

An Anthology of Contemporary Love Poems

The Blue Fog Journal

The Blue Fog Journal

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Editorial Note

A poet's mind stretches through the gateway of imagination which is unconstrained by the physical and weaves through the metaphysical. Through this, the poet creates a new world of messages which has validity in difficult situations unbounded by time. This world is also immersed with art, rhythm and romanticism. No wonder the greatest human thoughts in human history were conveyed through the medium of poetry which were also kept sacred as holy texts.

The world is in a capitalist mode, hungry for wealth and power. The common man, his natural state is lost somewhere in a desert of dreams. The common man is misinformed, that happiness is related to material wealth, and his purpose of life is only survival. His root is submerged in selfishness that erodes him eventually.

In today's world, the word "love" has lost its meaning. Love is not just a compromise between two individuals in a relationship, but a bond with which the entire universe weaves its society of beings. Love is all that transforms selfishness in selflessness and blends ego into super consciousness or a state of bliss. The outcome for the presence of love is kindness.

The goal of this anthology is to bring the sort of self-realization to this common man and make him understand that his awareness of the material mode of life is superficial. Although, this anthology features poems which mostly deal with love in relationships, we hope that the reader will be aware at some stage that "love" truth and godliness are fruits of the same tree. We hope to bring this realization through the medium of poetry.

Rohitash Chandra
Editor and Publisher

Acknowledgements

The Blue Fog Journal shows deep appreciation to the contributors of this anthology. Furthermore, we thank the member of the editorial board, especially Ed Coet for his time and effort in the selection process.

Rohitash Chandra
Editor and Publisher

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To the Love for Poetry
and
To the Girit People in Fiji

Chris Butler

Token Shakespearean Sonnet 10

We can be Romeo and Juliet,
Or the latest Dark Lady and Fair Youth,
Or any creation of dead poets
And we'll exist beyond recorded proof.
Gazing towards the sky from our balcony;
The perfect pair of young, star-crossed lovers,
We fall in love and topple hopelessly
Into comas from each other's smothers.
In our home of gold, mortar and lumber,
Held together with bubble gum and spit,
I wake you from your eternal slumber
With a Frenchmen's kiss between our chapped lips.
You can always be my one and only,
And we'll never live just to die lonely.

Token Shakespearean Sonnet 17

Boys write poems for girls, such a simple world,
Since muses aren't so easily amused.
Articulating feelings into words,
Love's only for those horny and confused.
Search the field of thorns for the one red rose,
Which a single petal can enclose you
Into the monogamous life you chose,
Awaiting the day she says; I do.
You recall the look of her starry-eyed,
Staring up at you with flame's desire,
Time suspended like the lights in the sky,
Before she let you go into the fire.
Hearts everywhere adhere to birds sing,
Although love can wither, even in spring.

Chris Butler has been a frequently published poet in a variety of poetry publications.

Bob Bradshaw

Love Letter from a Palm

I was the potted palm at the back of the stage
in our second grade play, and I was happy.

At high school dances I never led anyone
onto the dance floor.

For decades I was as shy
as a hermit thrush.

I stammered when I met you,
but I was quickly schooled
by your kisses.

Even today I'm amazed at how lucky
a former palm is to find himself

center stage in your life.

*Bob Bradshaw is a programmer living in Redwood City, CA.
His poetry can be found at Eclectica, Mississippi Review,
Pedestal Magazine, Orange Room Review, Slow Trains and
many other publications.*

Laurie Billman

Spring Hobos

The train of spring has roared
around the mountains
of winter's frosted country
Outlaws with loaded guns
are ready to rush out of the bushes and jump up
and take a feel of the ladies' corsets
before they rob the safe
In the front cars the young are
drinking to the sun, laughing out loud
toasting with sparkled glasses of wine
the wakening countryside
where excited flowers
spew out hot lava of yellow pollen
(an aerial sperm flying thick
on rose hips and tulip lips)
Come on, baby, lend me a hand,
let's be hobos on this train
into summer's flames
We are not young but we
sure can move for a ride
fast out of winter
In the hay-filled back cars
we'll drink straight from the bottle
a liquor aged to perfection
too strong and deep for

those soft-throated children
riding up front
Grizzled and tattered,
we will share stories of our
own bandito rides into July
Who can say what
kisses will be stolen
what secrets will be told
once we reach the
dark tunnel into earth's heart

Big Messy Love

my love

an out of control sprinkler spraying over the littered lawn of a low
rent housing project

the noise of life so present shooting over worn grass cluttered with old
cars

soaking sweet dogs snarling cats lovable and horrendous children
Jalapeño pepper

people who burn with such a strong rich flavor they bring tears to my
eyes

your love is a controlled ice flow melting rarely

releasing a stilled flow into a tiny creek bed

trickling down into a still landscape I invite you

to join a richer world break out of your fortress

my waters gush out to countries coated in poverty and poetry

baptize me in a joy most profound roll into rivers

of passion that caress mountains and canyons lying jagged

to the sky then evaporate up into the clouds that become the rain that

has softened me till all my edges are beaten down and rounded

you tell me now what a mess this appears

walking around with your ho hum heart that refuses to love those

stray dogs of existence who appear so different to you

who in their disorderly manner run through the kitchen and break all the
china

go ahead be tiny tiny neat and dry I chose big messy sloppy and wet

this is my training for that day when

I will melt down into a little mound of earth

my skeletal toes pointing up to skies where my spirit

is free to fly, out to lands and universes of big love the very air

coated with it

Karen Pullen is a mental health therapist living in North Carolina. Her poetry has appeared in The McGuffin, 13th Moon, and The Rambler, and in the anthologies "Not What I Expected," "Sand and Sea," and "Night Whispers."

Judi Brannan Armbruster

For Duane

it's a gray winter day

the last bits of snow cling to the shade

icicles trickle and dissolve

in these wistful moments

your hand on my shoulder

skin to skin

summon quiet pleasure

our love grows old and peaceful

your tender smile charms me

warms me

to my soul

neither of us

look too hard at the future

the day's realities sufficient

to know our love abides

we keep each other

in the moment

holding our love gently

in our hearts and eyes

Love Poem

The page is blank before me

But not my mind,

It is filled with images of you.

A fox barks in the night

The Full Moon slips from eclipse

To clouds

. . . .

Rain now,

Soft upon the window.

And You there between the sheets.

My joy complete.

Judi Brannan Armbruster is a married, 60 y/o direct descendant of the Karuk Tribe of California. She is a poetess who is often published on the internet and in anthologies. She has two manuscripts pending.

Lenore Weiss

Young Love

You weren't like those other boys.
You had a wolf whistle
Little Red would've died for.
I almost did several times.

In those days
I wore a black beret, and you,
my darling of the would-be actors guild,
wore nothing.

You yanked rose bushes
by their roots
in a courtship ritual
that set screen doors banging

up and down Penniman Court
as an ambulance escorted you
to a two-week engagement
with the interns.

You were so cool.
You had teepee eyebrows,
took me out on dates
in silk print shirts I wanted to climb into.

You always knew
I loved clothes.
So where was I between curtain calls?
Waiting for you at the Buttercup Café on Alcatraz.

I adjusted my Goodwill ring
in our glass bead game of love, reading
first edition books of poetry, pausing
whenever the clove smoke from my cigarette

made my eyes water, which was every other
cup of coffee, until the men in white coats
dropped you off at the curb. They'd had enough.
Not me. We were crawling

into bed with each other.
When my turn to go first came,
I rolled out my tongue
like a red carpet.

Chekhov List

On the drive back from LA, we pass through almond trees dusted with white blossoms, from mountains, rolling hills, farmland, to a web of power lines, half-way houses of gas stations and their convenience stores with heavy duty oil booster and engine oil treatment, thirsty tune-ups in a 32-ounce glass, models of Chevron gas trucks from different years mounted above the cashier where there's phone and gas plastic, but no mail-in redemption cards, flag decals, flaming eagles, skulls grinning inside glowing crosses, girls in stiletto heels wrapped in the American flag, a dust brush, a life lite, a flashlight and a CD organizer for the car. We settle on a jumbo pack of corn chips sealed with its own container of salsa, pull-off top. I have itchy fingers and so want to get it the way I wanted you all week end on a retro hotel bed carved with a spray of roses.

Lenore Weiss is an award-winning writer who lives in Oakland, California. Her chapbook, "Sh'ma Yis'rael," is available from Pudding House Publications.

Lamar Cole

Only Love

Love can sometimes be fresh.
Love can sometimes be new.
Love can sometimes make you happy.
And sometimes make you blue.

Love is the light that radiates from your eyes.
Love is your image floating in the skies.

Love is true.
And darling, the only love for me is you.

The Night Was Made For Romance

The night was made for romance.
In the night our two hearts dance.
Under the stars our lips touch.
In the garden your embrace means so much.

The night was made for love.
Our hearts cooing like a white dove.
Your eyes sparkling like diamonds so white.
I love you darling with all my might.

The night was made for caring and trust.
And darling, God made this night for us.

Katrin Talbot

Propinquity

Such a
darling hedgehog
of a word

The Quince and
the Apple sharing
flesh

The Wail and
the Lament breaking
soul

The Nincompoop and
the Fool
skipping hand in hand
toward the Abyss

Zen and the Icicle
shimmering through a
piercing stillness

The us part of you and me,
the you and me part of us,
breathing in
breathing out

Fiberglass Freedom

Trying to break
through
break past
the dandelion's ghost
the rattlesnake's
tender dream

Out to the open water
the flat plain of hesitation
rowing through the walls
around the feathers floating
through instinct

towards
pearls
and other brisk anomalies

where you are
the thirsty part that
floats above towards

where pop art shadows
dissolve into a sudden fragrant
mist of belief

finally
the sweetness

the oars' hard drinking
the hull's somber joy
the kiss of the waves

where you are
the thirsty part that
floats above towards

here

Australian-born Katrin Talbot's collection St. Cecilia's Daze is forthcoming from Parallel Press. Her poetry has appeared in Fresh Ink, Free Verse, Anew Magazine, two anthologies, and will appear in the New Plains Review and Zoland Poetry Journal. She was a finalist for the 2009 Yellowwood Poetry Prize.

Dr. Irene D. Hays

What I know of Love

Love arrives in guises,
rides in on music,
piano, cello, sax,

those early notes of Für Elise,
strains of Unforgettable.

Love plays strange with light,
shadows bend familiar shapes,
streetlamp feigns a moon,

wintering trees swoon
stark against the haloed night.

In a sculpture garden, every form becomes
the lover's –
shoulder's curve, tilt of chin.

Often there's a wait
as love keeps its own time,

anticipation keen for hours, sometimes
years.

Then love slips in on iridescent air
transports the senses –
fortissimo! crescendo!

A Second Chance For Love At Guardian Angel Homes

Do not weep as
we pass,

love is still
within our reach.

Touch my
sleeve, my hem,

press a petal
to my cheek.

We cannot will
such openings

or legislate
their nature –

ice or fire or
flowing stream.

We only know
that this one time

there is love
and we may take it.

If we should
let it pass us by

such currents
may not rise again;

across a
glacier's field we'd raise a palm

and then be
gone –

slowly, slowly
out of time.

*Dr. Irene D. Hays, a Washington State native, has lived and worked in Idaho, Hawaii, Colorado, and California, as writer, teacher, and education director. Her first chapbook, *The Measure of Loss*, was published in 2007 by Pudding House; her second, *Witness: Landscape to Inscape*, was released in 2008 by Foot Hills Publishing. Her poems have also appeared in literary journals and other media.*

Marian Kaplun Shapiro

April in Paris: Sur Le Metro

I'm on the train with you again. But now a slim young man has taken your place in front of me, swaying gracefully, one hand on pole, i-pod in pocket, ear-bud in ear. The accordion-player croons songs in languages I don't know well enough to translate, juggling his paper coffee cup of euros, sashaying deftly to the next car, without falling. *Amore. Amour. Amor.* These words I know.

Where did you go? When did you get off? Surely you didn't mean to leave me on the jump seat *réservé* for *les handicapés*! I make my way, pocketbook and plastic bag in hand - Evian, apple, pocket *dictionnaire* – to the *possibilité* of *renversement*. Where am I now? *Je ne sais pas.* And you? Perhaps *en route* to our *petit pension*. *S'il vous plaît, Madame, où est la direction Balard, à fin de la ligne violet?*

In the *correspondance* I recognize the homeless woman curled around her blanket, her head bolstered by floral rags. The fruit and flower stand is busy with bananas, dates, and strawberries. Lilies flirt with tulips, their stems drinking together in

tall tin water cans. Bits of trash, like sparrows,
congregate near overflowing bins. People hurry,
vite, vite, a flash of *rouge* toenails, scalpel-sharp

high heels in step with *traductions* of beige
Birkenstocks. And there's the harp we heard
this very morning, accompanied by amplified CD,
sailing Bach's Praeludium on the absent ocean.
Overhead, each note a silvery balloon, Gounod's
Ave Maria floats through my memory's life sky,
always the perfect lover, the perfect marriage, the
anniversaire of the uncounted and uncountable.

Wake me up now! Let me find you at the next
platform. Let me find you studying your subway
map, planning another afternoon at some *musée*
we haven't seen. Let me find you, just across
the track, waiting for me.

Vows

If

Love songs grew fragrant blossoms, flowers
would find ways to rhyme. Bells would bloom
in gardens of *as long as we both shall live*.

Grace notes of *I do's* would intermarry
in lavaliers of trills. The aisles would be strewn
with cadenzas, the altars painted brilliant
with brushes of light (*moon/sun/stars*)

Haikus of hope would spray the evening sky
with roman candles. Sugared strawberries
would serve as semi-colons. Sweet wine
would curve us into hollyhocks.

If

we were red red roses we would row
row row our boats gently down the stream.

On The Phone

Your voice slips
into my left ear
your words slide
into my brain swimming sound-
lessly over the synapses
remembering the old
familiar route
first left, second right at
the Shell station). Never mind
that it's been razed for condos,
an upscale retirement community.
Your voice knows
how to get there, no matter
how far apart we are. How
to wiggle under my skin
to lie low in layers
that won't be sloughed off
by soap, or sand, or sun,
love words that get reborn
with re-saying and re-saying.
Now, cell phones go dead
mid-sentence. We sigh, we
try again. I don't want to miss
a single word.

La Touriste Sans Souci

Nightmares do not follow me today.
My pocketbook has not been stolen, nor
is it lost. Somehow it's safely stowed,
and I can stride or even skip, my way
down *la petite Rue D'Amelie*, swinging
my arms. O dear freedom! *O chère liberté!*
Elevators stay their course, clean
bathrooms appear as needed, and *beaucoup*
gendarmes smile at me and tip their caps.
I've lost my *carte* and phrasebook, *c'est vrai*,
but strangers speak English, falling into step,
taking my arm, pointing out their favorite
sights. My highschool French buys me *une pomme*
with some loose coins that show up in my pocket.
De l'eau? I am directed to a nearby
water cooler.

Now it's time to meet my lover
à l'Hôtel Les Jardins d'Eiffel. He
has not forgotten. He has not died.
He is waiting for me, out front
on the hotel steps, waving, waving
and holding out his arms. I don't need flowers.
I don't need chocolate, I don't need coffee,
or even sunlight in my world. *Je n'ai pas*
besoin des fleurs. Je n'ai pas besoin

*du chocolate. Je n'ai pas besoin
le café, ou même la lumière
du soleil dans mon monde.*

*Born in 1939 in a housing project in The Bronx, Marian Kaplun Shapiro practices as a psychologist and poet in Lexington, Massachusetts. The author of *Second Childhood* (Norton, 1988) and many professional articles, in the last few years her poems have appeared in over 130 journals and anthologies, and have won seventeen first prizes and many other prizes. Her book, *Players In The Dream, Dreamers In The Play* appeared in April, 2007 from Plain View Press, and her chapbook, *Parenthesis*, appears on the website of Language And Culture (www.languageandculture.net) Her chapbooks, *Your Third Wish*, (*Finishing Line*), and *The End Of The World, Announced On Wednesday* (Pudding House) also appeared in late 2007. She was named Senior Poet Laureate of Massachusetts in 2006 and again in 2008.*

Stephen E. Mead

Humbling Love

This ocean of arms to fall in
and find a home:

Head on the heart, waves going across,
An ascension in the knowledge:
Rock, rock, rest in safe harbors...

Love, there is nothing small about this

Simple life:

Your purring fur, your platinum tickle

Setting righter than rain-----

Then all is transposed:

Cells, neurons sparking for whatever

Heaven we can now be

When this Bethlehem beds down.

Can't Sleep

Can't sleep

'til rest has come

for every other member breathing

the pages of this home, house, whatever

domicile I frequent is of no importance

should slumber not happen for those

I tiptoe around.

I am statue as lantern, fountain as phantom.

I shed wands of willing in my vibrant

Feet, hands, eyes...

They are the snowflake feathers

Falling from great down quilts.

I also have strings wound about
My Rochester heart attached to every
Other dreamer never sleeping sound enough
In the likes of this city.

In this city, the likes of which
Never before felt,
Never before seen
Lay me down as a prayer
Of flame to sleep & sleep
Cat-easy as the turning of a page.

Stephen Mead is a published artist and writer living in northeastern NY. He is best known for combining his poetry and art into book form. A collection of his "Selected Works" is currently available through Amazon.com.

Lisa Kemmerer

Angie

Because she has stolen my heart,
she steals my mornings,
warming her wispy body with mine,
I cannot tell her it is
time to get up.

She sleeps as if there were no clocks,
no rising or setting of the sun,
no work to do¹/₄
no tomorrow.

Expectation

Long ears, curving horns,
soft glow in golden light,

eyes of curiosity and innocence—
silent longing for gentle hands,

In the glow of a shining nimbus,
woolly knees and waddles,

curly tails and cloven hooves

huddle hopefully around the promise of a
Peaceable Kingdom.

The wee one smiles.
Peace on Earth and mercy mild
only when we love like that
baby-child.

Lisa Kemmerer is an artist, activist, and lover of wild places. She has hiked, biked, kayaked, and traveled widely, and currently teaches at Montana State University Billings.

Lindsay Knisely

Epithalamion

Come down to the place

where the land joins the water

Come see how the green shoulder

pours down into the cool sky-mirror

This is devotion.

A bird skims over the water

and this is also devotion

Above us, the clouds flatten

their glorious underbellies

against ceilings of air

that we will never see or touch

This is belief.

Watch as the clouds fade to coral
 in the sunset,
Pieces of floating ocean in the sky

Just as one body turns
 toward the sun
 of another
to speak the only truth
 our bodies can tell:

I will give myself to you
again and again
from now until
we set together
low in the horizon of love

And this is faith.

Come, see how love,
 arriving home
folds its wings
 and finds its voice
as it sings to its mate
 the sweet unbroken song of hope
which rises up
 over the water's shimmer
and into the starlit night.

Aftermath

The split branches of yesterday's storm
glare at the gray sky.
It is over.
We broke our gentle calm.

You walked into
this small space,
filled it, and then
you left.

The magnolia I planned
to kiss you under
is heavy with blossoms and
overwhelming scent.

I can't look at you for long.
Your eyes glitter darkly as before,
your small pink mouth moves
and then moves on.

*Lindsay Knisely lives with her true love by the sea in Santa Cruz, CA.
She is a writer and teacher at UC Santa Cruz who is originally from
Virginia by way of Ohio and Oregon.*

Ruhi Jiwani

Portal

I need a portal, something that will lead
into new dimensions and I've found one
in this man who seems like a boy oh so often,
talks dirty in my ear and steals money
from old white women,
in this man who wants to drive fast cars,
own a beautiful home and get married
to an Asiatic or Latin girl,
in this man who wants to have four children,
who asks me where I want to go on my honeymoon,
who wants to move back to California,
who steals my pen and writes about a girl
talking on her cell phone in the train,
a man who pays me outrageous compliments,
tells me not to wear lipstick and admires my body hair.
He throws money into the fountain at Philadelphia's
waterfront and asks me to make a wish.
The wish takes me by surprise.
Before the coin has hit the water,
I've already asked to be with him forever.

Where are you, Romeo?

On Valentine's Day, I watch Romeo and Juliet on TV.
His musky eyes remind me of a smell in my thighs.
His voice breaks in my ears like a gutter ball in an alley.
Pretty boys and girls play, their legs like young olive trees.
Oil drips slowly.

Rest your body on a rock near the sea.
Let the waves slip through it; let it call to the fishes.
I can lift you above thought.
I can sweeten you with my voice,
the waves roaring, the icicles melting, the salt vanishing.
The past clears and flows into my heart.
The missing picture is found.

I searched in the nooks and crannies of the world,
in the curls of your hair and the ridges of your skin.
I watched your socks uncurling before bed to see your feet
emerge. I hid under the bed, captured that foot and made it
mine.

We still have a life to live; we haven't lost out on much;
magic still exists within.

The door is open, the walls and windows obey.

The slowly trailing silk of the skies follows,
apprehending the fear of dawn, revealing the skin of dusk,
exposing us to the world.

Oh, Juliet, I will take any risk, get under the skin of the world for
you.

I will peel away the dust.

I will make a new evening bolting into the sunset.

Currently, Ruhi Jiwani lives in New York with her husband and studies English Literature at Columbia University. She has been published in Femina, The Eclectic Muse, The Writer's Eye and The Binnacle with a poem forthcoming in Off The Coast.

Desh Balasubramaniam

An Unfine Evening

table for two by the fading sun
bearing of spring
 among tall grass; among one footed cherry
dressed in mustard stains
seated across the eye shadows
a rosy starling with a vocal disorder
nodded for spells in liquid form
drunk a bottle of her unpleasant words
warmly asked for another more
bricks from her petals to my hollow temple
caviar eased the throat
 I spoke in silence
oysters didn't heal the covered bruises
clenched to my inner-coat
 my fading face on the sand
ate the wedding ring
 a cold dish
abandoned my mind to visit the brothels
she left along with my tobacco smoke
hung my conversation on a brass hook
nailed a horse shoe to my palm
walked home in rain
 it rained dead fish

Letter Without an Address

Shall I address to “dear”, or is that a letter of past tense?

“dear” to the dictionary is “*beloved or loved*”

e.d. suggests, it too had decayed away

“worthy” it says, *an obsolete meaning*; much like this together life

I begin...

This ill-mannered self fails to decipher those mastery thoughts

that loud little head of yours

Since the night of Thursday

everything had fallen to dogs alike

Elms are loosing their leaves

in midst of spring. Arresting voice (once sought by all)

is shattering the upright mirrors

How is it I have sinned? That I have wronged? These

silent conversations

beside the neighboring pillows

You cover your face with colourless sheets

Gazing of those eyes (not like those days of our first meetings)—

you instead, prefer to stare down at the pine floor boards

Fury...worn along with line of sweat on your brow

Crouching deep into despair

you pull out the speaker cord, in middle of:

“it’s either love or hate, I can’t find in between”

We’re at the graveyard, that’s

my death bed and you are not to be seen

You say: “*I am loosing you*” but,

you are loosing me (even before the pigeons wake)
No, I am not the lyrebird
to play the songs of your every want
My unclothed *Maja*, you hide yourself from this guiltless sinner
With you; dusk is no longer my favorite colour
Your poker-face, while joker hides within
 unlined cinnamon skin
Why must I wake to a bed filled with woes
 these sunrise mornings?

"You are next to me", you say, but
 "your thoughts, miles past breath—abstract dungeons"
Crave of solitary writing world, mumbling theatrics, self obsessed
"When will you be really with me?" the SCREAM
I had never left
My hand on your shoulder,
 won't you be my Gala, my dear
a window that never sleeps

Desh Balasubramaniam is a young poet. He was born in Sri Lanka and grew up in both the war torn North & Eastern provinces. He fled to New Zealand at the age of thirteen with his family on humanitarian asylum. His work has appeared in Blue Giraffe (Australia), Sunday Times (Sri Lanka) Online and further work will appear in the next edition of Mascara (Australia) and Blackmail Press (New Zealand).

Michele Laroche

They speak of you

Take my words
They speak of you
Hear my words
They sing of you
Read my words
They write of you
Feel my words
They touch of you

Read my words

They speak of you
All about you
They speak of you
They speak to you
Read my words

Take them away
Bring them back
Hear them aloud
Shut them down
Read them in
Tear them off
Feel them silk
Ride them rough

Read my words

They cry of you
All about you
They cry of you
They cry to you
Read them soft

Read them aloud
Hear my voice

My voice
In the back of the night
In the back of the dark
In the back of the black
Hear my voice
It speaks of you.

All these forces are not in vain

Let's be serious
Let's be light
It's all about love
Power and strength,
All these forces are not in vain.

Let's be absurd
Let's be reasonable
It's all about you
Tenderness and feelings,
All these forces are not in vain.

Let's be dreamers
Let's be enlightened
It's all about me
Attachment and affection,
All these forces are not in vain.

Let's be cold
Let's be sensuous
It's all about us
Magic and sparkles,
All these forces are not in vain.

Let's be prince
Let's be princess
It's all about fairy tales
Happiness ever after,
All these forces are not in vain.

Let's be passionate
Let's just be cool
It's all about more
Than it seems,
All these forces are not in vain.

I believed in such
Promises of light,
All these forces were not in vain.

Michele Laroche writes poetry, haiku, song lyrics and non-fiction prose, in French and English. She is a member of and editor for the South Mountain Poets. Her work has appeared on line and in print in SP Quill, I-70 Review, The Toronto Quarterly, Bent Pin Quarterly, long story short and jerseyworks, among other journals and in anthologies, Manorborn (2007, 2008), Queer Collection: Prose and Poetry (2007) and South Mountain Poets anthologies in 2006 and 2008).

Jeff Symes

Dreaming

Our love is nothing
but a dream of water
that flows through your hair,
under stars

that warm your face;
And in your eyes I can count
a numberless list
of our love's souvenirs:

Our furniture weaks of sweat
mountain mist and salted air;
Our carpet is crushed
beneath paths through distant lands;

Our ceiling of tin and dreams
sags,

bruised with moonbeams;

Our finest china resembles clay and mud

while our glasses brim with lakes and river floods.

The garments of our home

are miraculous threads

stained with song,

and while we, swaddled, sleep

our love lies awake, dreaming.

Our love

is not a thing.

Mystery

So the mystery

of your body, your passion:

cleaved to my form in sleep

so that we are a whole;

but the arousal of your limbs, breaths,

sighs

behind stones

beneath waters.

So,

the mystery of your body, your passion.

Your chambers that I turn

turn

welter in my palm,

languish in the sun

and my hands fail, blindly.

So the mystery

of your body,
your passion.

See the derisive cry of your flesh
in need of my hollow fulfillment;
How I undo the soft garden of your hair,
your wheat and your sun
– how your skin•fulfills its duty
to petals and light
warm in my stumbling fingers
but too far for my•reach.

And so
the mystery of your body, your passion.
You surround the distance of thunder
and the intimate burn of lightning
through the shuddering rain.
Then the storm subsides,
succumbs, or

surrenders,

leaves you trembling.

And so the mystery:

your body, your passion,

your distance

in my arms.

Jeff Symes, an aspiring poet, lives on the autumn edge of New England, breathing the cycles of leaving and returning.

N. Ayara Stein

Short Story

A handgun in a holster over his kidney signifies
-more than the five Coke and vodkas slung back-
that he'll likely blow his hand off
in Bea's Pancake House in Texarkana.
Tonight. Now, imagine yourself as that man.
Is there a law against going through the motions?
Skillet specials of steak-and-eggs zoom through air,
land with a greasy whunk in front of startled retirees.
Like an undertaker, you walk up to a table, get nowhere
trying a pickup line on a woman.
A bell rings off stage. In this glinting light
your eyeteeth become fangs, desire and fear
mushroom inside your heart; an actual
week could pass as you clear your throat.
You try a different line and get brushed off
again, are left standing in the middle
of the room, and just won't sit, can't sit.
Who's to say the motions aren't the thing itself?
Life isn't one paragraph long, my friend.
Daily life's petty divisions sweep us into epiphany:
one naked moment can last a lifetime.
So let's say you met her in the first,
married her in the last paragraph;
imagine yourself happy with that woman
perhaps feeling loving, and loved, at last.

Guest Stars

Sweeping the scope across the sky,
I try to find supernova remnants:
the veil Nebula in Cygnus,
the Ring in Lyra, the Eskimo.
I crave this delicate networking
that looks so much like spider's lace.

I imagine you dream of these explosions,
more luminous than our sun,
creating shock waves in space.
Blood pounding, you create them in me,
heavy and regular as a pulsar.

We owe our existence to large masses
blowing themselves apart;
their energy creating all the elements,
flowing through space to collect here.

Everything hinges on the nucleus of a star
falling to the center as its core collapses.
But this is not predictable; we must wait.

You shift everything into focus,
show me the dimensions.
Inside the lens there glows
the same pale green as your eyes,
a double star formation, a nice find.

Addendum: The Poet's Epistle to the Lonely

There is an art of absence in the dense dash of the daily
life we all lead, the art of empty morning and night beds,
the absence of the failed promises of someone else
besides yourself, and after a while they hardly matter.
No, that's a lie;
this absence slams your heart on day two-hundred forty-four
just as hard as the first day you parted ways.
Try not to think of yourself as wild
beast of human hope sweltered in fetid furs,
of optic nerves strained with all this not-seeing.
Come, in our spare time let's not seek revenge
until we erode the sound of the missing's name, turned it
from jalapeño to honey to vinegar.
Who needs to be an addict lugging a kit around
in search of a fix while love deals to someone else?
It's easy to confuse the heart;
understanding almost always comes near the end
of the edge of patience and nothing, just when you're ready to quit,
resist the silver charm dangled from the tongue of the beloved.

N. Ayara Stein is a Romani-American and the former editor of the arts quarterly Gypsy Blood Review. She's published in The New Orleans Review, The Birmingham Poetry Review, The Oxford American, California Quarterly, and others. She is currently looking for a publisher for two volumes of poetry and one book of short stories.

Michael Lee Johnson

Bowl of Petunias

If you must leave me please
leave me for something special,
like a beautiful bowl of petunias—
for when the memories leak
and cracks appear
and old memories fade,
flowers rebuff bloom,
sidewalks fester weeds
and we both lie down
separately from each other
for the very last time.

Sandy

I have seen your eyes roam
over me so many times,
I don't even bother to feel
them anymore.

One can speak with the eyes,
you know—
and you've been silent
for so long
it doesn't even hurt anymore
to see you staring at me
and not uttering a word.

Vicki I

It was here in
the breeze
I thought of you.

Why was it you
threw sunshine
in my eyes?

Why was it you kissed
the sky a tender shade
of blue?

Touch me to the winds
and I shall carry you
to a long lost love
somewhere beneath the
willow tree

you loved
so much.

Beyond the hidden shadows of my mind,
or beyond the shades that trace across the sky covering the
warming touches of the sun...

all skies are blue,
and all tender whisperings
of the breeze
are but thoughtful
memories of you.

Vicki II

Spare me the
breeze to
sing to you:

Grant me the
grass to
lay my head
upon.

Let my lips caress
the yellow daffodils
darting
 back
 and
 forth
dancing with the
gusts of the breeze
in thoughts of you.

Michael Lee Johnson is a poet and freelance writer from Itasca, Illinois. Michael Lee Johnson has been published in over 22 countries. He is also editor/publisher of four poetry sites, all open for submission, which can be found at his website: <http://poetryman.mysite.com/>. His brand new poetry chapbook with pictures "From Which Place the Morning Rises" and his new photo version of "The Lost American: From Exile to Freedom" are available at Lulu.com.

Michael Estabrook

Yves Saint Laurent and Patti

We're in San Francisco's *de Young Fine Arts Museum*
strolling through the Yves Saint Laurent exhibition:
such elegance, such exquisite style.
Behind one of the shiny glass cases
stands a bridal gown, officially that is.
In reality it's more of a bridal bikini,
constructed of lovely pastel flowers,
a diaphanous satiny train flowing behind.

"I'd love to see you in that little number,"
I quip at Patti. She frowns of course,
and shakes her head. She's
the most modest of women.

"I'd clearly look ridiculous in that,
and besides," she bends forward
to get a better look at the sign,
"It's a bridal gown, so too late!" she declares.
"You married me already."

She turns and walks away, more sashays
away really. And I'm watching her move thinking
how none of Yves Saint Laurent's fancy-
schmancy gowns or any
of his stunning, sultry models who strut them
have anything, not one single thing whatsoever,
over the natural purity
and ethereal, eternal elegance of my beautiful Patti
sashaying away smooth as satin
in her tight old blue jeans.

Her arms around my neck

There was that time way back
in high school when she sprained
her Achilles' tendon
and couldn't attend classes.
So I brought her homework home for her
and we studied together.
And I carried her around,
her arms around my neck,
from the living room
to the den, from the den
to the kitchen and back to the living room again.

"I thought it was nice not being able to walk
as long as you were by me.
Bet your arms hurt today
from carrying me around. Well
you shouldn't have done it – though I liked it,"
she wrote to me later.

I liked it too of course.
It's not every day you get
to carry a goddess around in your arms.

As a poet Michael Estabrook declares, "You are only as good as your next poem," and like a surfer searching for that perfect wave, he is searching for that next perfect poem. What keeps me going what keeps me moving forward as a poet is my wife. After 37 years of marriage she is still not only the most beautiful woman I have ever known, but the most beautiful person I have ever known. If I find that perfect poem anywhere I'll find it in her.

Ivan Jenson

Skin to Skin

This is my skin to skin resolution
to evolve with these primal instincts
to revolve around your moon

and never to accuse you
of black widow tapestry

to keep seeing you
through white wine glasses

to keep touching you with
kid glove precision

to keep prescribing to you
my sea view Cape Cod
capsules

to count on your on time
arrivals and red eye departures

to hearsay things that
are breath mint superstitious

to catch phrases that are
cool breeze complimentary

and to hold them like
hot water in a bathtub

and for now
to love within
the bubbles

Gold Fish

put this
right beside
heaven
when she
arrived with a gold fish
"You need
the company"
she said
it was
winter
and whether
I loved
her or not
she certainly
brought
a chill
into my
place
her face
seemed
wonderfully cold
and I knew then
love was so sub-zero
and it gave me
goose bumps
and like
stage fright
the snow

did go on
until July
when the
spotlight
sun
melted
my ice princess
into a
puddle
of tears
and reflected there
I saw
that gold
fish out of water

Ivan Jenson was born in Los Angeles, California. After publishing poetry in his teens, he moved to New York City and received immediate recognition and praise for his bold Pop Art. His "Absolut Jenson" painting was featured in Art News, Art in America. He has sold several works at Christie's New York. He painted the last portrait of the late Malcolm Forbes. Jenson has now completed mainstream and contemporary novels. Ivan Jensen has enjoyed unprecedented success publishing his poetry in Word Riot and other top literary magazines

Abe Lopez

Marriage

Death is beautiful,
Dying to self for our sake;
True consummation .

Love on Wheels

United couple,
A road of hazardous turns;
Two hearts on the wheel.

Abe Lopez is from Gracemont Oklahoma. He has been teaching public school art classes for twelve years. He's also a painter, photographer and obviously, as can be seen from these two haiku gems, he is also a haiku poet.

Roger Midgett

Quite Contrary

The boy with x-ray eyes peered
through your Catholic school uniform:
dark wool jumper, knee length,
light blue blouse with Peter Pan collar,
black and white saddle shoes.
We circled each other at the science fair,
until you sidled up to my geologic chart;
eras that separate us now.

Duplex in Havertown, false brick siding,
your father at the kitchen table, head in hands,
aftermath of his weekend binge.
Your mother, Irish and garrulous,
talking more to me than you did
while I pretended to be nice
but thought only of your body.

You were trained by the Legion of Mary
in the avoidance of advances,
trained by your brothers in the shoulder bump,
the slap, hip check, and tickle,
but most of all you were skilled at teasing me
for my clumsiness, my gravity, my stiff devotion.

Driving down Baltimore Pike
in my black Ford Fairlane
when the hood flew up, blotting out the world.

We careened to the shoulder, panting
with laughter, used the strap
from your purse to tie it down.

Tongues tangled in dentition,
inside someone else
for the first time since birth,
grinding the gears of time
in the front seat of the car.

My parents out of town, event as rare as a comet,
down in the basement beside the bumper pool table,
removing your blouse, breasts pale and cool,
until your sadness deflated desire
and I buttoned you up.

Mornings in the car in the vast gravel lot,
students laughing at the clouded windows,
my fingers stealing under edge of elastic:
wiry hair, jungled, terrain of desire;
you didn't move, barely breathed,
your face turned away. Through the day,
I'd breathe you
in from my hand.

Beside my callow poems,
your drawing for the magazine,
schooner tilted in the wind,
sails at full term, bursting from the frame.

After graduation, I tried
to ignore the obvious:
when you broke up with me,

in the car, of course,
the steering wheel carved
a bow in my forehead.

Half a year later, you came to me at college,
lay down on the bed in my narrow dorm room,
closing your eyes. A knock on the door,
I rose up to answer, let in my new girlfriend,
and you were gone, once again.

You dropped out of art school,
pregnant and married, but not by me.
Five years later, at a party,
tremulous, I sat beside you,
our spouses on either side.
The music was loud and I was drunk,
so leaned over and whispered,
“You know I still love you.”
So close that I inhaled your breath,
you looked me in the eye, and said:
“I can’t imagine why.”

Roger Midgett has published poems in various journals and has won poetry awards from Return To Creativity and from The Presence Journal's International Spiritual Poetry Competition. He works as a Mental Health Professional and lives with his family on an island near Seattle.

G David Schwarz and Jennifer Wiehe

There Is Something I'd Like To Ask You

There is something I'd like to ask you...

If you promise not to slap me
 I cannot promise such a thing
You must be trying to trap me
I do promise that
That is not on my agenda
I think you are so sweet

So splenda
 Ok what is it you'd like to ask
 I really want to know
 What is on your mind ... Let me give it a go
I wish I could ask right now
But I'd be embarrassed
I don't know how you feel for me

Or if you want to go to Paris
 I don't know about that
 No I don't think so
 My feelings are very clear
 I know where I want to go

Well if I am not rude
I'd like to ask you where
You would like to get
Where you'd want to land
And where you want to go

G. David Schwartz is the former president of Seedhouse, the online interfaith committee. G. David Schwartz is also the author of "A Jewish Appraisal of Dialogue." He is currently a volunteer at Drake Hospital in Cincinnati, where he continues to write. His new book, "Midrash and Working Out Of The Book" is now in stores or can be ordered.

Khurshid Alam

You Turned My Faith

Till a few minutes past, my eyes were blank
Then you painted yourself in them beautiful
Now I plant flowers and leaves of different hues
In my garden where once stood the store room
For a litter of garbage and dumps
And offer water to the birds at my window
And sing along their chirping again and again.

Till a few minutes past, my heart was blank
Then you entered into it and dwell there
Now I feel the world such a worthy place to live
Should I die I wish to be reposed in some corner
Of the earth than go to the heaven above
And lie with you some day for ever.

Shez Mingled in Me

I worship the prophetess of love
beauty, majesty, glory, and desire -
she is the sublime of all arts.

Smitten by her beauty I kissed
on her forehead: she taught me
to read her as I do the Bible.

Opiated by her aroma
I touched her skin pink
soft and so affectionate: she sedated
me and I bowed my head low.
She was the epitome of glory
I fumbled on her body with crave:
she admired my humbleness.
I sought solace in her lap
and went in a trance:
she was out of breath and could teach me
no ahead.
Finally she surrendered. She deigned.
She could spell no word
except she gave me a blink or two.
She crept into me and vanished
Now I smell she, I wine she
I've made an idol of her and sing a hymn to her daily.

Khurshid Alam, 34, works as a Technical Writer with an IT company based in Ahmedabad, Gujarat (India). He is a published poet and currently working on a novel.

Ed Coet

Perfect Love

It cannot be diminished,
regulated or rationed.

It is eternal.

It doesn't develop,
it is born within.

It is unconditional.

It trusts.

It is never jealous
and it doesn't brag;

It is kind, polite,
pure, humble,
and always right.

It embraces truth
and rejects evil.

It is powerful,
patient, honest
and forgiving.

Perfect love
is forever perfect.

Moment

The moment I saw you,
the instinct I captured that first
glimpse of breathtaking beauty it
shook me to the depth of my soul,
to the core of my being,
and I thought I would explode in ecstasy.

The moment I caught a glimpse
of your glimmering smile,
and felt the penetrating warmth
of your essence, purity and goodness,
your kindness and charm,
I was captivated body and soul.

That was the moment I was drawn in.
I was over come by an imaginary truth
that I could not explain and
could only feel and experience.
It explained that one emotion
that everyone seeks. It explained love.

That moment could not be denied me.
It could never be diminished or dismissed.
It was wholly mine to cling to
for however long I wanted.
It was complete perfection.
It was the moment I dreamt you.

Comfort

When I first met you I couldn't leave you,
not even in my thoughts.
Nothing has changed. You are still there.

Without you I was nothing.
With you, everything.
You made me.

If I wakened in the night, regardless of reason,
I reached for you. Like a child in need of nurturing,
the sight of you gave me comfort.

I recall combat in the sands of Desert Storm.
There you were, in my heart and mind.
Still, you gave me comfort.

I see you in our children.
How they look and act. How they live their lives.
They are one with you as you are one with me.

We grew old together.
That was a blessing. Life was wonderful,
but only because I had you.

In the hospital when I was gravely ill -
there you were, by my bedside.
You were the cure that I needed.

God made me say good-bye.

It hurts. I still cry.

Yet, even in death you give me comfort.

Caress the Soul

soft and passionate -
the beautiful touch of love
will caress your soul.

Amour

a passionate kiss
titillates sensual bliss
in taboo amour

Longing

how i long for you
the love i epitomize
who defines my life

Touch of Love

Enigmatic to the senses,
eliciting a titillating response.
Erotically arousing,
yet passionately reticent.
Romantically sensual
with deep rapturous warmth.
Shivering with joy felt
to the core of your being,
to the point of weeping.
Spiritual in depth, nearing adoration;
so magnificent is the "touch of love."

Ed Coet, also known as "The Poet Coet," is a retired US Army officer and professional educator. Currently the editor of the Blue Fog Journal, Ed Coet is a widely published freelance writer and poet. His articles, short stories, and his poems were published in over 40 magazines and journals world wide. Ed Coet's anthology credits include Namaste Fiji – "The International Anthology of Poetry Book;" The "Breaking Silences" Poetry Book Collection; The 2007 Scars Poetry Collection Book - "We The Poet's;" A Hudson View Poetry Digest - "Winter 2008 International Collection." and South African Poets Printery - "Tonight, An Anthology of World Love Poetry" and Moontown Cafe's "Poetry by Moonlight." Ed Coet's acclaimed book "POET COET" is now available at major on-line book outlets such as Barnes & Noble and Amazon.com.

Benjamin Stainton

Ella

Like the coiling mouth of the evening sea,
my love for her light opens & closes,
she cracks open the sullen heart of me,

I, creaking like a storm riven jetty,
love, marking my stave while night exposes
the darkened branches of a cypress tree,

we burn our bridges with hard liberty,
yet soften, aglow as Moortown dozes
or wakes, hungry for a first cup of tea.

I thirst & burst for a ripened berry
to bite; Ella, who never supposes
to judge the shadow of bitterest me,

yet still we mingle as one tragedy –
she is my bed & cascade of roses,
I am her river & frayed sanctity.

Green dawn bleeds into the skin of she,
sleeping while nature gently composes
the coiling waves of the sunlit sea,
she breaks over the open heart of me.

2nd February 1999

The air between us is thick.

I can smell your curls, washed,
dashed across a pillow of smoke.

We remember his name
guiltily between quaffs,
but the electric questions remain –

shall we fill our pale bodies
to the brim with ale & milk?
Does that stained silk bed

beckon us to jail in raptures?
Are we hungry enough
to suck each other bare?

The air between us is thick.

*

Her switch flicks.

A chorus of sparrows ushers the dawn.
I curl the quiet plant

into a string of pearls &
bathe your wrist in flutter-kisses.
Our wetness rolls in swathes,

growing giant, like wildebeest
trampling a landscape
of sandy skin & sheets.

The headboard creaks in whispers of relief.
A nest of stars opens,
pouring felt across our chests.

& sleep forgets to regret...

Benjamin Stainton's work has appeared in numerous print and online journals, including Poetry Salzburg Review, The Journal, and Gloom Cupboard. His debut collection, The Jealousies, was published in October 2008.

Benjamin Clark

12-3-06

You are galvanic,
glowing with electrical
current, and though I

know one touch could lead
to cardiac arrest or
death, I must chance it.

I will wear rubber
gloves and rain boots, and kiss you
with vaseline lips.

Kristin Reynolds

Naked Meadow Lovers

The scent of brazen meadow in spring;
A warm wind, willing clothes to grass...
Pale winter skin flushes; chills
Rise on our bare landscapes.
Solace finds us home
Within tangled
Limbs and breath -
Our love
Grows

Kristin Reynolds's work has been published in Sketchbook – A Journal for Western and Eastern Short Forms; World Haiku Review; Acorn Haiku Magazine, Moonset Literary Newspaper, Modern Haiku (Feb. 2009); Red Lights (Jan 2009); Ribbons: Tanka Society of America Journal; Blue Fog Journal; Avocet: A Journal of Nature Poems (slated for Winter, Spring and Summer issues); Nomad's Choir, SP Quill Quarterly Magazine (May 2009) and selected in 3 upcoming anthologies.

Mukesh Williams

Beyond Categories

Questions of birth and death,
Love and hate, duty and diligence,
Have always foxed us, belied our intelligence,

We have gone to religion and logic,
To understand the philosophy of being
And the categorical imperative,

We have tried to resolve distinctions
Through intuition, dogma and metaphor
Calling it universal reason,

We have taken recourse
To Aristotle, Kant and Husserl
To understand the Cartesian dualism,

We have worked hard to find a fitting answer
To these ultimate questions, but
Returned dissatisfied with a Rylean category mistake,

Now we wonder if there is no either or,
Now or never, but
An ever-present hesitation of our predicament!

Mukesh Williams has been published in Indian, Canadian, Caribbean, and American journals such as Indian Verse, The Journal of Indian Writing in English, Muse India, Centrifugal Eye, The Blue Fog Journal of Poetry, Foliate Oak, Plankton, and Best Poem. His poetry possesses a startling mixture of Japanese minimalism and Foucauldian coups and carries with it an uncanny postmodernist signature. His works have been quoted in reputed journals around the world from The Journal of Commonwealth Literature to The Other Voices International Project, and listed in the World Poetry Directory of UNESCO 2008. Williams has published two books of poems, Nakasendo and Other Poems (2006) and Moving Spaces, Changing Places (2007); and is now working on a third book The Figural Moment. His latest co-authored book, Representing India: Politics, Identities, and Literatures (January 2008) has been favorably reviewed in many journals and newspapers. He teaches at Keio University-SFC and Soka University, Japan and can be contacted through his blog site <http://www.beyond-the-shadows.blogspot.com>

Miguel Angel Garcia

Emotions are the Enemy

here we go once again
is it just him or does he wear his heart on the sleeves
a slow speed is what he tries to maintain
he's known to write to the rhythm of her humming because that's
the
only thing he receives
she gives off body signals to feed his brain
his emotions are the enemy but is this what he truly
believes
he hates the fact he's stepping on his own heart
strings
he needs her to take him under her wings
empowered by her presence
he lies to himself
saying he can live without her
but in reality he needs her like a unfed newborn fetus
every single thought of his is untrue
so was she the missing clue ?
motionless he sits watching fire
the world stood still
noticed his heart wasn't half empty but filled
he told her "love me
cancerously"
she said "i don't need too, i already do"
with no hesitation or distrust
they overlooked the sunset by sea
i'll let you in on a little secret
that boy is me
i possess a map
leading me through your veins
into your heart
i'll love you even your remains
to love means to take pain
pick me apart
put me back together
in return let me be a piece of your heart

your sunshine has cleared this overcast weather
it's too late now for a restart

Same Feeling, Just Different Days

your staring through me
but somehow I'm falling in your eyes
i find the simplest things adorable even the way you pronounce
your z's
don't follow your gut because it just seems to get in the way or is
it just the lies
pour yourself onto my components
i suggest you let me live inside you
never shall i make you my opponent
will i be
the one to hue you
this is the cue to catch my drift
is this your love that as me adrift
i love watching your skin paint me pictures all day
in return i woo her with words and a bouquet
drowning in your love because i was never meant to swim
concert master compose her limbs
your known as the hierarch to the rhythm of my beat
your are the blood to my veins which has made me complete
now i watch you sleep
praying to God to not keep you asleep
you whisper goodnight
i kiss you on the cheek
to not keep you awake i turn off the light
before i left
i wrote you a note:
you have formed my melody with your musical notes
i write of this love because it seems to float this boat
i loved you yesterday
i loved you today
and i'll love you tomorrow
forever ever and ever.

Clyde L. Borg

Never

Our yearning lips
Never touching or merging,
Like sky and earth
Or moon and stars,
Destined to be apart
Forever and ever.

A loving embrace
Never to be.
Like adversaries
And enemies,
Perennially apart
Forever and ever.

A Kiss

It was a kiss,
A touch of the lips,
And it sparked
A life's love.

Clyde L. Borg is a retired high school teacher and administrator. He has been writing poetry and nonfiction since 1998. He resides with his family in Fords, New Jersey.

Chad R. Herman

Forever

"A diamond is forever"
so the sales pitch
goes-"show her you'll love her
for the next [insert exaggerated
time frame
here]

Yet, fiddle-de-de, and
love is gone!
"You'd buy me a
diamond
if you really
loved me"

No I wouldn't, I'd
write you a poem-
those things stay
around-stuff
your diamond-
here's love,
immortalized in
letter.

Chad R. Herman is in love with the idea of love, and sees it as the thriving force in his family, although they see him as the writer/poet who deals in words like a gambler deals in cards. In the sleepy picturesque town of Dunedin, their lives drift by in a whirlwind of drama akin to the hurricanes that are always threatening.

Priya Anthony

My lady

You are my flower, my lady,
I am your bee,
Why is it that, when I touch you,
You put a little something on me,
Your pollen is sweeter than any honey,
Your nectar is sweetest, it could be,
Buzzing around you is all; I have done and will do.
My flower, don't u ever wanna come with me...?
Together till sunset we will be
My flower, my lady, I am your bee.

Moon

The illuminating night whispers to me,
Rustling sounds of wind and trees,
And the moon checks out,
Every star, it could see,
Making it blush as bright as it could be,
With the little clouds hanging around,
Waiting to cover the moon when it's ready,
Putting it to sleep until,
Another night comes swiftly and pleased.

Priya Anthony currently lives in Hayward, California with a passion for fine arts and poetry. She is from Fiji Islands.

Rajeswary Nadarajan

Untitled

The day you loved me, my whole world was blessed
These thoughts in my mind to you I must confess

You are the center of my thoughts and the essence of my being

What you have brought me I never thought I could procure
The gift of comfort, with you I am secure

For you have lifted me up from a life filled with uncertainty
And made me realize there is always a better tomorrow

It amazes me how someone can make me feel this way
I love you more and more with each passing day

You brighten my days and lift my spirits
I am sure you know it and now want you to hear this

I truly believe what we have is meant to be
We have opened our hearts clearly to see

What I am willing to do to keep a smile on your face
Just know that I'm here and will be always.

Rajeswary Nadarajan is from Malaysia and currently lives in Wellington, New Zealand. She has a passion for creative writing and has a collection of unpublished manuscript.

Furkan Ercan

Roadway

I have always loved the roadways,
Even I found real peace on them,
Not by a vehicle all the time,
Sometimes on foot,
But always with love.
Used to count the wired columns,
Look, there is another one! -
Taste the fresh air,
Smell the cereal fields.
Loved to watch their harmony with the wind,
Even made me feel like joining the harmony
Of the universe itself.
Felt me like hugging the hills far away,
And sometimes I thought
They would do same with a little will.
Those were the times I described true love,
While laying under a tree,
Watching daily life of the roadways.
With finding peace,
Love was all about being a part of the roadway,
With happiness,
With tears,
And other feelings.
No expectations,
Just coming up
With what comes up with endless road...

Furkan Ercan was born in Bayburt, Turkey. He is currently pursuing an undergraduate degree on Electrical and Electronics Engineering at Middle East Technical University, Northern Cyprus Campus. He is also an undergraduate research assistant in electrical energy efficiency. His interests are in Philosophy, Literature, Poetry and classical Turkish music. He enjoys writing and is composing his poetry collection.

Satendra Nandan

In Between

Between your voice
And your word
Is the silence:
The sky

Between your writing
And your words
Is the radiance:
The stars.

Between your understanding
And your accent
Are the colours:
The rainbow.

Between your prayers
And your love
Are the waves
The ocean.

Between the spaces
In your heart
Is the breadth of life:
The earth.

Takecare.

Note: "In Between" is selected from the collection, "The Loneliness of Islands," by Satendra Nandan.

Satendra Nandan is a Professor of Literature at the University of Fiji. He has written a number of books regarding the political unrest in Fiji. Some of the titles include; 'Requiem for a Rainbow,' 'The Wounded Sea,' and 'Fiji: Paradise in Pieces.' He has published his collected poems in 2007 which is titled, 'The Loneliness of Islands.'

Rohitash Chandra

Love is Greater than Us

If only love was a chemical reaction in the mind
I would let go, but I feel that this feeling is more
Its a wholesome experience on some level
of connectivity with you, maybe of the past lives,
maybe we are destined for joy in togetherness,
in our unity, in the beauty that god left in us,
for the continuity of our kind.”

Tantra

“Tonight, the room is lightened with candles
the pleasure has been lifted from the meals
entangled, absorbed in harmony
the hormones become the butterflies in the stomach
as two bodies desire to rush into each other.
Eventually, the mind gets calm, is in a subtle state
now that the bodies are near to meet
the heart is at stake in its beating
time has ceased to exist, in the union.

Soon, one skin will tremble with another
and then become inseparable, the weight bearable
pleasure and pain indistinguishable
but somehow, a part of the same entity
in joy, the two spirits move to and fro
from one body to another,
harnessing pleasure from the veins,
the blood fuels the body, from and back to the heart ,
two souls have merged into one, in pleasure,
the material body is in harmony with the spiritual,
the external senses turn inwards and become part of the
moment, everything is in a state of perfection,
in a state of joy and union.”

Why I love You

My love for you is not for the beauty
which I see from the outside,
but for the beauty of your Being,
which is compassionate, loving and caring to all,
to the homeless children on the street
and the old lady begging near the bank.

In this relationship, there are no conditions,
no possessiveness, no selfish arguments
but just the will for us to be,
together in the journey of life and death
to view the world holding hands
till the skin smooth, wrinkles old.

Off course, there is beauty in your touch,
in your smell of a blossoming morning flower,
in your voice of a soothing melodious tone
and in the way your eyes glow and speak to me
it makes me believe in God, and that someday,
there be end to human suffering.

This outer beauty of you is just temporary,
with time your body will age, your skin will wrinkle,
your voice will change;
but-- your eyes will always remain the same
they reveal the ultimatum of joy and compassion
they are a reflection of the inner Being in you
with which I am in love with,
and will be, till the end of this material body.
I pray, may our souls be together after death,
and may we be companions again in rebirth
of our later lives.

Love

“Biologists refer to the heart as an organ which draws blood, humanists and spiritualists refer to it as a symbol of love. The shape portrayed by the heart, and its purpose is unimportant, the compassion retrieved from it, is the salvation for humanity.”

“There is a lot to learn from the relationship between the flowers and the bees. The bees use the flower for its nectar and at the same time disperse pollens, the flower feeds the bees and becomes seed. Both are interlinked with life, in harmony their dependency is peaceful, and their message to the world is clear, to live with love and cooperation.”

“Love and let be loved with all your heart. Do not get too attached, for that everything in life, the material possessions and even the body is temporary, and with time, the body will cease and only the soul with its experience of life and love will depart, says Krishna of the Gita.”

“Love in its spiritual state is un-manifested. The manifestation of love in the material dimension is kindness and compassion.”

“Most of the suffering is caused by the selfishness, anger and fear. To this day, the world is suffering due to political, religious and racial instability caused by selfishness. Ignorance about the purpose of our existence makes things worse. We must stand against selfishness, and eliminate it using the weapon of love and kindness.”

“There is no 'them' and no 'we'. These are only superficial words which group and divide people.”

On Pure Love

Everything in the universe is subjected to impermanence. Neither fame, nor disrepute, nor lust, nor loss and gain remain forever. The only entity, of permanence is pure love. Pure love is above and unconstrained by human relationships, unconstrained by gain and loss, and is as pure as the verses of Valmiki, as pure as the teachings of Krishna, and as pure as the love of Jesus and Allah, and as pure as the wisdom of Buddha. Let pure love be the devotion of life.

That pure love is all that makes a real human being. No university degree can bring that realization, no scripture can impose it. That pure love comes from the Being within. So listen to the being in you, and through knowledge, prayer and meditation, awaken that pure love within you.

If one understands that pure love; the one would see the universe from a different perspective and feel its oneness. The one would find his Being in the cosmic dance of Lord Shiva, and become free from suffering.

"The one would see the society in him, he will find the joys and sorrows of the society part of him, and make the prosperity of the society his purpose of life; for that, the prosperity of the society is the prosperity of him," says the Krishna of the Bhagwat Gita.

And that realization is pure love, and that is Godliness. This is the path of Karma Yoga, the highest form of devotion, and the purpose of life.

Rohitash Chandra is the Founding Editor and Publisher of the Blue Fog Journal. He has contributed to several literary journals and published his poetry collection in 2007 known as "A Hot Pot of Roasted Poems". He is currently a doctorate candidate in Computing Science with Research focusing in areas of Artificial Intelligence at Victoria University in Wellington. His main interests are in Art, Literature, Philosophy and Spirituality.

Afterward

It was a labor of love to help compile, “An Anthology of Contemporary Love Poems.” As an editor it was a time consuming process to shift through many submissions and select the “very best” poems available for this anthology. Some selected poems relate to themes such as romantic love while others relate to plutonic love, lost love, or the ideal of love itself, but all of them embrace and encompass the passion and reality of genuine love in a meaningful and heartfelt capacity. The reader will enjoy the poetry of many well-established and widely published poets in this anthology and will also be introduced to a few other emerging talents who have been published for the first time in this anthology. This anthology is a moving and touching experience so sit back, relax, and enjoy.

Ed Coet

Editor, Blue Fog Journal

Author “Poet Coet: A Poetry and Short Story Collection”