

The Sacred Feminine  
Volume 2

The Sacred Feminine Volume 2

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### Introduction

The definition of a poetess is, simply put, a female poet. But I promise you, we are so much more! With every drop of our ink, we channel Calliope, Melpomene, and Erato, the very muses that so inspire us. To be part of the Sacred Feminine is to celebrate the goddess within all women.

-Courtney Glover

**Featured Author:**

Habits by: Celesia Parker

Life would give her a night out  
Exhaling, a friend's book catches her eye  
She smells fresh coffee  
Time for some self-respect

An antidote amidst fear  
Formable justification felt  
While running the water  
Of timeless thoughts

**Featured Poem:**

Mother Earth by: Jonna Wihnan

The leaves are changing from green to red, and  
there's something to be said about the thoughts in my  
head.

Every day's a new beginning, from the start to the  
end, makes me realize the Earth is my best friend.

For she holds me, supports me, and what you see is  
what you get. For when I'm deep inside her, I've  
never felt regret.

In her lies the truth, as united, we are one. The inner  
work she guides me through is never quite actually  
done.

Keep searching and learning, for your curiosity will  
peak. While discovering who I am, is the opportunity  
that I seek.

For like the leaves, we are changing, rearranging all  
our thoughts. From doubts to beliefs are the feelings  
that I've sought.

To grow from the ground we must be planted as a  
seed, with water and sunlight, the main elements we  
need.

It may rain, it may pour, and it may even snow.  
Leaving us drowning, with nowhere else to go.

But up comes the sun to dry up the ground, our  
seedling will blossom, our flower to be found.

As the daylight fades and the moon shines bright, I  
feel every star shining on this incredible night.

For the moonlight's presence offers comfort in  
knowing that, in day light or night sky there's always  
something glowing.

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The Sacred Feminine Volume 2

*Celesia Parker*



An Advantage

How can I stand in the middle of remembering  
On this vanishing trail so close to gone  
And not wonder where you are  
You, my star that I keenly seek out to find  
The vested interest in poetry of fiery passion  
A mirage my mind has transposed into life  
With wildlife motivation, you have disappeared  
Transpired breathing into thin air's conquest  
Victorious, you step high above yourself so high  
High above this vanishing trail of confusion  
I stand in the middle of remembering  
And not wonder where you are  
You, my star...

57 Years Ago

She climbed above established heights  
Integrity lead honestly

She already cooled the coals  
A lesson she learned well  
Perception She developed  
All by herself

Excited for her future  
Been a long time coming  
She did it

Respects her emotional support  
Intelligent enough to open a book  
Plowed her way, 57 years ago

# *Rhiannon Owens*

## Dust & Dirt

My life has all been pain  
I burn with my secret shame  
I shouldered all the blame

Though it was you who abused me  
Those put-downs, constantly  
That left me drowning in uncertainty

And then you cast me aside in the dust and the dirt  
Replaced with someone else to manipulate  
And I should have felt relief...  
But oh, God it hurt!

I didn't realize I was finally free  
You threw me away, like trash  
Just so much debris...

Now I watch my cat as she rolls in the dust and the dirt  
Rubbing it merrily into her fur  
Legs akimbo paws stretched wide...

And something suddenly clicks inside  
And I race into the garden and lie beside her  
Laughing and rolling as she stretches and purrs

If she is happy in the dirt and dust and debris  
Then why on earth shouldn't I be?  
If it's good enough for this Tigress, then that's good enough for  
me!

So, I tumble and giggle, and relish this feeling  
Finally, realizing that I am free

Locked in a Jar

Locked in a jar, a tiny being  
A girl of Thumbelina-like proportions,  
But how can it be, she is the image of me?  
I gaze at her perplexed, tip the jar to the side,  
She doesn't panic nor try to hide...  
Her eyes are steady as they meet mine,  
I know those eyes, I've seen them in the mirror time after time,  
I beseech her, begin to plead  
"I've removed the lid...Don't you want to be freed?"  
She shakes her head and says to me  
"Until you free yourself, how can I be?  
You've forged chains, trying to please everyone else,  
Now you need to live for yourself...  
And then we both can finally fly free  
Because I am you and you are me!"

In Ballycastle, Her Heart Would Stay (For my Grandma)

She talked of Ireland  
"One day I'll take you", she'd say  
Eyes smiling at the thought  
For it was Ballycastle where her heart always lay

In the hustle and bustle of the Ould Lammas Fair  
The sun beating down on a hot August day  
I imagine her there, sea breeze teasing her hair  
For it was Ballycastle where her heart always lay

We took the ferry from Liverpool port  
I slept at sea as the waves did sway  
Dreaming of seeing that Emerald Isle  
For it was Ballycastle where her heart would always stay

'Oh, what do you do  
When you are far from home?  
When your birth-land is calling  
And restless you roam?  
Seeds can be scattered,  
But rest where they're sown...  
For it was Ballycastle that would always be home...'  
And I saw the Glens of Antrim  
Where the sunlight would play  
On the deepest shades of green  
But still in Ballycastle her heart did lay

And I stood on a clifftop where Dunluce Castle perched  
Looking down on the Wishing Arch, wishing away  
I don't know what I wished for, but I know her wish was  
That in Ballycastle she always could stay

And the years have passed by since you've gone  
I look across from Ballintoy Harbour, beneath skies that are grey  
I know not why I'm searching – I know where you are  
For it was always Ballycastle where your heart really lay

‘Oh, what do you do  
When you are far from home?  
When your birth-land is calling  
And restless you roam?  
Seeds can be scattered

But rest where they’re sown...  
For it was Ballycastle that would always be home...’

No, never in those Glens nor the Giant’s Causeway  
It was always Ballycastle, where her heart would stay

*Usha N.*  
*Shrinivaasun*

You Have Come A Long Way, Dear Women

You Have Come A Long Way, Dear Women  
You come from the ribs of a man  
You are the force behind a successful man  
You rock the cradle  
You dish out culinary delights with a ladle  
A mother, a daughter, a sister, and a wife  
Many a role you play in your life  
In the kitchen, you preside  
At board meetings, you decide  
In the nursery, you feed your little mite  
You head a concern and show your might

You hold together a beautiful family  
You deal with criminals ruthlessly  
You argue, you judge  
From justice, you will never budge  
You travel amidst the clouds scattered and strewn  
You nonchalantly traverse the silvery moon  
You discover for a deadly disease a cure called radiation  
You affect a method for the blind to read and see a great invention  
You leave no stone unturned  
You are the most beautiful creation that God hath churned  
As Savitri, you brought back your husband from the dead in Hindu mythology

As Florence Nightingale, you saved the wounded soldiers from death at Scutari  
As a woman, I am proud to be you  
You have come a long way and hats off to you  
But never ever give up your femininity  
For this is your identity  
Rise in anger when injustice is done  
Let not criminals and porn men have their fun

But at other times be a haven of love and solace  
For the less fortunate and the rudderless  
In your presence, comfortable and cheerful should feel humanity  
For this is your essence and beauty

For those who really treat their women as better halves  
For those who hold their women close to their hearts  
For those who are with their women in times of distress  
And help them to unwind and de-stress  
Salutations to you, and may your creed progress  
And together we make this world a loving fortress

# *Theresa Louw*

## Divine Feminine

She travels far beyond the edge  
Of what the eyes perceive  
Parading strength and courage  
On the catwalk of fear  
Her soul a beautiful weave  
An equilibrium of light and dark  
A heart performing center stage  
Love above all, a noble devotion  
Compassion in mortality  
Intuitive justice, a belief  
Reflecting wisdom gained  
Through her own silent wraths  
Acceptance of pain in forgiveness  
Maturation through healing  
For she has dwindled weak  
Yet risen, spirited  
Intellectually vivacious  
A Divine Feminine

My Wild Moon

Here, there, somewhere, everywhere  
Between, within, entwined  
There you are, always will be  
Days, nights, moments, eternity  
My wild moon in a firefly sky, a duet  
Our souls, a passionate pirouette  
Often, your wars burn within  
The truth, I see beyond your skin  
You find all value above your own  
A King afraid to take his throne  
Tiptoe love, a wild horse ride  
Heartbeats tripping over pride  
Self-sabotage, fear of rejection  
Alignment divine, deep revelations  
Step back one, forward two  
Fight for me, for love, for you  
Embrace the connection, free  
Exposed and vulnerable, let love be  
For happiness is a mere choice  
Commitment in a whispered voice  
Creative passion, desires shared  
Wild moon wishes, hearts paired  
Miracles and blessings become  
Our souls are infinitely strung  
You are my wild moon in a firefly sky  
You give my words wings to fly

W o R d ♡ A r T

I often felt like misspelled words, trapped  
Paused breaths in a badly written chapter  
Peacefully chaotic, raising questions  
Missing abc's and too many exclamations  
My I's not dotted, and my t's not crossed  
Some of the syllables turned and tossed  
Others too often tried to write me right  
Bickering demands dimmed my light  
You know, the different ways I spell me  
Simply not what they wanted to see

Confusion and chaos between my lines  
Where love lingers within ancient times  
I am the blots of ink, recklessly spilled  
My naked heart beating wild, free-willed  
Scrambled letters questioning all  
Blemished blots on a broken brick wall  
Yet one, yes one reads my chaos right  
Blots and blemishes, a beautiful sight  
His intense heartbeats read my heart  
Inspiring me to be a perfectly flawed...  
piece

of

W o R d ♡ A r T

# *Kay Watkins*

## Roses

My husband doesn't buy me roses...  
They die out too soon.  
He says our love's everlasting like the sun & the moon.  
He plants all kinds of flowers, the perennial blooms,  
so many that they could fill up the living room.  
He waters them tenderly, gives them lots of care.  
So much beauty to see, such sweet fragrance fills the air.  
He says that's a symbol of how feels about me.  
Tender & sweet is our love to last eternally.



Endings

With each beginning also comes an end  
But only leads to new beginnings.

The caterpillar ends its part  
Only to become the butterfly

The autumn leaves die and fall  
Only to become renewed with fresh leaves

A baby's born  
Then grown, the person dies after having borne the next  
generation

And so it goes

Don't fear death  
It's from there new life can begin  
Care for the living  
Do all you can for the future beginnings

Let there be peace in the circle of life  
In every stage  
Birth to death to birth again  
Let there be peace

Nighttime, Dream Time, Deja-Vu

I've been there before  
In my convoluted dreams  
A place I lived as a child  
But now everything's wild

I've been there before  
But now we're all grown up  
Married with children  
And our children's children

That house has been long gone  
Gone  
Gone  
Long before the convoluted dreams

My parents are there, young again,  
though they've been long gone  
Gone  
Gone  
Long before the convoluted dreams

And yet we're all here now  
In my convoluted dreams  
Dealing with demons within and without  
Somehow working everything out  
In my convoluted dreams  
So strange to be seeing  
And yet also freeing

So I'll dream and revisit  
Feel a deja-vu.  
Battle my demons,  
And either wake up with a sense of dread  
Or calm knowing it's all in my head

# *Sarah Ramphal*

## Struggles

The struggles we face  
Won't count as nothing  
It somehow makes us stronger  
God has a greater plan  
Even though we can't see it  
Doesn't mean its not there  
Don't give up the fight  
Keep on going  
Even when down on the knees  
You will stand tall again  
Keep your faith alive  
And your prayers  
He will answer in time  
Struggles don't last that long  
For this too shall pass

Don't Despair

Don't despair  
Have no fear  
Though time has gone  
Those minutes, those years  
Was not in vain  
Even though we can't regain  
You are in the hand of the Father  
And His word says your latter  
Shall be greater than your past  
Cling to this promise  
And know that you have a purpose  
Continue on your journey  
Though it may seem long  
Trust His care  
He never fails  
And never give up  
On you and others

Holding On

Holding on to hope  
It's all you need sometimes  
When the road seems weary  
And your eyes are a bit teary  
Keep a smile on  
On that beautiful face  
Things will get better  
Miracles they happen  
Each and every day  
You are one  
And that's for sure  
Don't give up  
Keep on walking  
And love every part of you

## *Johanne Lee*

### Wilt You Know

Delicately dropping the petals of youth  
Falling without a sound into the dirt-coloured truth  
Once sumptuous and folded around a stoic steadfast stem  
Clasping to its bosom its seeds of acumen  
Time will recover what has blown away in confusion  
Cleverly creating once more its beauteous illusion  
Withered wounds once-proud stand in lonely clay less ground  
Rosy coloured cheeks no plumped or rouged up mounds  
Wind and rain and storm withstood the rotten weeds  
Your beauty lives to scent the earth in its bounty of ravenous  
needs

Inevitable It Seems

'Twas a man sent her to ruin  
Her Sirens ne'er sounded again  
His earthly form she longed to pursue him  
Though her brethren looked on in disdain

Temptress, she was and as man wants it all  
Destinies plunder and fall  
To Quarrel in loves sunshine spell  
And feast to dry out the bounty of swell

Poseidon in anger washed waves high in might  
The ocean depleted grieves waves  
Skies thundered to rage stalagmite  
Man just tossed them in caves

She gave all to surrender  
He tired and moved on  
Pieces of her heart to the pretender  
Her sirens her freedom were gone

Lamentations dance the air  
The sea looks to renew  
Incandescent washed despair  
As it counts the cost of you

First Love

A single rose  
Beauty  
complicated  
on its own  
it's the first of its kind  
Petals delicately falling  
into the veins of trust  
Though the end of its bloom  
is easily defined  
Kept in a book  
pressed into words of love  
like a secret held forever  
Plucked as one of many  
discarded  
in compare  
With time withered  
Betraying eyes  
naïve  
strings  
of lies  
wanderlust  
the hearts combust  
First love  
Intoxicating  
Toxic  
Wasting  
longing  
faded  
crushed  
now  
dust

## *Jyoti Nair*

### Giza!

She let her torso be plundered.  
Once her facial contour emitted  
rays from glances of mirror splinters.  
A body and those disintegrating tales of hers.  
That contemporary voices are baffled about.  
Analytical bellows of archeological trowels.

Butchered limestone casing.  
Wilted pride that continues to ramble about.  
Is that why some students hear some gibberish?  
When their pens scribble their inferences.

Girl,  
Will you encrypt it as my cognitive apparition?  
If I address Giza as a girl?  
Even last night, her pink petticoat was dismembered.  
She has pretty feet, and her favorite pastime is to romp...  
Romp jabbering about pink ribbons and Barbie braids to her  
favorite uncle.

To me, Giza is a girl.  
Both have abrasive hemlines.  
The stench of which, clobber your toes and sleep.  
Caustic fists being shredded into the resentful broth.  
Both anatomies were used as corroborative accounts.  
Though the girl is the preferred allusion and anecdote.  
An ivory song bleached in pale red.  
Usually!

Truths

Talk to me, only about those stark-naked truths, that gaze unflinchingly, with steely claws...I shall vet those on a lazy afternoon while sipping the darkest jaggery coffee that I have brewed in a while, with 2 blades, one as soft as the lashes of the turquoise lake, running through my veins, and another as bludgeoning as the betrayed thunder-goddess, whose torso is an ablazed terrain, that many of your camera lenses captured as chapped purple-lips of a screeching dusk. Only such truths, I shall accept.

Grief

An agate moon-starved ashtray  
Tugs at her ramshackle ribcage...  
For she has the diaphragm  
and density  
To caress corroded parapet-lips with star-breeze  
Remember, any lucent-gleam is borne of  
Stoic silk-draped whiplashes  
That conceal blood-curdling agonies

Thus, grief was reared to be subtle!

# *Lisa White*

## Wilma

I see her now, sitting with memories  
just a silhouette in the back of minds.  
I think of all the things her eyes did see  
and wonder what it is she leaves behind.

She talked of children, though they never came,  
as she sat all alone in her wheelchair  
and never once did she place any blame  
though I felt she truly wanted them there.

She has passed on now, all alone I'm sure  
but she lives on in my thoughts, to this day  
and just maybe that's enough to ensure  
her memories will never go away.

Somehow now, I hope she knows how we cared,  
and she lives on because of stories shared.



## *Courtney Glover*

### The Disavowed Heart

A house, built on the edge of an enigmatic and prominent hill.  
Once filled with love and passion, never anger or ill-will.

Now abandoned, in complete and unequivocal disrepair and neglect.  
The roof rotted away, the outer timbers... decrepit and derelict.

Oh, how sad! How utterly unfair and heartbreaking to see!  
A home, where love once filled every corner, damaged irreparably.

But such is the heart of a woman discarded by her best friend and lover.  
Abandoned, inconsolable, devastated beyond mere words, unable to ever recover...

Beautiful Imperfections

To be an aurora of opalescent beauty would be such an inarguably exquisite thing.

Never dreary or monochromatic. To never be an object in need of a polish or sheen.

To be ethereal and enigmatic, without a single flaw or defect there.

Somewhere between flawless perfection and beautifully, imperfectly rare.

Music

Music... speaks to our souls and fills our heads with often strange, yet inspiring dreams.  
It's enigmatic whisper, floating on the wind, never quite what it undoubtedly seems.

Music... soothes the savage beast, that we all carry within us, inarguably.  
A midnight wind rustling the leaves, it speaks to our hearts, changing us irreparably.

Music... the ringing of wind-chimes or the ocean lapping against the shore in dulcet tones.  
Like the whippoorwill, singing us a late-night aria. Merry yet mournful, deeply felt and inherently known.

*Beauty In Words*  
*(b.i.w.)*

Blooming Moon

It's my doom  
In times; red or blue  
White or gloom  
Opening the petals, I hear tunes  
Of a delighted melody I knew  
I will sing it again soon  
It's curves make the lovers swoon  
It's signature shine make the poets stand in awe  
It a splendid view  
When two  
Of mother nature's finest coup  
Entwine to improve  
My night to a whole new  
Piece of art and prove  
That even if I would lose  
Even if I dared to break the rule  
I will choose  
To be as beautiful as a blooming moon

Her Non-Existing Chair

I often go looking for rocking chairs  
in shops of antique and vintage rare  
I often go seeking for no ghosts in an afterlife affair  
neither orbs floating here and there  
I seek to sit in a rocking chair  
in a time capsule capturing the smell of old air

and I glare  
with eyes of children, the childlike wonder stare  
rock between then and now, give the past a hail  
for it where; a circle of stories get shared

and they dare  
to call the stories blares

and I swear  
I'll give diamonds and gold for what they call an ancestry  
despair

"if anyone is desperate it is me" I declare  
trying to imagine her in a sainted rocking chair  
rather than one with cheap wheels color of silverware  
trying to remember a world where she softly brushed my hair

Mirror

*"Mirror, mirror on the wall."*

*"Majesty, I know it all."*

*"Mirror, mirror on the wall."*

*"What acuity shall I grant the overlord?"*

*"Do I end it? Do I stall?"*

*"The glass will crack by dawn-  
A room disperse by only wrawl"*

*"If I fall?"*

*"He will crawl"*

*"If I refuse the call?"*

*"He will wait by the door-  
See him lurking, taking over the hall."*

*"Will he at least invite me to the ball?"*

*"Not to be trusted for an aid or a good deed withal-  
Not to befriend; that silhouette doll."*

*No escape from this isolated atoll.*

*"then what be I doing? By the end of the splendid fall?"  
A sigh was heard from lips of no silver nor gold.*

*"When you talk to the crystal-  
And the mindset echoes  
Will it benefit any? Will it benefit at all?  
But what do I know?  
Am I not; just a part of your agony  
If you recall."*

# *Pooja Srinivas*

## Her Soul Found It's Home

She knew not what life lay in  
store for her,  
so she tried to fit in places  
she wasn't cut for,  
The truth hit her sails like a  
storm one day;  
But, she strived hard and  
charted her way.  
She now found a place where  
she could 'blend' in,  
Her soul found its home and  
there is bliss within.

If You Cannot Be...

If you cannot be the buoyant  
force,  
That keeps one afloat,  
Don't be gravity either!  
If you cannot be a lighthouse,  
To someone who is lost,  
Don't be a mirage either!  
If you cannot hold and revere,  
A heart that loves and cares,  
Don't break it either!  
If you cannot be the silver lining,  
in someone's cloudy day,  
Don't be the reason for gloom  
either!

Wings of Freedom

My father gave me the greatest gift  
known.  
The freedom to choose my sky and fly  
on my own.  
I stumbled, faltered, and made  
mistakes.  
But that taught me lessons so  
precious!  
I treasure my beloved wings of  
freedom,  
And shall pass them on to my  
children as heirloom!

# *Lola Lawrence*

## She Is...

She is chaos and mystery  
A free spirit unabashedly herself  
Who loves with sometimes frightening intensity and gives too much  
Yet heartbreak never halts her stride  
Never broken, she will always rise  
Dark and sweet  
She enters your mind  
Whispers across the shivers through your mind  
Wicked and deliciously savage  
This woman is wild and addictive  
Magnetically captivating  
You are drawn in without knowing why  
Her magic will rip your soul open  
The raw of you exposed to her fingertips  
She will make you want to be better  
Make you dream  
Make you see the wonder in the stars  
That untamed heart will steal yours  
And make you question everything you knew about love

The Divine Feminine

At times the crown becomes heavy  
The stars dim and flicker on the swords  
Wielded by the Warrior Women  
We harden and hide ourselves  
Our divine feminine souls  
The casualties of calloused hands  
A softness long forgotten  
The wilderness of our beauty a crime  
To those who belittle and degrade  
Lost amongst the battered ramparts  
The cost of war, my dear  
When we believe the best part of being a woman  
Are the weakest

*Sarah Fawcett*



Note to Self

Know what can be,  
But it's far beyond me.  
Why can't I see me;  
As worthy?  
Too scared to grow,  
Scared to let go,  
I don't deserve  
To be free.  
Want so much to change,  
To gain awareness,  
It pains,  
But sleep beckons me back  
To unknowing.  
Don't deserve this, not good enough;  
I have the tools, but they rust  
And the layer of dust keeps on growing.  
When will I see  
All that stops me  
Is me?  
Nothing more...  
Nothing less...  
Not this pain in my chest.  
Only me,  
And the fear  
Of self-knowing.

Quake

The ground beneath my feet is shaking,  
Though none but me can tell.  
I look rock steady,  
But the cracks inside my head  
Seem to widen with every breath;  
Balance shifting,  
A small voice, persistent,  
Insistently whispering,  
"I'm not happy. Fix it."  
Demanding, "Take action!"  
But without instruction  
I flounder and freeze,  
Confused, ill at ease.  
I don't know what to do,  
Who to be,  
What to change;  
Is this a wisdom acquired with age?  
How do I "fix it"  
Without starting a quake?  
Is destruction the sole path  
To a life lived, awake?

Not For Boxing

Don't try to pack me in your box,  
With your mugs,  
And your doormats.  
I'm not going to crush myself  
To fit;  
I've done enough of that already.  
Besides,  
I'm still dismantling  
My own little cage,  
I need some room to expand,  
These walls are too small  
To contain me;  
There's no room  
For the possibilities.

*Courtney Williams*

Feminine Focus

As I sit here, twirl my hair  
You wonder what's on my mind,  
What's going on in there?  
Who needs to know,  
I'm not here for you to study and stare  
Yet you can't look away,  
Wondering what plagues my mind  
What issue am I clogging it's gears with,  
What one's cause it to grind?  
Am I trying to fix it for me,  
Or the betterment of humankind?

Who, Or What Am I?

I'm not her  
I am not them  
Or anyone you see,  
Sometimes I'm not even me,  
Should I be?  
I know I am my own person  
Even when I don't feel like being,  
I can't be someone else, but I can grow  
Change is hard to navigate though,  
Will I find it exhausting or freeing?  
Trying the new, or unordinary,  
Could feel like your first time really seeing.

Gorgeous Importance

Help, I've got something in my eye  
Is it an eyelash, is it painful?  
I don't know what it is,  
Can you look?  
Maybe it's just the urge to cry,  
Why is that urge there?  
Is something bugging you deep down?  
It's hard to realize, you could be quite unaware  
Or are you not ready for it to be uncovered?  
What if it's ugly, forcing everyone to stare,  
What if it's new or rare beauty discovered?

*A Fractured Poet*

Cello and The Master

A grace, held carefully  
In the embrace of a master.  
Caressing strings with the hair of a bow.  
Whispers and moans so quiet,  
slowly growing in the bouts.  
The master and the cello  
becoming one ethereal sigh.  
Slowly dancing to one rhythm  
the undemanding pushing and pulling  
of the hand that carefully desires the sounds.  
Mournful cries of loss and pain endured,  
a wandering gypsy soul, now uncontained.  
Dancing across the green,  
the blue, and the torn.  
Swirling together now gripping so tightly,  
the master and the cello as one.  
Together whimpering and pirouetting, rising  
while all in tears, crumble around them,  
in this concert performing their death waltz,  
they console and soothe each other,  
the cello and the master.

Celestial Time Chase

Left the familiar orbit and went around the bend,  
to the flat side of Earth, sitting on the edge,  
grinning devilishly with an aurora in hand.  
Watched time as it sat in one of Venus's arachnids.  
Leaping forward and hiding behind old cosmic waves,  
when Orion stretched his arm and pulled his belt,  
trapping time in a dusty net of the Milky Way.  
Jumped on the tail of a comet,  
hitching a ride on the nebula train,  
screaming past blue-green Uranus and Jupiter's red face.  
Dread showed on his face and time complained.  
"Why have you traveled to the galaxy's end?"  
Reply came out sending time into a spiral descend,  
"Came here to bring event horizon to your reign.  
Came here to kill you, to choke you with ashes of exploded  
stars."  
Hyperion and Titan served as witnesses and looked on in  
dismay.  
"Your decaying orbit has come to an end, your countdown won't  
remain."  
Left the familiar orbit and went around the bend,  
with a devilish grin and aurora in hand.  
Went around the blue moon, black dwarf, and a pulsar.  
Drowned time in the Sea of Tranquility and renewed everything  
deteriorated by age.

*Karen Ann  
Winerling*

Lost Love

Another gold seam in my kintsugi heart.  
It was a new love,  
fresh, gleaming, without tarnish.  
But so deeply did my heart feel it.  
My love was almost enough for us both.  
Almost.  
But love must be shared  
and through the sharing  
expand and grow.  
I hope my heart beats anew one day,  
but for now it is silent,  
healing; the new gold seam  
muted in the dark.

## *Marie D. Moldovan*

### Torture Rack

Lifetime after lifetime  
Society has put me on a torture rack  
You called me to slay the beast,  
not realizing it was you  
So when I raised my sword of truth  
and spun my words  
So they could echo within you  
To inspire a change  
You leaped into a state of rage and survival denial  
You beat me, hung me whipped my back  
Buried me alive in the summertime  
Leaving me to scream and claw at my casket  
Filled with flesh eating beetles and maggots  
Leaving me to punch through the wood  
Fight my way through the earth  
While my breath lasted  
Stuck me on a pole  
Light the haystack  
As the flames blazed  
Let me alive burn  
As you closed your eyes and turned  
Nailed me to a cross  
Let me die in the scorching sun  
Yet, time after time I keep coming back  
WTF, am I whack, on crack, or in need of a straitjacket  
Like the mad hatter running around like a rabbit  
With ricky-ticky-tock magic, thinking I  
Am prophetically fantastic  
Carrying a message for the masses  
Who apparently need a set of glasses  
This is my umpteenth round  
Wearing the barbed wire crown  
Tasked to rescue mass from self  
Not this time, I've had it  
You can pull your own head out of your ass  
I not going to be your scape goat  
Your pummeling bag

Or shit rag used to mop the slop  
Na man, you can be your own knight  
and shining armor  
Get up on your own horse and trot  
Clippity clop, clippity clop  
through the forest  
And save your own ass  
I am tired of being the hero  
You stick on the torture rack  
Because you can't pick up your own slack  
Jack black track  
Adios amigos! I bless you, but won't be back  
This is my last spin on the proverbial "wheel"  
Ya feel, feel, feel, the real  
Hear the speal, schpiel  
See the sentiment I lack  
For a society that stabbed me in the back  
After realizing it was schizophrenically whack  
Not liking the words I spun  
Blood sucking societal dragon  
Chasing its own tail for fun  
I'm out, headed to the beach to eat a peach  
Tap into some of that peach blossom luck  
Tootles, enjoy slaying yourself fool

Wipe The Slate

It is not my fate to regurgitate  
words of late  
Haphazardly plopped on my plate  
Or slopped in my bowl  
Labeled food for the soul  
Spelling a state to deny that which I know  
From a childhood foe  
Designed to blind  
With a societal bind  
Meant to lock my mind  
In a maze of haze  
A psychological craze  
MEANT to set ablaze  
A potential to rise

To the highest skies  
Leaving burned flesh  
Wrapped in a mesh  
To be strung as bait  
Over a gate  
Where one would be charged a rate  
As they take that which is divine  
Forced to suffer moral decline  
Of a shattering mind  
Engaging in eternal war  
Splitting two poles  
So Altered frequency flows

It Is not my fate to regurgitate  
That of a blackhole mind  
Primed for greed  
By a dead seed  
Turning humans into feed  
As an attempt to satisfy an insatiable need  
Incapacitated bede

It Is not my fate to regurgitate  
WIPE THE SLATE



Washing Away Emotion Along The Seashore

Upon rock after rock  
I wrote emotion after emotion  
With a piece of chalk  
As each rock laid  
I felt lighter and lighter  
Before I knew it  
The sand could not be-e seen  
Instead, there lay row upon row  
Rocks of emotion  
Marked by chalk  
I had filled the seaside  
With all my pain  
Before that moment  
I was unaware  
Of the weight I carried within  
I watched the waves slap the shore  
Roll over the rocks  
Till none could be seen  
Then roll back  
Taking with it the chalk written emotion  
And leaving behind a shore of rocks  
Into the sea, the emotion went  
Tears rolled down my eyes  
As I sensed a release  
Emotional freedom  
And a final goodbye

*Aahana Mukhi*

She Did

Vivid as a sunset on a  
heavenly summer dusk.  
She stood beneath the  
clouds where the sun hid.  
And she told herself, "You must!"  
And just like that, she did.

She embodies the aura  
of a prideful queen.  
Blinded of the rumors,  
others may perceive.

Empathetic yet strong,  
only by standing tall.  
She did change the world,  
for her and for all.

Arise

A sun arising in your skyless eyes  
Such a scope for tranquility  
With no clouds you are unbound  
Yet you care to show humility

Heartless

They roar with pride,  
A heart full of enlightenment.  
They sing with life,  
They fulfill the environment.

We are a disgrace,  
We don't listen to their calls of despair.  
It's time to strike a change,  
For we only have so many to spare.

As the peacock's display their adorned feathers,  
And the lioness hollers with satisfaction.  
Each and every distinctive creature...  
Is full of abstraction.

They wouldn't dare to scrape our faces.  
They can't pull themselves to tear our souls.  
How come we snatch the life of their vulnerable eyes?  
Why do we take control?

I am warning you...  
They never hurt us regardless.  
We'll regret ravaging the ecosystem.  
We are truly heartless.

# *Donna McCabe*

## Keep Fighting

The fabric of womanhood  
Ripped, torn to shreds  
From the chains and shackles upon high  
Trying to keep us in our place  
Instead of reaching our dreams  
Reaching for the stars  
We always seem to have to fight harder

## Bottled Up

Bottled up emotions  
Stashed away for too long  
Fermenting and brewing  
Beginning to pull me down  
Drown me in a sour aftertaste  
I need a sprinkle of sweetener  
To bring me back to reality  
Releasing all the negativity at last  
Having a free and peaceful heart

Poetry Is Like...

A life saver to the soul  
That stops one from drowning  
Being swallowed up whole  
In a dark world that is frowning  
An emotional outlet  
An uplifting high  
A saviour from afflictions  
That otherwise make you cry  
A balm to the pain  
From the outpouring of ink  
Helping soothe and numb the mind  
So you can't overthink...

*Abshar Saeed*

The Other Women (A poem on female rivalry)

Darling, you are different.  
The colour of your skin.  
The acne on your chin,  
few inches on the waist,  
hairs curled or straight,  
in trousers or a dress,  
in heels or flats,  
headscarves or hats.  
At office, college or household,  
married young or unmarried old.

No, she isn't brewing up a plan.  
Indeed, she will not steal your man.  
It isn't dramatic to take a stance.  
Or a gold digger when  
she cares about finance.  
It will not elevate you  
when you bring her down,  
when you shame her, or  
at her prosperity, you frown.

How can you expect men  
to appreciate and support,  
when you shatter her dignity  
and weaken her fort?  
Beauty starts on your head  
not in your mirror.  
The other women are unique like you.  
So, can't we cherish each other?

Monarch Butterflies

We lived in the gold-studded chrysalis  
  
Once oblivious to star-studded heights  
  
Meant only for the umbras, never the rising lights  
  
Enclosed in fears whether the crust will break  
  
Now metamorphosed into an essence, none can obliterate

The Deer of Sun

Grown from ribs, guardian of hearts

Harbour rose quartz, devotion steering direction

A maestro weaves the sun into a dagger and purifies poisoned darts.

Zeals cloaked as deer, yet soar into swan birds

A companion who ask affection, not mercy

Leading legions, ravaging wars and shaping dynasty

An ocean whose vigour stretches deep, she can  
cradle destruction, she can conserve peace.

*(The 7<sup>th</sup> century Ghazala al-Haruriyya was the fearsome leader  
of the Kharijites. She commanded armies against the Umayyad  
Caliphate leading them in battle and prayer.)*

*Jo Allyn White*

My Mississippi Tire Swing

It's arc swung a hundred feet or so  
That tire swing in the centenarian oak  
It took my daddy several tries  
Throwing a ten-pound hammer to the skies  
To get three-inch ship rope over that limb  
Mom said, "It nearly killed him."  
But, tenacious is as tenacious does  
It will go over; that's all there was  
Then down it came with a mighty thunk  
The needle threaded thirty feet from the trunk  
Knots were tied and a tractor tire added  
I felt so proud of my stalwart dad  
All of us would swing at once  
That limb could carry half a ton  
I sat atop ahold of a knot  
Sister inside, brother stood on top  
Exhilarating it was to soar with the breeze  
Our toes, I reckon, touched the leaves  
I've only seen one that ever came close  
To that old tire swing that I loved  
With its three-foot plank and one inch rope  
I suppose now, not really, actually nope  
I'm certain that it's still there  
Swinging only those who take the dare  
Now, it's been five dozen years  
My enchanted tire swing draws me near

*Kim Brake*

The Sacred Feminine Volume 2

I Know My Worth

I've come so far, this journey so long  
I've fallen to my knees, I've risen so strong  
Kindness lives in me, and passion does too  
These are my gifts, to myself I stay true

I know my worth, more precious than gold  
The eagle cries to me, a divine message unfolds  
"Don't chase after dreams. For you are the dream."  
I reclaim my power, I am the glowing goddess supreme.

The Sacred Feminine Volume 2

Whispering Moon

Mighty Orion loosens his belt,  
While shooting stars seek her attention  
Saturn showers with the wealth of his rings  
But her heart is deep with intention

Comets approach wishing to destruct  
Sun's passionate flame scorched the lovers  
But the moon knows her deepest desires  
And the love she seeks to discover

Gentle moon whispers to her wounded heart  
An eclipsed story to a cosmic event  
Sharing the secrets hidden within  
Awakened to the dream she dreamt



I'm All Woman

I'm a mother, a sister, a daughter, a friend  
I'm the story between perceived bookends  
I'm soft and I'm nurturing, I tend and I give  
Growing a garden of love, with Peace I do live

I'm a blooming lotus. I'm a hot poker plant  
A tender rose, a seedling trapped  
Deep roots embedded, I'm far-reaching vines  
All the flowers of me in nature's design

I'm wildflowers on mountains and by the riverside  
I'm boundless and free, I stand with great pride  
I'm determined, strong and fiercely independent  
I'm all flowers, I'm all Woman, I'm a warrior descendant

*Maggie Watson*

Roads

We have all travelled along different roads to get where we are today.

Some of us have faced many roadblocks along the way.

Others may have joined us en route, then veered off in another direction.

While the ones left have stayed by our side without desertion.

Whatever road or path you choose to take is not for the judgement of a few.

For they have not walked your road or spent a day in your shoes.

Your path is unique, and so are you.

Focus on today, build for tomorrow.

Don't look back at the road with sorrow when your journey comes to an end.

Memories of you will live in the hearts of others, as will the words from this pen.

Tunnels

I have been crawling around in the dark for so long I know no other way.

Often I have looked for a key to release me from this pain.

“Will I ever see the light again?”

I have searched in many places and looked upon many faces down here in this tunnel of grime.

But I have never found the key to this soul of mine.

So I decided to turn my gaze inward, wading through the hurt and fear as I sat in the ocean of my tears.

Then a light appeared overhead like someone had flicked a switch.

The answers to my angst then became clear.

Now I am emerging from the tunnel with no dirt on my back.

No longer will I be haunted by the ghosts of my past.

Braveheart

A Braveheart, she marches through the blood-soaked trenches of her mind.

Through the words cruel and unkind.

With her sword in her hand, she cuts each word in two.

All alone battling each day, but she is used to that and knows no other way.

So no one sees the war she is fighting or her tears.

She is a Braveheart admired and revered.

One day when this war is over, she will lay down and rest.

But until that time comes, this Braveheart marches on slaying her demons one by one.

*Piko*

Empty Vessel

He openly says  
'I need a girlfriend'  
But it's glaringly obvious  
That it's for his own satisfaction  
He's lonely and angry  
Wants someone to share his burdens  
And a regular shag  
He reeks of desperation for it  
Which will put most off  
Maybe he wants a trophy partner  
Or someone to wash his pants  
This self entitled attitude  
Of wanting a woman to fill his void  
Is something I've never heard before  
Most people say they are looking for love  
For friendship, kinship, fun and joy  
Someone to build a life with  
But he just seems to want an empty vessel  
To take some of his pain and anger  
No joy is mentioned  
No thirst for adventure  
No obvious desire for love  
Well, good luck to him  
But whoever she is  
She won't fix things

Canned Misery

I've been that person  
I know how tiny the triggers are  
The internal fury  
Waiting for a foot set wrong  
To release and vent  
But I'm on the other side now  
Just my being is irritating  
I'm quiet  
Choose words carefully  
Makes no difference  
I cause offense simply by existing  
Everything I represent is repulsed  
Insults thrown at me  
Followed by blame  
All the responsibility for his anger  
I've nowhere to go  
No safe place to retreat to  
Canned misery

Apology

What is an apology?  
What's it really for?  
Sometimes thrown around like confetti.  
A public gesture, a token to move on.  
Just left to rot on the pavement.  
Often very hard to extract.  
Like a secret recipe or prized possession.  
'How dare you try and get this from me'.  
What does it mean to receive one?  
Does it make everything better?  
Grudges are too often still held.  
Just bubbling under the surface until the next time  
Sometimes it's a silent contest.  
Who will concede and give the moral high ground away?  
Principled over inconsequential nonsense.  
Sometimes it's just polite...  
And necessary...  
And decent...  
Sorry shouldn't be the hardest word.

*Loredana P. Kint*

Lawnflower

I am a lawnflower,  
Harder to banish than unbidden thoughts.  
My stem seems to cower  
Beneath mowing blades,  
But after we've fought  
I bounce back, wherever you forbade.

I am a lawnflower,  
I welcome myself wherever I grow,  
In the cracks of the walls of power,  
Of manicured gardens confined,  
Or fields of rubble and snow;  
This flower's roots are blind.

I am a lawnflower,  
Stepped on often, wished on more,  
Braided in halos, childhood bowers,  
The favourite kiss of the honeybees  
Yet, whose honey you do not hunger for  
Because my petals don't please.

I am a lawnflower,  
The one they don't write poetry about  
For a verse on a weed would not empower  
Bored students, tethered to desks indoors.  
Let them drift: I will teach them to sprout,  
And conquer a planet as much ours as yours.

I am a lawnflower,  
I ask no permission  
To live, to smile, for an hour  
And make the most of the world.  
But it is also my mission  
To soften its soil, for new roots to unfurl.

*A.F. Kaye*

MUÑECA

I downplay all my symptoms,  
so they never think I'm ill.  
I thrive on making others happy,  
so I pop another pill.  
I shed my skin in silence,  
I sweat out the fever chills,  
so they won't see their ego,  
or that I'm the one it kills.

I'm sorry, sister dearest,  
I'm sorry, father time,  
of all the lives I'm told I've saved,  
I never could save mine.  
Their backs all look the same now.  
I've withstood their firing line.  
With bloody hands I grip my heart,  
and I swear that I'm just fine.

Inequivalent Exchange

You gripped my Heart before you ever gripped my Throat.  
You held my Hand before you held my Waist.  
I spent years bartering my Skin for Affection.  
A Decade lost to people I had to Beg.  
You taught me how to say "I love you."

Parched

I sought healing from the  
Holy Grails of those who hurt me.

But you can't quench a thirst  
with an Empty Cup.

## *Debie Collins*

### Corsets Unravel

The place where ghosts steal sanity,  
I sit and hope to be revealed.  
Shallow truths deepen, threadbare corsets unravel.  
Dare I look beyond the plastic perfections that suffocate?  
Tunnels of yesterday collapse and the aroma of tomorrow swirls  
above me.  
Freedom lies trapped between the wrinkles of my past.  
Yes, my story awaits.  
It is time to scream hopeful cries onto the new pages before me.  
I am alive.



The Glass Me

I should savor this fragile laughter before I fall,  
into that mirror that reflects back to me the cracked shell of what  
I was supposed to be.  
It is amazing, how freely  
I can critic my lines,  
and try to erase the result of me being happy.  
And not once, can I remember,  
looking beyond these flaws I so eagerly invest in.  
Maybe, just once,  
when I see,  
the glass me,  
reflected above the sink,  
I can seize all those judgements,  
secure them back into the wrinkle cream jars,  
place them back on the shelf,  
then,  
smile back at the survivor in me.

She is There

Ballerinas in satin,  
jumping clowns that spook,  
trapped in boxes.  
Look at her twirl,  
listen to his laugh.  
They perform on command,  
compliance that defines,  
prisoners of applause.  
Do they dare break free?  
Societal norms will steal her.  
She is a whisper; she is a scream.  
Tucked between petals, hidden in weeds,  
she is there.  
She will not fit into a box.  
Find her,  
she is your truth.

# *Fiona Dignan*

## Hiraeth

Persimmon moon burns  
orange in your veins tonight  
Pouring amphibious serenades  
amongst your diamonds and laurels  
Honeyed sonnets bait and canter  
as lean nocturnal fish  
You miss the desert and the Sierra mountains  
The dour men with their black torrid spite  
give you angles and edges, you lose gait  
Levity and disease glory in your homesick green music

(From the Welsh for nostalgic, homesick, wistful)

White Wedding

I put away childhood dolls in a chest  
for my future daughter.  
I will bury. My dress trails me  
lace crisscrossed like the inside  
of my thighs.  
Hair hot-iron branded  
into ringlets, topped with a wolf-tooth  
tiara eating away at my skull.  
The hairdresser's hands stretch my face,  
gargoyle, as she scrapes my crown into place  
tight coils at my nape.  
I am to be made worthy,  
I am to walk with grace,  
brace as the ghost veil skulks me, the stain  
of blood hidden with by the wedge of  
cotton, keeping my monthly curse tightly inside me.  
Although I always thought, you were meant to bleed on your  
wedding night.

Framing a Question

Your baby's spine sleeps curled as a question mark,  
bootie dot marking her end.  
She asks; what have you become?  
What kind of mother  
has she birthed in you?  
You sense the knot of her fisted body  
knead you for answers  
you do not have, a future  
of first everything;  
tooth, crawl, walk, school day,  
toddler throw downs, teenage tantrums  
and limbs which will unfurl  
outgrowing you.  
For now, rest, curled as a comma  
next to her incantations  
of milk graced breath.  
For now she is a completed puzzle  
you frame.

## *Jonna Wihnan*

### Home

I couldn't bear children, so Creator gave me three  
Two girls, One boy, it was a blended family  
The adventure to get here wasn't one of a kind  
It was one however, that toyed with my mind  
We integrated slowly, taking our time  
He had his, and I had mine  
I had a home, as did he  
We moved in together, selling mine eventually  
Along the way, in our three short years  
We've both shed, a lifetime of tears  
But the bond its created, now *that's* one of a kind  
It's something it takes some, a lifetime to find  
Here I am, happy to admit  
These kids as mine *too*, are puzzles that fit  
I wanted a son and I got that  
A handsome young man in his prime  
I wanted a daughter and I got two  
Who've mended my heart over time  
The moments we've shared, have lifted most cares  
Of not having a child of my own  
Because it is here, with these kids  
My heart feels at home

Sweet Child Of Hers

Into this world—on a journey of your own  
Born into a family—Some type of home  
No choice in the matter—Just along for the ride  
On a mission to grow & develop your pride  
An unwritten destiny—A story to unfold  
A lifetime of experiences—You will always hold  
I'm here to help you—along the way  
I'll be by your side—Should you run astray  
No judgement from me—Is a promise I make  
I'll guide you along—Every step that you take  
I promise to love you—Until the end of time  
I care not if your blood—Is not that of mine  
I'm the other mother—someone choosing to love  
Choosing to care and be there for you—  
Until I unite with the stars above

The Bright Side

As the story unravels, there's a light to be shun  
On the man who made it possible  
The man I call my number one  
The father of these children  
The man who's raising them wise  
The man who has been there  
Through the outpour of cries  
Though fierce and strong to his inner core  
Beyond the surface  
There is so. Much. More.  
He's sweet and caring, in all the right ways  
He'll tell you what's up  
And is supportive on your worst days  
We lost  
Then we lost  
Then we lost...again  
A couple of babies  
Then our furry best friend  
And that's just the surface of our wild adventure  
We've pushed through so much  
To pursue this endeavor  
Job loss, pandemic, war in Ukraine  
Together 24/7—could make you insane  
We've however figured it out  
He's my best friend  
Without a doubt

## *Stephanie Neese*

### Fertile Garden

I'll tend to my garden and ponder,  
This mad world that roots in your brain.  
The soil of my skull rich with nutrients.  
A migraine untreated,  
Teeth grinding in fear.  
No one cares, so why should I?

I'll tend to my garden and ponder,  
How little sanity is left in a world.  
Run by greedy sociopaths that  
Bought into the system with money,  
We couldn't ever dream of having.

But don't say poor little one,  
We are rich in family so eat another potato  
And be grateful your grandmother still visits.  
Even though you are our greatest disappointment.  
Our little genius,  
Our little freak.

We secretly hate you, pumpkin.  
We will carve you in our image but  
You will never be what we could have been  
With parents like yours.

Spoiled American Brat.  
Worst moment of my life.  
The vines grow out of my ears,  
A jack-o-lantern smile lights up as I tend  
To the roots in my garden,  
And ponder.

# *Cathy BLUE*

## Changing Places

I sat on your throne  
Sipped your ambrosia  
An angel brought me pop-corn  
Many demons sat down beside my feet  
To watch the drama of life  
Beneath our feet

All the strings you put on humans  
Got tangled only because  
You did a half-hearted job  
Claim how almighty you are  
This drama goes very well with pop-corn

Heart-breaks, disasters, violence, crimes  
Like a frakin' Titanic  
We watch the world  
Sail headfirst into a big, freakin' iceberg  
We gasp when we are programmed to  
Then stuff more pop-corn in our mouth

I hear you begging for your life  
Dear God in human disguise  
I smile wide and do what you had always done to us:  
Stuff more pop-corn into my darn mouth  
Take a big sip of ambrosia  
Clap, clap, clap!!!!!!!

Blindfold

Keep adding trauma over trauma  
Lashing out whenever you are wrong  
Harsh words, belittling sessions for the onlookers....  
Go on, carry on, I'm watching with a smirk on my face  
How I've changed you claim  
Stupid man, I only unfolded the blindfold

*Samantha  
Woodbeck*



Destined To Fly

I was never meant to be held down.  
Just as my heart is too big,  
my wingspan is too wide.  
These mediocre walls can't contain me  
no matter how hard they try.  
My soul rushes toward love's edge...  
Every.  
Single.  
Time.  
Never knowing what's on the other side.  
Risking it all, and not afraid to fall,  
trusting the infinite sky.  
Because I, with my disproportionate heart  
and uncontainable wings,  
I was born to love hard...  
And I...  
I was destined  
to  
fly.

Unwritten

She turns pain into poetry and makes it look so easy.  
Almost effortlessly, like breathing, or just a heart naturally  
beating.  
But do you ever stop to wonder how much hurt was inflicted  
to cause her words to pile up and bleed out into  
linguistic ballerinas onto pages?  
How ugliness can magically turn graceful even while her heart  
relentlessly rages?  
What transforms in the journey of emotions  
between the mind, body and the spirit's convictions?  
The scars are too much so she cartwheels them into words  
until they land with beautiful precision.  
She rewrites her story and becomes her own best healed edition.  
However, it's probably true that some things are still better  
left unwritten.

Mosaic Soul

I found peace  
amidst the broken parts,  
in shattered pieces of my war-torn heart.  
Hope embedded amongst the shards.  
Wreckage collected, mended,  
and gracefully healed.  
This hidden sacred art revealed  
and woven together with love in this tapestry of scars.  
Finally whole...  
My tragically beautiful,  
mosaic soul.

*KrysAnn Gernold*

In the Valley: Andariel Maiden of Anguish

Looking quietly across the valley...covered in morning dew...she  
could see the twisting rivers and a hint of the moon's hue.  
The sun was quickly rising and the day was to begin...but inside  
she felt so broken, unable to see her sins.  
Calm breezes blowing gently, blades of grass swayed with their  
touch.  
She had given all she had, though, truthfully, it never seems  
enough.  
She sipped her coffee and stared, wondering when the storm  
would brew...all of her life, patiently waiting to tell them all she  
knew.  
The maiden had turned to mother, and the mother had turned to  
crone, now was the time to let the lion inside her heart be known.  
So she placed the cup down gently on the granite counter top,  
opened up the front door, took a step, and stopped.  
From deep within her belly she felt the power grow,  
And the sound became her magik as she drowned the valley with  
her enchanting roar.

Divine Female: Andariel: Maiden of Anguish

Reminiscing of yesteryears.  
And, yes, I have shed some tears,  
I have had my fill of fear.  
And I walk forward with courage.

I have danced round many a fire pit.  
I have sung the chorus of loneliness.  
I have traveled dark places that no one should go.  
I have stood strong when others would fall, I have loved  
innocently, and I have loved many, and I have loved all.

I am neither old, nor am I young.  
There are still strings to play and songs to be sung.  
I walk alone, but with many a memory of beautiful melodies  
flitting gently in summer's warm embrace.  
I have looked somberly upon death's face.  
I have laughed with unencumbered grace.  
I have flown with fledglings in spring, and now in the fall of my  
being, I find peace in the raging storm,  
I grasp tightly onto the wisdom of the aged and worn.

I seek intimate beauty among the thorns.  
The midnight sky gives me hope, and the stars arranged in  
brilliant surround sound play with ferocity Bach and Mozart.  
I extend my fingers and grasp as much as my vessel can hold of  
their path.  
And when the sky itself opens up and releases it's pain in the  
form of rain on a dark and dusky night...I will not take flight.  
I will stand beneath the droplets as a marble statue of feminine  
verocity and strength.  
I will hold my jawline firm and without trembling, I will counsel  
diligently my shoulders should they begin to fall.  
For I am nothing, If I am not courage!  
And I will speak my power into the air beneath the clouds that  
seek to drown out my magic.

And should I fail, it will never be said that I was weak.  
It will hold no virtue should those who speak, seek to destroy my  
memory, or hide the space that I once held.  
For my words of warning will already have begun to sprout.  
They will survive unto the ages fertilized with the spilt blood of  
my enemies.  
And upon the heads of their children will the curse forever  
dance.  
By this vow, and with my feet firmly planted and rooted deeply  
in the ground,  
I command every Queen, past and future, to reclaim and redeem  
the power that belongs to the divine female.

# *Dana Siciliano di Rende*

The Substitute Objects of My Affection

I could be a world traveler,  
and hike the steps of  
Machu Pichu,  
trek the jungle paths  
of exotic countries  
with just a compass  
to guide me.  
I could fly to Paris,  
revisit the Latin Quarter  
and the Rue Houchette  
of so many memories.  
Yes,  
I could even be an ex- pat  
and move to where  
there are always open air  
food markets  
and milling crowds  
and exotic fruits  
and fragrant  
colorful spices.  
I could move to D.C.  
And interpret for the U.S. government, maybe,  
or spend the rest  
of my days  
along a Mediterranean beach,  
swim in its gentle waves.  
I could fly and revisit  
the casbah in Morocco  
or even ride a camel across the Saharan desert.  
And yes,  
I found my lifemate,  
and what I lack  
he fulfills  
and what he lacks  
I instill,  
a triumph  
of two strangers

uniting by will.  
But you are  
blood of my blood,  
bone of my bone,  
raised from a seed,  
the springtime of life.  
You leave a trail  
in the wind  
wherever you go  
that I must follow.  
Yes,  
a world of adventure calls.  
But I cannot answer.  
I could.  
But I wouldn't.  
All that wouldn't do  
All these,  
though wonderful  
are merely  
substitute objects  
of my affection.  
The real adventure,  
the compass  
for my true north  
is always you.  
My yearning is for you,  
the original  
object of my affection.  
The one tied  
to my heart.  
I cannot leave you  
my child.  
My heartbeat  
is tied to yours  
and leaving  
would only pull  
my heartstrings  
further and harder  
than they already are.

I cannot replace you  
with exotic adventures  
with substitute objects.  
You are the original  
object of my affection.  
My heart of a mother  
sees only in you  
the land of exploration  
worthy of my time,  
the ever new experience  
that I am content  
to revisit  
again and again.  
All I wish is  
to fly  
to a small place  
from whose balcony  
I can see your  
comings and goings,  
and wave and smile  
and visit with you  
once in a while,  
whenever we can.

The Goddess Abides

Her wings  
Are unseen  
And she wears a  
Human cape.  
The only time  
She shines so bright.  
A perfect light  
Is when  
She loves you  
And holds you tight.  
She, the mother,  
The guiding light.  
A mirror reflecting  
The Divine  
Who cares for all souls.  
Though she cares  
For but one.  
Investing her all  
In the child she conceived.  
The child who gave her  
Those lovely wings.  
It is a pure love,  
Undemanding,  
Without possessiveness.  
A dedicated love  
With hidden discretion.  
The abiding goddess  
Loves with her soul  
More than with her heart.  
Earning her wings  
From the start.  
The abiding goddess  
Chooses her path  
Not of possession,  
But of discretion,  
From a distance,  
In the end.

Yet always  
Embracing you  
Within the hidden wings  
Of a true friend.  
She desires  
That you walk  
By still waters  
And dream  
Beautiful dreams.  
That you be  
In loving company  
Of human form,  
Free to live fully  
And dedicate yourself  
To fulfillment.  
Her human cape  
May seem frail  
And not relevant  
To your time and place,  
Yet a mighty warrior  
Is she.  
With a heart fierce  
Who talks with angels  
On your behalf.  
And from the beginning,  
Despite the tight squeezing,  
It has always been  
All about your leaving,  
Finding your path.  
It is the aftermath  
Destined from the start.  
She watches you leave,  
Your orbit growing  
Ever wider  
Ever closer to the stars.  
And she spreads  
Her wings  
All unseen,  
Guiding you further

Away  
Yet ever close to her heart.  
The Goddess abides  
Hoping to lessen  
Life's strifes  
And watching  
As your sails unfurl  
Beyond the reach  
Of her wings,  
Smiling  
And abiding.

*Madhu  
Gangopadhyay*

Blame Game!

Why is it that a woman is always blamed?  
Single or married, unknown or famed.  
Clytemnestra, Penelope Drapaudi, Sita or Helen.  
Ages immemorial abhorred and shamed.

Was it not Paris who fell into the trap,  
When Aphrodite promised him the most beautiful bride's lap?

For ten long years Penelope sighed!  
The suitors labelled her flirtatious, in silence she cried...  
For Ulysses, after victory, did not return!  
She waited with patience till her son,  
Telemachus with Minerva by his side  
Sailed to Pylos and Sparta to learn his father's plight.  
Why then the Achaeans wanted her to be sent  
To Icarus' house? What malice they meant?

Aegisthus, it was who for the lust for power,  
Made love to Agamemnon's wife even when Mercury warnings  
on him showered!  
Why then poor Clytemnestra is framed and shunned?  
When Agamemnon himself all the hatred had earned!  
Did he not slyly sacrifice Iphigenia, at the altar of Artemis at  
Oracle's behest?  
Which filled Clytemnestra with vengeance and left her vexed.

The infidel Helen fled her husband's abode they say.  
Wasn't it Paris who raided Menelaus' house and stole her away?

Then Drapaudi is disrobed in the court and shamed,  
When five of her husbands stood there as if maimed!  
None of them ever reached to her aid.  
Not a word immodest she ever said!



The devoted Sita underwent all pains,  
Wasn't spared by Rama, who doubted her stain.  
Into the fire she leaped to prove  
Her piety and purity, not once she reproved.  
Her husband whose footsteps she always toed,  
What despicable trust in his wife he bestowed!

The priestess of Provence was also not spared.  
Nobody actually could for her ever care!  
Though she with spikenard had cleaned the Lord's feet,  
She has never been given her legitimate seat.

Beauty has always lured men and they abused,  
Whenever they wanted, rejoiced and used!  
The misogynist society needs to change:  
Man must respect women of all rank and range!  
Age after age, the truth prevails.  
That man and woman should in harmony sail.  
As Aristophanes' claims that the search is profound,  
True love and perfect match are hardly found!  
Once that is done, all sadness would end.  
A calibrated Sun would inundate the human realm!

Double-Dealing!

Gold prices rise  
Amidst war cries  
Events happy  
Are called off  
Intellectuals discussions  
Armchair scoffs!  
Business of certain kinds flourish,  
As men who fight for what they know not, perish!  
In this planet where humans inhibit  
The social fabric that advancements exhibit;  
All appear so ridiculously fake,  
Diabolic stand, diplomatic take!  
Drenching in bloodbath in one corner  
Fanfare of Women's Day gearing up to honour!  
Clinking wine and champagne glasses  
In some party hall  
Aristocratic, bureaucrats' wives giggle, toast,  
lunch and have a ball  
The poor, half naked, breastfeeds her child  
Penniless, malnourished, in filth and squalor survive!  
Building homes, hotels and bridges  
Under her feet her world crumbles and freezes!  
Muse for an artist, subject for poetry,  
The malaise of humanity makes great story!

Chilled Flames!

The glimmering moon  
On that white night  
When carpet of snow  
Spread miles after miles;  
The pines, like spectre in the dark  
On an odyssey, a poet's heart embarked!  
The silence spoke in an ancient tongue  
Snow bedecked mountains, bleached charm!  
A still, enthralling night of winter blue  
Frayed clouds on the firmament flew!  
Amalgamation of bittersweet memories  
In a chocolate tea cup melted!  
Volcanoes of emotions erupted!  
Lava of passions flowed and engulfed  
The bygone like leeches clung.  
A drop of saline rain brought!  
A breathing Ophelia, failed to drown!  
Hamlet absconding,  
Love's forgotten crown  
On the frozen bed of snow;  
The embers of lost amour glowed!  
The taste of the stale kiss so fresh;  
In brevity a lifetime lived!

*Leila Tualla*

I Remember When

I remember stubbing my toes on the same spot by the fireplace.  
I remember the way you had to jiggle, wiggle, finagle and push  
the shower knob just right to get to the hot water.  
I remember bliss was eating dinner in a computer chair,  
watching TV that was on the floor because we were two fresh  
out of college, student loan debted, newlyweds.  
I remember thinking there is nothing better than this; walking  
barefoot in the small kitchen, holding the swell of my belly and  
watching the light dancing across the curtains.  
I remember cats meowing next door and whispering a name over  
and over again; a lullaby I would always hum.  
I remember Thanksgiving: the announcements, the excitement,  
the preparations, the hope.  
I remember when my body was a home.  
I remember sitting in a chair, talking to my doctor and revisiting  
a birth plan I clung on with fear.  
I remember January 20th.  
I remember Winter, the dread enveloping me, and the shiver and  
coldness of what tomorrow could bring.  
I remember packing for uncertainty and yet, knowing for certain  
that I wouldn't be coming back home the same way I left.  
I remember the smell of antiseptics hitting you at the door, the  
sterile environment and the quiet reverence that comes moments  
before walking inside the hospital.  
I remember the way nurses treated you with care and feeling the  
pity in their hands.  
I remember 31 weeks, 4 days gestation.  
I remember when my body was a home and I was a safe place to  
be.  
I remember 3 pounds, 4 ounces.  
I remember holding back a scream and keeping my face neutral.  
I remember Spring; how the flowers started to grow outside my  
windowsill, but I only noticed the weeds and thorns.  
I remember days were for cooing and updates, and nights were  
for bargaining to a god I wasn't sure I believed in anymore.  
I remember how my heartbeat would match hers; the machines  
echoing our smiles and soft touches.

I remember Easter spent huddled in the hallway, holding my  
breath.  
I remember when my body was a home and I was a safe place to  
be until home was no longer safe for her.  
I remember the hallelujahs uttered with tears, whispered  
screaming next to each other so the other parents who still had to  
wait, wouldn't hear.  
I remember the drive to a small 2 bedroom house in the middle  
of the night, balled over in the passenger seat and releasing every  
single emotion until I was spent.  
I remember when my body was a home.  
I remember grief, anger, and shame shaping our daily moments.  
I remember the in-betweens, the questions, the trauma that  
would begin as silent tears before I could no longer hold in the  
screams.  
I remember holding space for daily gratitudes.  
I remember my body being a home and you are still safe with  
me.

You'll Never See Me Smile

I sometimes wonder how long it took, to capture a pose and her soft smile.

I wonder how long she sat, eyes trying so hard not to dart to here and there as chaos and commotion are happening in real time around her.

She must be a mother, I think, admiring her shoulders that look as if it has housed tears and comforted broken hearts.

Be still, she is being commanded.  
Smile, she is ordered.

And then she blinks.

And all at once, I see her; the scars on her face and chest from holding the promises of perfection inward.

How often has she clawed at her reflection?

How long before she began chiseling away at her body?

How long did it take for her space to get smaller?

To be more perfectly matched to the portrait immortalized in time?

How long before her shoulders grew too heavy from carrying the burdens of others?

Her hands surrender to the lies this image will tell.

Her mouth set in a secret only another woman would know.

I take her name into mine.

I forge her secret into my hands and weep for all the burdens women must carry, without complaint, always with a smile.

I wipe my tears, square my shoulders.  
And free her from her pedestal.

*Antoinette  
DiGiorgio*

Aged Face

I see your face, composed of folds and crevices and knowing eyes  
All those creases and swirls make you who you are  
Don't be afraid of aging, it shows every joy, every sorrow  
The book of your life is there for all to see and understand  
Written year by year, with a tapestry of love and hurt  
Those who cannot appreciate the beauty of the aged face  
Are shallow and uncomprehending about the wonders of life  
Wear your years like a badge of courage, used to forge ahead  
Your smile is that crinkle around your eyes,  
Your sorrow shows in the furrows of your mouth,  
Your victory shows in the scars that are visible to the eye  
In you lies all the exquisite beauty and knowledge you accumulated  
Forget the viciousness of the young, who sneer and laugh  
For their meanness will show up like pustules upon those young faces  
All the beauty and struggles of your life are encapsulated in every line and wrinkle  
Your face is as lovely as a crocheted doily sitting on your mantle  
Love yourself, for I love you, I see the beauty that made you who you are

Cry of Life

And she cried as she left her mother's womb  
Not wanting to leave the safety of this warmth  
She knew that this was the beginning of life  
Life that would be challenging and dangerous  
Yet mother's love kept her feeling comfort  
Quickly she grew and always there was mother  
Offering arms of consolation and happiness  
This woman instinctively knew her needs and wants  
Mother, mother full of kindness and patience  
Watching as baby slept, smiled, crawled, walked  
Achievements to be announced to all around  
So proud, the mother of this growing beauty

And she cried as she scraped her knee for the first time  
Running to mother, because mother knew what to do  
Mother with her magic kisses and healing potions  
Mother, only mother could fix what was broken  
With soft spoken words and encouragement  
Telling her little girl it will be all right, go play  
Stay strong for there will be other bruises along the way  
My sweet girl you are full of softness and toughness  
You will take what life gives you with kindness  
Although you may despair you will come through shining  
The sun and the stars live deep inside you, you are special  
So proud, the mother of this growing beauty

And she cried in confusion as she became a young woman  
Mother was along side her, telling her it is part of growing up  
Easing her anxiety of things she didn't quite yet understand  
Telling this maturing young woman the secrets of true love  
Speaking of desires that bring forth the beauty of more life  
Do not be afraid of love my darling daughter, embrace it  
Bring forward all the beautiful things you have stored inside  
Love is a commitment, so find a mate who will compliment you  
As you should compliment him, share your dreams of the future

But also share your sorrows, your nightmares, so that you  
become one soul  
You should also share your individualities, giving joy to each  
other  
So proud, the mother of this growing beauty

And she cried tears of joy on her wedding day  
Mother had prepared her for what was to come  
Happiness, the gift of sharing yourself with another being  
Living for what lay ahead, her own family and children  
Loving like you had never before known love as this  
Friendship, companionship, intimacy with another  
Working so hard to keep this special love alive  
Slowly reinventing herself to become the best she could  
Mother always at her side offering her advice and comfort  
The grounding force of her life, stability and generosity  
Showing the way to a beautiful fulfillment of self  
So proud, the mother of this growing beauty

And she cried out in pain and exultation as baby came  
Her tears and baby's tears mingled together forever  
Bonding, that which could never be broken in life or death  
Mother, so thrilled at having her daughter birth another life  
Such beauty, three generations attached by unseen umbilical  
cords  
Mother seeing the face of her daughter in this new unique baby  
All mother's knowledge there for her, raising this beautiful new  
life  
So much joy was shared at this moment, knowing part of her  
would live on  
That amazing woman who brought goodness and thoughtfulness  
Together they would impart all the wisdom they shared with  
baby  
Wisdom of a thousand generations, virtuousness, patience,  
caring  
So proud, the mother of this growing beauty

And she cried out in agony, screamed of the injustice  
Her guiding sail, taken from her, she was not ready  
She would never be ready to let go of sweet mother  
It was as if the sky fell into the ocean and the ocean dried up  
Come back to her mother, the woman who held her heart  
She cannot go on without you, you kept her safe from herself  
Mother, you are the only one who knew her, her angst  
She loved her family, truly she did, loved them beyond measure  
But you, you could see inside her, lay her soul open  
You recognized her fear and doubts, her self loathing  
Now she is nothing, she cannot live this life without you  
So alone, the daughter of this mother of beauty

Lullaby

I strummed my guitar softly while the moon hung low in the sky  
I wrote a song for you my dear, it was the sweetest lullaby  
Sleep my beautiful baby, rest your head upon my knee  
Dream of fairies and fluffy clouds, the future waits for thee  
Sheltered from bigotry, hate, and cruelty; none will touch your world  
A new kind of vision shall be your mantra, a golden age unfurled  
I shall teach you to plant a garden, your love for nature you'll declare  
I shall show you to respect all things, learn to love humankind everywhere  
You shall guide us all with hope and joy, teach people to live in peace  
You are the child who will show the way, and wars shall forever cease  
A new generation of warriors, who shall lead with words and deeds  
Weapons shall become things forgotten, non violence the only creed  
But close your eyes and dream of stars, your time has not yet come  
For you are destined to save this earth, and change what we've become

*Riya Aggarwal*

Fallen Wings

I flew high in the sky  
Unaware of the rising evil  
And I crushed to the ground  
With my fallen wings  
But nothing can stop me  
Now that I know the sky  
Even without my wings  
I still have my hopes up  
And my spirits high

She's A Conqueror

She's a conqueror  
Undeterred by the disasters around her  
She is persistent in her steps  
Accepting her flaws and her darkness  
She stands tall on cliff's edge  
With her hands wide spread  
And her thoughts and mind right ahead  
She is ready to conquer  
Whatever this world have in store for her



Hell Or Paradise Of Life

Navigate the way through the darkness  
Pass the fire that's set ablazed  
On the path to the heaven's gate  
Your will might be melting with the heat  
And your steps be faltering with burning stones  
But you refuse to surrender  
Your body wouldn't give up the fight  
Between Hell of a Life  
Or Heaven's Paradise

*Suzanne Newman*

Behind These Eyes

Behind these eyes, no-one can tell,  
The conflict that plays merry hell,  
Depression does invade and swell,  
'though silent are the screams I yell.  
Behind these eyes, my head inside  
Is filling with an inky tide,  
Where paranoias feed and thrive,  
And worries take a speed-boat ride.

Behind these eyes, there races round  
Anxiety, which grinds and pounds,  
It makes a whirring, grating sound,  
'til peace is nowhere to be found.  
Behind these eyes, there lives a fear,  
Which no-one knows, or sees is here,  
For brave-fronts can hide every tear,  
And dam them up, just like a weir.

Behind these eyes, I'm in a cell,  
Held prisoner in a deep, dank well,  
Where misery and darkness dwell,  
And I can't reach the alarm-bell.  
Behind these eyes, there's no way out,  
No exit past ill's hard, grim pout,  
Where bleak thoughts burn and punch with clout,  
And chase all joy and peace right out.

Behind these eyes, it's cold and dank,  
Frustration seeps and smells so rank,  
I slip down mental ill's bleak bank,  
With nought left in pep's reserve-tank.  
But, when I fear I just might drown,  
For there seems no help to be found,  
The Lord, in care and grace comes down,  
To help me turn these trials around.

Behind these eyes, there lies such stress,  
But also, there's a soul that's blessed,  
A Christian who is saved and dressed,  
In armour and Christ's righteousness.  
Behind these eyes, there is a fire,  
Not of this realm, but so much higher,  
The Spirit is a mighty crier,  
Prompts me to fight and be a trier.

Behind these eyes, there lives The Lord,  
My Saviour, Shepherd, forevermore,  
Who loves me in great grace outpoured,  
And mends my wings, so I can soar.  
Behind these eyes, amongst the dark,  
There burns a Holy light and spark,  
Which supersedes depression's scar,  
And heals, where trials have left their mark.

Behind these eyes, there lives a soul,  
That's redeemed, cleansed and been made whole,  
Whose joy does warm my fears, so cold,  
And fires up hope, so then I'm bold.  
Behind these eyes, there lives a love,  
Unshakable, for God above,  
For He sends succour like a dove,  
Moves woes aside, with awesome shove.

At The Helm

I'm drifting in a rotting boat,  
Whose name upon the side is "Hope",  
It's shrinking smaller everyday,  
Beneath the storm clouds...looming...grey.

I eddy round upon the tide,  
Of troubled waters' rough, cold ride,  
There're shadows when I look straight down,  
Which smirk and wait for me to drown.

I cannot row as have no oars,  
Can't swim, as I'm too far from shore,  
I try to paddle with my hands,  
But don't know which way is dry land.

I miserably sit in a heap,  
With water lapping round my feet,  
I fear it's just a matter of time,  
'til I'm consumed, by this gloomy brine.

But... as I'm waiting here to die,  
I spot something, and squint my eyes,  
I see a figure, glowing bright,  
Which looks like my Lord Jesus Christ!

He's walking right across the waves,  
Towards me, and I know I'm saved!  
He calms the foaming, troubled seas,  
And tells all shadows to leave me be.

He sends the storm and clouds away,  
And brings light to my darkest day,  
He gently steps into my boat,  
Brings it to life and revives "Hope".

He plugs the leaks and mends the sides,  
And makes sure I feel safe inside,  
I thank Him as I take His hand,  
When He says He knows the way to land.

I rest my head upon His chest,  
His love and power do leave me blessed,  
With God's great guidance at the tiller,  
The ride is smoother and waters stiller.

And Christ negotiates the seas,  
That threatened, once, to engulf me,  
I find such comfort in the presence of,  
My awesome Saviour's grace and love.

And all things in this mortal realm,  
Are better with Him at the helm,  
For He's the way, the truth and life,  
Throughout all trials and tests and strife.

And I am safe within God's hands,  
Who made the sky and sea and land,  
He keeps my peace and hope afloat,  
So gladly, I let Him steer my boat.

Grief Is A B!tch

Following behind the Grim Reaper of death,  
Is Grief, dancing in, with her cold, icy breath,  
She skips in death's shadow, for thrives off the pain  
He causes when our lost love is his timely gain.

Grief is a witch, casting curses and spells,  
Making woe in her wake, dragging hearts through her hell,  
She's also a b!tch, and a dark, evil sadist,  
Who twists up the truth with cruel, whispering hiss.

Grief has blank eyes and short spikes on her face,  
Skin's covered in frost, from her cold blow that chafes,  
Her hair is long horns, which can prick us like thorns,  
Her cloak's made of fur but does not make her warm.

Grief laps up our tears, like a cat drinking milk,  
And smiles at the taste of our pain as it spills,  
She inhales desperation...insomnia...frustration,  
Loves the sweet perfume of our distressed situation.

Grief carves out her name on our hearts, causing hurt,  
Using sharp fingernails which are brown with grave dirt,  
She stirs up emotions in tired, worn-out minds,  
So we'll crumble, thinking of good times now left behind.

Grief is a torturer, for she rakes over peace,  
At the strike of midnight, when she steals all our sleep,  
She enjoys weary sighs, as we then toss and turn,  
Laughing, when the dawn comes, at our red eyes which burn.

Grief strolls, oozing black, like an oil-slick spill,  
Causing us to fall down and feel beaten and ill,  
She toasts white marshmallows on funeral-pyres,  
And sucks out all joy, like a greedy vampire.

Grief fills us with shadows and caverns of black,  
She claws at our hair, while she rides on our backs,  
She drains lust for life, excited as we strain  
Just to get through each day, as we're weighed down with pain.

But, Grief cannot beat us, for her rawness will fade,  
'til she lurks in the background, in murky, grey haze,  
For God does step forth, to bring comfort and light,  
Reassurance that the future isn't bleak, but quite bright.

The Lord's consolations bring hope, peace and love,  
When we think of our kin up in Heaven above,  
Where there is no more sorrow, no pain, loss, or fear,  
No mourning, or heartache, no worry, or tears.

And, someday we'll join our loved ones, up in Glory,  
When our own time is up, at the end of life's story,  
'til then, we plod on, let The Lord show the way,  
Keep their memories alive, in our hearts, every day.

# *Melani Udaeta*

## A Letter To My Beloved

Oh my Beloved,  
Thank you for being you, so savage a  
voice such a soft touch;  
I know how gentle feels, in the harshness  
of your arms and the tenderness of your words;

Sparks that only become amplified when  
I see the flame in your eyes and watch it burn;  
An endless ocean that I know you would  
cross or destroy for me;

Thank you;

I succumb to this poetic awakening I  
was hiding for so long;  
You are the rhythm in between my lines  
an electric current that shocked my soul;  
So pardon these rhymes and ramblings.  
You make it hard for me to speak;  
So, I thought I would write you a letter.  
Throw up a cliché and say,

I love you my Beloved;  
I am so glad you're you.

Broken But Still Beautiful

Not a woman you'll find in a magazine filters on a perfectly  
made up face;  
Much more comfortable in a pair of jeans carefree fit and a tear  
on the surface;

Lines and freckles connect and tell a story, individuality fuses  
the light with the dark;  
Jagged edges come with the territory, zoom out and the vision  
becomes art;

Confrontation answered with an uproar my past reminds me the  
glass is half full;  
Grit can make you shine like a centerfold, I am broken but I am  
still beautiful.

Obsessed

They called me obsessed for everything I did;  
The endless hours driving just to listen to you sing;  
In a world that leaves you numb, you always made me feel  
something;

Now on the main stage;  
The headliner, high above where you used to play; Still wearing  
the same smile in front of twenty thousand that you did when it  
was twenty;

Connection through obsession.  
A festival known around the world will soon get to experience  
your voice;  
The one it took me an instant to fade into;  
Everything I've done? I'd do it all again;

Now when you hit that stage they'll understand your melody  
impossible to forget, and never again will I be called obsessed.

# *Kristen Wood*

## Progression

Diminished.  
Devalued.  
Depleted.

Minimized.  
Marginalized.  
Maligned.

Refused.  
Responded.  
Reacted.

Stood.  
Stirred.  
Spirited.

Held.  
Hoped.  
Hungered.

Engaged.  
Enhanced.  
Exalted.

Blue

She is every shade of blue  
from the cobalt of her eyes  
to the sapphire of her smile.  
Her happiness is a cloudless sky;  
her anger an indigo storm,  
all steel and midnight.  
And when she sleeps,  
I stare at her in azure awe,  
her periwinkle soul at rest.

Biographies

**Celesia Parker** lives in the deep south and is the mother of two sons and 2 grandchildren. She enjoys reading, art, gardening, and taking walks. This year she has self published two paperback books, 'Practice Perfection' and 'Glimpses Of You' with help from Shrouded Eye Press.

**Rhiannon Owens** is from the North-West of England and currently lives in South Wales with her husband, Nicholas. She currently has five poetry book collections published with co-author Ashley O'Keefe. The 'Rhiannon & Asley' series are available via Amazon.

For more information find them at  
<https://www.facebook.com/RhiannoAsleyPoetry/>

**Usha N Shrinivaasun** was born and brought up in a beautiful hill-station called Coonoor situated in the Nilgiris mountain range in south India in the state of Tamizhnadu. She worked as a visualizer in charge in a fortnightly called Aside. She was also in charge of an astrological newspaper column. Her interests include astrology, poetry, painting and music. She began by writing four-line verses in her astrological column which her readers loved. Slowly her interest in poetry developed from then onwards. Her poems have been published in popular tabloids. She would send handmade greeting cards with her verse in it to her near and dear ones. Only for the last two years has she seriously entered the world of verse and took part in all the poetry competitions conducted by various poetry groups, as well as winning quite a few contests. Her poems have been featured in anthologies and web magazines. Although she occasionally does a few write ups, her first love is poetry. She greatly reveres and admires the old masters like Wordsworth, Byron, Keats, and Shelley.



**Theresa Louw** is a 45yr old mother of two from Cape Town, South Africa. "My words are tiny pieces of my soul, scattered across the landscapes of this life. I am a survivor and started writing to heal those ever bleeding wounds, and now my words are home to a woman of strength, who loves with her soul and one very persistent heart. I am...therefore I write!"  
<https://www.facebook.com/ImpassionedHeart>

**Kay Watkins** is a deaf writer in her 60's and retired from doing occupational therapy for 40 years. Cochlear implants have enabled her to enjoy hearing sounds, especially birds which she also loves watching. Kay loves music, nature, all forms of art & especially enjoys combining photography and poetry. She has an amazing family and husband she has been with over a decade who has helped her with her new journey in the hearing world.

You can find out more about that journey in a short documentary called "KAY" in AdamGundersheimer.com under his directing section.

"Thank you for sharing my journey with me!"  
- Kay

**Sarah Ramphal**, also known as SBR(the Rose), was born on the 9th of October 1981. She is from the beautiful island of Trinidad & Tobago and a proud mother of two beautiful children aged 16 and 8. She loves nature, especially roses.

**Johanne Lee** is a proud mother, poet and children's picture book author which has been published in several anthologies such as Soul Poet Society's, Open Skies, and The Poetry Kingdom. The revenue from her picture books go to charities close to her heart.

**Jyoti Nair** Intrinsically from career per se, as a learning and development professional spearheading numerous business units in HR compass, Jyoti Nair is quite intrigued, with respect to the human behavior spectrum, its layered richness, and uncanny complexities. Ms. Nair has recently adopted a nom de plume as 'Aarya', her works have found havens in distinguished poetry

journals: The Kali Project & Through The Looking Glass- Indie Blue Publication Ventures, Impspired, Lothlorien Poetry Journal, Open Skies Quarterly, Journal of Expressive Writing, Indian Periodical, The Times Group Femina, Delhi Post etc. She has won some key accolades in the literary landscape, such as, The Certificate of Excellence by English Poets, Literary Excellence Certificate by Gujarat Sahitya Academy, to name a few. She envisages dawns where her poetry could be mobilized as indomitable propellers, to accelerate the eradication of blatant social evils.

**Lisa White** has been writing since around 9 years old. She writes on many subjects, but her favorites are regarding nature and love. Married, her wife and 3 kids give her many sources of inspiration. Her work has appeared in various anthologies and she is currently in the process of working on a small poetry collection to be released in 2022. For more information and a deeper glimpse into her work you can follow Lisa on her Facebook page "Me, Myself and Insanity."

**Courtney Glover** is originally from Fulton County, Georgia. She is a published author, editor and amateur photographer. Three poets that greatly inspired her are Edgar Allan Poe, Robert Frost, and Shel Silverstein with his book 'Where The Sidewalk Ends'. Her hobbies include reading, writing poetry, listening to music, and watching movies. She currently lives with her family in Camden County, New Jersey.

**Beauty In Words** (b.i.w) is the pin-name of an upcoming anonymous online poet/writer, sole founder and creator of the instagram page @beauty\_in\_words\_ and built up her following from there, her content vary from both short and long poems in both modern and traditional style illustrated by other artists on the platform, plus she provides other things related to her field of creation such as books and movies recommendations and reviews. Her poems have been published in several print and online publications, including witchesnpink, Dizzie magazine, Twist in time literary Mag, and spoken word 'scratch night'.

**Pooja Srinivas** Pooja Srinivas aka 'Circle' writes poetry on Instagram under the handle: circleofthought. She is a mother of two who finds peace and calm in scribbling. She was born and raised in India but has lived in China, Kosovo, and now the USA.

An engineer by education, Pooja worked in the semiconductor domain for nearly a decade. She took to writing as a full-time career for her love for the art. She takes technology and creative content writing assignments. And her first book 'The Flying Chip' is slated for release soon on Amazon, USA.

Poetry and Pooja hadn't met until the pandemic struck. Besides writing, Pooja enjoys dancing, listening to music, baking, reading, and cooking. She is an extrovert and thrives on social gatherings. She finds aging and life to be powerful teachers. Causes such as women empowerment, children's education, and conservation of nature are very close to her heart.

**Lola Lawrence** is a wife and a mother to three special-needs children. She has a Bachelors of Science in Behavioral-Social Sciences with a concentration in psychology. She owns her own life coaching business as well.

Lola has been writing poetry since her teenage years. After leaving the workforce to raise her children, Lola found her passion for writing again. She writes poetry, short stories and is currently writing a book. Primarily writing dark and erotic poetry, she also writes erotic fiction and has been published in two short story anthologies.

**Sarah Fawcett** was born and raised in Wales, and now lives in Derbyshire, UK, with her husband and two dogs. She began writing a few years ago and has recently had pieces published in Poetic Reveries and Yours Truly magazines; this is her first foray into the world of anthologies.

If you wish to read more of her work, you can find her on Instagram under @not\_just\_shadow

**Courtney Williams** is a painter and aspiring poetry writer from the midwest, who hopes to reach people through her words and love of artistic expression.

**A Fractured Poet** (Kim) is 45yrs old, originally from the midwest of the United States, currently living on the West Coast, US. Her journey with poetry and creative writing came from the need to express feelings of the unwillingness to "fit in" with the expectations of what it means to be sensitive and strong. A shy, amateur poet who just recently has been able to share her work with others on Instagram, but has been writing since her teens.

**Karen Ann Winering** is currently retired and simply enjoys posting her poetry online using Instagram.

**Marie Moldovan** is a Canadian Armed Forces Veteran, Entrepreneur, Reiki Master, Shaman, Poet, Artist, Author, Publisher and literal Jack of all trades. She has seen life from many perspectives, experienced homelessness, overcome addiction and has mastered many challenges. She Currently resides in Ontario, Canada.

**Aahana Mukhi** is 12 years old and currently studying in Island School. She loves to do art and write poetry. She was inspired to start writing by one of my favourite poets - Maya Angelou. She loves the way Maya Angelou uses rhyming words in her poetry, and how she conveys a deep message through her words. Similarly, she also hopes to portray an important message through her poetry.

**Donna McCabe** is an established poet with over twenty years experience. Her work has gained her multiple accolades within her field of literature. From being published in journals, magazines and anthologies she is also a respected admin on social media pages as well as having her own Instagram page, @donnamccabe\_

**Abshar Saeed** is a doctor and a writer who composes poetry, articles, short stories, etc which are inspired by nature and work experiences. She has been writing for a few years now and has received recognition on various platforms. Poetry, in her opinion, should not just be something to admire and read on leisure but to impact, inspire and encourage others.

**Jo Allyn White** had a career in the mental health field before transitioning to assisting special needs children in middle school. She's a sister, mother, grandmother, widow and cancer survivor/warrior. As a creative outlet she enjoys drawing, painting, making jewelry and writing. Reflective of her imagination and life experience, her writing has been described as "delicately profound", "enchanting" and "whimsical".

Instagram @jo\_allyn

**Kim Brake** Canadian-born author of 'This Journey of Mine', is delighted to share in this beautiful anthology dedicated to the Sacred Feminine. Her own healing journey began after breast cancer and reconstructive surgery took their toll. Poetry became the salve that healed her wounded heart. As she gathered her strength and healed, Kim tapped into her goddess energy, which is reflected within her featured poems. Her hope is that you will also be inspired to tap into your own goddess energy. "You are stronger than you know."- Kim

**Maggie Watson** was born in Cape Town, South Africa. She currently lives in the quiet seaside town outside of Edinburgh. When she's not writing, she volunteers for Barnardos, a children's-based charity. She has CFS which is a very debilitating/unpredictable illness at times. Maggie began writing in 2020 at the start of the Pandemic and it has now become a huge part of her life.

"I write from my heart and soul so my words can sometimes be raw. But I always hope that at least one poem from my collection will resonate, that is the real joy for me (apart from writing itself)." - Maggie

For more examples of her work you can visit her Facebook or Instagram Page.

<https://www.facebook.com/sweetangelbutterfly>

<https://www.instagram.com/poetrybymaggiwatson/>

**Piko** lives in the UK with her husband and two young boys. Since turning 40, Piko has been making time to pen her thoughts in poetry and prose. She finds most of her inspiration from people, her intimate experiences and her own colourful past. Still very new to the writing world, she's experimenting with new forms and finding what works best for her.

For more of her work, visit @beginners.luck.1981 on Instagram

**Loredana P. Kint** is a poet and poetry blogger in Aotearoa, New Zealand. She believes that poetry is a "snapshot of the soul," and often references the natural splendour of New Zealand in her writing. She is the author of a self-published nature poetry anthology, 'Reflections', and a children's science poetry book, 'What Are You Made Of?' Her poems have appeared in student journals, blogs, books, and a 4-metre-high art tower in downtown Auckland.

Website/Blog: [www.loredanapoetry.com](http://www.loredanapoetry.com)

Instagram: @loredana\_poetry

**A.F. Kaye** is a poet and published author of both poetry and memoir essays. She obtained her Bachelor's degree in English with a specialty in comics and creative writing from Virginia Commonwealth University. (Her mother wanted her to be a doctor, but you can see how well that turned out. But don't worry mom, at least she graduated.) Instagram: @afkayewrites

**Debie Collins** loves to draw, knit, write, and teach children with special needs. She currently lives in San Diego with her two spaniels, one tortoise and husband. She enjoys fly fishing, hiking, canoeing and camping.

“I was about 8 or 9 years old, when I discovered the magic of writing. I had a beautiful old typewriter that had a beautiful old smell. I can still remember the way it sounded as I wrote my very first book, Harry and Larry, the adventures of a pig and a tortoise that get abducted by aliens. After handing it off to my mom, I can remember waiting for the mail each day, hoping to get some sort of letter, asking me for a sequel. I learned at a young age, life wasn't that easy. Although I was disappointed, it didn't stop me from writing. And although Harry and Larry may never find a home in the local book store, they most definitely have a home in my heart.”

You can also check out her work on Instagram  
@jellybeantoespoetry

**Fiona Dignan** is a 39yr old stay-at-home mother of four children, who writes poetry in her spare time. She writes primarily on the theme of motherhood but has begun to explore other ideas such as ecology and feminism. She currently lives in London.

**Jonna Wihnan** is 33yrs old and was born in Fort Frances, ON. She later moved to Sudbury, ON to complete her Bachelors of Science in Nursing. She has practiced nursing on medical units and taught nursing students during their clinical placements. Currently she has been sick for a couple of years, dealing with a new diagnosis of Endometriosis. She has written informally her entire life, strictly based on emotion and feelings. “I started a selling Crystal Intention Candles (check out Wildlife Crystal Creations on FB/insta) as I am passionate about helping people and I love rocks. I am a Reiki Master, a spiritual junky, and mental health advocate. Writing is a healthy outlet. It's been so therapeutic, and I LOVE when people can resonate and feel less alone.”

**Stephanie Neese** When she isn't concocting scary stories or roaming the woods of Flagstaff, Arizona for poetic inspiration, Stephanie loves to play video games with her husband and snuggle with their two dogs.

Amazon : <https://amazon.com/author/stephanieneese>

**Cathy BLUE** has been writing since the age of 12, and was first drawn to poetry in her early teens, always staying true to her roots and following her own heart in her work. She has written and published 6 poetry books – 4 in English and 2 in Turkish – and has recently taken part in the Aroma of Nature anthology by Beliterat.

Her books can be found here:

[https://www.amazon.com/CathyBlue/e/B0992SXYFN/ref=dp\\_b\\_yline\\_cont\\_pop\\_ebooks\\_1](https://www.amazon.com/CathyBlue/e/B0992SXYFN/ref=dp_b_yline_cont_pop_ebooks_1)

Instagram: @thebordersofcreativity

Twitter: @thebordersofcr1

**Samantha Woodbeck** is a wife, mom, and teacher, who dabbles in health and wellness. She is a California native, but lived in Hawaii for a few short years. She lives with her husband and two children, three dogs, a bearded dragon, and tortoise. She is a special needs mom to two amazing and inspiring kids. She's easily distracted by the sky, loves the ocean, and wants to adopt all the animals. She holds a bachelor's degree in Liberal Arts, a Multiple Subject Teaching Credential in the state of California, a master's degree in Education, and is a Certified Thermographic Technician. She woke up in June of 2021 with an overwhelming amount of words in her heart and felt called to write them out.

You can find more of her work on Instagram

@Soul\_Spilled\_Sentiments

Here is the Amazon link to her book, 'Words of a Feather' @  
<https://www.amazon.com/Words-Feather-Collection-Poetry-Prose>

**KrysAnn Gernold** is 47 years old, with two amazing children who also write. She turned what was an escape from reality into a beautiful bonding experience with her children. Poetry has allowed them to learn to communicate, feel, and work through their emotions and reactions to everyday life events.

She has been a writer of poetry since she read her first poem in grade school. Poetry allows her to process emotions that she otherwise could not. Trauma and abuse taught her that emotions and emotional reactions led only to more abuse. At a young age, she learned to be quiet, to be still, to never be present. She learned that she was neither to be seen, nor be heard. Poetry has become her outlet. It allowed her voice to resonate. It allows her to speak and be heard. Even if it is only herself that sees and hears.

Andariel: The Maiden of Anguish, was born out of need to speak of every human emotion that could possibly exist. Whether love and romance, self growth, hatred, anger, or peace, Andariel feels it deeply and gives allowance to speak the innermost secrets that we all keep hidden in the double locked chambers deep in our souls. C. K. Sailer, Circa 1974

Facebook @Andariel: The Maiden of Anguish

She also has a book coming out in December of 2022 titled 'Manic Mayhem'.

**Dana Siciliano di Rende** is from California and is a motivational speaker, author, metaphysical poet, with poetry published in several anthologies. Be sure to check out her two Facebook pages, 'Poetry by Dana' and 'Advice For Life'.

**Madhu Gangopadhyay** is an MA in English Literature and a dance enthusiast. She has been in the education industry for two decades now. She has her poems and short stories published in several international anthologies, webzines and e-zines and her poems have been translated into Spanish, Albanian, Turkish and Persian. She is currently pursuing MA in Psychology.

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

**Leila Tualla** is a Filipino-American poet and author based in Houston, Texas. Leila's books include a YA contemporary romance called Letters to Lenora and a memoir/poetry collection called 'Storm of Hope: God, Preeclampsia, Depression and Me'. Her poetry is featured in several mental health anthologies and she is currently working on a poetry collection based on Asian American stereotypes and identifies. Her chapbook "pmdd & me" will be out Spring 2022.

**Antoinette DiGiorgio** was born in Brooklyn, NY. At a young age she was attracted to reading and writing poems, and creating her own song lyrics. She also had a love for Classical Dance and studied and performed for over 20 years. Antoinette now lives in Florida with her two children where she writes poetry and creates jewelry for her jewelry line.

Antoinette was named International Declarator, one of several women across the world for participation in The International Declaration of World Women Peace Day March 2022. She was also named an Ambassador of Ciesart Europa Global Women March 2022. She's also an International Ambassador for the Circle of International Chamber of Writers and Artists.

You can follow Antoinette on Facebook @Dancing With The Darkness

**Riya Aggarwal** is an Indian Author who refuse to let go of the stories unheard. She's an enthusiastic learner, trying whatever comes her way. She likes to pen long stories, quotes and poems and everything in between.

You can find her works on her Instagram handle:  
@thenextipenned



**Suzanne Newman** currently lives in England. She has always loved poetry, but only started writing it in earnest in 2018, following her cancer journey and subsequent battle with depression. Recovery was long and hard after V.I.D.E. chemo, radiotherapy and major surgery. Poetry was, and still is, very cathartic for her and is also a way of showing how her Christian faith has kept her going through the very darkest of mental and physical times. She joined Facebook in 2019 in order to tell her story through her poetry, with the hope of encouraging others who struggle with the same things that she does. She has had a lot of positive response in this sense so far.

To date, she has three poetry books out on sale, all available on Amazon (as well as elsewhere). The first one entitled “It’s Not Just You!” solely by her, whilst the other two, “Inspired By...” and “Kindred Spirits” are co-authored with her dear friend, Michael Grgich from the U.S.A.

**Melani Udaeta** is a writer of various different forms of poetry who currently resides in the Florida panhandle. Her work can also be found on Facebook at Melrose Poetry, on Instagram at melrose\_poetry18, and under Melani Udaeta on poetrysoup.com.

**Kristen Wood** is a writer, mother of five, and a librarian. Kristen’s work has been featured in Scary Mommy, Pop Sugar, Still Standing, Mothers Always Write, as well as many others. In her everyday life, she enjoys creating, napping, and pondering the cosmos.

Follow her author page on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/authorkristenwood/> where she will attempt to make you laugh, cry, and think, sometimes all at once.

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