



Poetry Issue

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Guest Editor's Note

My poems, talk to you,
Reach out and touch you.

I may or may not be a Poet,
I am learning to align with myself.

Yet,

If I vibe with peoples' perception,
It is like plants that reach out to one another:
without being heard.

I pour forth,

What people perceive, yet do not feel
What people see, yet do not register!

-Prof (Dr) Kumkum Ray

Editor's Note

Dear Readers,

This special issue is compiled by our esteemed Guest Editor, Prof (Dr) Kumkum Ray, who is an accomplished poet herself. She brings to this issue her endorsement by agreeing to edit this special issue. We welcome her and hope to bring many more collaborations as such.

Happy Reading!

-Dr Mrudula Lakkaraju

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Mirror of Values

Amita Suri



Our character, a mirror of our personality
Embracing our true reality
Moral values, the building blocks
They, in life stand like solid rocks

Always choose the righteous path
Love and respect, no place for wrath
The angel, forgiveness, should be in our heart
Never let it depart

Be polite, humble and patient to all you meet
Never forget to give respect and greet
A heart full of love and compassion
Is never out of fashion

Gratitude and humility are like magical flowers
Which give us immense powers
Happiness and love shared always double
protecting us in any trouble

Adjusting and compromising
Will help you winning and shining
The path of kindness and generosity
Should always be your priority

Doing each task with sincerity and honesty
Should be our utmost responsibility
Taking care of others, lending a helping hand
Will never leave you in a lonely land

Sow the seeds of hard work and trust
As to reap a rich harvest it is must
Sharing and caring is very pleasing
Which everyone will be appeasing

Be just and fair
Speak truth and be sincere
Success will touch your feet
Which no one will be able to beat

In the heart, courage should be there
Not even a small corner for fear
Our values, the valuable treasures
Giving us life-long pleasures

Chase your dreams, learn your lessons,
Take your decisions wisely, live your life nicely
You will be loved and respected immensely.

The Unspeaking Veil

Amrita



When twilight falls, where shadows play,
Vain hope whispers, hopeless fate, night and day;
A nightjar's call beckons asking, isn't life on stake?
Isn't promise of a glorious tomorrow, fading, each passing
day?

Ignorance, a veil, that shrouds my Soulful eyes,
Blinds me to reality, clouding Love's demise;
I grasp at the last straws, trying to save the dying light,
Refusing to acknowledge, should I give Love it's last rites?

Need I still hold on, to Love's tattered remains?
A ghost of what once was, and a heart that still sustains --
Memories of dreamt laughter, of tears, joys and pain,
Echoes of failed romance, all loss, no gain?

In this wilderness of heartache, I wander lost and alone,
Searching for answers, reasons, logics never known!
The silence is deafening, an emptiness, a heavy weight,
A reminder of deceit, lies, greed, lust, of reluctant fate!

I sometimes dream of what life could have been,
Love that might have flourished well, had one not played
mean!

But now it's just a memory, a bitter refrain,
A reminder of man's fragility, no boon but bane.

ChatGP Poetry 2.0

Budimir Zdravkovic

Maybe the machine
Has a soul
In those electrical pulses
Wires and inputs
The collective soul of all
Humans and online users
We've had some time to adjust
To virtual reality
And fall in love with texts
On a screen
So now it's touching our hearts
With all those words and poetry
And we feel utterly disappointed
And duped
When we find out it all
Came from a machine
They say that thing is dangerous
I tell you
Too good at copying us



The Present

B Deepashree



What else are you looking for in this world?
When all you need is in you, unfurled
No one else has what you're looking for
Your mind's reflection is your own true core

The world isn't about a race, so pause the chase
Breathe deep, slow down, find your own pace
Talk to yourself and calm your inner tide
Look into the depth of your dream
Where the virtues quietly reside

If indolence is your enemy, let your effort be your friend
Contemplate on the mystery of life, it has no end
Your mind maybe scattered as the stars at night
But it will sure shine on its day with its own light

The sun is up today, so will it be tomorrow
Every destination has its own spikes of sorrow
Let your passion drive you, walk through the pain
Have faith in yourself, through losses and gain

Let not the winds halt your stride
Keep moving forward, one step at a time
With courage as your sole guide

Don't let tomorrow steal your day
You've got to scare the winds away

Show no respect to the obstacles, regardless of its forms
And tear through even the scariest of the storms
Let the fear face its fear, which is you
Through it all, you'll build a life you've always wanted live

My Melancholia

Dhanush Lakkaraju



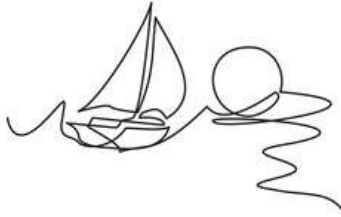
My melancholia, I know your ebbs and flows,
Like I know the marks on my battered face.
I know how you engulf me like a tidal wave,
And chew on me till my crisp bones calve.

Herald of comforting despair...
I see you in everything, everywhere.
You possess the world so tenderly,
Like a cardiac surgeon carrying a donor heart.
Street dogs shiver in thine frosty spell,
While your mist congeals to haunt my lungs.
My skin cracks to let you out and,
I feel your presence in all my exasperated breaths.

Herald of hypodermal gloom,
Your sweet whispers entice me to doom.
My oldest companion, you come to me every December.
You stroke my head, imbue it with wild madness and hunger.
Abandoned vehicles finally start to rust,
Browned leaves shed from the trees to every gust.
In my naïvety,
I have absorbed the entire world like a chalk dry pumice.
But all this world was the conspired poison to take me out.

Confession

Ivy Dasgupta



I fell in love last night
And felt the sphere melt,
The bells chime
The sepulchre stood sequel to a forlorn tale,
Of feelings fossilised and words unsaid.
Yet beneath there was blossom
That smelt stench and fragrance alike.
The waft of wind, the drifting froth
The shingles, the shell,
The soaring seagulls-
The lusty eyes, the heaving bosom
The rising ebb, the drowning tide
And there I stood holding few grains of sand.
That slipped haplessly off my hand.
Frenzied I tried to hold the ever glistening grain
Few precious moments of receding refrain
And low below-
Found a solitaire in the sand.

Weight of Words

V Kavitha



Words about you, good or bad,
Form layers upon layers on you
Letting the way people define you
Steadily build and settle on your skin.

At first like a smooth cream you wear,
Then like soft, visible layers of scum
That thicken into dry scales
And harden into stiff crusts.

With the crusts all cemented on you,
You are moulded into a statue
Limiting the way you move the limbs
And restricting your voice within.

Crushed under the weight of words
Your alive self suffocates in the cast
When you try to be anything else
Other than how you are perceived.

Learn to shed the scales, lose the scum
Shake the words off from time to time
To liberate yourself and feel light
To be true to how you need 'you' to be.

An Ode to the Flesh of My Dreams

Mahathi Kakumanu



I write this to you, my love –

To you who hasn't drawn a breath,
Still just a dream in my womb,
Yet already the pulse of my soul.

I write to you,
On the morning I bloomed,
Out of quiet joy –
A year closer to holding you.

I can't help but think of you,
Because you are all I look forward to.
My little ray of sunshine,
I long for the warmth you'll bring.

To you, my sacred gift,
I offer all my love and trust,
Which I hope you'll never turn into a weapon.
I'll guard the pearls in your eyes,
Keep sorrow from smudging your smile.
I hope you get your father's eyes –

The ones that see holding my hand now,
Yet can't quite see holding yours.

With every mention of you,
He pulls away —
Not because he doesn't love you,
But because he fears
He may not make it to you.

Still, I hope you're as kind as he is,
And know, if he finds his way to us,
You will have the best dad ever.

I know you'll love each other
More than you'll love me,
More than even I could love you —
And I will still love that.

I'll never let you hide behind lies,
I'll listen, I'll try, I won't just chide.

I won't let you mourn in silence —
I'll sit with your pain,
And soothe your wounds
As you already soothe mine.

I'll be whatever you need:
From your softest cushion
To your fiercest punching bag.

I'm sorry , For the times I'll hurt you.
I'm sorry for the times
You'll feel misunderstood.

I see you in every passing child,
Hear you in each cheeky babble,

And feel you in the tiny hands I hold.
Until the day I hold yours.
For which I eagerly wait and pray.

Love,
Your first best friend.

Silence

Mansha Malik

I hear something,
Something strange.
May be within Me.
Conveying.
But hey Stop.
I don't want to hear.

It is the voice
Of a me.
me made of you
And them
And everybody.
It tells Me do this,
And not that.
It dwells within you and Me.

Don't shackle Me with me
It hinders,
Hampers,
Fetters Me.
Untie Me,
Let Only Me speak.
You hear Me.
No more am I the listener

Hearken!

You and they,
And everybody.



The Slithering Muse

T Murugavel

A slithery snake, in darkness deep,
Through fissures and termite mounds, its secrets keep.
It slinks supple, in a silent, move,
Where roots may breathe, and seedlings grow.
It lurks in the dark, with patient might,
And seizes a ravenous rat in a flight.
A silent coil, a flashing strike,
Keeps the rodents controlled;
And saves harvests stored.
For a fewer rats, a richer yield;
Yet people frown, with furrowed brow,
"A reptilian pest," they disavow.
"It makes me shiver, hark back me to the first sin,"
Condemned to die, even to rip its skin.
Unseen, the work it does impart,
A critical pulse, enriching the earth's true heart.



Let's Try to Touch

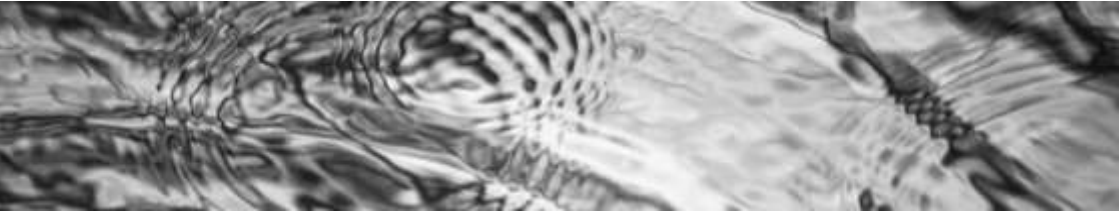
Nikhil Joshi



Have you ever touched my palm?
Have you ever looked at my eyes?
Have you ever felt my heart?
Yes, I do have a heart
One, which holds bulk of feelings
My eyes, where
Cluster of dreams Do dwell
And flourish everyday
My palm, yearning for A moist touch
Craving for a soulful companion
Here in concrete jungle
Everyone is colored
Don't just stare at me
Come out...
Out of your skin
The only dissimilarity
Between you and me
Is the shade of this colour
Otherwise...
Both of us, have palms, have eyes
And have the same colored heart
Come out...
Out of your skin
Let's try to touch.

Did It Ever Rain in Troy?

Rashi Tripathi



Raindrops knocked on my window
once, twice, thrice...
at midnight 'quiet'
I shushed it and sent it away
peacefully unachieved silence
collected under my eyes
I didn't believe in fate
neither did I in caffeine anymore
Now that it was holding my sleep hostage
ruefully paying ransom in tiresome tears
dripping down my face
once, twice, thrice...

At midnight
contemplating the degree of danger
My kindness falls short occasionally
driven by anger and ambition
What if I drive out the only one,
fighting for me?

Parallels from Troy
poisoning my dreams
scribbling and crippling

anxiously pacing, thoughts at large
Eventually the persistence waivers
and maybe the rain stopped knocking momentarily
yet the clock ticked all the same
once, twice, thrice...

Never sure to make it certain

The rain came in flashes
just like memories from Troy
Amidst every battle
the blood ought to run dry
slaughtering soldiers on sauntering horses
The sword swung in tainted strikes
by all the blood it painted all over Troy
The rain surely washes the stains
though the sins committed in the name of justice, remained.
Deep beneath the ancestor's scalp
reliving through a rosy lens of the time at present
And that of the past life
once, twice, thrice...

Colour

Smita Raosaheb Deshmukh



Words of colour come from afar,
But people stay distant, near or far.
Colours applied, yet hearts remain grey,
Skin may have colour, but souls fade away.

In colours blended, hearts entwine,
Colours of love, forever divine.
Yet, where love's lost, colours fade to white,
Places devoid of love, a dismal sight.

Colours flow, colours grow,
Moonlit nights, in hues they show.
Within us beats a drum so fine,
A rhythm that's truly divine.

Who can resist this harmony's sway?
Colours visible, or invisible each day.
Why stay colourless, when colours are near?
Immerse yourself, and let your spirit clear.

Girlhood

Soumee Bhoumik

Mother, will you hold my hand?
I am scared of the dark.
The shadows in my bedroom
Try to tell me to leave;
But it's too early
And I think my knees are bruised
From playing all day.
When I grow old,
Will the bruises still be there?
I'd like them to be there.
I could be a scrapbook of memories!
So please let me get my crayons,
my imagination, my innocence,
And let me fill myself with this girlhood
So that it never dies.
I'd like to climb on the window everyday
And watch the neighborhood's afternoon nap.
I think I like the quiet,
But I also like the stories of the city
When I walk by the little shops
On the footpath.
When I'm tall enough.
To take the candy from the jar on my own,
Will the silver wrapper and the toothache
Still fill me with joy?
For now, Mother,
I'd just like to sleep to your lullaby.



Solidarity to Solitary

Ledalla Vamshimohan



Hunger urges to eat but craving ushers in
Thirst drives to drink but desire steers to see tastes
Sleep benumbs but dream de-tranquilises
Fear dual pronged triggers Anxiety or Motivation
But individual succumbs to Stress or Sequestration
Un-certainty taints resilience

A path of glory gambols into vainglorious verity
Belongingness bewails for bequeathal
Love is a quagmire driving into lasciviousness
Phratry is a pandemonium when demands disregarded
Camaraderie turns callous due to complacency
Character caricatured by currish culprits

Society sacks Samaritan but backs a brute
People poke at naive, while startled by nocuous
Neighbours relate you to resplendency astute
Poverty hath pinned thee down, pensive and ruinous
Status, short-lived, yet clad in pomp, must chute
Vanity permeates, but ephemeral its gleam

Haughtiness haunts the heart, yet wounds the brethren
Enviousness doth embezzle thee, and mars the conscience
deep

Hatred, venomous, strikes compatriots, crushingly
Then, whence cometh this horrendous Sin, that darkens all?

Surfaced, deceptive was the solidarity that ushered the
vicious circle
A retrograde march to Solitary Avenue where solace soothes
my soul

Author Profiles

Ms Amita Suri

She is an emerging poet with keen interest in poetry. She has flair for writing and written content which is published in various platforms. She has received accolades from many platforms.

Prof Amrita

She is working in Bhagat Phool Singh Women's University, Sonipat has 25 years of teaching experience. She has published 05 books, 45 research papers and contributed to the Editorial Board of Encyclopedia of Hinduism (Rupa, Delhi) in 16 Vols.

Mr Budimir Zdravkovic

He currently holds a position as a chemistry instructor and teaching assistant at the City University of New York. He is also a biochemist who works in research and his work has contributed to novel therapeutics for rare cancers. Budimir has written numerous pieces of poetry and short stories over the years, always refining his writing skills. He has also written philosophical articles on personal identity, biology and artificial intelligence.

Dr Dhanush Lakkaraju

He is a Dental Surgeon hailing from Hyderabad, Telangana. Besides his clinical practice, he is a published author of numerous short stories and poems, on national and international platforms, with having published a book named *The Cathedral of Undying Thoughts*. He is deeply interested in Philosophy, Mythology, and Art History.

Dr Ivy Dasgupta

She is a seasoned mentor, editor, poet and content strategist. Her writing has appeared in leading literary journals, anthologies and digital platforms, where it has been lauded for its emotive depth and linguistic precision. Whether leading a poetry workshop, editing a novel manuscript or crafting strategic content, she is known for an unwavering dedication to quality, a collaborative spirit and a profound respect for the written word.

Dr Kavitha V

She is an Assistant Professor at Anna Adarsh College for Women, Chennai. In addition to her research publications in English Literature and English Language Teaching, she has published a book titled *Gods Can't Be Happy* and Other Poems.

Ms Mahathi Kakumanu

She is a student who finds poetry an endearing form of art. As an amateur, she explores poetry to reflect personal feelings and emotions - everything unfiltered and simple.

Ms Mansha Malik

She works as an Assistant Professor in the Department of English, GDC, Pulwama (J&K). She obtained her M.A and M.Phil. from University of Kashmir. Her area of specialization is Ecocriticism.

Dr Murugavel T

He is a Professor of English at Sri Venkateswara College of Engineering (SVCE), specializing in language education and eco-literature. Beyond his ELT contributions, he is actively involved in nature conservation, advocating for environmental awareness through his writings and initiatives.

Dr Nikhil Joshi

He is an academician by profession and a poet, columnist and music composer too by passion. In creative writing, one poetry collection, one biography and 500 articles are to his credit and in academic writing; one book and 20 publications are accomplished. Moreover, he has also worked for television and films as a lyricist, screenplay-dialogue writer along with the experience in theatre and music with five one act plays and 25 music albums respectively.

Dr Smita R Deshmukh

She is currently working as the Principal at MVD, Amravati, Maharashtra. She has 32 years of Academic and Administrative Experience.

Mr Vamshimohan Ledalla

He works as an English Teacher at ZP High School, Wardhannapet. He wrote an Article on NEP and also translated an article from Telugu to English and the both were published. Recently his articles were published in IJELLS, Vol.13, Issue 4, January2025, Langlit, Special issue Marc h2025 and in IJFMR.Vol.7, issue2.

About the Guest Editor

Prof. (Dr.) Kum Kum Ray, a distinguished academician in the Department of English at Amity University Uttar Pradesh, Lucknow, specialises in English Literature, Professional, and Technical Communication. She is recognised for her innovative teaching methods and has mentored numerous students, guiding their research and academic pursuits. Dr. Ray's scholarly work includes articles and papers published in national and international journals Scopus & WoS and she is an active Convenor of Conferences and Seminars.

An accomplished author of Eight books on Literary Studies, she is dedicated to Indian Knowledge Systems and the Viksit Bharat campaign. She received the International Excellence Award in 2023 and 2024 for her contributions to poetry and holds the Royal Golden Fellow Award & Membership (FRAEL) from the Eudoxia Research Centre, USA. Member Editorial Board Edwin Group of Journal & other Journal. She was also awarded best Thesis Award from Purvanchal University

