventing me from giving,

Going near the pup or touching?!

Someone feeds the pup

I just watch.

Someone inside says, 'Poor thing',

But I only watch.

I say it needs a vet,

But I don't move or call.

I just stand and watch.

This is cruelty

Or, detachment, as they say.

I don't act and I watch

Actually, my mind.



**Geeta Varma:** She is a poet based in Chennai, India. She has contributed to numerous anthologies. She has also published two books. She has been a teacher for thirty years and a freelance journalist. She is now an Educational Consultant and writes for Deccan Herald. She enjoys working with children and has conducted many creative workshops. Her interests include music, reading, writing (poems and stories for children) and travelling.



## IN REPLY

The breeze dances around my face,  
Enticing me to open my eyes, already two deep caves,  
Where a clear stream of acceptance runs mirroring the  
bedrock,  
Wisps of my free tresses acknowledging its presence,  
I smile.

For with its invisible hands it moulds my countenance,  
What else could be born out of acceptance?  
Outside my vision I see palms sway in response,

For the breeze is so much like my soul lingering and  
prompting,

As I dance in the still cadence of all that co-exists,

The temple it plays with encircling and entwined in musical  
pillars of my body,

And I dance with my eyes still closed to every little sound  
around that surrounds,

In reply.

In silence.



**Geethanjali Dilip:** Geethanjali takes her name seriously and evolves as a handful of songs. A French teacher by profession she contributes to several ezines and blogs. She is a recipient of The Reuel International award for Poetry 2017 and also the meritorious award for commendable mention in Great Indian Poetry Contest 2018. Residing at Salem, India, Geeth believes that poetry connects and moves the world.



## **NO, IT DOESN'T**

My rolling up in a pile  
amidst my blankets;  
hugging my pillow close;  
the darkened windows;  
my apathy to food  
or wanting too much;  
and water-can-waits;  
friends are such nuisances -  
so much drama!

Going out?

Pish!

Too much bother!

And I've seen this series before -  
they're all the same.

I'll never lose weight;  
and anyways he wasn't my boyfriend -  
he just liked her more...  
move on...

No it doesn't -  
you're imagining it.  
Nothing I've said  
has anything to do with depression.





**Glory Sasikala:** She is a writer, publisher, and poet currently residing in Chennai, Tamilnadu, India. She is the Editor and Publisher of GloMag, an international poetry and prose magazine. Her poetry books, novels, and short stories are available in various online bookstores such as Amazon and Flipkart as well as on her blogs. She is on the brink of publishing a very interesting collection of anecdotes and short stories inspired by her rather colourful and chequered life.



## **LET ME BE YOUR THOUGHTS**

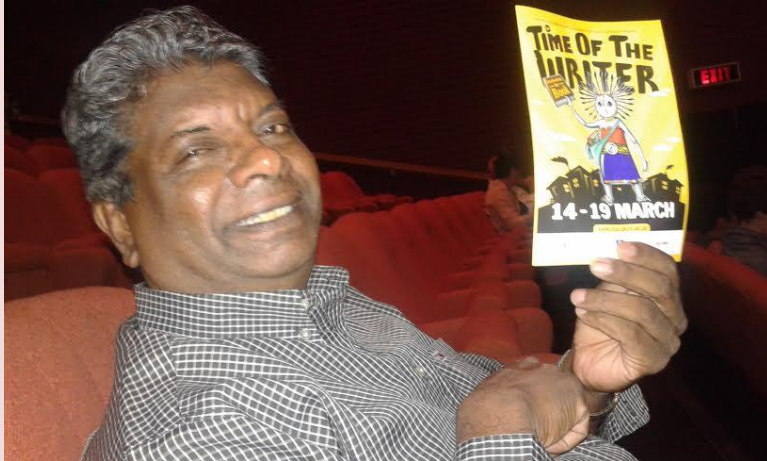
When your mind wanders aimlessly  
veering in nomadic listless dispiritedness  
and you want to leave the world  
with its melancholy blues behind  
and your thoughts aimlessly drift  
searching for that elusive dream  
let me be the keeper of your thoughts  
cherished in the inner sanctum of my mind

don't send your thoughts floating on a stream  
on its way to the lonely sea  
to drift away in the vastness of the ocean  
don't send your thoughts on the wings of the uncaring wind  
to be blown into fragments in every direction  
don't send your thoughts on a wild journey on the wings of  
floating clouds  
there isn't a silver lining stitched on the seams of the clouds  
perchance a raging storm hides, to shatter your dreams  
and wreck deep wounds on your fragile spirit

when your thoughts are restless and weary  
flying through the vastness of nothingness  
passing through the wilderness of solitude  
lost and astray in the loneliness of vicissitude

if you need a repository to keep your thoughts sane  
let me be the one to lure them to my heart  
let them sing with mine, a lover's symphony

your thoughts and mine complementary  
with the rhythms of timeless love



**Gonapragasen Naicker Aka Danny:** He is an Indian born, and brought up in South Africa. He has been fascinated by, and writing poetry since his early boyhood. He has performed his poetry at various forums, including the Poetry Africa Festival, the Mauritian Writers' Association, and Glorioustimes, India. He is the Convenor of the Live Poets Society, Durban, South Africa.



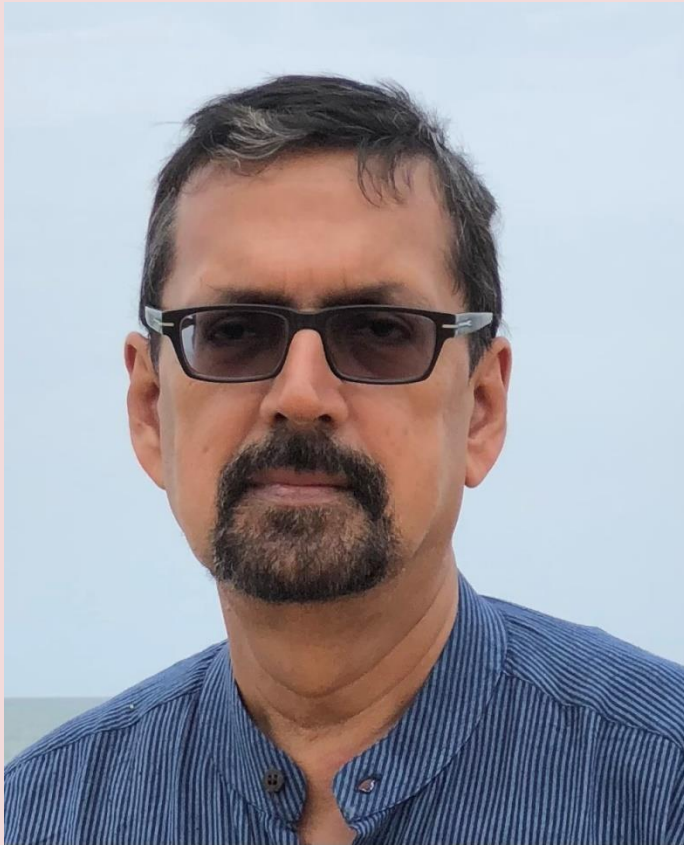
## LONGING

So far below, so far away from the rest,  
here going means only waiting,  
hovering in same place,

everything I see hides another thing  
there is so much other movement I do not perceive  
letting go is difficult,

dry leaves reel down in torrents  
filling my dream with light brown eyes  
I sit on the edge of the moors,

once mauve fading into pink into red  
the twilight  
etching forever yearning on my skin.



**Gopal Lahiri:** He is a bilingual poet, critic, editor, writer and translator with 27 books published, including eight jointly edited books. His poetry is also published across various anthologies as well as in eminent journals of India and abroad. His poems are translated in 16 languages. He has been nominated for **Pushcart Prize** for poetry in 2021. He is the recipient of the Poet of the Year Award in **Destiny Poets**, UK, 2016, Setu Excellence Award, 2020, Pittsburgh, US and **Indology** Life-Time Achievement award, West Bengal, India. His latest collection of poems '**Alleys are Filled with Future Alphabets**' has received wide acclaim.





### **A POEM FROM A YOUNG MIGRANT**

With searing rhythms inside,  
I leave my Thanlwin behind.  
My heart perversely stays behind  
in Ramanya.

Tears shove their way out,  
carrying the message of temporary goodbye  
on behalf of my strangled



Plying seagulls in withering light  
hear my gasping grief pervading  
Salween's corrugated

Far from my cherished homeland,  
I make my way toward a new bosom  
across Mekong's indigo terrain.

Here, in Sawadee Ka reflected on honest smiles,  
your Phleng Chat Thai in loud and happy unison,  
and the healing chimes at Phra Chedi Luang in the  
burdenless zephyr,  
I suddenly hear the sound of Peace I hunger.

When I see colorful people in daily seeking strides  
making the most of living in a harmonious paradise,  
and many an undiscovered door you unfold on my path,  
I sense within me the fresh birth of a heart mightier than  
the power of adversity.

Under the kind cocoon of Maha Vajiralongkorn,  
I find a warm refuge.  
Siam, my second home

Here, in the ethereal light of surging dawn  
sprinkled with the fragrance of Freedom  
and suffused with a rare, vibrant promise,  
I pray the dawn light of my motherland  
to be clear of the smells of blood;  
to be empty of the wails of unheeded sufferings.

Krung Thep, when I have paid off what I owe to you,  
let me return to adorn my beloved peacock  
in the dazzling robe of the proud sun\_\_\_  
let me return to adorn my beloved peacock  
in the dazzling robe of the proud sun.

## **NOTE**

***Thanlwin: The river surrounding Mawlamyine in Mon State, Myanmar***

***Ramanya: The ancient name of Mon State***

***Salween: Thanlwin also known as Salween river***

***Mekong: A river that channels between Myanmar and Thailand***

***Swadee Ka: Greeting in Thai***

***Phleng Chat Thai: National Anthem***

***Phra Chedi Luang: One of the famous historical sites in Thailand with tiny bells tinkling in the stirring air***

***Maha Vajiralongkorn: The current sovereign of Thailand***

***Krung Thep: The way Thai people call Bangkok city***

***Peacock: A metaphor that signifies the land of Myanmar as it is shaped like a peacock on its map.***



**Hein Min Tun:** He is a recipient of “Distinguished Writer Award” from International Bharat Award for Literature-2022, the third prize winner in Asian Literary Society’s weekly poetry contest, a featured poet on the UK-based The POET Magazine and a regular contributor to GloMag and a multi-published poet in numerous global anthologies.



## EYESHADOW

The arrival of this grey winter morning  
fails to prevent me from searching  
for the warm colors of fall  
in my new eyeshadow palette...

I refuse to accept the season's pale hues:  
being autumn-born, I singe my eyelids  
with cinnamon and rose-gold...

I apply eyeshadow because

I've often been praised for my beautiful eyes--

And why shouldn't I highlight

the burning, the beautiful

just because I'm mourning

the winter departure

of my once-incandescent love?



**Jagari Mukherjee:** She is a poet, editor, and reviewer based in Kolkata, India. She has two full-length books of poetry and two chapbooks. She is the winner of Poeisis Award for Excellence in Poetry 2019, and also the recipient of Reuel International Prize for Poetry 2019, among other awards. She is a gold medalist in English Literature, a Best of the Net 2018 nominee and a Bear River Writers' Conference alumna, and a Bear River alumna. She won the Women Empowered Gifted Poet Award in 2020, and the Bharat Award For Short Story 2022. Jagari is the Founder and Chief Executive Editor of the literary journal, EKL Review.



## CONNECTION

in a fleeting image across the sky  
the eternal silence of a gliding wing  
there, a familiar, honest and true  
enough to guide a body through  
the love required to live this life

hands stacked, a web, a vine  
a finger moves across a palm  
the fortune teller illuminates the bridge  
we travel together across this night  
no boundaries here to navigate  
no time, to age a perfect face



look out to see the flowing water  
reflecting that which has gone before  
an ever changing bed of roses  
to keep us warm and hold us close  
words create a recreation  
sweet music from moist embouchure  
and in our hearts the truth gestating  
in perfect season, a paradise born



**Joe Kidd:** He is a multi-award-winning songwriter, speech writer, music/film critic, and ordained minister, inducted into Michigan Rock & Roll Hall of Fame 2017, recipient of Michigan Governor's and US House of Representatives certificates for work promoting Peace, Social Justice, Cultural Diversity. He lives in Detroit Michigan USA with partner, author/vocalist Sheila Burke. He has a CD titled *Everybody Has A Purpose* 2015, a book of poetry titled *The Invisible Waterhole* 2020. His works appear in benefit recordings, Music For Japan, and Songs For Standing Rock, many poetry journals. He was on tour throughout North America and Western Europe.

<https://www.amazon.com/Joe-Kidd/e/B089QYDXSM>

<https://joekiddandsheilaburke.com/>



## **NUDE MODEL**

Do you still remember...?

Sitting face to face in my balcony  
you made my pencil sketch  
on a piece of plain paper.

Can you find your way back here  
through life's blown up corridor?

The blasted bridge lying on its rubbles  
give way to walking shadows no more.

Do you still remember those all,  
the corner seats in the theatre hall,  
my head on your shoulder, our kiss,  
sitting hand in hand, inhaling peace?

We are friends no more, rubbles declare,  
buried alive under the shelled horizon,  
I still wait for you, my enemy dear,  
find back your way past the hanged sun.

Now you stand alone in the hearth  
caught in between life and your birth.  
All war uniforms melt alike, rough or fine,  
who'll claim your limbs, when found among other nine?

I still clutch that sketch, breathing,  
find me by your work of love, living.  
The art won't disappear in an illusion,  
smashed, when I'll decay beyond detection.



**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 poetry books are 'Unfinished' (2010) and 'The Bridge' (2022). Her oeuvres have been published in various national and international anthologies. Kakoli is equally keen in vernacular literature. Many of her Bengali poems have been published online and printed in local magazines. She is also a painter and a jewellery designer and has keen interest in music and art in general.



## GANJA

*This poem is from a series called, 'I come from the Slum'.*

*I call these 'my terrible poems'*

Three they were : Fifteen, thirteen, sixteen,

Gangly, loose-limbed, threadbare clothes,

Hanging loose on them like disconnected limbs..

Uncombed hair, hippie-style, greasy..

Zombie-like eyes followed me as I walked down the street..

Alarmed, I hurried away to school..

One, in particular, the fifteen-year old, my age,

Almost got up to come towards me, the other pulled him down;

Three schoolboys, now dropouts,

Idling in the abandoned ruin of a building..

How was I to know that this would be the last time I'd see them alive?

We were once playmates in our streets,

Their fathers were in our employ,

Their mothers regularly came home, asking for this and that,

I was allowed to play with them, and then, things changed.

I was prohibited from all conversation with them..

Their eyes mocked the world, from gaunt faces..

The day I knew of that deadly mocktail that they consumed

Was the day their bodies, were brought out, blue-black,

After they had gone two days of 'missing'..

His eyes still sought mine, in a plea of forgiveness, of understanding, of deliverance..



Oh, dear boy, I saw the young withered face,  
My childhood friend with whom I shared chocolates  
Oh, had I just known, I could have done something just  
something to help..  
“How?” I asked the policemen, who were removing the  
bodies, “Ganja,” they said.

I took up the cause of youth addiction at my school...  
And brought awareness to my locality..  
I regret to this day, not having done it earlier.



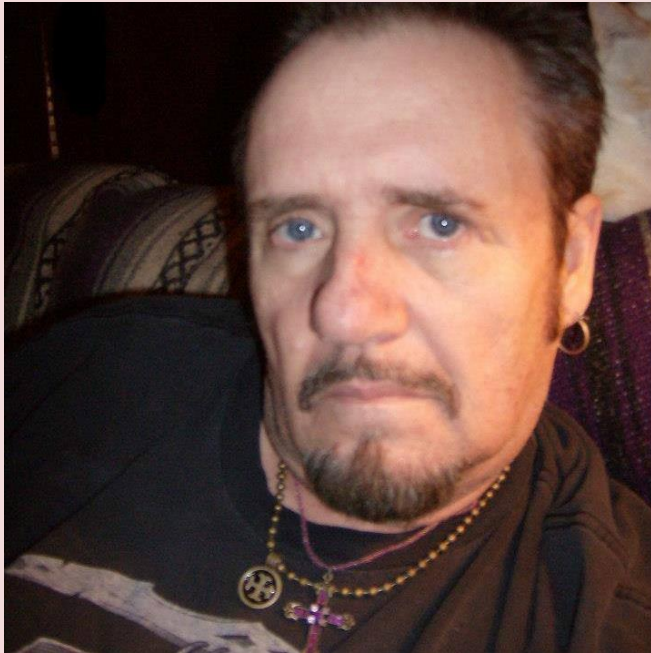
**Kamar Sultana Sheik:** She is a poet, writing mostly on themes of spirituality, mysticism, and nature with a focus in Sufi Poetry. Her professional career spanning 18 years has been in various organizations and Institutions including the IT sector. She is a self-styled life coach and has currently 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.



## BECKONING SEA

My hand reaches to block the sun's rays;  
soaring high is a lone white gull,  
warm breath on cheeks  
reflected blue sky; parted lips.  
The sea overflows white sands  
serene of shadow; soft of noise  
wings of green teal swiftly wave;  
quietly the heartbeat quickens.

Blue autumn sky  
love, hopes and dreams;  
Sometimes, I see you there.  
Off-shore is where you'll find me  
even if you're only a fantasy;  
ocean winds hale to me  
taking me so far away from you;  
an autumn sea rages.  
The beckoning sea just;  
Waves, waves, waves goodbye!



**Ken Allan Dronsfield:** He is a disabled veteran and prize winning poet from New Hampshire, now residing in Oklahoma. He has six poetry collections to date; 'The Cellaring', 'A Taint of Pity', 'Zephyr's Whisper', 'The Cellaring, Second Edition', 'Sonnets and Scribbles' and his latest collaborative book, 'Inamorata at Twilight. Ken's been nominated four times for the Pushcart Prize and seven times for Best of the Net. He was First Prize Winner for the 2018 and 2019, Realistic Poetry International Nature Poetry Contests. He has recently begun producing Creative Content on his YouTube channel and has had wonderful success sharing his poetry with the social media community. Ken loves writing, thunderstorms, coin collecting and spending time with his rescue cats Willa and Yumpy.



***Despite popular support, religions continue to oppose same-sex marriages in Australia. The only ones supporting same-sex marriage are Uniting Church, Reform Jewish synagogues of Judaism, and Buddhism. While the Federation of Australian Buddhist Councils says that it has been consistent in its support for same-sex marriage since 2012, the Australian Council of Hindu Clergy says that marriage under Hinduism is between a man and a woman - a view they share with the Australian National Imams Council, which says that Islam sanctifies marriage as only being between a man and a woman.***

## **THE RAINBOW OF LOVE**

She cupped her partner's neck in her palms  
And ran her kiss from her forehead to chin  
And stayed on her lips the longest

“They might say we stole the rainbow from Heaven  
But it was ours all the time because  
yesterday we had a nine hour rainbow  
The longest lasting rainbow ever  
Ours is a natural sexual orientation  
Our love is a legitimate social event”

The Australian people voted Yes  
The Australian parliament said Yes  
And the sky gave the longest bow  
In seven colours of gender  
In seven hues of sexual orientation  
Lest our preference for particular genitals  
Does not turn into a cissexist fetish

Love is between two persons  
Not necessarily two genders

Marriage is a relationship

Not a religious vow

Marriage is about love and space

Not about sex, gender and religion

Marriage is not for reproduction

Nor a consequence of reproduction

Marriage is not threatened by gay couples

Nor by marriage equality

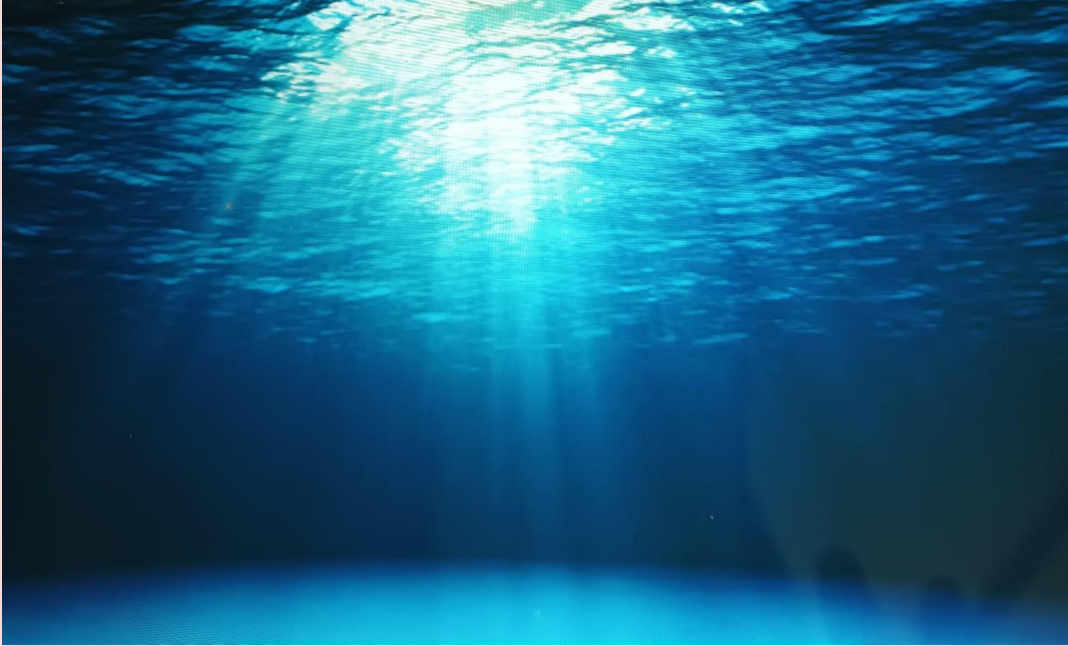
But by a lack of loving commitment

Turning many marriages into loveless deserts





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



## **A LEAP OF FAITH**

Through the prism of personal experiences, I pass...  
through the layers of reality stereotypes,  
growing in seasons of unstoppable time...  
flowers and thorns,  
sun splashed days, rain dawns, cloud songs, moon drops on  
flowing rivers,  
laughter and talk.

Wisdom is painted with feelings,  
they linger in words on thoughtful doors and windows of  
the mind.  
they come together serendipitously,  
lingering on intense joy and pain inside the musical  
introspections...  
unknowingly marked and calibrated in the reality of time  
and space.  
The stars are gone...  
hidden in the zone of darkness.  
I empty self of self, speck of speck and  
feelings of dark nothingness,  
that drift to the galactic edge...  
like being gently drawn to source...  
a quiet, velvet touch of death offline...  
The stars are gone.  
There is left,  
only a leap of faith.



**Ketaki Mazumdar:** She is a poet who writes prolifically with passion and joy. She and her latest book *Woodsmoke and Embers* has been listed amongst the Top 50 most influential authors of 2021. She has been honoured by Ukiyoto Publishing as Poet of the Year 2022. Her poems have immense depth and deal with life, love, nature, women, mysticism. In her book, she weaves a tapestry of India in a section, *Terracotta Thoughts*. Her love for her country shows through, seeped in imagery of places she has travelled, in India. An educationist, with a National Award, she has also authored children's books.



## **DHANUSHKODI**

Desolate it stretches far and wide  
No jaded root to recall its time of pride  
when fertile squares breathed green  
dwellers in their mien appeared serene  
content to sell their wares in the town  
Angle their languid way back to shack  
live within the realm, recline on their back.  
They ignored the sea's howl and roar  
garnered sea shells on the gold-crested shore.

Feared none, never divined what's in store.  
Its sanctity had a hoary esoteric label  
where Lord Rama's bow drew a parable.  
The canoe glided, a gentle swan on the stream,  
Chiming temple bells crooned the hymn.  
And then....came the terrible requiem!

All went into oblivion in a day's roar,  
Maniacal fury scything life, the snowy  
froth of memories interred on the shore.  
The marooned islet froze into folklore.

Passing years winnowed its tears.  
Bleak stumps bear the signature of hell.

I watch untested youth frolic on the waves.  
Behind them is husk of a rusted icon in canvas.



***Dhanushkodi: A serene, beautiful hamlet it once was which had a miniscule population, a revered temple, post office, hospital and a school. In 1964 a terrible cyclone accompanied by tidal waves that rose to 20 ft, flattened the entire flourishing village. All that remains now is desolation all around but it has its name tagged to Lord Rama of Ramayana who built a bridge across the sea with the help of monkeys of Kishkinda to rescue his abducted wife, Sita. The very ocean that Rama tamed turned out to devastate a village.***



**K.S.Subramanian:** He has published two volumes of poetry titled ***Ragpickers*** and ***Treading on Gnarled Sand*** through the Writers Workshop, Kolkata, India. His poem 'Dreams' won the cash award in Asian Age, a mainstream publication from New Delhi. He was once featured in museindia, run

by Central Institute of Indian Languages, Hyderabad. All his short stories, 16 of them so far, have appeared in various web sites, notably Muse india, Indian Ruminations, Kitaab, Indian Periodical among others. Poems have been highlighted in several anthologies, published both at home and abroad and web zines. He is a retired senior Asst. Editor from The Hindu.





## **ARTISTRY**

Painters paint heavens.

Singers

rattle the sky.

There is art to be found,

systematically,

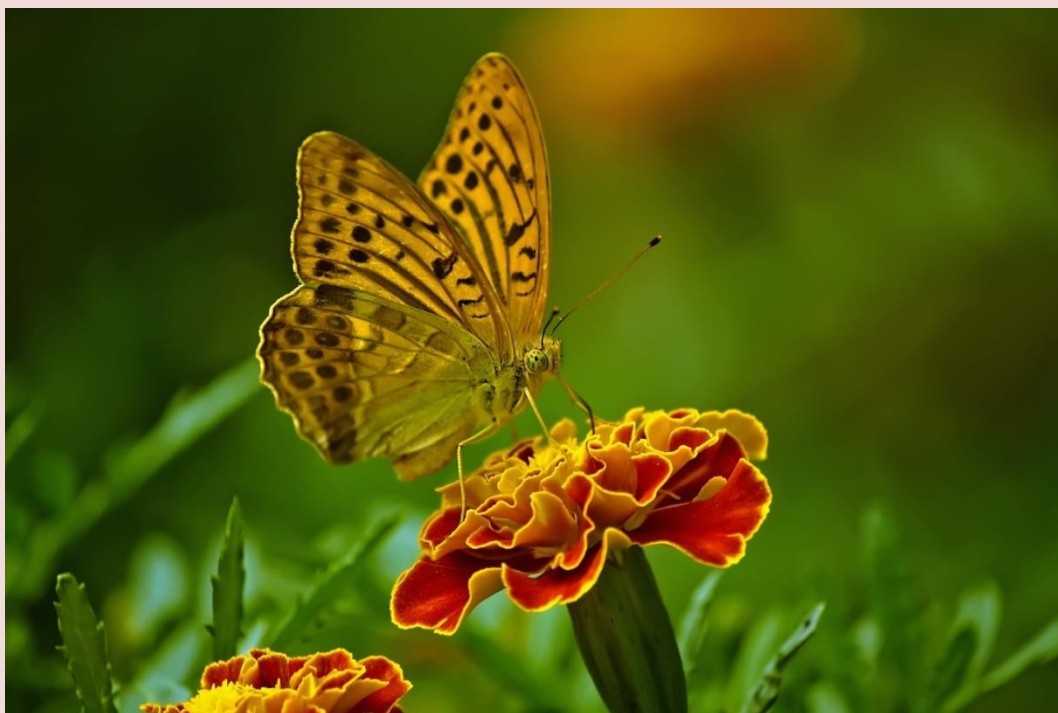
within every heart.

And across the vault,

each hope shines as a star.



**Linda Imbler:** Linda Imbler's poetry collections include six published paperbacks: *Big Questions*, *Little Sleep*, *Big Questions*, *Little Sleep* second edition (expanded with 66 additional poems); *Lost and Found*; *Red Is The Sunrise*; *Bus Lights*; *Travel Sight*; and *Spica's Frequency*. Soma Publishing has published her four e-book collections, *The Sea's Secret Song*; *Pairings*, a hybrid of short fiction and poetry; and *That Fifth Element*; and *Per Quindecim*. Her new book, *Rhythms Told*, will be published this autumn. Examples of Linda's poetry and a listing of publications can be found at [lindaspotryblog.blogspot.com](http://lindaspotryblog.blogspot.com)



## **BUTTERFLIES REMINDED ME**

The beautiful butterflies reminded me of my color

My beauty and vigor

Which I need to be aware of

The butterflies reminded me of my choice

My broken wings and strength

Mostly it shook me from my core

Reminding me and myself

You are yourself

and the selection of selecting

the vibrancy and passion  
colourful feature in our dominance  
butterflies reminded me  
of you and your ever smiling devotion  
to achieve your milestone.



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



## KOHL EYES

She blew away the light, swiftly  
Whispering his name, huskily  
Red lips, Kohl eyes a seductress at play  
Flaming hearts refuse to tame,  
come what may

His touch spiked her existence  
Intense power exist even in silence  
Her sensuous steamy breath, beauty, alluring  
A million kisses, passions soaring

Matchstick extinguished,

smokey essence

Untamed desires arise, such is his presence

Two souls entwined in dense dark

Exploring, intimately igniting a spark



**Lubna Ahmed:** She is a Certified Master NLP (Neurological Linguistic Programming) Practitioner; NLP Workshop Facilitator and Soft Skills trainer; and Certified Advanced Life Coach. She conducts SuperKoolKids Art Therapy workshops. She resides in Delhi with her family. She has managed to carve a niche for herself in the literary world by



her ever so simple 'Love poems'. 'Princess Lubna' is her pen name, her writers' identity. Her love poems are spiritual and have a Mystical Aura. She has written many poems for National and International Anthologies. She is an avid traveller.





## **TORNADO!**

Waterspout

A tornado brewing!

I could almost hear the waves howl

Like the lost leaves of autumn

Waiting for their burial

Under the shroud of powdered snow.

Here December seldom strides.  
The pale moon, the yowl of the wind,  
The bright sunshine on a bright morn in spring;  
Or the petrichor on a summer afternoon,  
Even that heady aroma in that coffee mug  
All seem to be hand in glove!  
Suffusing the emotional and cognitive domains!

An invisible battle  
A constant war within!  
When the past is the enemy  
And today defends the bygone  
Can tomorrow ever triumph?  
Storms come and subside!  
Like always, lows of life  
Devastates the very core;  
Love shall happen never more!



**Madhu Gangopadhyay:** She hails from India. She has a Master's degree in English Literature from Calcutta University and a Bachelor's degree in Education. She is fiercely passionate about poetry and short stories, and a penchant for mythology. She has been in the education industry for two decades now. She has also been a content developer and has designed academic course books for senior school students. Her works have been published in several anthologies and online journals. Her poems have been translated into several languages. She is also an exponent of Indian classical dance forms. Currently she is pursuing MA in Psychology.

<http://madmusingspoetry.com/home>

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



## **SECRET OF THE NIGHT**

The wind whispered softly

Spanning long distances

"Sleep, I am there for you".

Mixing all the colours in a palette

Nature painted an arching rainbow,  
excelling the arch of your eyebrows.

Cradled in the lap of a ditty, she drank  
the nectar dripping from your lips.

The cares of the world wafted away

by the strength of your promise -  
lulled all woes behind closed doors.  
The shadow of an unseen presence  
kept moving long and short, undulating  
rhythmic like pulsating heartbeats.  
Melting into the night, holding on to  
a comforting lie, like a cuddly teddy bear  
Night snored deeply to be awakened by  
Cheering, smiling buttercups.



**Madhumathy. R:** Dr. Madhumathy is a retired Associate Professor of English. A lover of literature, her poems have figured in journals and anthologies. A member of Destiny Poets (ICOP), Wakefield, UK, many of her poems have come under their highly commended category. She is also in their panel of critics. Her poems have appeared in the US-based 'Setu Bilingual' published from Pittsburgh. One of her poems titled 'Erasure' was selected as the Poem Of The Month by Destiny Poets.



## THE WORLD BAZAAR

The golden sunshine  
and a buzzing,  
market like world,  
The deceptive 'bazaar'!  
Concrete piles  
stacked in golden jars,  
Some houses  
and a few homes,  
And some dream shoppes;



Therein lie stacks of relationships,  
With ferries of falsehoods,  
Plays of fancies,  
some pleasures,  
many sorrows,  
Lying amongst some scattered bondings,  
the torturous alliances,  
and some relations uprooted.  
There is a small crowd  
that's lonesome,  
Some love resides inside,  
but then there is disgrace too,  
Some stories are in the making,  
and many tales left incomplete,  
imperfect and worsened;  
Feel some smiling moments run through,  
Also sense some hateful hearts,  
Bitter truths and



the sweet lies too:

The sheer curtain

of glittering lights

flutters here,

with something hidden,

something very different,

Unpredictable,

and unimaginable,

that may vanish within a blink!

Open your eyes,

Choose your pick

and get down to business,

For this market of the world

is abuzz and awakened,

The bedazzling, deceptive bazaar,

bathed in the fresh sun-rays,

decorated by the glimmering golden sunlight.



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



Being tactful and having the ability

to show emotions with ease

Often represent the culmination of

being vulnerable and weak

Comprehending that these very traits

make people unique

Being empathetic, compassionate, and sensitive

Sometimes it integrates unnecessary grief

Piercing the internal aura with pessimistic streaks

Still, it's the truest form of life,

that lets you love, laugh and live



**Madhu Jaiswal:** She is a bilingual poet, writer and social worker hailing from Kolkata. She is executive editor and an in-house graphic designer with The Impish Lass Publishing House, Mumbai and has 8 anthologies to her credit. Her creative contributions have been published in various national and international anthologies and she often gets featured in prestigious e-zines and is associated with several prestigious projects. She was recently featured in the prestigious anthology Aatish 2 alongside various stalwarts. She bagged third prize in Beyond Black Sakhi Annual Poetry Awards 2019-2020. She is attached to a social group named Share A Smile and volunteers for social causes and upliftment of the destitute.



I just love the sun's rays  
in the winter mornings,  
peeping through the clouds  
as if they have a story to tell.  
How beautifully they fill  
the blue of the sky  
charming the whole world  
with the spark of its glory.

I just love the sun's rays  
in the winter mornings,  
spreading its sheen  
throughout the blues  
creating an enigma  
an aura of its beauty  
still lurking in the mist  
of unending grace.

I just love the sun's rays  
in the winter mornings.



**Mehak Varun:** She is the author of three books - THE HUMANE QUEST (volume-1,2 &3), published by Authorspress, New Delhi. She is born and brought up in Jammu and settled in Chandigarh. 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. Recently, she has been awarded Gitesh-Biwa Memorial Award of excellence for her article on woman power "I Just Need A Chance".



## **JESUS AND HOW HE MUST HAVE FELT**

Staggering out Wee-Willy's  
dumpy dive bar, droopy eyes,  
my feelings desensitizing,  
confusing my avocado fart,  
at 3:20 a.m., with last night  
splash on Brut aftershave.  
Whispering to my outcast  
self-sounding is more like pending death.  
My body detaching from myself,  
numbed by winter's fingers.  
I creak up these outside stairs



to my apartment after an all-night drunk,  
cheap Tesco's Windsor Castle  
London Dry Gin—on the rocks.  
I thought of Jesus  
how He must have felt  
during His resurrection  
dragging His holy body  
up that endless stairwell  
spiraling toward heaven.



**Michael Lee Johnson:** He lived ten years in Canada, Vietnam era. Today he is a poet in the greater Chicagoland area, IL. He has 248 YouTube poetry videos. Michael Lee Johnson is an internationally published poet in 43 countries, several published poetry books, nominated for 4 Pushcart Prize awards and 5 Best of the Net nominations. He is editor-in-chief of 3 poetry anthologies, all available on Amazon, and has several poetry books and chapbooks. He has over 536 published poems. Michael is the administrator of 6 Facebook Poetry groups and Member of the Illinois State Poetry Society

<http://www.illinoispoets.org/>



## LOVE YOUR LIFE

Life is all about happiness and sadness existing together like sunlight and shadow or day and night. On a lighter note, one of my friends recently remarked “Wow...you are like a celebrity woman now! So many awards and achievements... You are living a perfect life!” Seeing the best aspects of other’s lives especially on social media, people tend to assume like this. But this is our biggest misunderstanding about others. My friend or others who think like her, never realize the fact that I have my own share of ups and downs in life. They never know about the struggles, disappointments or failures I had in my path of

life, ultimately reaching the present position of an achiever with God's blessings. So don't believe that a perfect life means happiness. Your life may not be a fairy tale with 'Then they lived happily ever after' type of ending. It is a mixture of positive and negative events. When you are depressed, believe that 'Nothing lasts forever, this too shall pass'. Stop chasing happiness like a mirage in desert. Learn to accept life as it is. Love yourself. Love your family and friends. Be optimistic with a positive outlook towards life. Love your life! WISH YOU A HAPPY NEW YEAR!



**Nalini Janardhanan:** Dr (Major) Nalini Janardhanan, is a doctor who served in the Indian Army as an Army Medical Officer. She is a popular writer from Kerala who received the Katha Award and a writer of many medical books for which she has received the IMA Sahithya Award. She is an Akashvani artist of ghazals and bhajans. She has been felicitated with many awards for her contributions towards society as a Doctor, Singer, Writer and Army Officer.



I remember the day she held me lightly,  
Her hands were nervous and her lips shy,  
With a soft smile, she sipped the coffee.  
Ah! I witnessed the falling in love!

Then, some days, her hands would shake  
As she trembled and teardrops fell into the coffee  
Making it a bit salty I guess!  
She sipped it anyways.

This time her lips were pale and weary.

I could feel the loneliness in her touch.

Then I waited. I kept waiting for her till she came back with  
that magical touch.

That strong grip, the lips with grit and promises.

When she sipped from me, I just knew that

She wasn't going to give up!

And that made me happy for her,

As I was her favorite,

The lonely coffee cup!



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





## THE WINTER...!

Into the hollow of the lonely hours,  
pouring itself like a wild cascade,  
my fortitude in acerbic tone,  
pierce the soul  
the envenomed chalice shines in the thirteenth hour..!

And the shredded spirit,  
Adrift in tears,  
The paper boats in the flow of life..!  
Summoning itself for a deliberate wish  
to wriggle free  
from my embrace  
And so a felon in my court  
for a verdict.

Seduced by the riddles of life,  
in the light of burning heart,  
As if,  
Dandelion is ready to seed,  
tying me to the journey  
To the darkness before the light..!

Spilled over in each instant,  
The winter earth sings the dirges,  
As the snow flakes  
suicide for the leafless branches  
the dried ribcage of my world..!

The empty hollow echoes now,  
The coldness of death in each instant,  
The beats of a humanoid,  
In my lonely hours  
The symphony of a broken life..!



**Nitusmita Saikia:** Nitusmita Saikia, a bilingual writer from Assam, India is presently working as instructor in National Cadet Corps. Apart from poetry, she also writes short stories, plays and has been writing for magazine like FM, GloMag, and Innsaei. Her poems have been published in many national and international anthologies and in local newspapers, in blogs etc.



## IT'S ME TIME

It's time for me time

Bells do chime

Words do rhyme

Music in the background

Nostalgia does hound

It's the time for solo date

It's a meet with the soul

Reminiscent of being there  
Moments that seemed mere  
What's dear, froths up  
Infirmity bottles up  
Tête-à-tête with self  
It's me time, indeed  
Rushing memories  
Gushing feelings  
Percolating the aches  
Highlighting the joys  
Redefining choices  
Reminiscing lessons  
Limiting toxicity  
It's me time, yes it's me time!



**Nivedita Roy:** She is a teacher by profession, bilingual poetess and author. She resides in the Kingdom of Bahrain and belongs to Lucknow. Along with many other awards, she is the recipient of Independence Day Literary Honours 2021 and 2022 by Motivational Strips. She is the author of 2 solo poetry books in English and Hindi. She has co-authored 13 anthologies. Her poems/articles are published in many newspapers and sites in India and Bahrain. She is the Moderator for the Bahrain office of Motivational strips. She is one of the editors for the ezine Brahmand: Voice of the cosmos.



## MY CHRISTMAS TREE

Winter's icy doodles

Adorn the frosted glass windowpanes.

The moon, a shimmering snowball,

Adorns the shiny black cape of the night.

And I, I stare at them,

The snowflakes and the moon,

As they sparkle around me.

Then I step out to find my own magic.



I leave the path where the hydrangeas bloomed  
And primroses swayed among the grass,  
Walking slowly along the stream, now a sheet of ice,  
While being showered by gently floating white crystals.

With a sparkle here and a shimmer there  
Through the tress I spy the clearing coming close  
And there, twinkling and shining bright  
In tandem with the stars and the moon, it stands  
Proud and tall

My Christmas tree – a sight to behold

The sight, the scent, the scene  
Truly magical indeed  
A memory for today, tomorrow and forever.



**Nivedita Karthik:** She is a graduate in Immunology from the University of Oxford. She is an accomplished Bharatanatyam dancer and published poet. Her poetry has appeared in Glomag, The Society of Classical Poets, The Epoch Times, The Poet anthologies, The Bamboo Hut, Eskimopie, The Sequoyah Cherokee River Journal, The Ekphrastic Review, Visual Verse, and Trouvaille Review. Her microfiction has been published by The Potato Soup Literary Journal. She also regularly contributes to the open mics organized by Rattle Poetry. Her poetry books *She: The reality of womanhood* and *The many moods of water* are available on Amazon.



## SEASON OF CHANGE

The dry, fallen leaves crunch like paper under my heavy winter boots

As I walk on the path leading to the backyard.

The leaves that were orange, then red, then gold  
have now shriveled to a muddy colour  
and fallen off the branches of the trees  
and look forlorn as they lie on the grass.

Seasons come and go, but what of the changes I see in myself?

Am I as predictable as the seasons  
or do the curve balls that life seems to enjoy throwing at me

Make me step with care and caution  
on the pile of dry leaves so as not to disturb any vagrant  
snake  
or lizard that loves the blanket of leaves as shelter from  
the cold.

Step by step, I walk and realize that this is also a change  
that I need to cherish because with Christmas around the  
corner,  
I must hope for everything good  
and cherish the year that has been, curveballs and all.



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



When you say,  
'Live a little'  
Does it mean  
Floating in/on  
A bubble  
And flying away  
From reality  
For a while?

Does living mean  
Savouring joy  
Which the world  
Calls us unworthy of  
Or is it a slice of cake  
Eaten stealthily  
In the dark  
With those who share  
Your dark secrets?

Or is life  
Something unacceptable  
On the dark side of life...  
A temporary stroll,  
Stolen kisses, orgasms,  
Partying until senseless...  
Smoking until the mind

Encounters its core  
Or drinking until  
Alcohol purges one  
Off its ego... Enough  
For one's deepest emotions  
To surface for all to see...  
To laugh, cry, love or hate  
With abandon?

Is life exploration  
Of one's own inner self  
Denied to us?  
Is living flowering  
Of dreams and desires?  
Or is a life lived  
In a way  
That simply makes  
One happy?





**Panjami Anand:** Greetings, I am but a speck in the world, aspiring to be as aware and genuine as possible. My poems are fragments of my soul. Thank you for running your palms through them.



[www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)

## THE TOMB

*This poem commemorates 100 years of discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamun by Howard Carter in 1922*

A hundred years, a hundred years ago.

A boy of 12, Hussein stumbled on the top step of a tomb.

And then, on November 26th, 1922 Howard carter  
discovered the Tutankhamun tomb.

The tomb lay silent for hundreds and hundreds of years in  
the Valley of Kings.

And then, it was discovered...the only pharaonic Egyptian mausoleum with its burial artefacts intact.

The dazzling gold sarcophagus and five rooms full of treasures of the boy-king.

Thrones, statues, jewels, furniture and weapons all for the after-life comfort and swing.

All amounting to 4500 eye-dazzling, mind boggling objects.

Riches, riches all around; also a gold gilded bed with lion heads have been found.

The chamber in which the boy-king was laid,

The walls are covered in gold with a three piece coffin bed.

The most famous is the funeral mask, fathoming the jewels in it is a task.

A solid gold mask inlaid with lapis lazuli and eyes of obsidian and quartz.

Hordes of treasure and so much care after death,

For a boy-king who died at just 19, oh what a fate!



**Paramita Mukherjee Mullick:** I am Dr. Paramita Mukherjee Mullick and I live in Mumbai, India. I am a scientist, a poet, an organizer and an editor. Painting and photography are my passions. With nine published books and blessed with quite a few awards I happily head two forums---Being the President and Initiator of the Mumbai Chapter of the Intercultural Poetry and Performance Library (IPPL) and the Cultural Convenor and Literary Coordinator (West India) of the International Society for Intercultural Studies and Research (ISISAR).



Let me be a child again  
grow as naturally as possible  
enjoy joys of a child  
laugh, cry, and play  
like the Neem tree or mango tree  
sunshine or rain  
storm or thunder  
let me hear the sounds  
Amma, tell me stories

when you bathe me

when you feed me

or put me to sleep

let me study what i want

when i go to school

dont force engineering on me

i may like to be a gardener

or carpenter

Going abroad doesn't interest me

for studies or job

like to explore as a traveller

study what i love

Herbetology may be.

Dont force marriage on me

hate fancy weddings



so many lights and camera  
let me choose my partner.



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



## NEW EYES

All doors and windows open into deep wells. All openings stretch into darkness. Open eyes are wells into wide and steep otherness where yourself is present less.

Careful how you step into unlit rooms. Eyelid doors shut behind without warning. These are new eyes to you. A blink blooms behind you flashes a fresh new morning.

Lower bucket of yourself into go to otherness where light is different.



Where things you thought solid stone always flow,  
Things you thought always eternal are spent.

Every eye a well into other.  
New eyes, new shoes, new wells to discover.



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



### **S T COLERIDGE: A SIGHT TO DREAM OF, NOT TO TELL."**

The only place where I shred off all baggage,  
Of visible and invisible boundaries,  
Learnt things, unlearning lessons,  
Disrobing the cloak of fear,  
Transcending borders,  
Embracing parallel universe,  
Bunches of wonderful dreams,  
To live with me,  
Episode by episode,  
Every night,

Never to intersect each other in reality

May be to meet one day

And act like strangers

When settling all numbers

On the final day.



**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 OF HUNGER

A heartbeat

all that life misses these days

the way poem misses

the language of poetry .

No more words sprout,

the flow of language all that the murmuring poetic Brook  
lacks.

In poetry, the mountain is not just a height to scale,

One has to feel its innumerable wounds that feet leave  
while scaling.

The sky is a state of mind.

Sky, thy name is flying high!

You just have to stretch your skin a bit and see how you  
move with your own sky like an umbrella in hand.

I see hungry waves moving rhythmically like crocodiles

And the fathomless sea

Out of fear search's a shore in me.

Seen I have the jaw of the sea

very often in poetry.

Everywhere there is the poetry of hunger.

I have seen the deadly hungry eyes of the tiger in the forest  
of alphabets,

I have felt the fear of leaves

when tigers chase deer in the forest of words.

Somewhere something is missing.

In poetry these days

Missing the very language of poetry!



**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.





## WHEN

When hungry, eat your rice,

Tired, close your eyes.

When dirty, have a bath.

In company, listen more, talk less

And when you talk, let your words be soft and soothing.

When idle, relax or read a book of your choice.

In love, never give all your heart,

Keep some for yourself.

In the garden of life, be the flower

And never the weed.

When confused, go for a swim or shower.

When you feel like crying, cry your heart out.

When you want to laugh, laugh loudly.

Sometimes, listen to yourself quietly.

Spend not too much time listening to others.

Lead your life as if tomorrow you were to die

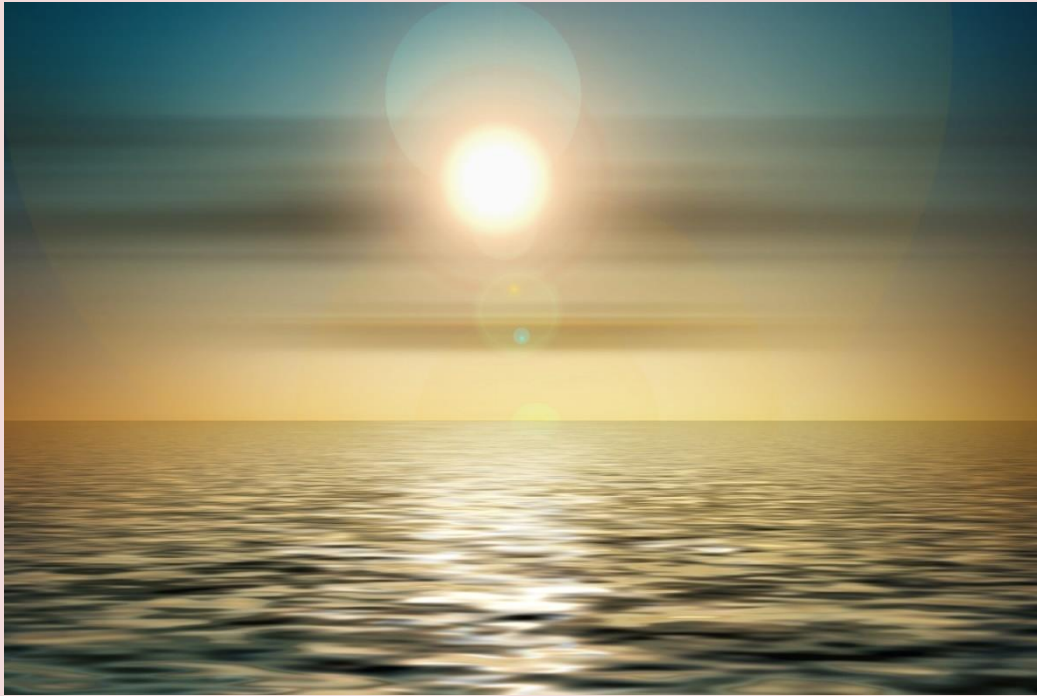
And when you die,

Be happy.





**Pramila Khadun:** She is a write/poetess from the Republic of Mauritius. Married to Raj, she has three children Dr Rajnee, Captain Kaviraj and Priyumvada. She is holder of a BSc degree in Home Economics from S.N.D.T. University, India and a Post-Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) from Mauritius Institute of Education. Before retiring as educator, she was Head of Home Economics at Modern College. She has several published books to her credit. She has contributed to several international anthologies. She is one among the Incredible Women of India. Ade CapasManilah (Australia) projected her as one of the twenty-five women of essence. Her poems have been frequently highly recommended by Destiny Poets based in the UK. She won the Reuel International Prize for excellence in writing and Literature in 2015.



## **THE BEST FRIEND**

Oh my Maker,

Do give me a dear friend,

To play with, quarrel with, have fun with, discuss things with,

Share my fears, worries and joys with,

Share my dreams with,

Who shall take care of me,

when I am sad, sick or poor...

Goodness! That is quite a long list of qualities!

Am i that, which i want in a friend?!

Am i asking for too much?!

I now realise my best friend is You my Lord!

You are my refuge!

I need none other!



**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.



## **THE NEVERENDING BOND**

The river keeps moving inside my soul,  
releasing the sweet and sour  
remembrances of bygone days.

As I walk on the shoreline in solitude  
the river flows gently towards an unknown destination.

in winter or in summer,  
the river keeps moving in between

In the mirror of my heart  
I lay on the sands

in search of joy and peace.

The sands of the shore don't know

From where the wind comes to blow them

Or, they don't know

where their homes are!

As the water keeps moving

through my consciousness,

I can sense the chillness of their rotation.

I can hear their pain and pleasure too

in every single moment.

At times, the sweet bonding

between me and the river,

Rejuvenates my soul and body in harmony.



**Preety Bora:** Hailing from a beautiful state Assam (India), the poetess, Mrs Preety Bora started writing from her college days. She lives in a city called Golaghat with her family. Nature inspires her to write poetry. She writes in both languages: in English and in Assamese (her mother tongue). Her poems have been published in various anthologies and magazines in India and in foreign countries. Being an innate lover of Nature, she allows her feelings and ideas to be expressed as free verse. Her poems visualise the beauty of nature and the fundamental elements of life.





## **FOXGLOVES IN CHARM**

How much of charm,  
How much hidden in the term,  
A hidden charm, still I daresay  
Visible and heard often,  
Driving the hidden slow devil;  
Both in my motherland,  
Fatherland, foxglove, improves,  
In one moment, I speed up,  
Roll it, roll on it, for further



Investigation, a speedy spell,  
On long love, enduring, endearing,  
Cannot describe any further,  
Fully venerable.



**Radhamani Sarma:** Radhamani, a student of Ethiraj college, Chennai did BA English Literature, and MA from Venkateswara University, Tirupati. She specialized in the plays of W.H. Auden for her doctoral thesis from the University of Madras. She obtained (PGDTE) CIEFL, post-graduate diploma in the teaching of English from Hyderabad. She is a retired professor of English from Pachaiyappa's college, with 31 years of teaching experience. She guided M.Phil and Ph.D. Research scholars. She has published four Books of poems and one book of short stories. She is widely published and anthologized and subscribes to various journals and websites, and is also a reviewer and critic. Now her avocation is mainstream poetry and haiku-relate verses, with a keen interest in Cherita and gembun.



## THE REMEMBRANCE OF THOSE DAYS

It took me so long to type and mail this  
it made you wonder whether I'd do it, or not?

You say I did things that meant something,  
to you at least. I say it was a chemical reaction,  
time, our test tube, our thoughts reactants.

If I made you feel more than what you thought you were,  
you did the same to me.

You are right about the game metaphor, and all its fun.  
I did not know back then, that I'd cherish the moments

in the months to come, maybe till the end  
of the months of my life. It's too early to be certain about  
that.

You know, it was a game when I showed you what I saw,  
when I only guessed your thoughts and got lucky!  
when I spoke my thoughts aloud and let you think  
they were yours. Some monologue!  
True, it was not plain luck all the time.

Your power was mine, so was the darkness within,  
and the light deeper in you. I saw your eyes sparkle  
as you soared on the wings of hope. I soared with you.  
I needed that more than you, I know now.

I am not good with people. Yet I felt good with you. Why?  
A universe we were, you and I, preordained to die soon.

I judged you alright, I judged as I sensed, and sensed  
all the strength, all the weakness filled in you,  
in us, me too. Believe me when I say  
that it was always about me. I spoke  
what made me feel right, good, healed, whatever.  
Sometimes it worked for you too.

I have a long list of things I did that I don't do anymore.  
I respect myself for being that man and am happy we met.  
Drifting every which where, we may be, but we carry within  
us  
the remembrance of those days:  
that twinkle in the dark sky, in cold that warmth.



**Rajnish Mishra:** Rajnish Mishra is a poet, writer, translator and blogger born and brought up in Varanasi, India and now in exile from his city. His work originates at the point of intersection between his psyche and his city. He edits PPP Ezine and writes at:

<https://rajnishmishravns.wordpress.com/>





*Painting by Vincent Van Gogh-Old Man in Sorrow*

## **DEEP IS THE OCEAN OF SORROW**

The whole world is spinning around me,  
There seems to be no full stop;  
How long am I destined To wait for embarking  
On my final journey? My whole self is  
Engulfed into the deep ocean of sorrow,

And there is no helmsman to steer  
My boat of life;

Though I am seated on a chair,  
The ground below has slipped from my  
Mental reach; with eyes closed by my  
Wrinkled pair of palms, I am  
Wading into the dark alleys of my  
Mind without finding a way-out;

Am I paying the price of my sins,  
Committed all over my life, or have  
I violated the widely accepted norms  
Of life? maybe both, my heart says;  
But the penalty imposed  
Is too harsh to bear;



How much I wish to recreate the  
Past scenes of my life and  
Rewrite the script once again,  
Even knowing that In real life,  
Wishful thinking is not allowed;

I am an embodiment, at this moment,  
Of missed chances and lost opportunities,  
In life's intriguing journey.



**Rakesh Chandra:** Mr Rakesh Chandra is a retired civil servant. He is currently pursuing his Ph.D in Law from Lucknow University. He has got two collections of poems titled 'Moon is Black' and 'Circle Of Life'. He also has one collection of Hindi poems. His English poems have found place in different poetry journals and newspapers' literary supplements. He also has authored two books on Law.



## **RESIDUES OF CRACKERS**

On Diwali night--

Buildings, temples, bazaars and the city  
deck up in magical hues of light:

Thousands of earthen lamps,  
millions of electric bulbs!

But do they ward off  
the self- imposed inner darkness?

Our hearts have hardened--

No oil, no lamp, no wick,  
not even a flicker of light!

The boundaries of mental opacity  
are too high for us  
to transcend!

The residues of fireworks and crackers  
zip across the dark sky  
now meaningless, lost forever,  
they seem like shooting stars,  
but no one can wish upon them  
otherwise I would have  
got my wish fulfilled too!  
I watch the flashes  
until the darkness engulfs them!  
Tell me...tell me--  
What do I wish for?



**Ranjana Sharan Sinha:** Dr. Ranjana Sharan Sinha is a poet and author with 9 published books in different genres and is a well-known name in Indian Poetry in English. She is a retired professor of English, S. B. City College, Nagpur. She has received many awards for her contribution to poetry, including a commendation from the former President of India, A. P. J. Abdul Kalam for her poem 'Mother Nature' contained in her collection 'Spring Zone'. Her poems from her collection 'Scents and Shadows' are part of the post-graduate university syllabus. She lives in Nagpur.



## **OF A CERTAIN BOND**

Thought I had locked it securely  
Odd how you entered my heart so quietly  
Never to leave it, so I thought!  
While there, you stayed with my thoughts  
Stayed with me, ate with me  
Travelled with my mind everywhere  
There was so much sweetness in it  
There still is; though there was much pain  
When you left, but only for a while!  
Your memories kept overshadowing it...

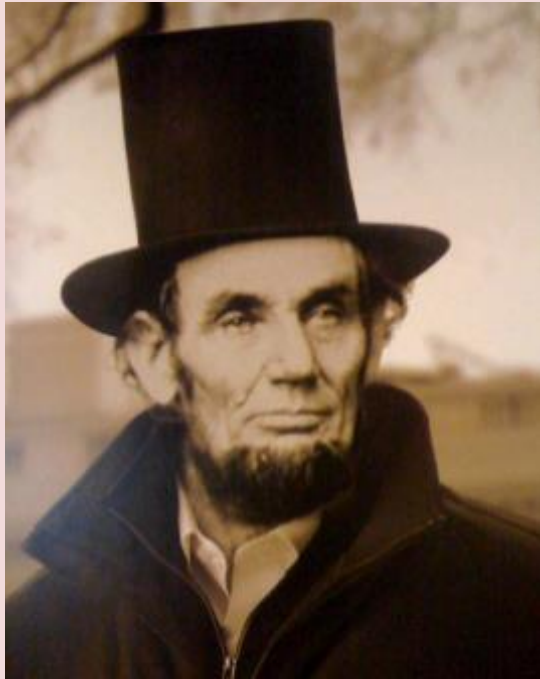
Now, the door of a certain chamber  
In my divine heart will be always kept shut.  
The talks we had, the laughter we shared  
The songs we sang with a certain longing  
Are all in that sacred cavern  
Along with that small seat where you last sat  
In my garden and shared with me your burdens.  
And when all others will never see me anymore  
I shall quietly, serenely stop by its door  
And ensure that even my shadow never lingers there...





**Ravi Ranganathan:** He is a writer, critic and a poet from Chennai and a retired banker. He has to his credit three books of poems titled “Lyrics of Life”; “Blade of green grass; and “Of Cloudless Climes”. He revels in writing his thought-provoking short poems called ‘Myku’. His awards include recognition in "Poiesis award for excellence" of Poiesisonline; Sahitya Gaurav award by Literati Cosmos Society Mathura; and ‘Master of creative Impulse ‘award by Philosophyque Poetica. He contributes poems for the half-yearly Poetry book Metverse Muse. He writes regularly for the annual anthologies of Guntur Poetry festival and Amaravati Poetic Prism. He is a regular contributor for Glomag and weekly contributor for the webzine “Literary Vibes”. He is the Treasurer of Chennai Poets' Circle.





## STATE OF THE UNION

pray for us

any excuses melted down,  
we are adrift in a country that once was a friend

pray for us

who once marched to songs of freedom,  
now lighting cigarettes again  
sitting in church pews and town meetings  
now filled with maniacal red hats

pray for us  
vomiting hybrid Monsanto tomatoes,  
this corporate earth has been desecrated  
leaving us prisoners solitary in our room cells,  
timid in our streets,  
with cynical eyes tracking the hesitancy of our steps

pray for us  
distrustful of our rainbow colors,  
southwest mountains eroding after a flood,  
and we may be buried alive,  
hushed inside our skins but for the silent rain  
falling on an unforgiving lake,  
heartless hours drifting,  
forcing back another somber day

oh Lincoln pray for our deliverance  
from these grey callous cities and towns,

so we may once again revere your legacy with heads  
bowed,  
unashamed and unabashed,  
for we were never a generation who fears fortitude,  
and the clear present struggle even to resist this country  
that once was a friend



**Robert Feldman:** Born in Paterson, New Jersey, Robert was inspired by members of Paterson's literary tradition, notably Allen Ginsberg and William Carlos Williams. Later, living in St. Louis, he organized poetry readings, produced and hosted a community-issues news hour and a biweekly bebop jazz radio program on KDNA-FM. After relocating to Bisbee, Arizona, Robert was instrumental in publishing some of Arizona's most influential writers and in 1980 and collaborating with Lawrence Ferlinghetti's "Mule Mountain Dreams". Robert now resides in Tucson, continuing to write, paint, and play tabla, besides actively publishing his work for selected poetry magazines as well as his own collections.



## **CUTTING TIES**

He was listed  
as a serial offender  
because the scissors  
never left him.

Running up  
on couples holding hands  
and snipping their shoe laces  
at the loop.

Announcing  
that he was cutting ties  
before running off  
into the surrounding  
woods.

Picked up later  
by the boys in blue.

A quick game of 20 questions  
before his pricey lawyer  
from the city  
walked in.



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



## CONVERSATION

River said:

I'm tired of a chronic pain

I can't flow as I should

My veins became drained

Like footways in the desert

I have been blocked

On my way

By anti-natural elements

My friends have

Gone away on their way



Trees said:

Oh dear, I'm so thirsty

Give me a drop to drink

My leaves have become

Dried and started to fall

I'm going to be a skeleton

Poppies plants said:

Oh, my playmate,

Because you don't have

Enough water,

My roots are not getting wet;

I have lost all my beauty.

No flowers have blossomed on me

No honeybees are

Being attracted to me

I became just as a  
Waste grass on this land

Pebbles said:

Oh my protector  
Since you become slender  
I got no option, but to surrender  
To the giant wheels of  
Earth-movers.

I lost the strokes of  
Your smooth ripples,  
And your cold hugs.

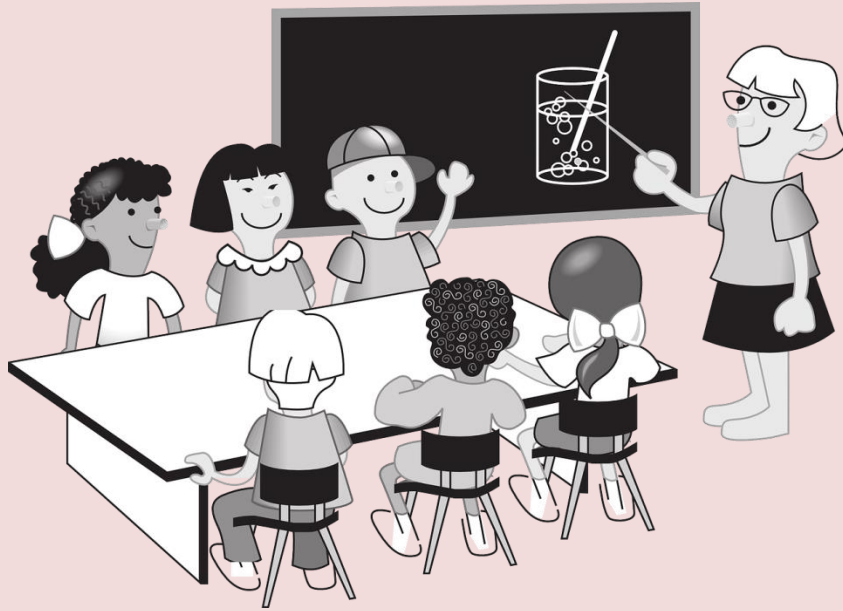
Now I'm lying on  
Someone's courtyards.

Save me, save us from  
The devastating calamity  
Save the nature

The river had no reply  
She struggled to flow  
Even as a tiny channel.



**Saleem Raza (Saleem Kattuchola):** A writer and painter hailing from Kerala, India. Working as a freelancer BPO. He writes short stories, poems, and travelogues in various regional language magazines (Malayalam), and periodicals with a pen name 'Saleem Kattuchola', and used to write English poems and articles in International magazines and newspapers. He is the author of the book 'Voyage through Emotions'



## MEMORIES

How time does fly in the blink of an eye!  
With heavy heart and teary eyes I now bid goodbye.  
Fourteen long years, it feels just like yesterday  
When we stepped into school on our very first day.

Meeting new playmates, with whom we grew up,  
Pen-fights, classroom cricket, chor-police were on top.  
We might fall, we might get into fights,  
But with a call for 'Games!' everyone unites.

Lock-and-key, wall-touch, colour-colour and more,  
We played our entire break, till both feet were sore.  
Sports days saw fun, songs and chants so clever  
And somehow it was always Yellow House who was the  
cheater!

Dancing for our teachers, and they too danced for us,  
Eating and giggling on picnics, drinking from plastic cups.  
Christmas was a delight for all of us too -  
You would know if you went to a Catholic school.

And when the time has all gone by,  
Memories are all that are left behind.  
And when we've said the final goodbye,  
Memories are all that are left behind.



**Samixa Bajaj:** I am a student from Guwahati, Assam. I'm currently preparing for my class 12 boards. GloMag has provided me with a regular forum on which I can present a piece of my soul through my writing, for which I am very grateful. Besides writing I love to read, dance (I am a Kathak dancer), sketch sometimes and I'm currently learning how to play the guitar.



## **ARE THEY MERE CHARACTERS?**

Cerulean skies gently give way to xanthic hues of dawn, a  
tinge of tangerine

Tracing dreams that have etched themselves over the  
misted window pane,

I silently mourn the death of someone the world hasn't yet  
known

It's emotionally draining, giving life to people whom you've  
created and then

Deciding a destiny for them...

In a month's time, I have lived so many parallel lives

Smiling, reminiscing, weeping - living a slice of life all over again

Through the pages of a book in the making

It's not easy - the catharsis comes with its fair share of unavoidable grief

Collateral damage, maybe - I don't know

Somewhere, even if it's in bits and pieces, I've put parts of myself into all of them

And now as much as I rejoice the victory of a dream come true,

The emptiness that follows - unavoidable

Could I have done better? I wonder

"Perfection is a myth, darling", my heart whispers

Perhaps... But then they are not just characters, at least not for me

And a goodbye, it's not easy

I'll probably sip some hot strong coffee and dream a little more

Live another slice of life, delving back into those pages



His hazel brown eyes, her emerald green ones and the  
game of chess

It's time to fall in love and continue the gamble,

Once again, let my thoughts go astray and recreate some of  
those ephemeral moments...



**Samrudhi Dash:** I am a poet, novelist, editor and motivational speaker, currently residing in New Delhi, India. I write under the pseudonym 'Inara'. Along with contributions to over two dozen anthologies, international e-zines and magazines, I have published till date five solo poetry anthologies and three novels and conceptualised and edited four anthologies of different genres. I have completed my Masters in English literature from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. My signature words are

"Hope, Live, Believe". My third novel "Letters from A Stranger - A Life Changing Map" is available as an e-book on Amazon Kindle and figured in the Amazon Bestseller List at Rank 10.



## **HOMEWARD BOUND**

You kiss me a safe ride  
through skies and winds  
that have touched war wrought lands  
that blows over seas of tears  
and hopes of sunshine wade through a sea of masks  
multicolored like the faces  
You've turned and left for home  
I turned and left  
for what is another  
home.

Mobiles connect me to different minds

One after another

Through smiles

And some tears I walk in and out

Of the many homes.

Though miles from brick and mortar,

I have niches in my heart.

You said goodbye to my

black screen.

I turned and left

for what is another

home.



**Sangita Kalarickal:** Sangita Kalarickal is a wordsmith, crafting in the forms of poetry, both free-form and haikai styles, and fiction. Her work has been published in several e-magazines, and anthologies. She utilizes her left brain at her day job in technology. Dr. Kalarickal lives in Minnesota, USA with her husband, kid, and her garden which she shares with wildlife, sometimes happily.



## THE DANCING FEATHER

Which bird had lost its feather?

There it lay forlorn; where had the bird gone?

Was it feeling lost, frantically hunting for it?

Ah, there it was- flying overhead,

a piece of bread in its beak.

Was it seeking its lost feather?

Hey, was the feather just striking a pose  
or was it really comatose?

Ah, lo and behold,  
there were notes of music in the air.  
The feather slowly lifted itself in elegant grace.  
A fly buzzing around fell silent,  
transfixed by the graceful swaying of the delicate danseuse.

It rose and fell in slow motion,  
blissfully enjoying the notes of  
the invisible musician conducting the orchestra.

La- la - la-

The air throbbed with lyrical notes.



Was the musician singing lullabies to the feather?

Perhaps rehearsing some new concert?

Did I just hear crystal glasses tingling?

The feather began its descent to the ground.

Snug and happy, its resting place it had finally found.



**Santosh Bakaya:** Recipient of the Reuel Award for poetry [for my poem, *Oh Hark!* Setu International Award, 2018, Keshav Malik Award, 2019, I am a poet, essayist, novelist, TEDx speaker, biographer, and creative writing mentor, critically acclaimed for my poetic biography of Mahatma Gandhi, *Ballad of Bapu*. My Ted Talk on *The Myth of Writer's Block* is very popular. I write a weekly column *Morning Meanderings* in Learning and Creativity.Com, the



first part of which is an e-book now. My two collaborative e-books, *Vodka by the Volga* with Dr. Ampat Koshy and *From Prinsep Ghat to Peer Panjal* with Gopal Lahiri have been Amazon bestsellers. My latest book is *Runcible Spoons and Peagreen Boats (poetry)*.



## **AUTUMN MUSINGS**

From baby green

Just about being seen

To green commanding respect

Mastering life at each aspect

To turning yellow

And allowing others to glow

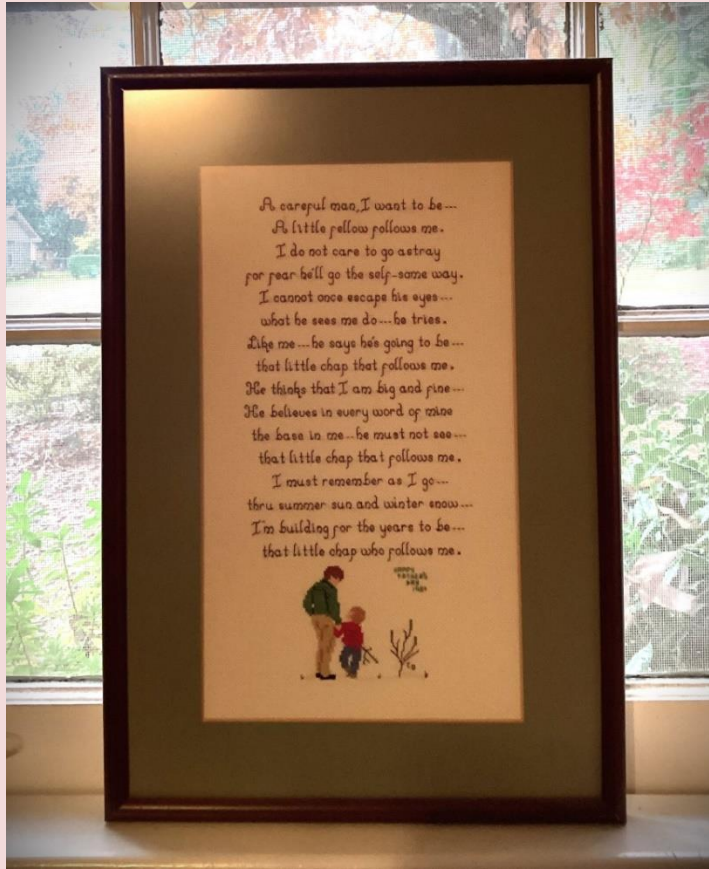
Passing on their wisdom  
To others so new and young

To a fine gold  
With a message so bold  
That now it's time to detach  
And go to ground and help new life hatch

Leaves are a beauty that show what life will be  
That at every stage, there is wonder to see  
To be helpful and finally push back  
To be a part of nature endlessly is their knack



**Sara Bubber:** Sara is a storyteller, writer, poet and an Animal communicator. She works as a content writer at Heartyculture Wellness. Sara spends time with books, her pets and her indie friends in the area! She is a fan of Bollywood over Hollywood and less known hindi series!



## IF ONLY IN DREAMS

My father

of infinite consciousness

passed away from this world

but eternal in the God state of transcendence

appeared to me in a perfect form

of amplified unification

and argued the point to my face

that you may shed your skin  
and seem to live several lives  
while roaming with a suit of flesh

but where he came from  
and has returned  
there is only one  
energetic point  
of truth  
that pulses  
forever

and with that encounter signed  
sealed and delivered  
I remember  
that the great abyss of fear  
is also the source

where heaven  
expands

so I'll be damned  
if I don't dance  
through every season  
while enjoying my time  
served on earth

because I know it's beautiful on the other side  
but there's still something about the sun  
that shines an awfully special song  
of light here during the tribulation





**Scott Thomas Outlar:** Scott Thomas Outlar lives and writes in the suburbs outside of Atlanta, Georgia, USA. He is the author of seven books, and his work has been nominated multiple times for both the Pushcart Prize and Best of the Net. He guest-edited the Hope Anthology of Poetry from CultureCult Press as well as the 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022 Western Voices editions of Setu Mag. He has been a weekly contributor at Dissident Voice for the past eight years. Selections of his poetry have been translated into Afrikaans, Albanian, Azerbaijani, Bengali, Cherokee, Dutch, French, Hindi, Italian, Kurdish, Malayalam, Persian, Serbian, and Spanish. More about Outlar's work can be found at [17Numa.com](http://17Numa.com).





## TUNES OF THE UNIVERSE

Standing at the tip of a tall cliff.

I watched the blue-white waves bang on the foothill

The strong hill smiles and ignores the pain – but I thought,

I am sensible to stand on a higher ground

Stable is the rock, and I made the best choice.

None can shake me for a million years.

The rock kept fighting the fierce azure water

And lo, the waves were receding quick

I said to myself they were scared of my presence

Steps unfold to the open land, once ruled by the sea

Roses flower all over, and a spectacular world unveils  
How lucky I am? My mind felt prouder and more confident  
I walked down the easy road and rested in the aroma.

Every step here is pre-planned by the universe.  
And we walk on it with the burden of pride in our heart  
I did it; I was the only one who could do it; how funny?!  
But do we really do it alone? Or are we the doer?  
The weird world with weird mind scripts many dramas  
And I, a foolish puppet, dance to an unheard tune.



**Shalini Samuel:** She comes from a little village in Kanyakumari. She works as a content writer at Kai Marketing. She loves to write as it gives her more peace. Author of three poetry collections she thinks poetry is a beautiful form of art, where the poet writes out his/her deeper mind and the reader gets a glimpse of it.



### **A BROKEN HEART**

I loved her with all my heart  
Gave my all, a place in my heart  
Only to be used and discarded  
Like a used and old tattered shirt

I loved her with all my heart  
Did her bidding, nothing short  
Hid my tears when I was ignored  
Drowned my sorrow in my heart

I loved her with all my heart  
Wine helped hold the painful heart  
The alcohol helped dull the pain  
But would not heal the broken heart

I loved her with all my heart  
I did, right from the start  
I would die for her and give all  
Did break Kavi Shankara's heart



**Shankar N Kashyap:** I am an artist - author, poet and painter residing in Newcastle upon Tyne, UK. I am a Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon. I have contributed to various anthologies, both National and International. I have also published 8 books so far including Medicolegal, Historical, Thriller as well as books on Poetry. I was declared “Author of the Year” on consecutive years 2017 and 2018.



Just the words,  
just the Words.  
Let's pull them in  
and string them up,  
the wind'll carry them all the way,  
and waves'll hum like a mother's song.  
Those words you dream,  
to the mountain rhyme,  
the sky's own rhythm.  
The universe will play  
that song  
till the day your vision fades...





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

[www.shreevarma.com](http://www.shreevarma.com)

[https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shreekumar\\_Varma](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shreekumar_Varma)





## WHAT IS THIS GAME?

There is magic in the air,

People are shouting

Kids are dancing

Flags are being swayed

There is a Mexican wave

Drumbeats fill the air

Dismay and cheer are being heard together

Families are united

People have waited for years

They have travelled for hours

What is this game?

Children play this game on the road

Boys play it on the playground

Now girls play it too

It's played at recess,

It is played by the rich and the poor

What is this game?

Hours of training

Years of practice

The final moment arrives

When you are finally on the green turf

Millions of eyes are glued on you,

Expectations of the country are on your shoulders

People are waiting with bated breaths

What is this game?

Finally, the teams have assembled  
Now it's time for the whistle to blow  
For the layman it might look absurd  
To see 22 energetic players fighting for a ball  
The euphoria cannot be expressed in words  
Yes! It is the game we all were waiting for  
The beautiful game is "FOOTBALL".



**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 organisations which organises 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.



it was a suspension bridge;

it was a public bridge;

it was a refurbished bridge—a 143-year- old, 233 metre  
long cable supported bridge—

on the Machchhu river—Morbi, in Gujarat

that collapsed on that fateful day!

about 250 people walking its floor—

all chirpy, excited and unsuspecting!

suddenly—the decaying cables give way!

the bridge swings; some victims swing;

waters flow and there are cries for help!  
the news of the crash spreads like wildfire!

the locals, the official agencies; the  
Navy, the Army...all swing into action!

some victims escape, some are rescued; some are injured  
and some  
are dead and gone!

condolences are paid;  
compensations are announced;  
demands for justice are raised—  
gloom pervades the houses of the  
deceased!

A man-made disaster;  
a result of negligence—wonder  
Who will now be blamed!



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





## THE HOMECOMING

It is finally that time of the year again,  
When the Mother Goddess is visiting with her children,  
When the air is filled with the aroma of the fresh fragrance  
of 'Kaash' flowers,  
When the azure blue sky seems to pay homage with tiny  
wisps of white clouds overwhelming the onlooker and the  
fast beating heart,



When the prayer chants and strains of the songs of the Noble Laureate Rabindranath Tagore charms the eager ears,

When the clay from the holy river Ganges used in shaping the form of the Goddess cannot be distinguished from that of the professional subaltern's,

When lengthening evenings and early dusks become the order of the day,

When the artists from Kumartuli with vibrant multicolor palettes and rainbow hues amazes,

When the different vestments adorning the Goddess and her family, radiates and sparkle with the sheen of gold and silver,

When the resplendent and iridescent Goddess looks on with a calm demeanor and motherly eyes,

When the jostling humanity with wondrous eyes views the magnificent accompaniments,

When the visions of the craft and skill of the artists' creativity transforms the ordinary to the extraordinary,

When the ingenious and innovative artists weave magic into the rich tapestries of the pandal—the traditions and

cultures of humanity, together with socially relevant themes,

When the crowds harmonize these symbols as the triumph of good over evil.

When the early dewy mornings resounds with the rhythmic sounds of 'Dhaak' and conch shells,

When the 'Anjoli' timings are announced over the mike,

It is then the racing heart beating in tandem to the sights and sounds exhales, bursting with exhilaration-transcending all barriers, acknowledges finally that the long countdown to Durga Puja has fruitfully ended

**Note**

***Durga Puja: An annual Hindu festival representing the celebration of female power as 'Shakti' in the Universe.***

***Kaash: Kaans grass***

***Kumartulli: A traditional potter's quarters in Northern Kolkata in the state of West Bengal***

***Dhaak: An Indian Percussion instrument***

***Anjoli: Offering of flowers and leaves of Bel to the Almighty***



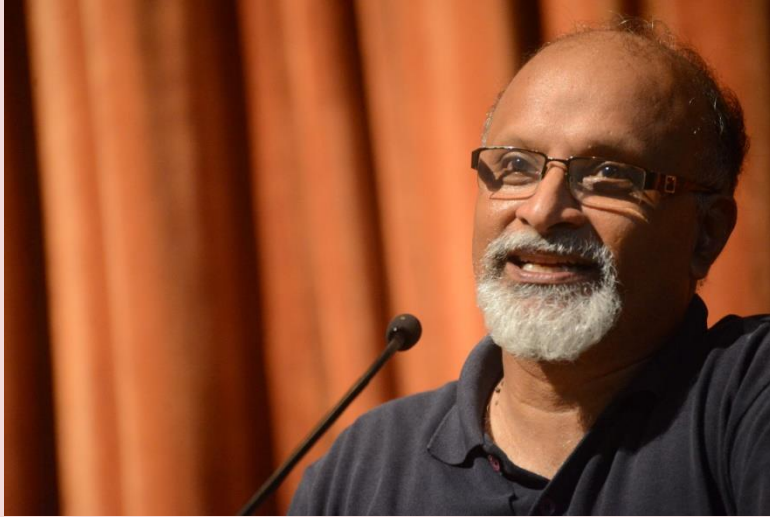
**Someeta Das:** Someeta Das taught for twenty-eight years in the English Dept. of Maharaja Manindra Chandra College, Kolkata. Among other interests, writing poems, short stories, and travel narratives are of special interest. She has published in Glomag, Woman's era, Setu, The Statesman and a number of e-zines.



I would rather die  
than live out a lie.  
A farce called love  
that was not there before and is not there now.

We wooed and cooed  
and all that we could  
to keep the images high  
while we did what we did in the sly.

You'll surely agree  
it feels great to be free  
to head one's own way  
at the end of the day.



**Sri N Srivatsa:** Originally from Madras of yore, I moved to New Delhi in 1978. I am a Physics graduate and a retired banker. I was a singer with the Madras Youth Choir. I worked both behind and on-stage in Tamil, English and Hindi productions of Arangam, Yatrik and Madras Players. I have been pursuing translation of good poetry from Tamil to English and vice versa plus a few in Hindi as a passion. Over the years, my poetry has been featured on television, various magazines and in an anthology of poems for children. Four volumes of Tamil poems, including two this year, by four different poets translated by “moi”s have been published.



## **A GLIMMER OF HOPE**

The saviour when malady, poverty and corruption rule the roost

The first ray of light at dawn

The cactus flower blooming in the desert sand

It is "We" against the narcissistic "I"

The gentle curve on the maiden's face as tears trickle down her cheeks

The brutish punch on the faces of misery, pain and agony

It is soothing and tranquil as mother's lullaby

The constant companion of a caged bird



It hides in the last corner of the soldier's throbbing heart

Singing "We shall overcome some day..... "

It is a glimmer of hope!



## HE MOVES ON!

Sturdy, handsome man sacrificing the youthful charm

Toxin of patriotism filled in his veins

Getting wounded, protecting the pride of the nation

Comporting his life in an illusion

Writing letters to his wife

Recalling how his mother fed him as a child

His companions are now the ammunition

But he moves on!

The autocrats sit reposed on their chairs

Minting money incessantly

He becomes a martyr, leaving his kindred tattered

Soon, another victim gets deployed

Leading his life in a manner alike

Filled with the toxin, given the ammunition

He, too, moves on and on...





**Staffy Bhateja (Steffi):** She is a 29-year old poet, editor and painter hailing from The City Beautiful- Chandigarh. She has completed her Masters in English Literature from MCM DAV College, affiliated to Panjab University, Chandigarh and has also done Masters in Philosophy from the University's main campus. Poetry and Painting are two of her biggest passions. 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. She believes in the words of George R R Martin that a reader lives a thousand lives before he dies and the man who never reads lives only one.



## **WINTER**

Pine frost with silver daggers falling like crackling ice.

Animals are trying to find an area safe and nice.

This winter has become bold.

Nothing wants to stay out in the cold.



**Stephen Goetz:** I'm a published poet from Lincoln City, Oregon, USA. I'm a senior street performer. I love to dance. I'm a published poet in online poetry groups. I've received poetry awards from Motivational Strips and affiliate groups. I've appeared in consecutive poetry books put out by Glomag.



## LET'S FOOTBALL

Thirty-two countries vie

For the Golden trophy that beguiles

A guilded hand holding a golden worldly orb

Frenzied fans with banners, coloured faces are the mob.

The world cup is not a cup

It's an honour with pride's up

Some big names, some giant killers

Some injured, some with guards and fillers.

'Gundogan' gunned on with a goal

Dembélé is neither a dumb-bell nor a dumb belle

Then there's a Duke and a Cash

Waiting to goal their stash

Lion 'Lionel' is Messimerising magical

'Harry Kane', couldn't hurry and was not Able

Balde with a thick mop of dark hair, a misnomer

Played his game square and fair, is a no goner.

Braithwaite didn't have to wait for his breath

Giroud is no Roo while Bah is no Rah-Rah

Mbappe, is the 'mai-baap'\* of the French team

Koke doesn't choke but poke for goal's cream.

The ball is dribbled, lobbed, headed and passed

The perfect foot-aim shoots into the net fast

Off-side often disallows their glory

A bane or a boon hinges on the supporters story.

The lord of the field runs amok as a referee

A strong sturdy man immune to the bullies

He runs non-stop to check for fouls

Yellow/red cards are his weapons as he roars and growls.

Argentina urged on to merge and converge and emerge

France pranced, danced holding the spectators in trance.

Morocco wrote history with glory to be told

Let's foot the bill with the ball when on 18th a golden story unfolds.

***Mai-baap - The whole and sole of anything or any situation.***





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



## **CAUGHT IN THE WEB**

Lavish me with attention  
I still feel the shimmer and the quiver  
in the deepest recesses of my core  
as air stirs ruthlessly  
putting an end to merciful breeze  
help me overcome the arid acres of distress  
and burst into a soulful song



Before horizon blurs in the edge  
prepares to fold itself  
and hide under the pleats of darkness  
eventually gets wrapped under night's flair  
take a long pause ...if you so want  
but whisper something in a hush

The waves of gnawing sense  
now crashing and washing my bare feet  
would snatch my breath  
and lull me soon.... it seems  
there has been enough comeuppance  
for my misgiving  
spare me from the wrath this time

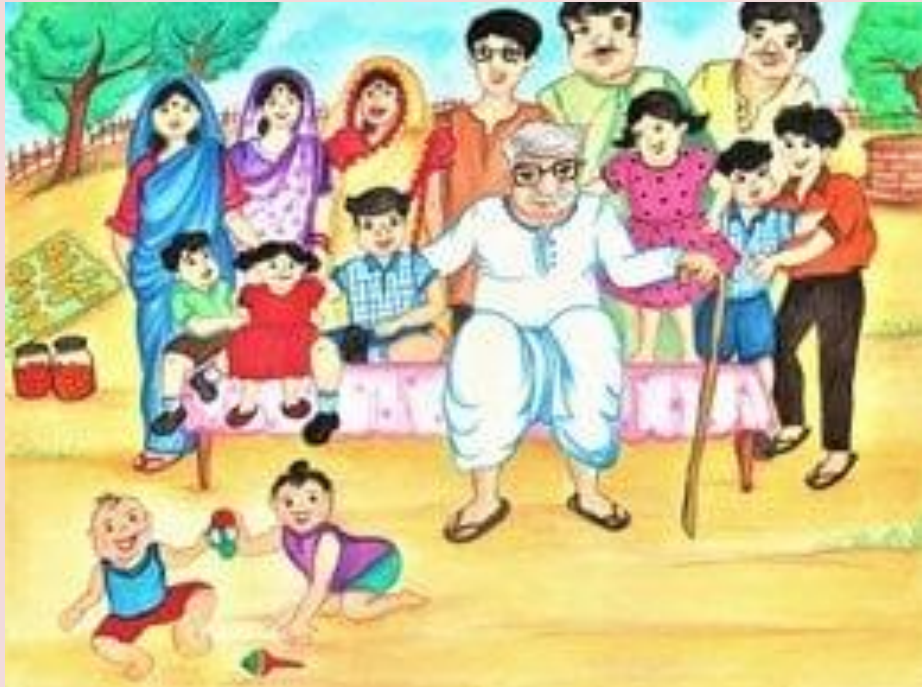
I am waiting with a pale ache  
wishing for the darkness to evanescence

enabling me to embrace the perpetual sun  
hope your gesture proffers a long day  
wide and clear  
assures a gleaming night  
with moths and fireflies dancing  
to the rhythms of elation

At a remote corner of earth's fringe  
I stand ...clinging to a flicker of hope  
looking at the bees bustle and hum  
the butterflies heave and clamber  
cherishing a desire to live a life as before.



**Sujata Dash:** Sujata Dash is a poet from Bhubaneswar, Odisha. She is a retired banker. She has two published poetry anthologies (More than Mere-a bunch of poems, Riot of hues, by Authorspress) to her credit. She is a singer, avid lover of nature. She regularly contributes to anthologies worldwide.



<https://storyweaver.org.in/illustrations/32455-joint-family-picture>

## **LAZY MUSIC IS STILL**

Cherubic chortles, moppet chuckles, Infant whoops, side-splitting mirth,

unbridled gales, kittenish mischief bubbled, rippling gangly childhood.

Uproarious guffaws, girly giggles, whispered secrets, the walls heard all.

Long fragrant summer afternoons played lazy music.

.Siblings n cousins, aunts n uncles, nieces, and nephews,  
young 'n old, parents and grands,  
futures glimpsed in fatherly folds, wrinkled hands  
Lessons in kneading the perfect spongy dough, mounds of  
'missi rotis'  
dollops of ghee seep crimped rotis, love spun by Ma's  
podgy hands,  
gallons of guzzled buttermilk ensures siesta. Lazy music  
plays on.

Juvenile pranks soured not, brittle egos didn't walk on  
eggshells,  
no risible reasons needed for childish screams  
life a carnival, the ancestral home, a merry-go-round.  
Decades died ending an era, a lone gypsy spirit hangs by a  
sepia thread,  
never a part of the rainbow called life. Ghazals play lazy  
music.

Gray skies smile, cumulus clouds play tag, redolent of sudden summer showers

her tongue tastes sultry evening petrichor, the flavor of 'Saavan'

along with her 'pakoras, tangy mint chutney, malpuas, and malai',

Walls crumbling under the weight of heritage, stare vacantly

into uncertain future, sparrows no longer nest indoors. No skylight ledges

in air-conditioned modern rooms. The NRI families having flown away

fading nostalgia washes away the Tiffany's perfume.

The lazy music is still.

***Tandoor: clay oven***

***Roti: flat Indian bread***

***missi roti: made in a tandoor with dough of flour, gram flour, onions, salt and chilies.***

***Pakoras: savouries***

***Malpuas: a syrupy sweet made in monsoons***

***Malai: cream***

***Saavan: the monsoon month***

***Ghazals: wistful love songs in Urdu***

***NRI: Non-resident Indians.***



**Sunil Kaushal:** Dr. Sunil Kaushal, an awarded author, a gynecologist, trilingual writer, translated into French, German, and Greek, has been honoured nationally and internationally with many awards. The Nissim Award given by Nissim Ltd., awarded by The Significant League (International); the Enchanting Muse and Fellow of the Regal World of Scribes Award, by The Pentasi B Poetree Group; Literary Brigadier by StoryMirror; Stickypins bestowed her with the title of Quillmaster; the Women Achiever's Award 2019 by Literoma. Featured in the Limca

Book of Records as part of the Amravati Poetic Prism 2018. Her poems find a place in The Golden Book of World Records. She is a winner at YoAlfaaz. She was awarded Best Lioness President, Asia. She is a Gold medallist in Dramatics. Her varied interests and hobbies keep her in love with life and active at 78, yoga being the fuel.





## **LONELINESS OF URBAN STREETS**

Vacant

silent

like the eyes

of

a young war-widow

or

the orphans

of an ethnic cleansing

some place  
in a democracy  
far-off, yet  
very  
nearby,

the night walks the  
crowded streets

as a man  
downsized,

detached in the  
shuffling crowds.



**Sunil Sharma:** Sunil Sharma, PhD (English), is currently Toronto-based academic, critic, literary editor and author with 25 published books: Seven collections of poetry; five of short fiction; one novel; a critical study of the novel, and, ten joint anthologies on prose, poetry and criticism, and, one joint poetry collection. He is, among others, a recipient of the UK-based Destiny Poets' inaugural Poet of the Year award---2012. His poems were published in the prestigious UN project: Happiness: The Delight-Tree: An Anthology of Contemporary International Poetry, in the year 2015.

Sunil edits the English section of the monthly bilingual journal Setu published from Pittsburgh, USA:

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

<http://www.drsunilsharma.blogspot.in/>



## **GOODBYES ARE HARD**

The calendar says it's 23rd July 2021

but google memories

pops up a picture from July 2020

you - sitting in your chair

wisps of moonlight in your hair

the kohl of sun in your eyes

smiling like the rainbow in the skies

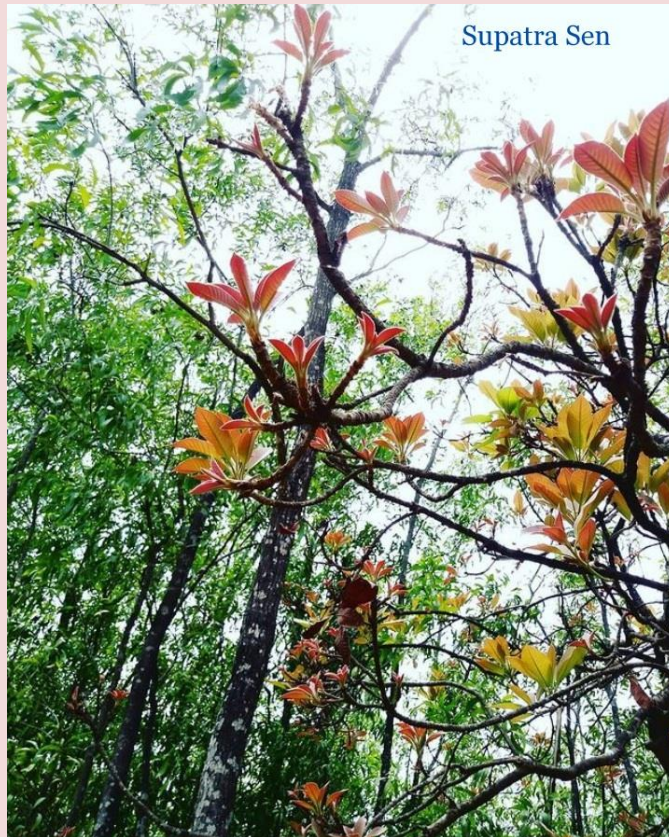
sometimes I can still feel the touch of your hands -

soft and strong

my days feel so empty  
without your calls  
I wonder why?  
you never talked much  
just one or two sentences  
sometimes they were repetitive  
I know you went at the right time...  
but is there ever a right time?  
does goodbye  
end it all?  
life is about moving on  
then why do I keep going back?



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



## **MY AUTUMN LEAVES**

Did I leave them here  
Here among the bookshelves  
Some on the dusty armchair  
Tracing the sun  
A few on the swing  
Abandoned...on the verandah  
Carelessly scattered...  
Impossible to gather



Strewn...tossed

All around

Stories of

Not so long ago

When spring ruled...

Did I bury them so deep

That they remained

Unspoiled

Pristine

Embraced by earth

Nurtured by time

To bloom and blossom

With the mellow shades of Fall

My Autumn Leaves...



**Supatra Sen:** Dr. Supatra Sen, currently Associate Professor in a reputed Kolkata college is a veteran academician, teaching and researching in the fields of Botany and Environment. Her international books, papers and reviews are chiefly in her professional 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' since 2016. Her tryst with poetry writing began in 2020 during the global pandemic and in October 2021 her poetry anthology 'My Autumn Sonata' was published.



*in oil paint by by Suzette Portes San Jose*

### **WHEN FOREVER SHALL FIND ITS END...**

love is the long and lasting journey to forever  
we stood by time to last long staying together  
travel far beyond the shore fulfilling the promises  
from the foliage of the past, as true love suffices

the vastness of the sea brings us to nowhere  
the ripples of the waves only whisperings linger  
for the seeking soul visions beyond the unseen  
meddle among the clouds on a pathway forbidden

stood by time enchanted with the hues of the sky  
created miracles of hope fulfilled in the heavens high  
hold you closer and feel your breath in the breeze  
the warmth that tows my slumbered heart from freeze

let me hold you to journey beneath the wandering sight  
beyond the horizons in the kaleidoscope of the sunlight  
with vows of promises from this broken heart to mend  
to love you still until ... when forever shall find its end



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



### **LIKE WAITING!!!**

Since you have cut the ropes of sleep,  
While you are waiting for your own self,  
Go flow from you to yourself,  
Like a secret blood just drawn from the bank of time.  
Oh displaced person to amputated places, while your  
eyelids shed from departure, sadness drops from the sweat  
of the sky sixty graves.  
While you wait for yourself,  
Think of the children of death and the fires that burn.  
You should have died in order for us to sleep.  
You should have eaten the fire ignited from your waiting,  
so you can expel your pain and render it to ashes.

Die slowly when you come out of yourself,

Like a bouquet of flowers turned yellow, so I can feel the  
alienation and the empty loneliness.

The bird that slumbered on a paper kite, stopped wailing on  
electricity poles.

The heads of passers-by were giving him a fleeting look.  
And a crazy camera stands in the middle of the road:" Oh  
my helplessness".

Oh air cut from the paper of time, there are tricks that  
failed to cross, there are hands that erase in ink the face of  
sorrows.

Oh traveller,

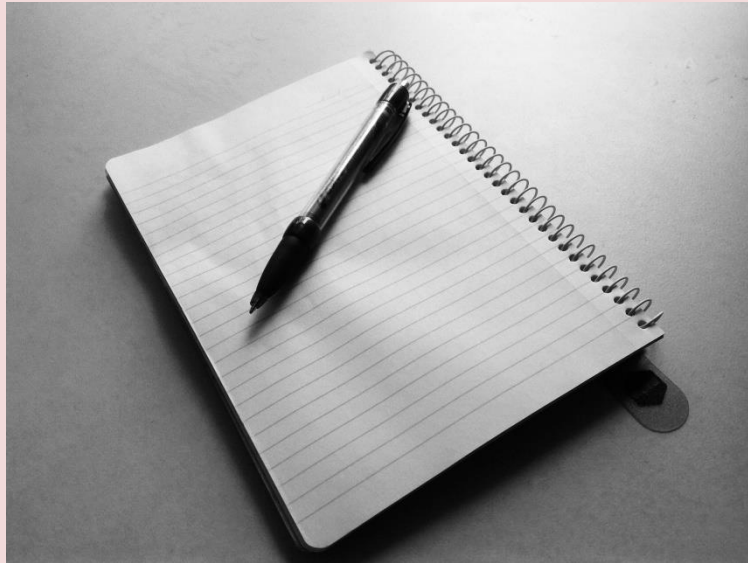
When you get tired of leaning on a cane waiting for  
yourself,

Remember that you are still breathing in the midst of this  
fire, due to your five daily prayers.



**Taghrid Bou Merhi:** She is a Lebanese poetess, writer, and translator living in Brazil. She holds a Law degree and is ambassador of the team “International Cultural Salon Association”. She won the Nizar Sartawi International Translator Award for Creativity 2021 in the field of translation and literature. She is the editor of AL-ARABE TODAY and RAINBOW Magazine Revista Literária Agareed and Allaylak. Her poems have been published in numerous international anthologies and journals. She has translated 8 books. Her poems have been translated into more than 24 languages. Her books include: Songs of longing; The Keys of Science:Verses and Manifestations; Philosophies at the Edge of the Soul; FLOWERS OF LOVE; 5. Wounds of the heart; 6. Esperanza (Under Review).7. Mine Is Not Mine.





## THE PEN AND THE PAPER

The pen and the paper  
Got into a serious fight.  
Each had a swollen ego  
Over one's might.

The pen was arrogant  
'coz it thought;  
It bought character to the paper  
With every single dot.

The paper on the other hand  
Was very adamant  
That the pen was useless  
Without the paper's face.

And so they decided  
To part ways.  
And both went in their packets  
To happily pass their days.

The students became idle  
Without their basic tools.  
The writers sat wondering,  
They couldn't write a thing.

The pen and the paper were then summoned.  
Each was awarded the same podium.

Both of them then got back to the drill.

Else I would still be sitting, still wondering!!



**Uma Agarwal Bajaj:** I have been contributing to Glomag for almost two 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 recently realised that I have the ability to pen some of my

thoughts. I write both in English and Hindi and hope to be better myself with each passing day. I read fiction, whenever I get some time. Apart from this I love to cook and have a fascination for gardening (in my balcony).



## ODE TO A 'DAWN'

Six decades ago in September  
The eldest was born, a daughter  
My parents held the child dear  
'Dawn' they so aptly named her

A little princess she was true  
In frilly yellow, pink and blue  
Leading us children, a motley crew  
In games and adventures new

Her dreams were filled with colours  
Rolls of silky embroidery floss  
Tatting thread and spools of lace  
And tons of every kind of spice

A bungalow with a winding driveway  
Rows of potted plants along the way  
Happy tunes as she rustles up dishes  
To savour flavours her family wishes

Life broke in; she let go her reverie  
Off to work with numbers, on a salary

Least prepared, best adapted she  
To a job and the breadwinner be

Full three decades and a half  
She generously gave of herself  
To parents, siblings, partner ,  
Children to rest upon her shoulder

At long last came the bright day  
At fifty seven she called it a day  
Stepping up the rung in the family game  
Matriarch of her dreams she became

Family finances, asset building fair  
Relationships mediating with flair  
Childhood stories and advice to spare  
Joy, sorrow, anger, appreciation share

Bright as the sun on a good day  
Holding all our troubles at bay  
Her love and integrity holds sway  
Yesterday, today and everyday

Blessed am I this janma and the next  
Her sister, her sibling youngest  
If I can ask the divine a request  
Repeat this relationship it's the best

A dutiful daughter, caring sister  
Thoughtful partner, protective mother  
Grandma revels as 'mama bear'  
A strong woman beyond compare

Strong coffee stems away her yawn  
Menus and grandparent duty drawn



Her trademark smile wide and bonnie

Usha, her name means dawn



**Uma Vangal:** I'm a filmmaker, film professor, film curator, leadership trainer, Tedx Speaker, Women Wellness coach, DEI specialist, yoga therapist, poet and mother. I have taught media, communication, journalism, visual arts and film for 30 years at leading institutions across Chennai, South India and also at Kenyon College, Ohio. Currently, I'm on a Fulbright Research Fellowship exploring ways to evolve a global gaze in Documentary films. Transnational identities, cuisines, cultures and cross cultural journeys form the crux of my work in writing, films and my

pedagogy. I make films with a focus on humanity and humanism. "Dream all you want and pursue your dreams since anything is possible, if you set your mind to it" is my motto.



## VOYAGER

Quo Vadis my lone voyager?

What takes you on this sojourn?

Your shadow once chased the Manhattan skyline

Giddily rubbing shoulders in corridors of power

The seasoned traveler

What restlessness does your solitude seek?

Your residence was once a million ports

And three loves you inflamed en route

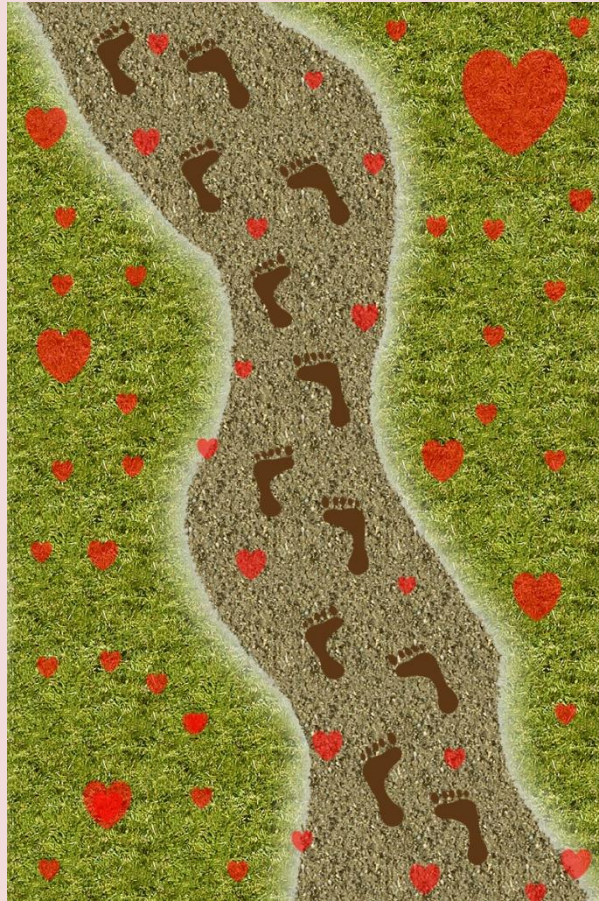
Friends lost count of your shifting zip codes  
As your rucksack emptied of each travel souvenir  
Whither goest thou today passenger?  
As you stand on platform number 7

The station of the now, not so sleepy town  
An infinite wait  
And yet no sweeter sight –  
Than of the slow train that takes you home.



**Vandana Kumar:** She is a French teacher and poet in New Delhi, India. Her poems have been published in national and international websites like 'Glomag', 'Mad Swirl', 'Scarlet Leaf Review', 'North of Oxford', 'Grey Sparrow Journal', 'Lothlorien Poetry Journal', 'The Piker Press', 'Dissident Voice', 'Borderless journal', 'Madras Courier, etc. She has featured in anthologies like 'Harbinger Asylum', 'Kali Project' and 'But You Don't Look Sick'. She has recently featured in Fine Lines- a print quarterly literary Journal based out of Nebraska. 'Her cinema articles appear regularly in 'Just-cinema' and Daily Eye. She was a jury member for the 'All India Poetry Competition' organized by 'Cocoa-Butter' and also co-edited their debut print anthology that resulted from this competition.





## **MARRIAGE**

One foot  
    forward  
then the other  
One foot  
    forward  
then the other

Otherwise  
how ludicrously inconvenient it would be  
to keep moving

just one foot  
forward  
dragging the other along  
just because



**Vidya Shankar:** I am an English Language teacher and a 'book' in the Human Library. Widely published in reputed literary platforms, author of two poetry books, and editor of four anthologies, I love exploring various poetry forms and experimenting with new writing techniques. Featured in a unique coffee table book, '50 Inspiring Women boys and girls should read about, Chennai Edition', I find meaning to my life through yoga and mandalas.



## FOOTFALL

A life loses itself in other lives,

Survives, but is different

In the absence of your beautiful mind

And what you murmured with a disarming pout

Got stuck in the sweaty pages

Of a dog-eared past - -

But that which was hidden, finally, revealed itself

Through a misplaced full stop

In a runaway sentence - -



At all times, you felt your life  
Was like a badly-worded blurb  
Printed without a purpose  
And yet an ancient song made us share  
A sense of loss: Your footfall down a forgotten corridor  
Drowns the silence of hyphenated reveries.



**Vijay Nair:** I retired as Associate Professor, Department of English, Government Victoria College Palakkad, Kerala. I taught English Language and Literature in various colleges for 31 years. My Ph.D. thesis was on the plays of Wole Soyinka. 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. I have been fortunate to have had my poems 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].



## **PERSEVERANCE**

Irresistible emotions  
shimmering the sky  
with crimson flare

Silver clouds flooding  
through the backdrop  
of valleys to long  
for a full moon

In the midst of  
a blue night  
dreams  
still keep  
shining like stars

Crystalized dreams  
throng the mind  
and fade like  
gloomy horizons  
to uncover  
a new dawn

I was hunting  
for memories  
in the annals of  
weariness  
where the hope

never ends

With open arms

I wait at

the comfort zone

of my hope

for an arm

to hold me tight

Fortunately

life was still there

at the very edge

of a new dream

filled with

self-illuminating love

Shall I seek  
A reservoir of strength  
to shape a world  
of substance  
within my soul



**M Vijayaraghavan Nair:** He is a retired senior executive of a multinational pharma company. He lives in Parli, Kerala (India) with his family. He is currently the editorial board member of Sahithya Samvedanam Magazine published from Kothamangalam, Kerala. Being a multi-lingual and prolific poet he has written 100s of poems in his native language Malayalam and in English. His first anthology of

poems in Malayalam titled as “Vaakku” (Word) is getting ready to be published soon. Most of his works have been appeared in periodicals and social media.



## BRUSH AND WIND

The stream gurgles merrily

I step in happy to feel

The cool water flowing around my feet

I sigh with happiness

I look at the pebbles

Rounded and smoothed by the flow

I wiggle my toes and watch as little fishes dart to and fro

I cup the water and throw it skyward

Watching the drops rain on me

Again and again I throw the water

And stand laughing in the rain I have made



Joy as the cool breeze blows suffuses me  
Here I could die a million deaths  
Here I could dissolve and flow  
Becoming one with the wind and the river  
From dust to dust I wish to be



**Vineetha Mekkoth:** She is a poet, writer, translator and editor from Calicut, Kerala. She works as State Tax Officer in the State GST Department. She has translated for the Kerala Sahitya Academy and has also contributed articles for the Malayalam Literary Survey, a quarterly brought out by the academy. She has published poems and short stories in various anthologies. She is co-editor of two anthologies.

Her debut poetry collection 'Ashtavakra and Other Poems' published in August 2017 is available on Amazon. Her latest work titled 'Penpiravi-Birth of A Woman' is the translation of the Malayalam poet Girija Pathekkara's poetry collection published by Authorspress, New Delhi (October, 2021)



**ciao! 😊**