

Poems with Proverbs

Found
Another
Proverb

A Few Of Our Authors

Nicole Langley
Chelsea Whitlow
Crystal Barker
Carley Baker
Scott Pierce

Found Another
Proverb

POEMS WITH PROVERBS

All Rights Reserved

Published By



Poets Choice
www.poetschoice.in

1st Edition June 2024

Book Designed By Laura Antonioli, England

Cover Designed By Koni Deraz, Germany

Curated By Dr Gladson Clifford Joe

ISBN: 978-81-973060-7-5

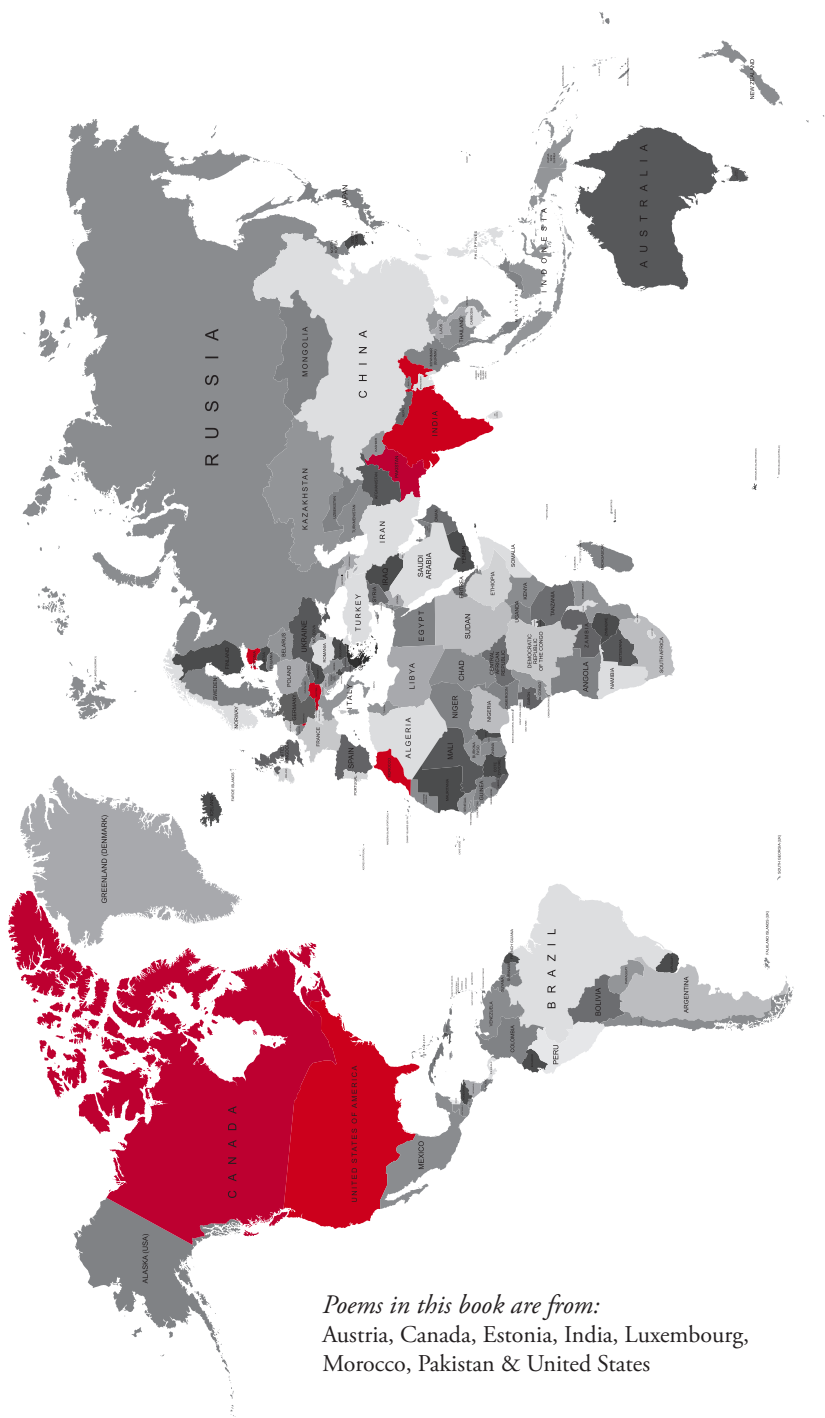
BCID: 225-17248461

Visit www.bookcrossing.com



Instagram - @poetschoice

Youtube - @PoetsChoice



Poems in this book are from:
Austria, Canada, Estonia, India, Luxembourg,
Morocco, Pakistan & United States

Poems

Clever Father, Clever Daughter, Clever Mother, Clever Son • 1

Briana Hammerstrom - <i>Clay Loam</i>	2
Catherine Vincent - <i>Gold-Eyed Angels</i>	5
Cecilia Chu - <i>Open Palm, Circa 2005</i>	6
Charity Morris - <i>Distance</i>	8
Emory Thompson - <i>Noah's song</i>	10
Hailey Elles <i>My Student Comes To Me And Says-</i>	13
<i>I Always Made An Awkward Bow</i>	16
Nicole Langley - <i>The Duality Of Parenting</i>	19
Terry Brinkman - <i>Emperors Purple</i>	21

He Who Knows And Knows He Knows, He Is Wise - Follow Him • 23

Terry Brinkman - <i>Her Dancing Coins</i>	24
Thomas Curtis - <i>Grimms</i>	25
Travis Murt - <i>Crazy River</i>	26

If You Wish To Be Blamed, Marry; If You Wish To Be Praised, Die • 29

Chelsea Whitlow - <i>Deadly Expectations</i>	30
Felix Mwiya - <i>Blindness, A Form Of Beauty</i>	31
Isabelle Call - <i>The Jester</i>	33

Sarah Desouza - *A Conversation With The Moon*.....34

Live And Let Live • 39

Carley Baker - *Come Back*.....40

Crystal Barker - *Juanita*41

Jan Wiezorek

Tree By The Waterside43

Look Upon The Humble.....44

Janari Teessar

Darkness In Light.....46

Forbidden Forever.....47

Noha Nasri - *The Crow And The Dove*.....48

Sara Zulfiqar - *Live And Let Live*.....50

Somdeep Datta - *Truth And Lies*.....51

Taeryn McKinstry - *Perfect And Complete*52

Self Knowledge Is The Beginning Of Self-Improvement • 55

Andrew Revie - *The Girl Left Me*.....56

Atlas Hutchinson - *Blood Letting*58

Deaundra Jackson - *Self Knowledge*.....61

Irina Lessne - *My Self*.....62

Jenni Frank - *Judgement Barometer*.....63

Joshua Skinnell - *Napalm*65

Kelly Maida

Hungry Ghosts.....68

Ancient Saints69

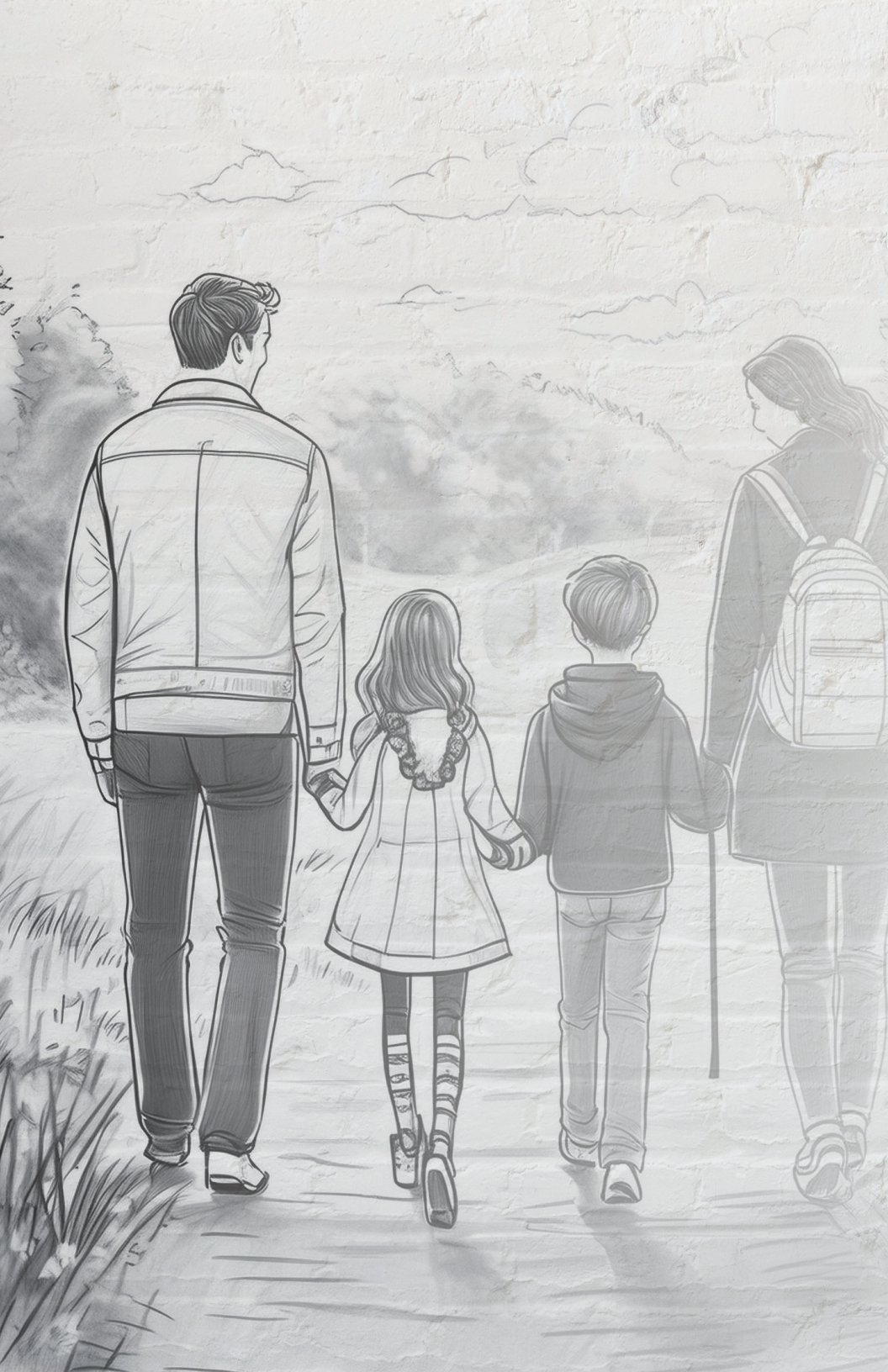
Nicole Shirley - *From The Ghost Of Ophelia*.....70

Pedro Alves - *The Dream Of The Eagle*72

RMG - *Love Thyself*74

Scott Pierce - *Crimson And Alabaster Clash*76

Sehaj Dhingra - <i>Chai</i>	78
Velibor Baco - <i>Sail Into The Darkness</i>	80
<i>Acknowledgement</i>	82
<i>Our Single Author Publications:</i>	83
<i>From This Series</i>	84



Closer Father,
Closer Daughter,
Closer Mother,
Closer Son

Briana Hammerstrom

Portland, Oregon - United States

Clay Loam

My father is a gardener.
Taught me to bury
my feelings and other
objects. We had good soil.
My anger, however,
remained a bone the lawn
would regurgitate.

When his hand first cracked
across my cheekbone,
the peal of thunder
resulting from my throat
was just an inheritance
of shock— how dare I
disrespect him in his house?
Now, there are no hands,
but the lawn buffets itself
an elephant's graveyard
anyways. If only one of us
could cull the crop; make
the ground we both
sprouted from
fallow.

I did my best
to uproot myself
before my father could
churn me to mulch,
forfeiting an inheritance
to a castle of rot,
in favor of a harvest
I am not ashamed of...
but some things bloom
in the blood. My father
didn't mean to plant
his anger, but it,
like most invasive species,
began to prosper.
Inheritance: a trickier word
for inescapable, really.

His green thumbs are mine
His fists are mine—
and I know there is
supposed to be a turn
in this poem, a volta
for the audience
to clap and snap
about a comeback, but
the metaphor won't
take root.

Even the men I love
inspire my body to flinch
when they raise
their hands,
their voices,

even in support—
I cannot stop comparing
applause to brutality,
the rabid fans
the violent joy
the same thunderclap.
Gardeners and Gladiators
are the same occupation,
a trade passed through genetics—
beating our nature into submission.
My family tree is a blood sport.

I am doing my best
to bud and begin again...
but my hands remain
ignorant
of how a petal
greet the sun,
terrified of
unfurling,
maturing.

Of what growth means
they will have to give up.

Catherine Vincent

Lexington, Kentucky - United States

Gold-Eyed Angels

I do not know whose eyes I have
Brown is universal on both sides
Nary a green a blue or a hazel
Maybe once all of our eyes were filled with color
Toiling in the fields under the sun made Papaw's eyes darken
Watching her brother turn to rot caused Nana's eyes to harden
My family is tied together by the amber in our irises
Sometimes when the sun's rays kiss the grounds of Earth
Brown turns to gold and we are ignited as angels

Cecilia Chu

San Francisco, California - United States

Open Palm, Circa 2005

In between idle scrolling in my claustrophobic dorm,
I discovered my dad had changed his profile picture
to our family smiling
on the day of my high school graduation.
Funny, how I don't remember hearing
a word of congratulation.
But maybe that's how I want to remember him,
stoic and was always there
but somehow never present.
It's easier, safer to think
all this is within my realm of expectation
than to hope.
Since I started college he hasn't called,
unless snippets of conversation
in the background of answering my mom counts.
I don't know if I blame him.
After all, I guess I haven't either; what would I have to say?
I picture years of resentment rushing out in a single breath.

Still, I call him *baba* the same way I did
when I first learned the word but not yet the meaning.
Like I'm still that child,
sidling up to impossibly long legs.

I wonder what he looked like cradling
my chubby toddler body to his, the way he smelled.
Like cigarettes, probably, even back then.
He's never been one for quitting bad habits.
How he looked at me—if even after all the novels
I've scoffed at, love was something
you could glean through the eyes.

It feels childish, asking about love.
Grasping for the memory of it.
Questioning if somebody sees you,
then if you want to be seen.
Though I reckon even when you're 80
and every version of this story's turned dog-eared,
some questions just stay unanswered.
It turns out you only hold
your daughter's hand for so long
before she learns to cross the street alone.
You just don't know until it happens.
I pray somebody reaches back through time
to tell me "Hold on till he lets go, and then longer still"
and "I don't mean to spoil this story,
but soon you'll be too tall to find shoulders to hide behind."
I wonder if I'd take his hand again, given half a chance.

Charity Morris

Lakeline, Ohio - United States

Distance

I never thought much about my parents' marriage until after it was over. I never really think about my carburetor either until my check engine light comes on. I'm not even entirely sure what a carburetor does.

But there was this one moment, shortly before the end although I didn't know it at the time, when I came home from set strike to my mother smoking a cigarette. My mother doesn't smoke but I knew that was what she was doing by the glowing coal that bobbed two feet above the concrete step and was quickly stubbed out as I approached.

"Mama," I said, somewhere between a question and a reproach.

But she didn't say anything back. She just stared past me, somewhere out past the treeline and sniffed. I realized then that she had been crying. Then she looked at me and she smiled and she said, "How's my girl?"

It was all right then. I heaved my pack down and sat beside her. We watched the treeline. Years passed and we watched the treeline. My mother sniffed again and the trees ate it.

Then, finally, she said, "I miss being touched."

I frowned at the treeline.

"Not like that," she said.

The trees turned from forest to charcoal to ebony during the decades that we watched them.

Then:

“I mean, in a way that doesn’t expect anything back.” I felt her eyes on me. She hesitated, then continued. “Hug the kids because the kids need hugs, nurse the baby because the baby needs fed.” She paused abruptly, then clarified. “Other stuff.”

I couldn’t understand her then. I do now. Most women do eventually.

But I thought I understood enough. I slipped my cold hand over her warm one, and slid each of my fingers between each of hers to the cold concrete beneath.

And I watched the treeline.

Emory Thompson

Salem, Oregon - United States

Noah's song

There's a starving man out at sea who has never seen the sun
and a growing girl beside him with a temperament for fun.
Via counting on their fingers, they can see where to begin;
She can replicate his rhythm as a beat come from within.
He taps out on the tambourine to every word she hurls,
each halfway understanding as their separate songs unfurl.
Lone fumbling turns to humming, a tune hidden all along,
and side steps into something that wants to be a song

*Oh, Mother save me, it's been dark too long
Every night it pours, and the blue sky's gone
Fishermen come round, for those who belong*

They watch the sky for signs of storm, but nothing's there to see.
So far adrift, no wind sounds, and no rain pounds. Silence
abounds,
unless they mean to make for land, it's their song against sea.

*Oh, Father save me, the sun can't be gone
We're lost in the blue, awaiting thereon,
with faith in you, though the rest have gone*

He shivers and she sweats, calling rhythm from the distant shore.

She plays at the captain's wheel as he wrestles with the oars,
The sea spray seeps in. As their shouts bring about the rain, it pours.

*Oh, Brother won't you say what's come and gone
For three days it's rained, and my home's near gone
Yet we are waiting, for what we know is gone.*

His baritone carries over her whistling siren song.
The girl braves the breeze of his tone, killing the light— all she's known.

The shrill of her youth keeps singing their song's cold encroaching doom.

*Oh, sister save me, dark of night can't last,
I fear every breath could be my labored last,
But we are here— trust. This dark sky won't last.*

The last note held on like a dirge, keeping the funeral march
and its pallbearers from laying the corpse to its final sleep.
She who'd never seen shade nor wind saw her shadow at long last,

and couldn't help but scream and run when he learned where she had kept

the sunshine- her voice. He craved warmth but with half the song,

Neither's melodies struck accords nor discords, only lone notes.

The man could sing, but he could breathe if only she didn't choke,

for the hand 'round her neck only meant to save the thing it broke.

Hailey Elles

Bridgewater, Vermont - United States

My Student Comes To Me And Says—

My student comes to me and says—

she hasn't eaten in days she
wants

to be

invisible.

She asks— if I can make her smaller. *If I*

have a magic pill. Some kind of carpet.

I can show her the $s(t)$ cars.

I can ask her if she
would like to see. This~ is a kind of *violation*.

the *prophesy*
some kind of code.

It asks us // to share

less of ourselves.

It asks us
if we are holy // or not

and just who did we think we were, *anyway?*

all these years of marching saints
holding our stretched *marked*
bellies in our hands. Bleeding
through our fingertips. I ask her if
she would like to see. This- *blood*. Sticky
all over my hands. it is screaming

it is screaming with urgency *though*
i am silent

I am silent because my years have made me restless and alone.

I am silent because I am told

to be otherwise

is to have *consequences*

I am silent because I carry my mother's pain-

so rotund in my belly it fills

and empties *me*

It leans on my chest. It does not let me rest
or breathe or

It sits below

like a little bird

the surface

some small thing. some hope forgotten

I'd like to tell her: Don't you dare. Don't you dare
do this *again*, daughter.

Don't you dare let yourself be scoured *again*, daughter.
--I'd like to call her that.

her

daughter
and I think if I could call

daughter

things might make a little more sense. This urgency // might
make

~ a little more sense,

Daughter.

I'd wipe my bloody hands on my shirt and show her my scars,
daughter, don't you see

Don't you see?
All this is for you.

I Always Made An Awkward Bow

"I always made an awkward bow." -John Keats

I.

The old professor holds his mind
gooey between his hands—dripping
spackling all over the blue tile floors.

The professor holds his mind.

His is a dying breed.

The students- their faces fresh and pick marked and full of lust-

The students- their bellies full of fear in a dying world-

The students- their hearts full of inquisition (a kind of
heartbreak he knows he cannot remedy)

they have moved on to other gods.

The professor holds his mind - cradles it

he holds it against his heart

every heartbeat

shooting electrical waves through his memories

The professor

was a boy once

The professor
broke his arm falling off his bicycle, once

The professor
The professor
The professor

he holds his mind up as if it is contagious.
he passes it around as though it were on loan
he asks who will accept his offer-- (no one)

this was his world and it was enough. Once,
He goes back to his study where he keeps all the old books for
which no one will pay him, he goes back to the quiet walls
where he holds his ideas, he goes back and he is bleeding, he is
covered in blood. He goes back and all the inside parts of him
are dirty from being carried around in the open air.

II.

I hold up my mind.
I hold up my mind for inspection.
I hold up my mind It is a raw and cold Tuesday
morning. I have my tea in my hands.
I carry the stop sign across the sidewalk, I funnel the kids out of
the hall-

Listen, *children,*

all the things i ever was. had. held.
i offer them
they cannot hear me they
are sleeping their

fuzzy hoodies look down at their desks.

Maybe it will all be for something. Maybe it will all be for something. Maybe it will all be
be

Maybe it will all be
for something.

So what, if the years have made me soft?
So what, if the years have left me

full of rot?

I stand here now to warn you of
your years—it is not much but it is
a kind of love. I don't think you will ever see
i don't expect

you will ever

Listen, *children,*

I'm not looking for your sympathy.

*Should I be surprised that they
disregard me?*

Listen, *children*
that you will

someday disregard every living thing
that somewhere in doing you will feel something sharpen
you will feel something Snap.

I hope,

I will take myself and my old mind and go
for a walk.

I will sing it a song it will say

*Let the children be free,
Oh, let all God's little children be free.*

Nicole Langley

Spring Branch, Texas - United States

The Duality Of Parenting

I was always told from a young age to mind my business,
“Don’t bother the other missus’.”
But then to contradict that,
Like pulling the next card out of a hat
I was always told to help those in need:
To stand tall in front of my peers and take the lead.

And yes, I agree there should be times to keep your thoughts to
yourself.
But others, they shouldn’t just be put away on a shelf.
Just walk away. This shouting doesn’t concern you.

Then what about the circle on her eye, the black and blue hue?
What do you do? What can you do?
Say something?
Give the police a ring?
But you were always told to mind your business
Do not get involved in things like this.
But you were always told to help people
To act as their steeple.

And what of the woman being dragged to the car
By the man who treats noon like a bar?
And what of the child with tears streaming down his face,
His parents yelling, scolding him for not winning the race?
So what do we do when we're told not to get involved?
I mean shit, all we ever learn in school is to critical problem
solve

Terry Brinkman

West Valley City, Utah - United States

Emperors Purple

World's greatest reformers
The millwrights honor of Clever Father
All women whisper Clever Mothers and Daughters
Fancier's classic face of family
Sunburst appears in the northwest at clever son
Undoubted Emperors purple our matching tee shirts
Very puissant to law and order
Joy bells ruler have fun be safe
Mantle of the cloth of home
The peer's shovels at us
Palfrey neighs stock our homage



He Who Knows And
Knows He Knows,
He Is Wise
- Follow Him

Terry Brinkman

West Valley City, Utah - United States

Her Dancing Coins

Her dancing coins make a lot of sense
Bald as he was he knows all so we follow him
He uses Red Stone and White Clay compound
Alabaster silent sleeping bear at his side
Like holding water in his hands with you
Eager anticipation of our meeting
Maladroit silk hat wearing I brow from mother
My Blue Irish Eyes unshed tears sing

Thomas Curtis

Huntington Beach, California - United States

Grimms

Cloak and daggers, midnights must, till dusk from Suns awake,
scythes awake, other world or human kind, jedi mind some
holly power of another kind, other world is better still, humans
only kill, don't tell me how to think or feel, snakes and fakes,
sorrows dwell and cuts inside the boat man pays the rides, and
now is here to stay, to haunt and slay 644 has cleared my way,
traded souls with the reaper for my own, and need my pay, and
his soul now to is paid, Grim had a brother and the two of us
are here to slaughter.

Travis Murt

Boaz, Kentucky - United States

Crazy River

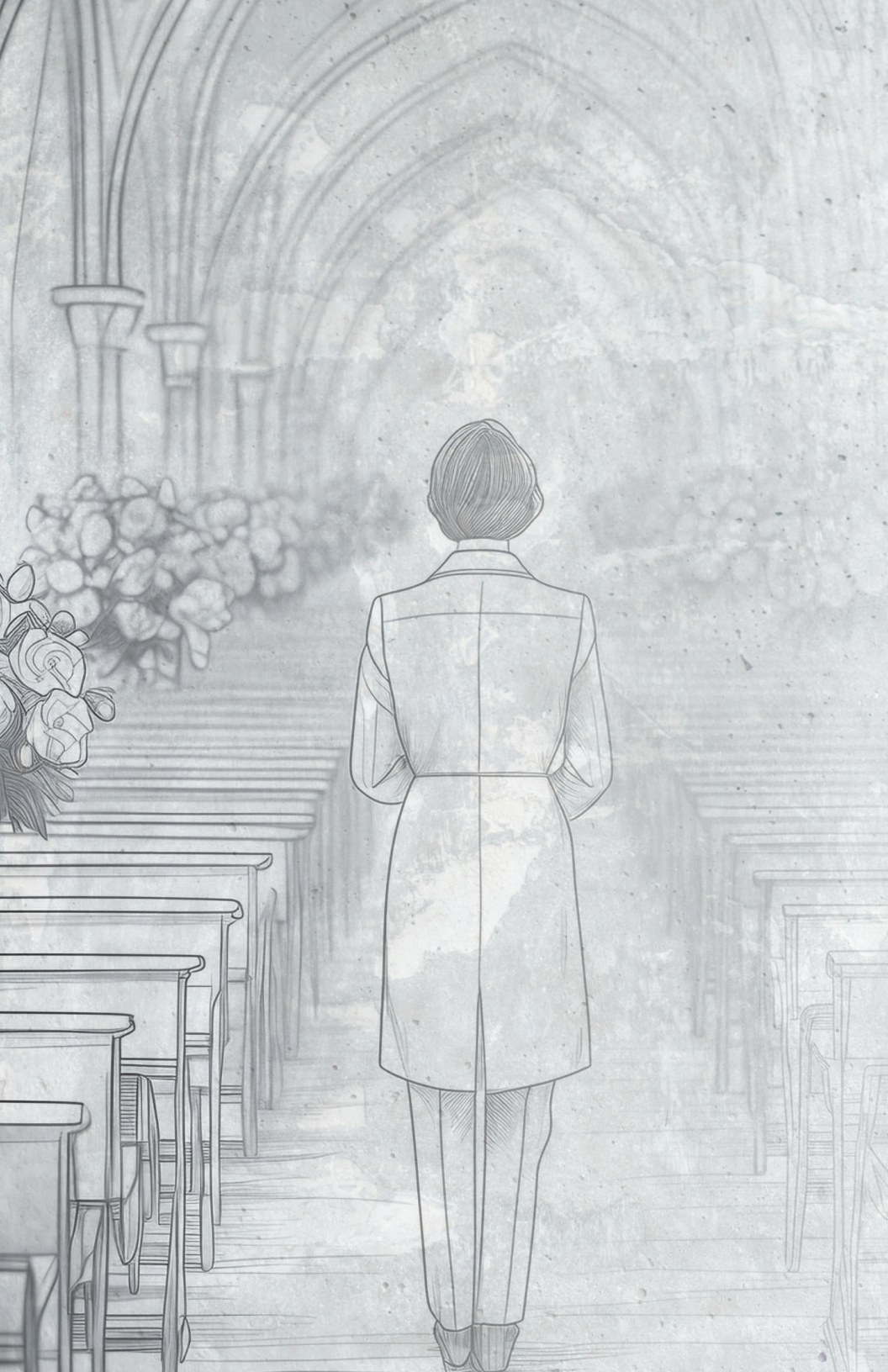
Having a crush is so
fantastical, if not wrong.
It's amazing to think
about, if it didn't feel like
daydreaming during an exam.

Having a crush is so
daring, if it didn't feel like
daring against yourself.

I wish I knew what
the rules were. All I
knew before it was
all a commodity is worth
nothing but a dream.

Having a crush is so hard
when it feels like
no one else has one.





If You Wish
To Be Blamed, Marry;
If You Wish
To Be Praised,
Die

Chelsea Whitlow

Rockford, Illinois - United States

Deadly Expectations

Death or disaster make headlines,
Perfectionists walk in their straight lines.
Without ice in your veins, your work dies.
Not even the omnipotent know your name.
It's a sad story, one about sadness and pain.
You try and try, but all that you get is blame.
If you're strong and independent, you should feel shame.
If you marry and have kids, you've somehow won the game.

What if I'm happier alone?
What if loneliness is my home?
It isn't fair to compare me to them,
My work will be noticed at the end.
You see the future in my eyes,
But with each expectation I slowly die.

Bleeding feelings from a pen.
I feel it all and then I'm numb again.
The writings are already on the wall.
The world won't know me until I fall.

Felix Mwiya

Gharuan - India

Blindness, A Form Of Beauty

I am smart, I am damn.
It is how the situation comes.

I wish to be open to the world,
I share my weakness in the wild.

Extra vaga unruly off'
Yearning for comfort.

Comfort, is my desire,
Cooling down the fire.

Fire, it keeps burning,
My beauty keeps flaming.

Flames, sweet fades
Sand comfort the deads.

A life how precious,
Monday I am anxious.

Anxious, take a nice picture,
Show am a beautiful fixture.

Fixture, isn't it past time!
Time, away from my prime.

Isabelle Call

Vancouver, British Columbia - Canada

The Jester

When I arrived in Dreamland, a jester took my hand
Led me down a rabbit hole, and told me about death

*She's a being go many sorrows, though she's never cruel
She'll hold your hand and kiss your cheek until your last breath*

*Then she'll weep and say goodbye to yet another fool
Whose dreams condemned them to slumber, the way they have you*

I stared at the jester in bewilderment as the cloak fell from her
head

And a pained smile met my gaze as I realized my skin was blue

She wrapped me in her tenderness and ever warming glow
As the last breath left my body with the final words she said

Sarah Desouza

Siolim, Goa - India

A Conversation With The Moon

She was sitting at the window,
looking at the stars,
counting each one, by one
wondering how far they are...

She happened to look at the moon
which suddenly spoke to her like a sister,
The moon said 'what troubles you my child?',
She smiled and replied to the moon
"I want much more than this provincial life"

The moon replied
"let me tell you that your mother,
had said something similar to me as a young girl

she also talked to me freely, so I told her
If You Wish To Be Blamed, Marry;
If you wish to be praised, Die
did you know It takes this much courage
for the moon to be a hope for others in the sky?

Trust me I the moon, do know why,
So continue like a wildflower
to be free, to have your own meaning,
to cast a light instead of a shadow...

To desire to be remembered, and to stand out alone,
like me as a beacon of hope, to cause a stir,
and not be one in the muck, who is always rather stuck,

But be the one who paints the path ahead
with ones own wisdom
When the whole world is drowning
in the sea of seeming confusion
(as if they too are lost in melodies
of their own choices and experiences)

Be all that you are-
because you have managed to come this far;
Be still, and know that you my friend,
are an immortal diamond of much worth in the sand...

When the young girl,
was done talking to the moon,
she looked at her phone and soon-
there was a text from her big sister Bex...

“Come to stay with me,
here in London, for eternity..
I know there in the desert,
its lonely too,
but here where I am,
There’s real hope waiting for you...”

To which she replied
“Coming sis,
coz the moon gave me some advice-
about life that I never want to miss”

Then she sent her an emoji kiss
And prayed to God in earnest
She thought this could be the start of something new
Or the dreams of the night and more writing too

Writing about what made her smile,
Writing about what blessed her life,
Writing about prosperity too

Writing about the moon and how
it thought of me and raised an eyebrow
and said to its self “Even if this world ends,
Love wins, and so will you win my child”

So keep writing the story of your life
The world will end, but love and music will endure!
Believe and you will find your way...





Live And
Let Live

Carley Baker

North Port, Florida - United States

Come Back

I can't leave you alone.
Even when I keep my head still--
My eyes follow where you go.

I pray to be glued to you
For your body in doorway
To be nothing new.

I'm told it's for the best to move on
But how could I
When you're not even gone?

The day I leave and let you live your life
Will be the next morning
After I have died.

Even then I'll be buried
With your first ring on my finger
You know I can't re-marry.

Not when I know you could be back
If not for me
Then for your savings other half.

Crystal Barker

North Las Vegas, Nevada - United States



Juanita

Joyfully
understands and embraces differences.
Acceptance and kindness she
nourishes in her heart.
Identifies with the philosophy
to live and let live.
All she welcomes with open arms for a hug.

Mama Coyote she is fondly called,
adopting many strays along her way.
Yips poetic howls of gladness, her
song to life's full moon.

Jan Wiezorek

Buchanan, Michigan - United States

Tree By The Waterside

He comes to drink in your shade
that tells a story of longing,
how the branches yearn to brush,
to paint themselves over soil,
which the maker of sun ordains,
all with hunger of potency, how trails
end, shadows ache in themselves, one
arm pinning the other, as lovers entwined
in coverlets, and ways in which our eyes
bend, fading like strength, until every part
of all rests, as directed by the order of lines,
his potent stems wanting life and eternity
to drink, as from the mouth of your moss.

Look Upon The Humble

The probability of a stem
being perfect is creator's
perfection, and you become
yourself in this way, open to air,
with my red bulb, your long stem,
as if together we are never-ending,
as if we are only as clouds see us,
a bud ready to pop, nothing more,
ourselves being simple, without
knowledge of us being more than
we are, more than we are together.

Janari Teessar
Rakvere - Estonia

Darkness In Light

I feel as in prison,
when morning appears.
Forgetting my reasons,
returning as fears.

Crippled by shadows,
yet carried by light.
Is what we are told.
but how is that right?

Both are within us.
The darkness, the light.
Taking one out,
just wouldn't be right.

Truth lies in knowing,
that light cannot be.
Unless the darkness,
has set it free.

Embrace the darkness,
together with light.
For all our brightness,
glows stronger at night.

Forbidden Forever

We have, what's neither of ours.
In a place, where we shouldn't meet.

When our minds have lost all power.
As one, united, we breathe.

High, among the towers.
On a time, when all are asleep.

Your eyes are mine for an hour.
But my heart is yours to keep.

Noha Nasri
Temara - Morocco

The Crow And The Dove

Once upon a time, there was a crow,
His feathers glistened charcoal-black.
As he passed the larks, they would bow
So glorious he walked and turned his back.

One day this crow saw a snow-white dove,
Walking so gracefully on the grassy rooftop.
So delicate were her steps high above
The black chimney, her feathers would flop.

The crow so proudly walked over and cried:
“Young dove show that walk of yours,
For I want to learn it and be admired,
Oh white foreign dove, do that gait of yours”

The dove strode slowly many times then flew away,
The crow thought proudly that he has worked it out.
He went hurriedly to the larks down in the quay,
To his surprise, they laughed and flew about.

The crow has lost his own gait, alas!
He would trip over and fall so often.
The larks made fun of him and went at last.
He wept as his legs would twine and stiffen.

The crow regretted what he did a lot,
He wept and longed for his old ways.
Now do not try to be something you are not,
Be yourself and let others be their way.

Sara Zulfiqar

Labore - Pakistan

Live And Let Live

In you I see a reflection of me
You feel joy and pain
Let alone being my own flesh and blood
I think: "I'll just knock some sense into your brain"

I'm not your judge, nor are you one for me
Our mistakes in each of our hearts leave a stain
Our kind words in each of our lives reap us our own good
Live and let live when Truth is made plain

Somdeep Datta

Kolkata - India

Truth And Lies

In a time when everyone is screaming,
I choose silence stares.
In a time when everyone is dreaming,
I pick my nightmares.

Lines of lies and truths getting blurred,
Fact and fictions in an unholy shame,
Sheathed swords and twisted words,
As crimes are committed in a holy name.

Hush! If you can silently listen,
You can hear the blades sharpening.
The bells are ringing unusually loud,
As if to complement the ominous singing.

Everybody is eager put a label,
But nobody offers an ear to listen.
So, you live with your truth,
And let me live with mine.

Taeryn McKinstry

Burlington, Vermont - United States

Perfect And Complete

Within you lie an innumerable number of you,
Yet, we all look ever outward.
Focused the aspects of otherness,
In vain attempts to be accepted by another.
We remain bellicose to our psyche,
Why should you look inward when the flesh around you is
much more tender?
The woods of the mind remain deep,
And foggy daring one to get lost within its canopy.
If you were to really search inside of you,
Would the current you come back?
Or perhaps some doppelganger proclaiming they found
perfection.
In being whisked away you would surely grow,
A more volatile shard of the ego,
Until one dares to search again for themselves.
So, it would become a great cycle of kindred,
Spirits and minds eternally searching and hunting.
Insatiable wanderlust would drive each you forth,
And back into your fathomless mind.
Yet, each and every one of you would proclaim,
“Fear not my friends,
For I have found myself.

I am complete and without fault,
A complete compilation of strength and weakness,
A paragon of virtue on sin,
Learn from me as I learn from myself,
Realize that we may complete ourselves.”
None of us would dare refute you,
As we would gaze upon your form with awe and contempt.
Mad that in our frenzy of obsessing over the other,
That we had chosen the wrong one to mimic.
You would laugh,
Scolding the naive children before you,
“Why should you be me?
And why should I trade an eye for an eye?
I had what I wanted before I even began the search,
I can't contain the vessel of your completion.
I can only offer to you the path that I found,
Look inward, subsume yourself,
Get lost in the vastness that comprises you,
Once your feet begin to bleed,
Twice when you begin to drown in the vitae,
And once again when you realize you are travelling back out,
You will find it;
That truth, that you lack nothing.”



Self Knowledge
Is The Beginning
Of Self-Improvement

Andrew Revie

Montvale, New Jersey - United States

The Girl Left Me

For an ex-marine
So I started drinking
Among other things
Then a new girl came
Who didn't mind the drinking
And the other things
At first
But then she began to mind them
So she left too
And then there was no girl
But there was vodka
And poetry
And the memory of love
And I was happy in my sadness
I think
Then I stopped drinking
And another new girl came
But she wasn't the right one
So the drinking came back
And I left her
For a change
And then another girl
Who didn't drink but

Seemed to like that I did
And then I stopped again
And then she wasn't interested
Anymore
But who needs anyone
That beautiful anyway
Now there's no drinking
And no girl
And only this poem
But I think I'm getting
Better at the whole thing
Don't you?

Atlas Hutchinson

Fairview, North Carolina - United States

Blood Letting

I must bore
another hole
into my
head
to let
the light in
so i can
see what is
as it is
not as i
would imagine
it to be

I must tear
another hole
into my
chest to
let the
light in
to feel how
it is
as it is
not as i

would
imagine
it to be

I seek
and fear
the connection
more
than ever
and ever
the (un)known
the divine
the paradox
the meaning
(what do you have in mind?)
the point or place
which is halfway
between extremes
the course of action
a way of attaining an end

and yet it does
not end
and i do not
mean well
nor the opposite
in totality
i make impact
another hole
into my throat
and i speak
this time
as it is

not as
i would
imagine it to be
(what do you mean?)

there is a hole
where the light comes
inside me

I open my mouth
and no sound
comes out

Deandra Jackson

Rex, Georgia - United States

Self Knowledge

Self-Awareness is a Silver Purse
I was buried in self loathing
because I wouldn't let God be God
I wouldn't let my wailing flesh die
I kept telling it to take the reins

"God is good," I'd tell myself
"He is omnibenevolent," I whisper
"He is omnipotent," I think
"He is omniscient," I wonder

"Look at the sun," I tell myself
that's how faithful God is
"Place your hand over your heart,"
100,000 times a day, at least, is
how often God thinks of you.

I buy a silver purse,
and know I am loved.

Irina Lessne

Potomac, Maryland - United States

My Self

Knowing myself is like meeting a stranger,
yet the stranger is someone I've never seen face to face.
I know myself, yet I barely know who I am.
I am a blank canvas but only to my own naked eye.
Others see me, observe me, take in all of me.

I am aware of who I am, where I exist and who I have become,
yet I've never seen myself through the eyes of a stranger.
Do I want to?
Do I want to encounter what makes me tick?
Maybe?
Perhaps not.

Knowing myself is no easy feat,
yet I am up for the challenge.
Each day, I am growing, changing, evolving,
into who I want to be.
I am the paintbrush of a masterpiece imagined.
I am the filling in between two pieces of wonder bread.
I am the feeling you get after you eat a delicious meal.

I am, I am, I am.

Yet, who will I...become?

Jenni Frank

Newport Beach, California - United States

Judgement Barometer

Today I recalibrated
my judgement barometer
It's like a moral compass
that measures the pressure
I feel
from other people's verdicts
on my trials
and tribulations
Those ridged impositions
cast over my decisions
that threaten to push me
into fabricated
redefinitions of my
self
because how I see myself
could be a mere reflection
in the eyes of others
But it isn't
I am more than the sum
of perceptions and
assumptions
more than the subtraction
of expectations

more than actions taken
in counterbalance to impositions
I am an accumulation of choices
made to make me
happy
and recent barometric readings
indicate that
I don't really care
how you feel about
any of it

Joshua Skinnell

Los Angeles, California - United States

Napalm

His knuckle blanched, clutching the cold steel trigger in an eruption of rage

A dark ribbon of ink jetted from the barrel, the thick sludge streamed from the nozzle

Napalm coated the textured walls, seeped into the woven plush carpet, and wept from the popcorn ceiling

The vicious gel covered the family photos, slithered down the banister, and soaked the curtains above

The searing inferno engulfed the staircase and swallowed the second floor beyond

This was for the blind; those who ignored his cries

This was for the deaf; those who ignored his pleas

This was for the boxers; the nights he spent as a heavy bag, pounded for the sins of others

This was for the alchemists; those who twisted love into disdain,
warping purity into venom

This furnace was for them; them who weren't present; them
who wouldn't notice

Yet, there you stood, small and still, tears carving paths down
your cheeks as the flames flickered in your almond eyes

Your little fingers trembled, you gasped and wept, your perfect
heart was broken

The invisible had become blind, the mute had become deaf, the
beaten had become the champion

His grip loosened, the trigger recoiled, and the rage smoldered

What have I done? Who have I become?

He turned the barrel inward, awkwardly struggling with its
length and wrestling with its hose

Then, he whispered softly as he depressed the steel trigger,

“It ends here.”

Kelly Maida

Albany, New York - United States

Hungry Ghosts

In the deep
That is when you call out to me
Is in your sleep
You try to push your feelings for me down
And that is why my energy keeps coming back around
It haunts you like hungry ghosts
That never leave you alone
I sometimes get visions of you at night
And I can hear you calling out to me
It is another way we speak
And its called telepathy

Ancient Saints

Norse gods
Ancient saints
Gather here
To reacquaint
The villagers ride at dawn
A quest they are on
A map they seek
To lead them to the path that meets
Torches that light
Circled around the stones
Temples of old
Guardians of the watchtowers
A biblical chest
The holy quest
A communion of the soul
Days of old
Lazarus found
Underground
A holy temple
Hermeticus in sight
A place to reunite her pilgrimage flight
Her destined fate
Now awaits

Nicole Shirley

From The Ghost Of Ophelia

Who is there to praise the dead when we die?
No tombstone here to identify me.
How are the people who gather around my grave supposed to
know...
who lies in this dug out earth?

If there is anything I remember, I was once alive.
I was a young woman named Ophelia.
I had a lover, but my father warned me to abstain from meeting
with him.
So too did my brother, Laertes, repeat those warnings to stay
vigilant.

My former lover's name is Prince Hamlet, and Lord Hamlet is
the crown prince of Denmark.
I rejected his letters and gifts, but it was not intentional.
I was only obeying my father's words, yet what was in store for
me was Lord Hamlet's madness.
Madness turned our love out of control—my love was repelled.

Lord Hamlet's love for me was awry, for he promised:
we would no longer be engaged to marry.
My rejection of Lord Hamlet's affections injured his heart,
so I was commanded to go to a nunnery.

Pedro Alves

Niedercorn - Luxembourg

The Dream Of The Eagle

Blinded and robbed of love
not his sight but blinded by ego
dreams of soaring high and proud
visions of resembling an eagle

but he felt like the smallest of insects
insignificant, weak and frail
trying to work on himself
seemed just like an endless tale

he couldn't figure out what was wrong
he thought he was doing everything right
but never once did he listen to the song
playing in his soul full of might

until humbled by life and all of its hardships
also referred to as God's grace
he was made aware of the life-changing fact
he never knew who he was in the first place

so he pondered on that question
at large for a while
until finally again
he produced a genuine smile

he heard the song deep within
that was playing all along
his soul told him who he was
and for once he felt truly strong

no longer blinded he now felt love
didn't feel like an insect but more of a dove
some day a bit bigger like maybe a seagull
until one day he'll live his dream of the eagle

RMG

Everett, Washington - United States

Love Thyself

More important than you know
More beautiful than you think
Smarter than how you feel
Replace the yelling with understanding
Replace the insults with compliments
Easier said than done
But if we are not kind to ourselves how can we expect others to be
You help your friends and family and you come last
When your around them you often wear a mask
They See the im ok how can i help you face
The my life is great yet
when in your head
The thoughts are darkened
Why do i look like this, am i even enough
You try so hard to be tough
Yes i know your life has been rough
Does it seem like your watching a show
Why take take control and let yourself grow
You are beautiful, intelligent, understanding, caring and kind
Look at yourself for once and stop your self abuse
Be patient with your mind
Be kind to your doubts

Be reassuring to your feelings
Love yourself before others for once
If you love yourself your love for others will grow as well
So what did you say to yourself in the mirror today
Unravel and let go
Look at your beauty, know your intelligence, and be open to
growth
Love others but learn to love thyself first
Be your first love and let others be your last
That is truly the only way to shatter that mask

Scott Pierce

Franklin, Tennessee - United States

Crimson And Alabaster Clash

When deeply we go
Intrinsic we know
That alabaster and crimson clash

What can we know
when we know nothing of?
When the words make no sense
But the rhyming scheme does?

Come compass needle
Come course correction
Cause oft in a plummet
We lose our direction

Til a drop of water at bottom of the sea
Letting loose the memory
I am the ocean and the ocean me.

Heartbeats softly reverberate
Tears of solace gently penetrate
Be Love discovered
One needs no other
Crimson and Alabaster clash.

Sehaj Dhingra

Delhi - India

Chai

Two,
My grandmother bathed me with milk and *haldi*,
Rubbbed my skin with *atta* to remove hair
She said it was to brighten my skin
The one that resembled my ancestors'
The one that resembled the color of *chai*.

Six,
I was forced to dress up in pink frocks with floral patterns,
Small sarees and *kurtas* with the *cham-cham* of my *payal*.
It was to teach me,
It was to ensure I understood how to be appealing.

Twelve,
I told my mother to buy me skincare products,
'fair and lovely' always had a place on my dresser.

Fourteen,
I was told,
Not to wear shorts
To stop hugging my brother
To start helping my mother in the kitchen
To realize I was older now.

Sixteen,
I started covering up my body,
The dark patches on my skin.
The years of hurt on my arms,
With the kurtas of floral prints.

Eighteen,
I found my sweet escape,
The one I had been yearning for
I thought I had everything I wanted
I thought I was complete;
I now yearned for *chai*,
I thought.

twenty-one,
I started wearing *sarees*,
With *bangles* on my hands.
I started wearing suits,
With a red *bindi* between my *kajal-laden* eyes.
I started to love myself again,
I started drinking *chai* again.

Velibor Baco

Vienna - Austria

Sail Into The Darkness

Sail into the dark,
swim past the sirens,
heard voices,
yet wordless,
reaching from afar.

Pull your soul from the depths of
the unknown,
the sea of emotion,
there you will find,
words beauty of one kind.

Keep going,
through mountains,
undiscovered will find,
the answers amounted,
past realm of undefined.



Acknowledgement

Joshua Skinnell

Andrew Revie

Scott Pierce

Crystal Barker

Isabelle Call

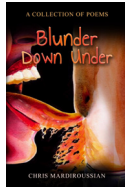
Our Single Author Publications:



A Futile Attempt At Delaying The Inevitable



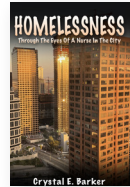
Burnout



Blunder Down Under



Free Air Berlin



Homelessness



Mother Medusa



Seasoned Women



Summers In Laurel Canyon



Sunlight Reflector



Questions We Didn't Ask Out Loud



Unheard Whispers



Walking Through The Four Seasons



Where Have All The Bluejays Gone



Whispers In The Wind

From This Series

COLLECTION OF POEMS

FOUND A PROVERB

A Woman's Clothes Is The Price Of Her Husbands Peace
Actions Speak Louder Than Words
Better Face A Danger Once Than To Be Always In Fear
Better Late Than Never
He Who Has Come Through Fire Will Not Fade In The Sun
Often A Persons' Mouth Broke Their Nose
Where There Is A Will There Is A Way

(published in 2021)

Finding a proverb is a journey of self realization.
There is valuable time which goes into learning of its existence.
It's precious and must be treated with care.

Clever Father, Clever Daughter; Clever Mother, Clever Son
He who knows, and he knows he knows. He is wise- follow him.
If you wish to be blamed, marry; if you wish to be praised, die.
Live and Let Live.
Self knowledge is the beginning of self improvement



Poets' Choice®
www.poetschoice.in

ISBN 978-8-19-730607-5



9 788197 306075