

The Sacred Feminine:  
Volume 3

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Thank you to all the amazing, gifted women authors that made this book possible. You are not just a poetess, but a queen of the ink quill. And your words are a testament to the power of the pen when in the hands of a female poet.

May the poetry in these pages stand the test of time and bring love, strength and healing to future generations of women and female authors everywhere. May our written words be as cathartic to other women as they were to us that penned them.

Winter's Rose

She was a part of the earth, every tree and blade of grass,  
and the bright sun.

Every flower upon the earth was a piece of her soul since  
time first begun.

How many times had she been buried beneath the weight  
of this cruel world?

How many times was she swallowed whole by heartache's  
repetitive whirl?

Yet, she was determined to rise again, despite the risks or  
costs.

For she had such a soul, daring to bloom, in spite of  
winter's frost.

-Courtney Glover

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The Sacred Feminine: Volume 3

**Melanie Garfinkel Waknine**

Sacred Feminine Awakening

Untouched deep within  
Folds of silken angels' brush  
Soul searching for more

Sacred Feminine  
Holy waters sprinkle you  
An awakening

For All The Woman You Are...

W - we women are wonderfully  
O - outspoken outstanding original who  
M - make magnificent moments memorable  
A - always attuned attentive aware  
N - nurturing those around us

!!!!!!!

Woman-  
You have limits, however, they are endless...  
Stay fierce and strong, you are enough

Serpentine Sacred

It slithered its way  
round the non-flowering flower-  
willfully believing its ability  
to exert hissing power...

Light veined petals  
bared and exposed  
her naked sensual soul,  
a musical in-composed.

Serpent's sneaky eye,  
clandestinely magnified a vision-  
fantastical fairy tale, or fable,  
mockery or derision?

The non-flowering barren beauty  
indulged in a revelation she was most fond,  
tempting serpentine movement around her,  
a creation of Spiritual bond.

A new musical composition,  
intense rush of pure adrenaline-  
Serpent's secret nuances,  
provocation for Sacred Feminine.

**Rhiannon Owens**

Tapestry

Dust mottles my hair  
Cobwebs coat my dress  
Should I twirl for you?  
Eyes searching for Heaven  
As I slowly pirouette...

Patch over my raggedy skirt  
And stitch over my scars  
Make a feathered cover  
For my intricately patterned heart...

I weave a little spell  
Offer up a seamy prayer  
I'm embroidered  
I'm brocaded...

But I'm faded...  
The colour no longer there

Burn A Candle For Me

Through fields I drift, weaving the magic of my soul  
Skirt billowing behind me, always searching  
Desirous to feel whole

They call me a witch, those five pentagram points are  
branded into my heart  
But I am not evil, I yearn to love...  
I'm just a girl perfecting my otherworldly art

Alone, the chasm inside me is screaming as I clutch at my  
hair  
With jewel-bedecked hands that seem to mock me  
In the futile sorrow of my despair  
All my mystic symbols are as nothing, there is no magic I  
can conjure or weave  
That can bring to the longing of my heart  
Just one sweet moment of reprieve!

I clutch every talisman to my chest  
and send incantations ricocheting through the night  
but my power is all for naught  
Can't ease the raging passions that disturb my rest

I have the spirit of a horse, that runs wild and free  
but I see my face trapped in every orb, I am fettered  
The sand slips through my fingers  
Because time is running out for me



Light a candle for me and let it burn bright  
Because my hopes are beginning to ebb  
Sisters, I bare myself naked, hold me to your breasts  
I leave my clothes behind and trust the cards to guide  
But I'm a shell of who I used to be  
An urchin plucked from the soothing waters  
Of the soothing sea

And now the oceans are raging, like my spirit  
As love once again evades me  
And I'm lost in my own deepest yearning  
I'm no longer who I used to be

Passions In Purple

A lilac blossom in your deeply hued hair.  
The violet jewel in your lily pad, that swells  
as I touch you there.  
This love still able to surprise, in the magenta  
depths of your amethyst eyes.  
My still mauve waters, belying the pull of  
lavender lagoon.  
Swimming against it is of no use...  
I'll be back in your arms of damson and grape...  
Tasting you...  
Oh, so very soon...

I Was Blind

All raging hormones and short-temper  
as you served up a plate of mouth-watering delight,  
watching with pleasure as I tucked in...  
You were smiling but I was self-conscious,  
hating being watched as I ate and thinking, crossly,  
"Stop looking at me, stop looking at me!"

You didn't tuck me in anymore,  
because I would have made a fuss,  
but I kind of missed it...  
No, I wasn't a kid anymore,  
and I'd hear you coming up the stairs.  
You would always check on me first  
and I'd lie eyes squeezed shut as you stood for moments  
that seemed to drag,  
irritably screaming at you in my head  
"Go to bed! Go to bed!"

Saw you at the hospital where I was working.  
You heard me and asked,  
"Is that you Rhiannon? You look really small  
because of my eyes..."

That was the last time you ever saw me,  
and my vicious thoughts haunt me still.  
Wish you could have stared at me  
forever and ever,  
and saw the granddaughter you deserved...

I would have eaten second helpings and more!  
I'd snore up a storm...  
just to see the love and pride in your beautiful eyes.

You lost your sight Grandma,  
but it was me who was blind!

Tiger Bay

In Tiger Bay  
Watched by the ladies of the night  
Whose hips did sway  
Their badly painted faces were hungry  
They looked to swallow me with hungrier eyes  
The garish masks  
A hollow disguise  
I avoided their gazes  
That raked over me  
Raked up and down  
Sharp with savagery  
The hunger in their bellies  
Gnawing to the bone,  
They need money to feed  
Those little hungry mouths  
Waiting in squalor  
Waiting at home...  
Hungry so hungry  
Left all alone...

**Melani Udaeta**

Instant Lust

From the first touch upon her lips,  
the young girl would never be the same;  
There was a new sway in her sinful hips;

Awakening what a man could tame;  
Call it a connection or simply carnal,  
such starved eyes flicker with flame;

Now throwing out all of the formal  
every word ended with a thrust;  
So strong but willingly gave up control;

He knew what to do when she fussed,  
just one touch led to instant lust.

A Woman Who Carved Her Crown

Led through a road paved with fire,  
they thought she would incinerate;  
Flying with wings of titanium,  
ashes only raised her higher;

They thought she would incinerate,  
instead a hand grenade was thrown;  
Propelled with power into the air;

Flying with wings of titanium,  
nothing could bring her down;  
So tough, wrapped in a soft sound;

Ashes only raised her higher;  
Chipped polish, grace, sharp talons  
of a woman who carved her crown.

Clumsily

Risky unflawed breathing flawed by your touch,  
you hit like an endless electric shock;  
I try to evade, not hang on too much,  
each exit I am met with a roadblock;  
Feet in the air, a game of double-dutch,  
my pulse in my throat with all the sweet talk;  
Suddenly I fall, your hands land on me;  
Smiling heart spills on the floor clumsily.

For Girls Filled With Fire

This is for girls filled with fire,  
the ones who have been told  
'Tone down. You're too hot to handle.'

To all the girls who light the way,  
the ones who have been told 'Stop.  
You don't have what it takes.'

This is for girls who refuse to listen;  
To the ones who take the unfiltered flight?  
Those wings are your magic carpet ride;

To all the girls built on rebuilt ashes  
the ones who crash and get up again,  
those flames fuel your reincarnation;

For all you girls made of fire? Burn.

Symbiotic Nature

Wildly fertile soil;  
Soft petals and wise old oaks,  
some consume insects;

Oxygen filled air;  
Many who can't, long to fly  
to change perspective;

Storms, wildfires, earthquakes,  
we feel leveled when she yells;  
Mother may I live?

These rushing currents;  
Home to scores of marine life,  
full of square rip tides;

Replenishing the famine,  
it's symbiotic nature.

**Courtney Glover**

In The Garden Green

For I am the serpent, in the garden of Eden perfect  
and green.

I was once Adam's wife, but unworthy I was  
irreparably deemed.

Now my Adam has a new wife, and her name is the  
beautiful Eve.

But if I am lost to Eden, then they too shall be  
irrecoverably cast out.

So a plan I had conjured up, with me as the devil and  
Eve as the wide-eyed Faust.

I refuse to be replaced by one so singularly naïve or  
otherwise turned about.

If I am to be cursed, then I promise that I will not  
endure this torment alone, forlorn.

They both shall suffer my unbridled wrath and know  
the ire of a woman scorned.

We Are

We are our dreams, brought to life, and put to the world's  
test.

We are the ghosts of unrequited love, broken, bleeding,  
laid to rest.

We are a culmination of every decision, good or bad, right  
or mistakenly wrong.

We are every regret, every sin ever wrought, every song  
that's never been sung.

We are every soul that we've ever loved, every good  
memory that we've ever made.

We are the apogee of life on this blue, spinning marble.  
And that we (reluctantly) cannot trade.

So do not let the ghosts of the pasts haunt you. You cannot  
change what's passed.

Be better than you were yesterday. Do better than all the  
wrongs humanity has amassed.

The Dark Muses

There are, as we know, muses of poetry, song and art  
of divine splendor.

But what about the other muses? Those of a darker,  
more tenebrous nature?

Muses of mayhem, chaos, lust and war. Dark muses  
of ethereal beauty sublime.

For it's said that there were once nine dark goddesses,  
long before Zeus' time.

(One muse for self-indulgence and greed.  
One muse for green-eyed envious deeds.  
One muse for blood-lust and war.  
One for mayhem and chaos galore.

One muse for unrestrained desire and lust.  
One muse for grief, heartbreak and mistrust.  
One muse for vengeance and unbridled wrath.  
One for acrimony and discontent vast.

And lastly, one muse for malicious thoughts and  
cruel intent.  
Nine dark muses, goddesses of arcane powers,  
deities of malcontent.)

Long before sunlight lit the green fertile fields, with  
trees laden heavy with fruit, lush and grand.  
Long before the Greek gods, in their ivory towers  
atop Mount Olympus, ruled man.

Muses of considerable power, nine goddesses that  
either led men astray or made them kings.  
Goddesses influencing mortals and their sadistic  
desires and all the chaos it brings.

For these were dark times, when even the sun itself  
barely lit the sky above.

When peace and tranquility were but a dream dreamt  
by those who prayed for love.

A world born of havoc and mayhem, when bedlam  
ruled the savage day.

A world fueled by discontentment and malevolence,  
a maelstrom of disarray.

Nine muses stood tall, atop it all, as they glanced  
down upon mankind and sighed.

Pandemonium was their gift, as one by one they hung  
their heads and cried.

For it was not them who fed off of mankind's prayers,  
but the other way around.

When looking for someone to blame, it was only  
mankind to be found.

(Previously published in the Lothlorien Poetry  
Journal)

Hope's Reverie

As I desperately attempt to be the tempest storm I've longed so often to be.

Blindsided, the truth weighed down by intransigent fools, I now so sharply see.

Clinging to the edge, awaking the goddess within, a maelstrom surging to life.

Struggling, attempting to balance myself on the precipice of life's precarious knife.

As I remind those around me that I am infinitely obstinate, with a long memory.

You may shatter my heart, but you will never extinguish hope's reverie.

Vivary

She lives her life, day after day, an endless routine of chores.

Is she a pawn in some matrix? Have her captors grown bored?

Trapped...in a vivarium. An experiment that has clearly gone awry.

Are her nightmares the reality? For if a false existence... how does one survive?

Can she hope to find the reset button and start her life anew?

To have never suffered, to get the happy ending she's long overdue?

What she wouldn't give to undo all of her past mistakes.

To break free of this prison of pain and trauma... and escape.



**Debbie Clewer**

Fields Of Green

She walked through fields of green  
Feet caressing the grass and flowers below  
She touched the breeze, transparent as it blew  
Gentle and cool, to ease the salty tears of frustration  
That ran in mascara river's down her cheeks  
Searching in vain for a cosmetic sea

Her heart had been broken  
Hit by a wrecking ball of emotion and shattered  
Each shard Piercing and increasing her pain

The sun sent her warmth, in kindness  
And the sky kept the clouds at bay  
But it was the night that understood her  
It shared the darkness that steadily engulfed her mind

Ghost Of A Soldier

I've watched you  
Through the passing years  
I've held your heart  
In soft caress  
I tried to dry your flowing tears  
And kiss away your bitterness

Shrapnel shattered  
Dreams of love  
My life cut short  
In battle cry  
In breath of last  
I spoke your name  
21 too young to die

You lived your life  
Mother and wife  
But now and then  
Your eyes would blur  
As memories crept  
Inside your head  
Of youthful love  
So strong and pure

And now in creak  
Of aging bone  
You kneel in bend  
Of aging head  
And kiss the white  
Of Flanders stone  
In Flanders fields  
Of glorious red

**Johanne Lee**

Fabric

She had not shed the past  
Rather gathered each garment  
Tore a strip from each experience  
Mindful of its bombardment

Rally, chalked up tally  
Embroidering her as whoever  
She damned or not pleased  
She, the map of owned endeavour

Should she dream a glimpse  
Of futures derailment or station  
Passing through imaginations  
Nuance of nation

Read her epitaph or see the birth  
Why preposterous she'd yell  
Plaited as she is to the past  
The vast, the deeds she knows well

And those she will seek  
Be founded maybe grounded  
Asking of sensibility  
Madness woman in flight  
Argues its culpability

Flings fragility a cloth  
And says wipe this mess  
Before it begins

Ah but the horsehair, the satin ribbons,  
the plaited mane,  
the silliness of a walk in torrential  
forecast rain

Where the bees hive, offering sting, a walk upon the cliff  
face knowing the danger the seas offering  
mouth agape... ready in collect  
I shall only reflect upon the unknown  
The tides long thrown  
The cloak I wore of an elder  
A borrowed skirt  
The wet dab of tissue  
The smile after hurt

So no to a glance  
of where in meet we chance ...

To dream

The Sacred

Moon lit her resting  
The world taken in care  
A shy elm paid homage  
As the breeze brushed her hair

In her nature nurturing  
At one with every grain  
Lately hibernation  
Whispering her name

Everything she shoulders  
Still housing inner child  
She that faces mountains  
A moment to rewind

Release, revel in the peace

Heavy lidded-a tear falls from the sky  
As a reunion  
cocoon the butterfly

Oh tired wings  
Free of cluttered things  
Every crease eased from brow  
There's a time to let things slide  
and return to the sacred... somehow

A Fine Art

With deft stroke and good intention  
She drove her nails into the mud  
Scraped every evil mention  
Every trace of misunderstood

Stole their chains to wear defiant  
Vehement place value in voice  
Petals strewn homage to silent  
In dress of dainty sung by Joyce

With difficult birth and attire  
Fierce she stands with gutsy apprise  
Flame in her eyes ready to fire  
The curse undone, there shall she rise

She need make up no timely hour  
She long borne of the brilliant  
Wrath shall speak kindly empower  
Woman... thou art resilient

**Marie Stell**

The Crossing

I watch them bring the boat in  
As we wait on sodden sand,  
My memories flash before me  
Of our deserted, beaten land.  
We've travelled days and many nights,  
We were promised a new life,  
By men who told my husband  
"Save your daughter, son and wife."  
We paid with all our money,  
Left in the middle of the night.  
The journey fraught with danger,  
Keeping safe and out of sight.  
We wait upon the shore,  
Our children hungry, tired and weak.  
My husband's hand, a thousand words  
But not a word we speak.  
The boat now on the shoreline,  
The tide is rising fast.  
Families rushing forward  
Not wanting to be last.  
A mist falls all around us.  
Screaming, shouting fills the air.  
We're safely on the boat  
And thanking God that we are there.  
Those who do not make it  
Are left standing in the tide,  
Those on board are wet and sobbing  
With others clinging to the side.  
The air is cold, it's dark now  
As we creak along the sea.  
My husband holds us close to him,  
Dare we dream now to be free?  
I feel the water on my feet.

Shouting once more fills the air.  
The boat is going under  
And then nothing but despair.  
The water's freezing cold  
As we try to stay afloat.  
A wave sweeps me from my family  
And I'm dragged up on a boat.  
One by one are now beside me.  
Freezing cold, they weep.  
The search is then abandoned,  
My family taken by the deep.  
In shock and numb, we reach a shore  
With cliffs as white as snow.  
I do not know the language  
But forward I must go.  
The rain begins to fall,  
It hides the tears upon my face.  
I owe it to my family  
To make a life here in this place.

**Antoinette DiGiorgio**

Blue Moon

If the moon can be blue  
And still be beautiful  
Why can't my blueful  
Heart still shine bright

Trying to capture the glow  
Encase it inside my ribs  
Needing its' warmth  
To thaw my iced veins

Lovely moon of blue  
Work your magic dust  
Bring me back to life  
So I can feel emotions

Set me free to soar high  
Allow me to fly with angels  
Under that cosmic blue haze  
That keeps me mesmerized

Scoop me up in enchanted  
Dreams so I can breathe joy  
Feel love and pain again  
Instead of this numbness

If the moon can be blue  
And still be beautiful  
Then I know my blueful  
Heart has hope to beat

Pulsating with energy  
Now a quasar throbbing  
I am renewed alive with the  
Power to change the tide

I am one with the blue moon  
Soaring through the beautiful  
Heavens singing with angels  
In a blue misty river of love

Dream Light

The sun's gone down, cool is the air  
Don't give your thoughts another care  
Go to sleep, let your dreams take flight  
Passions will fill you till morning light

Dream that starlight lights up your soul  
Remember dear, you paid the toll  
Your life belongs to only you  
Get up, get out, begin to do

Awaken afreshed, there's new life  
Take it, live it without any strife  
Go forward and shine like the glorious stars  
For you no longer are held by prison bars

Charmer

He was a snake oil salesman  
A snake charmer  
He could hold you in his grip  
with his enchanting music  
One note from his instrument  
you were totally mesmerized,  
completely under his spell  
He spoke in sickly sweet tongues  
compelling you to love him  
You never noticed  
you were being led to your doom  
Until you were finally locked in his cage  
Yes, the cage of false security  
There you were left to languish  
Alone, forgotten, cast-off  
No longer useful to his game,  
like a well utilized lab specimen  
As you watched him move on  
to capture his next unsuspecting prey

Patchwork

I sit here in my room  
Stitching my life together  
Taking pieces of this and that  
Trying to make sense of it all  
With my tears flowing  
My fingers bloodied  
Quietly working on  
My quilt of existence  
Before my eyes close  
For the very last time  
With the moon as my light  
Each stitch is filled with hope  
Love comes into balance  
Mother, father, brother  
Memories upon the sea  
Dreams that made me cry out  
Good people, bad people  
Children playing in the sun  
Snowball fights, no school  
Loving pets here and gone  
Dancing, singing, laughing  
Depression, heartache  
Total despair, anxiety filled  
Family gathered round  
Now no longer with me  
It is almost complete  
Patchwork of a lifetime  
Room for some more  
Stitches in the future  
A new life, new love  
Grandchildren at my feet  
Spending the last of days  
Happy fulfilled complete  
Listening to the birds

Feeling the wind  
One with wondrous nature  
Blue skies, lavender fields  
I will wrap my quilt  
Around my shoulders  
Lay and close these eyes  
Hear the last of the echoes  
Feeling the softness  
Of my patchwork blanket  
Touching my warm skin  
Quietly the light of the moon  
My light will go out forever

Sword Of Truth

I am merely a woman  
But my words are potent  
Put them on display  
The strongest of men tremble  
At the sight of them  
They fear the sharp edge  
Of my sword  
They jump overboard  
Into the dark waters  
I cannot believe the power I yield  
I have sipped from the chalice  
Of might and strength  
Take heed dear mortals  
Before you gaze upon my words  
For you do so at the risk  
Of being blinded by the truth

**Rani Chand**

Spread Sheet

Vast, light, dark...yet colorful  
Whole self within the universe  
Engulfing the world in layers of  
Breathing space and breathlessness  
Measured traits but not seen the way  
A challenge, yet a scene of rest

Home to the Heart of Remembrance  
Holy to the Hymn of Forbearance  
Hope to the eyes of the unspoken love  
Honour to be seen as a "Divine Essence"

Stars decor to get the look of a nightingale  
Sun glares the full length in high spirit  
Mind mesmerized to sparkle likewise  
As a dot on the same -when soul takes a leap



**Patti Woosley**

The Dawn's Lullaby

Just before daybreak, when it's quiet and still,  
a Robin sits perched on my windowsill.

With a voice like an angel, he solo's a song,  
beckoning up to the sky to bring on the dawn.

The Bluebirds and a Goldfinch from an old oak tree, and a  
family of Sparrows, chime in with their glee.

The Woodpecker keeps beat, as the Orioles sing through,  
while a wise old Owl chants, "who-dee who,  
who-dee who."

The Wrens and the Blue Jays stop to offer their notes, to  
the sun they are all crooning an anthem they wrote.

Serenaded with harmony, the sun starts to rise,  
as the bird chorus sings the Dawn's Lullaby.

A Woman

A woman walks with style and grace. Oh, but she's so  
much more than a pretty face!  
She's a hand to help, and a mind that's strong. She's the  
one that makes the house a home.  
She's the first to rise; the last to sleep. She's the one you  
call, when the path gets steep.  
She gives to everyone she knows, with a labor of love that  
goes and goes.  
Her deeds go unnoticed and uncompensated, to family,  
and friends, and those unrelated.

She's your wife and your soul mate, your friend and lover.  
She's a boss and a trainer, and a great back rubber.  
She's a great magician, who never misses a beat.  
She makes gourmet dinners from hamburger meat.  
She's a tutor and gardener, a carpenter and plumber.  
She's a cheerleader, clown, and a marathon runner.  
She's your employee, an accountant, a cook, and a  
baker. She's a doctor, a nurse, and a miracle maker.  
She's a chauffeur, a barber, party planner and teacher,  
and occasionally her advice is as good as a preacher.

Her voice when she's singing her baby a song, is as sweet  
as Mariah or Celine Dione.  
She will always be there when you need a friend. She was  
there in the beginning, and she'll be there at the end.

So if you are blessed with a sister, a daughter, a  
granddaughter, a niece, grandma, aunt, girlfriend, wife,  
neighbor or a mother...  
go give her a hug and tell her you love her.

If I Could Write A Song

If I could write a song.  
If the notes would come to me.  
I'd write the sweetest lyrics, with the greatest melody.  
The music would have such rhythm, all musicians would agree,  
and everyone with a guitar would strum along with me.  
There never be a charge, no fees or royalties,  
and everyone who wants to sing, can sing my song for free.  
There'd be no storms in my song; only skies of the clearest blue.  
There be no tears, no broken hearts, and dreams would all come true.  
There'd be no crying verses; no worried minds to ease.  
My song would lift up voices with sounds of love and peace.  
It would fill the skies with sweet romance.  
The world would join hands and sing and dance,  
if I could write a song.

Scars

Behind every scar lies a story of a hurt that caused us to weep.  
A pain that left a reminder, of a wound that cut too deep.

There are scars that happened in childhood, caused by a careless act while at play,  
when we could run to our mothers, who would kiss all our tears away.

There are scars on a Mother's body; marks from carrying her babies inside.  
We get scars from wounds and sickness. Every scar leaves a story behind.

There are scars caused by the weather. Yes, the wind and the sun leave their mark.  
Oh, but then there are the invisible scars; the scars we wear on our heart.

Looking at our scars make us wonder. Why do these old scars remain?  
Perhaps our scars are to remind us, happiness returns after the pain.

Life's journey has its pains and its sorrows.  
Our scars teach us to prevail.  
For every hurt serves to make us be stronger.  
Oh! The many stories our scars can tell.

My Name Is Sam

I sat down by an old man on a park bench, wrapped up in  
yesterday's news to keep him warm.  
His wrinkled face was weathered and unshaven.  
His smelly clothes were dirty and torn.  
There was such sadness in his teary eyes, that I had to look  
away,  
but I'll never forget what the old man told me, when I  
heard him softly say...  
"My Life on the streets is oh, so lonely.  
Every day is always the same.  
Sometimes someone will sit down beside me,  
but no one cares enough to ask my name.  
The cold wind blows right through me, and it cuts down  
through my bones,  
but nothing cuts deeper into a man's soul like the hell of  
being alone.  
I have no pillow to rest my head.  
I've had nothing to eat in days, but my hungry belly ain't  
the problem.  
It's the hunger in my soul that's here to stay.  
I gave my heart to the bottle.  
I let the needle steal my soul away.  
Along the way, life lost all its meaning.  
Do you understand what I'm trying to say?  
On the streets of life, I'm all alone.  
I'm on the streets of life without a home.  
Look into my eyes and you'll see my pain.  
Can you help me find my life again?  
I am broken beyond repair without even a God to hear my  
prayer."  
And so I told him how much God loved him, and how his  
Son died for him and me,  
so our sins could all be forgiven and how Christ died to set  
us free.

I shared with him my breakfast.  
I gave him my coffee and my time.  
And we prayed in the park together, while Jesus held his  
hand and mine.  
He was smiling when I left him.  
I said, "Are you happy?" He said, "I am."  
I asked him what his name was.  
He said, "My name is Sam."

**Sarah Rachel Ramphal**

Silver Lining

Dark clouds they hover over me today  
Just like my worries and my doubts  
And oh how they seem so heavy  
But the great thing was  
The sun it hide behind those clouds  
Making the most beautiful  
Of a silver lining that I ever saw  
Right there and then  
I was given hope  
That my dark clouds  
Shall no longer be  
And soon light will shine  
Upon my life to warm my heart  
My doubts no more  
And I will be alright  
If dark clouds hover  
Over you today  
Just know that there  
Shall always be silver linings  
Bringing light and hope  
And those dark clouds  
Will soon disappear

Celebrate Yourself

Celebrate yourself  
That awesome authentic you  
That no one else can be  
You are unique in all your ways  
Be happy, be proud for  
Each little goal you have attained  
Dance in the shower  
While you sing your favorite song  
Sip your favorite wine  
Buy yourself ice-cream  
Roses whatever your liking  
Celebrate you for all the battles  
You have fought and won  
For no one else may do  
Celebrate who you are  
That beautiful soul  
And most of all, love yourself

This Maze Called Life

Everyday I tell myself  
I am fine  
Hiding behind denial  
This can be fine  
But it's okay to feel  
Broken  
Sad  
Lost  
Lonely  
Trying to find yourself  
In this maze called life  
The U turns  
That takes you away  
From what's ahead  
Seems like it's taking forever  
To get there  
The dreams  
That you have  
That you see at the end  
It's a puzzle  
Being pieced slowly but surely  
Hang in there  
It will all be beautiful soon  
This maze called life  
It's taking form  
One step at a time

Spring

The blooms that burst in colors  
The fragrance that fills the air  
The cool afternoon breezes  
The warmth of the starry skies  
The moon she smiles  
Romance comes alive in spring  
Makes the heart dance with nature  
Oh how beautiful it is to savor  
Spring as love and love as spring  
Alive, free and full of enchanted beauty  
This season that burst with life a new  
In all its glory they smile in glee  
Spring is here and life it sings  
As the birds oh so sweetly  
It's my favorite time of year  
Where nature just shows its splendor

Poet's Words

It's never easy sometimes  
Penning these words  
For some they hurt so bad  
Like a knife stabbed straight into the heart  
Somehow we manage to pen them still  
Though the pain may be so deep  
It sets our spirits free  
Writing in riddles  
Emotions hide like a puzzle  
Only the like minded minds and heart can feel  
those words set free  
Pen, paper, emotions, love,  
Life, pain, grieve  
All in a poets hands  
Their story wrapped in words  
Tossed about the universe  
It is what makes us come to life  
Immortalized in time  
Poets words forever they live

**Suzanne Newman**

Daffodil

I'm a bright and beautiful daffodil  
Who's standing proud, growing on a hill  
The welcome sun, in Spring, is warm  
The air is fresh, and wind is calm  
There's not a raincloud within sight  
And my yellow petals shine, so bright

After a while, a storm picks up  
Sleet and gusts pound my trumpet-cup  
My battered petals start to tear  
And soon they're gone... my stalk, laid bare  
My tattered bloom's blown with the gales  
I am left, bereft, as my stem just flails

My foliage, once grand and green  
Now hanging remnants of my leaves  
The petals, which were shining gold -  
All gone... now I am torn and bald  
I've nothing left, and start to cry  
Wish I would hurry up and die

But... God Himself protects my roots  
Encased them in His armored-suit  
And 'though I'm feeling tired and old  
He'll revive me, and tend my bulb  
And after I've recuperated  
I'll stand again - regenerated

And I'll have grown in trust and faith  
Survive all storms, in God's good grace  
And very soon the time will come  
When I'll re-bloom, out in the sun  
New petals proudly on display  
Shine in HIS light, on a glorious day

So, I'll not fear when I can't stand  
Nor worry when I'm battered strands  
For God will help me weather storms  
Forever keeps bulb and roots warm  
I'll wait to bloom at HIS say-so  
Trust in His timing, then, re-grow

Atop the hill that I am on  
Stands Calvary's cross and God The Son  
Forever I'll keep this in view  
In HIM I'm reborn, strong, renewed  
Reminded of my humble place –  
A thankful servant, saved in grace

### Just A Pebble

The Lord asked me to throw a pebble – “That isn't very grand!” I said,  
“Why don't I throw this rock or boulder? Or even a mountain, Lord, instead!”  
I'm trying to show off a bit – show The Lord I'm eager to impress,  
But He's not impressed by pride or arrogance, “Just do what I ask, child, please,” He stressed.

“For pebbles are as crucial as the bigger rocks and mountain ranges.  
Just throw a small one in a lake...see how the surface moves and changes?  
Don't ever underestimate the power a single pebble holds.  
In fact, remember David? And how one pebble left Goliath cold?

Pebbles firm the shoreline, stop feet sinking where you roam and tread.  
Make habitats for creatures in the rock pools and on riverbeds.  
I made animals of different sizes, from the elephant to the tiny mouse.  
Many crumbs make up a loaf of bread, many bricks are used to build a house.

Just trust me and obey, my child, know that a pebble in my hands  
Is equally as important as a mountain in my Holy plan.  
It might not be what YOU want, but it's not about what just YOU see.  
For I see ALL...you can't comprehend...throw the pebble and leave the rest to me”.

Depression's Abrupt Wall

My goodness...who turned out the light?!  
A minute ago I was feeling alright,  
But now it seems my head has turned,  
And it aches and hurts where the darkness burns.

I was doing fine, and then suddenly  
Depression slams a wall in front of me.  
From nowhere, there's a barrier made of brick.  
One hundred miles long and twenty feet thick.

This debilitating, cold, cruel wall  
Looms at ten thousand meters tall.  
No light can pass this harsh, bleak black.  
There is no give and no hint of a crack.

I don't know how these icy bricks  
Made a solid impasse quite so quick.  
In what seemed like five minutes flat,  
My mind's switched into midnight black.

I reach out, just to feel the stones,  
Which numb and chill and make me groan.  
The coldness really zaps my strength,  
Makes heart hang low and shoulders tense.

Depression knows it's a frightening foe,  
Takes pleasure in pain and cultivates sorrow.  
It's a worry to find I can't see past  
This black shield and the despair which lasts.

It's hard to live where there is no light.  
The future's grim...anything but bright.  
The shadow cast by depression's wall  
Consumes joy to make peace and hope grow small.

I feel so cold and all alone.  
Mind's squashed and squeezed by slabs of stone,  
Which hems me in so mercilessly  
'til thoughts aren't mine and brain's not free.

I panic and cede and sink to my knees,  
Depression is winning...it's gloating and pleased.  
But, when I've no hope, The Lord provides some.  
Throws me a life-line, when my own's come undone.

Lord Jesus stands by me and is here all the while.  
He summons my strength, gives peace reason to smile.  
He tells me to sit tight and exercise faith.  
Reassures me He'll help, in His unfailing grace.

What I lose to depression, God will turn to my gain.  
Perseverance will thrive and my faith grows in pain.  
The Lord does ensure when depression attacks  
My soul remains safe and untouched by the black.

Soul's bravery's contagious and helps keep me going  
Throughout all life's struggles and when cold winds blow  
in.  
So, I won't give up, nor give in to this trial,  
For The Lord walks this wall with me...each troubled mile.

And, one day, I trust that I'll come to the end  
Of depression's dark wall and then my mind will mend.  
Until then, I'll just have to ignore all the tricks  
That depression does play, with its nightmarish bricks.



Grandma Menopause

A little old lady's walking down the street.  
She looks quite harmless, small, and sweet  
But she'll trip you up with her malicious feet.  
Leave you feeling assaulted, shocked, bruised, and beat.  
She'll shake you up, slap you hard, leaving your cheeks  
Red hot with a flushing, lava-like roaring heat.  
Leave you tangled in a heap in your damp bed sheets  
When insomnia strikes cruelly, to steal restful sleep.

She's shockingly wicked – Grandma Menopause,  
Jangles hormones around 'til your body feels sore.  
You're a shell of the woman who walked youthful shores  
And are ravaged, worn out, battered, empty and raw.  
Brain-fog drifts freely, and anxiety pours.  
It takes courage sometimes just to go out the door,  
When you want to just crumple in tears on the floor.  
For the fight seems too much and you can't take much  
more.

No-one else understands and nobody else knows,  
How menopause causes such low, bloody blows.  
Such feelings of madness and helplessness grow,  
'Though concealed on the surface, so the pain doesn't  
show.  
Beneath the confusion and sweaty skin glow,  
Depression runs high, self-confidence is low.  
Frustration is rife, recall's smothered in snow.  
You forget names of people you know you should know!

The tiredness is tiring, the weariness drains.  
It's exhausting just trying to prop up your brain.  
There are days where you think you are going insane  
And vigour and vim just seem limp, lost and lame.  
But you cannot speak up, for you feel too ashamed,

And then have to "crack on" through the misery and pain.  
For others still need you to help them just the same.  
So you quash your own feelings, trying to hide the strain.

Grandma Menopause appears to relish her job.  
Is happy to ransack, accost, mug, and rob.  
Expands your waistline so you look like a blob.  
Choosing comfort over style so you feel like a slob.  
She rakes over demons and jangles and prods.  
Approaches pain's locked doors and rattles the knobs.  
She likes to throw curve-balls with cruel, brutal lobs.  
Forcing your worn-out brain to move, duck, weave and  
bob.

Menopause is a thief, and ruthless, cold b\*\*ch.  
Making happiness vanish, like a spell-casting witch.  
She leaves pride and peace reeling and lost in a ditch.  
Beckons depression to gnaw you, with teeth black as pitch.  
Your hormones are jumping, like fleas with an itch.  
You try to pull yourself together, but the pieces won't fit.  
Eyes so puffy and sore, they're just two weeping slits.  
Every day is a battle when emotions are ripped.

Grandma Menopause laughs, as she slams down her  
frame.

To drum her beat constantly on your flailing brain.  
She lies to your mind, whispers that you're insane  
And smirks, satisfied, when she sees you're in pain.  
You feel so washed out - like you're poured down the  
drain.

Start the mornings feeling like you've been hit by a train.  
Paranoia and misery run amuck, quite untamed.  
You think it's just you and you think you're to blame.

Grandma 'M' uses knitting needles to poke and to prick.  
Jabs at your poor thoughts, 'til teeth grind, clench, and grit.  
Her blows do swipe low and never once does she miss,  
As she sneers in your face with a venomous hiss.  
Menopause puts you down and shouts orders and spits.  
Messes up your poor brain, 'til you fear head will split.  
Whatever you do isn't right, she'll nit-pick.  
Causes leg cramps, indigestion and the stress make you sick.

Right now, daily, I stare menopause square in the face.  
Pray to God to support me in His unfailing grace.  
For this wicked, cruel Grandma blocks my path in life's race.  
Halting me, so I've lost all momentum and pace.  
But God is my crutch, my support and my brace.  
The truth and my sanity when this madness does chase.  
He'll shepherd me through when tears reach to my waist.  
Until the blessed day menopause becomes a faint, distant trace.

**Julie O'Hara**

I Could Not Speak

When I was a child,  
I could not speak because only  
adult thoughts mattered.  
When I was a teen,  
I could not speak because authority figures  
had to be respected.  
When I was a worker,  
I could not speak because my knowledge  
was threatening.  
When I was a wife,  
I could not speak because my opinions  
were inconsequential.  
Now, as an old woman,  
I cannot speak, because I do not exist.  
I lurk behind my smile and my perfectly  
made-up face and coiffed hair.  
I must be pleasant.  
I must not speak.  
I do not exist. I never have existed.

Tiny Moments

I stay wrapped up in the tiny, little moments  
Trying so hard to hold onto my existence  
as best as I can  
Trying to feel secure in the insecurity  
While staying sane in the vortex of insanity  
Not taking chances yet lost in the  
illusion of safety  
Forgoing so much vital time holding onto the  
pretense of patience and false virtue  
The minutes, days, months and years  
pass and slide on by  
Through the playground of earthly life  
My hair has gone grey  
My eyes and ears have weakened  
My skin has become wrinkled and crepe like  
I have become wizened, worn out and fragile  
Yet, I still stay wrapped up in the tiny, little moments  
Trying so hard to hold onto my existence  
as hard as I can  
Trying to feel secure in the insecurity  
While staying sane in the vortex of insanity  
Not taking chances yet lost in the  
illusion of safety

I Am Not A Goddess

I am not a goddess  
For you to worship  
I am not a priestess  
For you to bow down to  
I am not an angel  
To inspire fear and awe  
I am your woman  
For you to love, cherish and honor  
I am Divine  
I am Feminine

You are not a god  
I will not worship you  
You are not a priest  
I will not revere you  
You are not an angel  
I will not fear you  
You are my man  
I will love, cherish and honor you  
You are Divine  
You are Masculine

Do not raise me up like a sacrifice  
Do not put me on a pedestal to adore  
Do not deify me into something  
I was not meant to be  
We are humans  
We are mortals  
We are love  
We are sacred  
I am not a goddess

Four Ladies At The Diner

There are four ladies sitting  
Behind me at my favorite breakfast diner  
Like me, they are approaching old age  
(Would you call it pre-old age?)  
Obviously, they have known each other throughout  
Their lifetimes  
Drinking coffee  
Eating omelets  
It is their Saturday morning ritual  
Their "let's touch base" ritual  
Talking about kids  
Boasting about grandkids  
Sharing news about family  
And mutual friends  
Discussing ailments and medical conditions  
Worrying and praying together and  
Then laughing and giggling like teenagers  
With love and affection  
Supporting and guiding each  
As strong women have done forever  
They are beautiful

Lorelei

Her eyes are as green as the  
Rhine River swirling around the stone  
She languishes on  
While warming her soul  
And beckoning you with the promises  
Of love so deep, so pure, so passionate  
"Just jump", "Dive", "Swim with Me"  
She calls out to you  
"Come to me, my love.  
There is such beauty below.  
We can make love, and play, and frolic  
Like lust-drenched dolphins  
You'll see beautiful so profound  
And feel pleasure so complete."  
Her words spark an obsession and  
pounding in your heart  
Syncopated to the pulse of her siren song  
She is no black-eyed Susan  
Waving lonely in the field  
Provoking pity disguised as love and desire  
Nor is she a crystal blue-eyed Princess  
Promising riches, fame and earthly success  
Your ego perceives as truth  
She is soft, she is luscious  
She is a demon  
She is an angel  
She is a succubus  
Who wants to feed on your masculine essence

And devotion  
Until your soul melts like cotton candy  
In the frothy waves around her  
You cannot resist her  
You will not resist her  
You will only surrender  
To Lorelei

**Calliope Wordsmith**

A Twisted Tango

Locked in an endless dance, a battle, a duet  
Tugging, twirling, an endless tête-à-tête

A constant struggle, of equally matched opposing  
sides  
Neither one willing to concede, a tango of imposing  
size

So the detrimental dance continues, a true Freudian  
battle of wits  
As she struggles with her inner demons, her  
personality irrevocably split

Above And Below

Let us speak of the old gods, those high above and far  
below  
Of ancient and powerful deities that existed long,  
long ago  
When roamed mighty legions of fearsome leviathans  
Before the great Olympians and even the mighty  
Titans

A time when trepidation and terror gripped the  
sunless, starless lands  
And savage, inhuman sorcerers ruled with an iron  
boot and hand  
Before the sun brought light to the realm, severing the  
darkness' hold  
When mortals worshipped out of fear or faced  
suffering untold

An age, wiped from memory, unknown to humans or  
any living creature  
The era of magick, before the annihilation of all life,  
the first global reaper  
A world of alchemy, audacious revelry, and things no  
one dares speak of  
When the earth was newly formed, full of ancient  
deities, below and above

Snake Oil

To the charming man selling snake oil,  
With a clever tongue and charismatic smile...  
You may have everyone else so easily fooled  
But certainly not me, not by a country mile.

I see right through your silver-tongued speech,  
Your beguiling words that promise so much.  
I know the truth behind those enigmatic eyes.  
You're a liar and a fraud with your Midas touch.

I will never be deceived by your dazzling dialogue.  
That devilish grin hides a serpent, I've no doubt.  
So go peddle your wares and your schemes  
elsewhere!  
You're nothing but a charlatan and a swindler with zero  
clout.

**Patricia Harris**

My Home

My home, crumbles,  
Filled with the broken pieces  
Of heartbreak's history.

Perhaps I could have built  
The foundation differently,  
Strengthened the parts exposed.

In the building of the foundation,  
How much would it change  
The home that I loved eventually?

Do Not

Do not, into my mouth  
place your words,  
for the taste does not suit.

I have always said that which  
I mean with total honesty,  
be it kind or mean.

You putting your words  
in my mouth only adds  
to the questions I have  
of what you are about.

My Worth

I keep forgetting that I have more  
Than just a little bit of a shine.  
I have a lot more to me than  
most people even realize...

So when I want to go out  
Into the woods and let loose  
That scream with no end...

Know that though I doubt  
my own place,  
My worth is not  
On your opinion based.

**Abigirl Phiri**

African Woman

Mama Africa, you are a queen  
Born in the heart of Africa  
You are a force to be reckoned with  
And whichever continent you go to your reputation  
precedes you

Born to defy all odds  
Raised to own your throne in the world  
You shall leave your foot prints in the sands of time  
Because you are a lioness, fiercely independent by nature

Mama Africa, your possibilities are ever endless  
It's a born deep knowledge that you are the  
mother of nations  
Anyone worth his or her salt knows  
African woman you are the most prized possession in the  
plains of Africa

African woman, blessed mother of nations  
You are a vision and the world is your oyster  
You represent so much more than you can possibly fathom  
In fact you instill and inspire confidence

You are a woman of substance  
Your face is full of character  
You hold the future pedigrees in the palm of your hands  
And what you say goes



You have an air of command  
You listen to the voice of reason  
You are a woman of means  
And everything pales out into insignificance in your presence

Your beautiful skin is sun kissed by the African sun  
Your beauty shines so blindly bright as if an angel with a halo  
You signify the true epitome of woman hood, body wise  
Behold, what a sight you are

Blessed both with beauty and brains  
You are a weapon of mass destruction  
You can hold your own just as well, you stand out like a sore thumb  
Arguably you are second to none

Men will fall at your feet left, right and center  
Enticed to snag such a precious jewel  
Truth be told to shame the devil  
You are a finders' keeper

Partners we are and partners we will continue to be with our menfolk  
Closely following in our great grandmothers' footsteps  
You shall strive tirelessly to ascertain your sisters' names go down in history  
For we, African women have a legacy to uphold

The fruits of your womb will traipse on this mother earth  
You will endure and ensure that the family lines continue  
You will stake your claim  
And equally earn your keep in this world

Arise and shine, emblem of continuity and perpetuity  
Conquer your fears  
Let your heritage show in all your endeavors  
You are an imperial queen both in mind and spirit

Gracious like Nala  
Elegant and poised like Nandi  
You have been called forth by different names  
Undoubtedly and proudly you are a "strong woman",  
mama

Makhadzisa

She sings like a bird  
And her songs continue to be heard and played  
She is the queen of the Venda born and bred  
With teachings that value families and how they  
should be fed

We will continue to sing her praise  
Because she sings with so much grace  
Touching the hearts of the young and old,  
vanquishing dread  
As the music flows in our bodies, tightly  
and loosely clad

Such kind of music is for the Gods  
This is why we listen in hordes  
Addicted to her tunes on repeat in spades  
Glad that there are still singers that inspire  
confidence in the trade

All hail, Makhadzisa  
A symbol of how hard work pays  
For that reason she is here to stay  
And naysayers are not going to do anything  
about it, nay

**Kay Watkins**

Children Are The Guardians Of The Future, Of The Earth,  
Of Nature And Humanity

Children are the guardians of the future, of the earth, of  
nature and humanity.  
But who will guard the children?  
Who will ensure THAT the future, the earth and humanity  
will BE there FOR them to guard?

And so it goes. Where do we start?  
HERE. When do we start?  
NOW.

Hand in hand may we ALL do this together.

Move On

Move On.  
Move on dear woman,  
Move on dear man.  
Not all change is good, and not all movement is forward...  
But you'll never know until you try.  
Because staying still can definitely make you wither up  
and die.

The plant, the child, all are growing, moving on.  
Some may go in the wrong direction, but usually not.  
And never stops.

Taking that first step without holding on...  
yes, the toddler may fall.  
And yes, it may be painful,  
But that toddler pulls himself back up and tries again...and  
again... and again.

Move on dear woman,  
Move on dear man.  
Go venture forth.  
If you fall, go on the wrong path,  
pull yourself back up, find your way...  
And keep on moving on.

If You Are Willing To Take The Time

If you are willing to take the time  
Then you will see  
The caterpillar change into a  
Butterfly flying free

If you are willing to take the time  
You'll see the sapling  
Grow into a tall strong tree

If you are willing to take the time  
You can see a friendship blossom into love  
The kind that endures and not fizzle out  
with the first spat  
Or the first sign of wrinkles and gray hair

So on and so forth

These are the days of instant gratification  
Instant coffee, instant rice, instant drive  
through meals  
Instant feelings brought on by uppers, downers,  
even LSD

So on and so forth

Which also bring on disposable everything  
Things not made to last  
Disposable razors, cameras  
Battery operated toothbrushes  
Disposable marriages

So on and so forth

People don't want to wait for the real thing  
The better thing  
The lasting thing

What shall it be  
What are YOU worth  
Do we want what's real  
Do we want what'll last  
When we know WE are worth it  
We'll then be truly willing  
To take the time

Different Roads, Different Choices

Different roads, different choices....  
Sometimes the road can be very twisty,  
with different stops (choices) made along the way...  
seeing where we end up and knowing that it's a good  
place is AWESOME.

If it's not, keep on traveling.  
Enjoy the next road you're on...  
see that it may be interesting, even glorious at times.

Keep moving on to YOUR good place.  
The choices you make dictate the life you lead.

Live Life

Live life  
Don't be too busy  
Enjoy living  
Gaze on its beauty  
Meditate on the sublime  
Of art, nature, music, poetry of Walden and Angelou  
Take in the beauty of love  
Encouragement, sun shining on the flowers  
Don't be too busy  
Enjoy living  
Live life

**Robin Michele Payne**

Beauty And Death

It's said that beauty soothes the savage beast,  
Or blinds the sight of the beholder to behold;  
The starving man who sits before a feast  
Who savours remnants covered in green mould.

We often judge with vision dulled with pride,  
Removing heart and soul from sanity;  
I fear all innocence we will deride,  
On baseless shallowness and vanity.

Oh harken! Such angelic souls elude  
Societal confinements. Quite absurd.  
Eternally her purities subdue  
All those whose hearts within are never stirred.

So tamed is death by her naivety,  
He takes a pause from all atrocity.

Mourning Stone

This epitome of grace and culture,  
The likes of which sits immortalized in sculpture;  
Once rapturous delight that stirred the soul,  
A flame that time extinguished into coal.

Fragile and rare this heart that's held within;  
To suffocate this fire is such a sin,  
That Lucifer himself would never dare  
Obstruct the spark that rises up in prayer.

Yet ever faithfully she lays her hope  
On dreams that quickly vanish into smoke,  
Reminisce of love that never got the chance  
To lie beneath the stars or share a dance.

Truly precious are these moments passing by,  
For eternity she'll mourn but never cry.

True Love

Most intimate moments aren't spent in bed,  
It's first gentle touch should be in your head;  
Sparked conversation becoming a flame,  
Their absence of voice makes you feel insane.

It's a laughing glance shared in sparkling eyes,  
A shoulder to lean, when tender heart cries;  
Fingers stroke hair of the head in your lap,  
Falling asleep — holding hands while you nap.

Cooking their favourite meal — just because.  
Giving some space when at times they take pause;  
Leaning back into arms wrapped from behind,  
Forgiving flaws with no need to remind.

When mind, heart and body finally merge,  
That's when true love will begin to emerge.

Field Of Dreams

Star light, star bright, wishes made every night.  
She stands her ground, gazing up at the light;  
Naysayers tell her she's wasting her time.  
Theft of innocence is the biggest crime.

Celestial glow within a field of dreams,  
The world around her is not what it seems;  
Surrounded by wishes, some old, some new —  
All that she hopes for, is one to come true.

Hope is the faith held secure in her heart  
And dreams of a love that will never part;  
Quickly wishing upon a falling star,  
Imagines the places of where you are.

Of all of the dreams she dreams will come true,  
None can compare to those she has of you.

Self Portrait

If I could paint a picture  
Of what I think you see,  
Not sure exactly what I'd  
Draw would reflect the real me.

For when I look in the mirror  
I see only scars;  
Where others see beauty,  
I only see flaws.

But I know I have a kind heart  
And I tend to love too deep,  
And as age creeps in — that's  
What I hope I keep.

I don't want to be defined by wrinkles  
Or the tinsel in my hair,  
But for the twinkle in my eyes  
And my wild flair!!

So I think that my  
Self portrait would be;  
A set of smiling green eyes  
Within a colorful sea;

Splashes of color  
Thrown here and there;  
The water my love,  
And the sunshine my hair.

My hands are the waves  
That brush soft on the shore;  
And my footprints the shells  
Tossed from the ocean floor.

**Usha N Shrinivaasun**

That Feminine Touch

Forever special is a woman's touch  
Anything she does she leaves her indelible mark as such  
'Tis a gift of the Gods which transforms a house into a home  
How she does it is can never be learnt from any tome  
That care and love only a woman can lavish upon her family  
Trials and tribulations she can brush aside and go around cheerfully  
As a wife and mother she makes them feel loved and secure  
For every ill in her mind, heart and hands there is a cure  
A child with a mother feels cozy loved and happy  
A man shows his true self to his mother or wife freely  
For he knows he will be loved for himself alone  
For his weaknesses and faults and his achievements shown  
Female of the species, the most wonderful of God's creations  
Sans her the world would be bereft of colour, dull and in a state of cessation

The Beginning Of Womanhood

Adam was feeling bored and lonely  
He was in sore need of company  
So on him God took pity  
From his ribs another creation of great beauty  
Eve was born as the first woman to grace the earth  
Through her happened on this earth many a birth  
The first woman to head a country was in ancient climes  
Ma Meenakshi who ruled Madurai known as  
Halasyapuran in those times  
Then came Rani Durgawati of Gondwana in northern Hindustan  
Followed by Jhansi ki rani of Punjab who on the British made war upon  
Then it was Indira Gandhi the Indian Prime minister  
Who was preceded by Israel's Golda Meir  
Margaret Thatcher of the United Kingdom took the world by storm  
Earning the name of the most honest Prime Minister in terrific form  
Now in many a country women rule efficiently  
But still atrocities against them are increasing alarmingly  
In the corporate world women are ignored completely  
When top positions are graced by men automatically  
We as women against this should wage a war  
And show the world that women with men are on par



The Girl Child

In ancient India or Bharatha Kadam as it was known  
The girl child was compared to Goddess Mahalakshmi  
renown  
The deity of wealth, luck, beauty and worldly pleasure  
The father before going out his business would first see his  
daughter  
Because for him his daughter is the ultimate Goddess  
Who is his wealth, his solace and happiness  
Such was the status of the girl child in the days of yore  
But deteriorated for some reason as the years did wore  
Girl child slaughter was common In remote villages  
Fathers and mothers behaved like primordial savages  
Now it is for us to punish these obnoxious creatures  
And stop atrocities against women and the girl child and  
her nomenclature

**Lisa Essler**

Boxes

Stuffed into little boxes,  
right from the start.  
- the good girl  
- *Does what she's told.*  
- the bad girl  
- *Questions everything.*

Words to constrain me.  
And I believed...

Where do I fit in?  
- Obedient Angel  
- Sassy Devil  
I'm right, yet I'm wrong?  
- You're one or the other  
And I trusted...

In defiance, I screamed.  
- Others besieged me,  
- heart, mind and soul.  
- *whispering, You're wrong.*  
- Thundering voices echoed,  
- *You're damned.*  
And I spurned their hold on me...

- Many refused to see  
the whole of me.  
- weak and strong,  
- brilliant, yet foolish,  
- temptress and warrior,  
- lover becomes teacher,  
- daughter matures to mother,  
- wife and sister.

Not always right,  
**not always wrong.**

I am all.

Creek

In the heat of summer,  
I follow the path,  
seek dense shade  
beside the creek.

Time alone  
at last.

Gnarled as a gumtree,  
I to cling to steep banks,  
battle for space with thick  
tea tree and blackberry.

Flagging,  
I arrive.

Perch on a fallen trunk,  
sink bare feet in cool, silty water  
ringed with rocks,  
I rest in shadow.

Unknot  
my core.

Rich minutes alone, before  
'Mum' reaches my ears,  
scramble, slide, lithe limbs thump  
my son lands beside me.

Sighing,  
I look.

A smile brightens  
his upturned face.  
I would change nothing  
to have this moment.

Haystack Board Walk

Higher than the house,  
Dad places  
tight rectangles of sweet, dry, hay.  
Interlocking patterns form,  
– to make sure that they stay together –

Clasping my sister's smaller hand,  
we stroll along wide boards.  
Twisted fragments of dried grass  
hitch to cloth, tickle bare skin.

Arms spread like wings, inching downwards  
encouraging her I say,  
– this is how you do it, follow me –  
Splinters drive home as she slides down.

Darken The Night

Cherish the dark,  
indigo to ebony.  
A star, a crescent,  
against raven authenticity.

Lambent lamps glow,  
blend into jet,  
hazing the eyes,  
from the Empyrean.

Clarity,  
pristine onyx, Luna,  
sliver to a swollen whole.  
Let it be.

**Angie Ramsaroop**

Message In The Clouds

Looked up from my seat,  
Thick white clouds in the sky.  
Outlined with a thin layer of grey.  
Flicker of light made me blink.  
Flicker on flicker of and on again,  
As if to get my attention.

Brilliant sun rays poured down  
in luminous colors.  
Clouds all glowing now  
seem to smile,  
As if to say I Am Here,  
it's going to get better.

Time stood still.  
I stopped what I was doing.  
Is this real?  
Am I seeing things.

Then like a seen on a stage.  
The clouds reverted to white  
with gray lining.  
The image stayed with me.

My hand found a life of its own.  
Thoughts flew out of my mind.  
My writings turned into scribbles  
that I barely understand.

They have to see Me in everything.  
In the way you interact with each other.  
In the acceptance of differences.  
Am in the cries of the people.  
I am crying too.

My beloved soul had to go  
through the trials of Christ  
to show the renewal of the path  
to light and the truth.

Feminine sacrifice to remind us  
of the feminine side in each of us.  
Mother Earth is crying out.  
You damage the Earth  
That was created for you.

But you do not SEE.  
Let's see if you will understand  
When it's one of YOU.  
STOP, PAY ATTENTION.  
Look, listen and think.

Remember how to feel.  
Humanity is lost.  
Recall the divinity in you.  
Be one with nature.  
Return to ME.  
Yes, it is ME in the clouds.

**Nardine Sanderson**

My Heart Must Love Therefore

If ever I wrote most beautiful things,  
my heart must love therefore...  
As if by chance I once had dreamt this love of ours...  
forevermore,  
For certain things of beauty come and whisper longings to  
the heart...  
And love most certain there remains to love and never  
part...  
If ever I wrote of this fair love...the beautiful things that  
never die, if ever I dreamt the dreams of love, beyond  
one's heart but sleeping eye...

The Fire And The Flame

Whatever a hero does for love could never be in vain, for love they battle through pits of hell the fire and the flame there's a heroine in the making of a woman with a child, she claims to know the darkest places, her heart forever wild, there's a hero in the making when he just can't seem to let it go, stronger is his heart and soul for you would never know.

Please Remember Where

When it's time to lay down your heart , please remember where, for sometimes you forget this love, the promise that we share, on the days you cannot fight this burden that hangs upon your soul, please remember I shall mend you every ounce of pain or hole, please find comfort in my arms, for they are built by grace, I know you see the darkness love and feel so out of place, let me be your protection I'd forge through hell to save your life, I'd walk the deepest valley in search of where you are, make potions out of starry skies just to heal your scar ,whatever a hero does for love could never be in vain, for love they battle through pits of hell the fire and the flame.

Heroine In The Making

There's a heroine in the making of a woman with a child,  
she claims to know the darkest places, her heart forever  
wild, there's a hero in the making when he just can't seem  
to let it go, stronger is his heart and soul for you would  
never know, but granted life to measure light that  
darkness could not win the war, for we have love to live  
and so, it's only strength we need it more.

Gunning For The Throne

How does one end the passage without an ending  
planned, for lovers or the villain slayer they go hand in  
hand, who makes the sacrifice and no more burden be, it's  
often the writer who finds such pain in all its ecstasy, but  
who may go unnoticed to the dawning of that light, no  
amount of love forsaken, nor less pressure then to fight for  
a victory may mask the flag, and raise one's spirit high, but  
who may choose or proposition one and render them to  
die, for I cannot kill my character nor build a palace of  
strength alone, but there can be only one hero gunning for  
the throne.

**Celesia Parker**

The Reality Of Romance

A romantically prominent mind  
amplifies the singular quality  
for my exaggerated thoughts

Realist you rescued intellect  
one cavalier faithful to reality  
and scared to death of drama

Elevated emotions must always emerge  
tho realistic in timing dispersion  
because you rescued intellect

Bread Crusts

Countless memories unfold into present day  
The lives cultivated for greatness were denied status  
They lacked ethical evidence of furthering nothing more  
than themselves  
No back bone



Past That

That was my past calling  
It stayed past it's welcome  
Stagnant in surroundings  
Trying to fit disintegrated living into life  
Long gone

Pain sorrow and false hope  
I don't know them  
Persistent in becoming a part of me  
I won't let them  
So long

Not moving there  
I refuse  
You showed your face  
I want more than betrayal in my life  
Pretty song

Deep in conviction that light a road ahead  
Transparent while pure  
Softened by confidence  
Strengthened from laughter  
Not alone

Keep calling past tomorrow  
I still won't answer

Selfish

Only out to impress herself mostly  
Her face lately she feels is ghostly  
We can all be whatever we want  
Some of us will never get past an old haunt

Lover of perfume and not high dollar rent  
The rest came and went  
Fortified with the fact she has honor intact  
Good lord knows she is a balancing act

A true romantic with a tender line  
It makes sense that it just takes time  
An hourglass she is not  
Just gives her all of what she's got

Overtures

I am an instrument that music plays  
Changing movements of oh so many ways  
Up on my feet I love different sways

I am an instrument that music plays

Different tones surround me on different days  
Like balanced glasses of water on various trays  
Glaring at life like looking directly at the sun ray's

I am an instrument that music plays

**Candina Ann**

When The Clouds Shifted

From days that made me feel completely broken  
And in so much pain,  
Too weak to ever stand again.

Many yesterdays were filled with so much sorrow,  
It was challenging to live in the present,  
Or have hope for a better tomorrow.

The mighty voice, I was told about  
From way up high, Well...  
He was silently speaking to me  
Directly from the sky.

Sadly, I could not hear Him,  
Because I didn't understand,  
I did not accept that he was there,  
Nor did I reach for His helping hand.

So when you are struggling,  
Keep your eyes on the sky,  
Don't look back anymore.

Watch for the clouds to shift,  
Close your eyes in comfort.  
As the pain lifts,  
It's a feeling oh so new.  
The warmth of the golden rays of sunshine,  
Will appear as a magical rainbow prism glistening  
through.

So trust me when I say,  
Let the turning of the tides calm you;  
Let it reset you and comfort you.  
It's a place to be safe and still.

When you witness this -  
You'll make the right choice  
And know when you're wrong.  
Above the warm sunlit sky,  
Glistening atop the ocean tides.

It is then, with no doubt,  
You will know He's there...  
Signs as simple as a breath;  
A breath of fresh air...

So continue to keep your eyes on the sky,  
Don't look back anymore...

When the clouds shift  
I cloud shifted, and I too closed my eyes in comfort,  
As the pain lifted.  
It was truly a feeling oh so new.  
The warmth of golden rays of sunshine warmed me,  
And a sign- a rainbow prism glistened through.

So...  
If sailing through your own storm,  
Look up into the sky,  
When the clouds are shifting past you,  
Know it's time to say goodbye.  
Goodbye to all the sorrow and goodbye to all the pain.

For every storm has a calm,  
And it shall pass,  
With his light to guide you in.

When the clouds shift  
Let's close our eyes in comfort,  
Release the pain as it's lifted, and  
Together we will feel brand new.  
The warmth of the golden rays of sunshine  
Our hearts renewed for a brighter tomorrow...

## Biographies

**Melanie Garfinkel Waknine** has been blessed and fortunate to have traveled extensively meeting dynamic people as well as capturing Nature's beauty and purity, both in photography and verse.

She grew up in Johannesburg, South Africa, emigrated alone to Israel, eventually finding love in the snow... Canada! When she's not writing, she devotes her time to elderly dementia patients.

A number of her poems have been aired on Fine Music Radio Inc, published online at Spillwords.com, printed in Open Skies Poetry Vol 1, Wheelsong Poetry Anthology 2022, Dark Reflections: An Open Skies Collection, and Inspired Magazine Issue 22.

Published and read on her Instagram:  
@onemeldoll and @1melzifleur

**Rhiannon Owens** moved to Merthyr Tydfil from the North-West of England after bagging herself a handsome Welsh boy, Nicholas. She loves her cat, her mid-life crisis dresses, reading, and making her messy garden look even worse. As well as her solo writing projects Rhiannon has seven poetry books published along with her writing partner, the super talented Ashley O'Keefe (the 'Rhianno & Asley' series) which are available via Amazon.

She has had work featured in several anthologies and has (tentatively) dipped her toe into spoken poetry.  
<https://www.facebook.com/RhiannoAsleyPoetry/>

**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. She is a featured poet in their anthologies 'P.S. It's Poetry' and 'P.S It's Still Poetry'. Her work is also included in the following Open Skies poetry collections: 'The Sacred Feminine Vol II', 'Dark Reflections', 'Myth, Legends, and Lore', and 'Open Skies Poetry Vol 1.' all available on Amazon.

**Courtney Glover** is originally from Fulton County, Georgia. She is a writer, published author, editor and amateur photographer. She is the editor of The Sacred Feminine anthologies, the Open Skies Poetry yearly anthologies, and the various Open Skies Poetry themed anthologies. Her work has also been featured in several different poetry anthologies including the Lothlorien Poetry Journal, Quintessence: Aspects of the Soul, Encore (Jimmy Broccoli, Editor), as well as two separate Southern Arizona Press anthologies. She currently lives with her family in New Jersey.

**Debbie Clewer** has enjoyed writing poetry from a young age. She is a hairdresser and married with two grown children. Debbie joined online forums during lockdown rediscovering her love of writing.

She has had work published in: Keys To The Kingdom (Poetry Kingdom), Spotlight (Jimmy Broccoli), Open Skies Poetry Volume 1 (Open Skies), Dark Reflections (Open Skies), Woman's Journey (Johanne Lee), Dream Catchers, Shadow Weavers (Dark Poetry Society), and Myths, Legends and Lore (Open Skies).

**Johanne Lee** is a proud Mancunian mother of 3, poet and author of 6 children's picture books and two collections of poetry. Her two poetry books are Woman's Journey and the newly released Under The Lavender Moon, as part of the Open Skies Spotlight series. All books raise money for

various charities. Johanne has been published in over 20 anthologies including The Sacred Feminine anthologies 1-3, Southern Arizona Press, Wheelsong 2, Impspired Magazine and DPS Ezine just to name a few. She can be found as Johanne Lee Author on Fb and Instagram.

**Marie Stell** is 43 years old and lives in Blackpool, England. She has written a children's rhyming book "Little Spud" about a little dragon who is on the autistic spectrum. He has some difficulties and isn't like all the other dragons and unfortunately, he gets bullied. However he is a very talented dragon and proves the bullies wrong. It highlights that no matter what your abilities are, if you believe in yourself, if you look for the magic inside you, you can achieve anything.

Her full-time career consists of her family members, being an author/writer/poet and runs a small inclusive drama group for people who would not normally have the chance to go on stage. Marie writes pantomime scripts and short scenes for their productions and all money raised on show nights goes to local charities.

**Antoinette DiGiorgio** was born in Brooklyn New York, was awarded the title "International Ambassador" of the Circle of the International Chamber of Writers and Artists, Ciesart Europa Global, March of 2022. She has been published in 5 Open Skies Anthologies and in several Internet Web magazines. She was also published in the book "Peace begins with us" which was #1 on Amazon. Her first poetry book "The Darkest Hour: When light forgets our name" was released in May 2022. A new book is in the queue for the beginning of 2024. She currently resides in Florida with her two children. You can follow her on Facebook @Dancing With the Darkness.

**Rani Chand** is a freelance writer from India. She writes in the genre of writing related to life events and the beauties of Nature. Poems are my favorites. A regular writer (Member) of Ruskin Bond Group, Monthly Poem Competition. She has been bestowed with 1st prize in The International Poetry Contest in 2022. She has snippets of regular thoughts spanning more than a decade.

**Patti Woosley** is a full-time grandmother and a poet from the great state of Texas. She first started writing poems and song lyrics in 2005 when her daughter needed an original song for her country music album. She turned three of her poems into really great songs. Poetry helped her get through the saddest times of her life, after the deaths of her two sons. Now that she's retired, she writes almost every day. It keeps her busy and it helps her sort out her feelings. She has written about all kinds of subjects; love, death, nature, and everyday life topics that affect the world, such as homelessness, addictions, religion, and war. She also loves to read poetry. Reading poetry is a beautiful way for a person to learn about life's ups and downs; its joys and its heartaches.

**Sarah Rachel Ramphal** is from the beautiful island of Trinidad and Tobago. A mother to two beautiful children. Her passion is writing and she loves roses. Hence her pen name SBR (the Rose).

**Suzanne Newman** lives in the Midlands in the U.K. and has been writing Christian-based poetry since 2017.

**Julie O'Hara** was published nationally at age 14, Julie has racked up numerous writing awards. She has been published in several anthologies, Cat Fancy Magazine, Playgirl, Readers Digest and other publications Julie was a Professional Songwriter scholarship recipient at Berklee

College of Music in Boston, MA and has won numerous songwriting awards.

She is also a mother of two daughters and grandmother of two granddaughters. She lives the life of a nomad, traveling the country visiting friends, giving readings and making new friends in her 28-foot motorhome. In her spare time, she enjoys photography, making jewelry, making soap and reading.

**Calliope Wordsmith** is a poet and author who originally hails from Savannah, Georgia.

**Patricia Harris** is a dreamer, crafter, gamer, and digital artist who loves creativity in life. A half-mad poet, her writing is found all over social media and various other websites. She is a devoted mom who can be found doing a variety of art when she isn't penning poetry and writing words. She is owner of the indie publishing company Fae Corps publishing. Her collection of writings includes a memoir, children's books, and poetry.

For more from Patricia, check out:

[www.facebook.com/mouseypoet](https://www.facebook.com/mouseypoet) or [pattimouse.wordpress.com](https://pattimouse.wordpress.com)

Her books are all listed

on [www.books2read.com/rl/PatriciaHarris](https://www.books2read.com/rl/PatriciaHarris)

**Abigirl Phiri** is a prolific writer and an avid reader. She won the Zimbabwe 2020 Yett essay writing competition. Currently, she is pursuing a DPhil in commerce.

**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.

**Robin Michele Payne** is a native Californian who grew up loving to read and write from a young age. Writing poems and short stories has always been her real passion in life. After losing touch with her creative self over the years, she has just recently delved headlong into it once more. Her works have been accepted in multiple, worldwide published magazines and she has won awards for her poetry online and in poetry slams.

After living in Cairo, Egypt for twelve years, she now resides in Shrewsbury, England to increase her knowledge in the literary arts, play writing, and physically exploring the haunts and legends of the greats who reside there (both current and long departed).

Robin's biggest inspiration is the love of her life, alongside nature and everything beautiful, dark and full of spirit. She writes what is close to her heart, even if that means laying her soul open for all the world to read. She writes from her whole being and is just trying to leave this world a little bit better with her words.

**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.

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.

**Lisa Essler** is a middle-aged Australian poet and writer who has arrived at a place in life where she has the confidence to publish her work. She considers this is an exciting path for herself. Writing and poetry has been the light through many difficult times in her life.

In 1997, she completed a Bachelor degree, majoring in History and Literature. In 2021, she completed two years of intensive study in Professional Writing and Editing. Her life is busy with editing work, writing and caring for her ill, disabled sister. She has previously worked in the public service.

Her poetry reflects different concerns of her's, such as the natural environment and its conservation or issues regarding women. Some of her work covers childhood experiences, while other poetry covers some of her adult experiences. She came from a background of religious fundamentalism. The poem Boxes reflects how she felt unheard in that community.

**Angie Ramsaroop** (real name Anganie Ramsaroop) is a wife and mother of three from Trinidad and Tobago. (Her pen name) Angie Ramsaroop holds a Primary Degree in

Education Specializing in Early Childhood Care and Education. Her work experience varies from sales to manufacturing to teaching. She enjoys She has spearheaded her dreams of making a reality of Dreamwear Exclusive, manufacturing clothing, Young Leaders Early Childhood Care and Education (her (preschool and day care), along with her Facebook group page Creations and Beyond.

**Nardine Sanderson** is an award-winning Australian author and poetess, published in New York Adelaide magazine. She is the author of the poetry books, Bare Winter, Longings of Spring, and Beneath A Stone Unturned. She has been published in numerous anthologies and magazines and is currently awaiting the production her children's rhyming book coming soon.

**Celesia Parker** has been writing poetry since she was five years old. She has self-published four books including, "Practice Perfection" and "Glimpses Of You". She received a recognition with a chapbook from Keith Sparks' Open Skies spotlight series called "Stepping Stones" that contains her poems published in Open Skies Quarterly volumes 1-6.

Celesia considers herself a woman's romantically new formalist poet with personal experiences twisted amongst her fiction.

**Candina Ann** is a native Californian who has spent most of her life on the island of Alameda and within the city of Oakland, CA., near the beautiful San Francisco Bay Area. Ever since Candina was a child, she has been attracted to the ocean and loves its natural healing properties. She has frequented secluded beaches, coves, and cliffsides along California's coastline for self-reflection and inspiration. She

has multiple published books, published and unpublished poetry and lyrics, and her main endeavor is co-writing as a Project Coordinating Manager in the sync music industry.

As a survivor of various challenges, she believes in writing from the heart and celebrating triumph over tribulation. In 2019, she assembled her autobiography with a unique, creative twist. *My Own Ocean Tides: Triumph Over Tribulation Bk 1 of a potential series of Chronicles [2020]*, shares a poetic description of overcoming her life challenges, the wisdom she gained, and the valuable life lessons she learned. Candina Ann finished her first song, *When the Clouds Shifted (2020)*, and released it out into the world as a tool to help others find comfort and hope for a better tomorrow.



Proof