

# INNSÆI

AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL  
OF CREATIVE LITERATURE, ART,  
TRANSLATION, AND RESEARCH  
FOR PEACE AND HUMANITY  
(IJCLATRPH)  
(BLIND PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL)



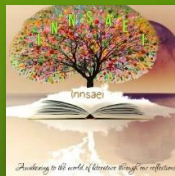
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Edited by

The Proofread Team, INNSÆI

Contact

General: [infoinnsaeijournal@gmail.com](mailto:infoinnsaeijournal@gmail.com)

Submission: [subinnsaeijournal@gmail.com](mailto:subinnsaeijournal@gmail.com)

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## VISION

An honest voice having the vision to provide a vibrant literary culture with creative writers, artists, translators, and researchers to promote peace and humanity in society.

## MISSION

1. To provide a vibrant literary culture among creative writers, artists translators, and researchers.
2. To encourage young writers, artists, translators, and researchers in society.
3. To initiate the promotion of peace and humanity in society.
4. To provide an ambience among the literary communities to work together for a common cause.
5. To provide a platform for the deep inner expression of suppressed thoughts.
6. To encourage hidden voices from the grass-root contributors giving them an opportunity to express human values.
7. To promote translation as a medium of exchange of cultures around the globe.

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## FOUNDERS' VOICE



## Founders' Voice

Dear Readers,

Greetings for the new Eve in Literature!!!

As the literary journey moves forward... it takes many beautiful turns...!!!

The Nobel Prize for Literature 2022 has been announced. It goes to French Author Annie Ernaux (b.1940). It is cited that it is “for the courage and the clinical acuity with which she uncovers the roots, estrangements and collective restraints of personal memory.” Her relentless ink has been proved to be of global significance. She has, in her interviews, noted that ‘Writing is a political act, opening our eyes to social inequality and for this purpose, the language is used as a knife in order to expose the veils of imagination. Being one of the most acclaimed authors in France, she writes fiction as well as non-fiction based on the day-to-day life of her country that involve her autobiographical and historical experiences. Her novels- *Les Armoires Vides* (1974), *A Man's Place*, and *A Woman's Story* (1988) and also her autobiography, *The Years* (2008) won the Prix Renaudot in France and were also shortlisted for Man Booker International, in 2019.

Being a voice for WOMEN, she has laid bare the deep-down wounds of them, in a manner that they can be duly seen and recognized in the big bad patriarchal society of the world. In the political scenario, she has put her stamp on them with confidence. Her writings are woven around the themes of sexuality; intimate relationships; social inequality and the experience of changing class through education; time and memory; and the overarching question of how to write these life experiences.

Her three autobiographies have coined a new term in literature- Autosociobiographical texts. She has written the autobiography of her contemporary society as well. It is a historical document of the social and cultural history of France during 1940 to 2007.

We, Innsæinans, congratulate her on her grand achievement. It is for her pen that allowed the Pains to flow. We pray to God to provide strength to all PENS to raise their voices to stop violence. Love should conquer... Humanity should prevail... Peace should be the claim for all...

The journey is getting remarkable with the contributions of the global writers. Through different activities in collaboration with educational institutions, we are propagating literature as a prominent means of social change; propagation of peace and humanity and enjoyment of the soul.

We, hereby, make an appeal to all institutions, persons, literary groups and the like, to come forward to join hands in the cause of a better world.

*Come! join the march towards a peaceful World.*

*Come! join hands to spread the message of peace and humanity, all around.*

*Come! join your pens together, to write the future of hope and kindness for the universe.*

*Come! let's make this world a stage to sing, of the glorious cultures of humanity.*

Adieu...

Mr Orbindu Ganga and Tejaswini Patil, Ph. D.  
Founder Directors,  
Innsæi Journal,  
International Journal of Creative Literature, Art,  
Translation, and Research for Peace and Humanity.  
(IJCLATRPH)

## POETRY



### **Shiny Vikas (India)**

Shiny Vikas is a poet, blogger, and a free thinker. She has recently been part of a beautiful anthology, *The Land of Unfree Laborers*, by Dr Ujjwala Kakarla, depicting the struggle and challenges of the farmers and street vendors. A graduate in Bachelor of Arts, she holds certification in Media, Journalism, from the Asutosh College, Kolkata. She has taken a short break from work and shifted to her hometown Kerala. A strong believer in the Law of karma. She loves to explore life as a beautiful and learning experience.

## **The Spirit That Guides**

*Shiny Vikas*

The newness

The spirit that guides

The path we chose

Remove the obstacles from the heart

The soul dwells in peace and unconditional love

The wear and tear of our minds

The saturation of the life experience

Hold on!

To create a comfort zone

The inextricable similarities and parallel paths

Break free!

From the mediocrity of life

The harsh but much-needed change

Towards a new path

The brilliant reality!



**Mrs. Sudha Vishwanath (India)**

Mrs Sudha Vishwanath is a teacher by profession. She took to writing as a hobby. Many of her stories have been published in Woman's Era. She has some anthologies to her credit. Mrs Sudha Vishwanath is also active on many writing platforms. Some of her soul stirring articles have been published in the soul curry section of the TOI.

**In Search of Treasure***Mrs. Sudha Vishwanath*

Seated on his porch, the man wears a frown,  
The house huge with things costly seem worthless,  
Dissatisfaction looms in his eyes brown,  
More and more he yearns, landing in a mess,  
Dying a slow death each day with distress.  
Goodness comes, if happiness with you be,  
Life is small to brood over things, you see,  
Learn you must to find your cup of pleasure,  
Don't run behind luxury from hours wee,  
Close friends, kith, kin are indeed true treasure.



### **Dušan Stojković (USA)**

Dušan Stojković was born on June 27, 1994. He published a collection of poetry *You are not cursed – it entered the chest, it left the chest*. Together with Jelena Sarić Cvetković, he is the founder of the Association MUK (Young Artists of Culture), as well as the deputy president of the Association. He is a member of the Association of Free Artistic Souls (USUD 016), the BUKA Association, as well as the International Association of Writers and Artists *Gorski Vidici*.



**My Daughter Will Bear Your Name***Dušan Stojković*

If I ever have a daughter

I will give her your name

Because

They will have Your eyes.

Blue sapphire eyes.

Dew in the meadow

Will love Her bare feet.

The stars will sleep in Her eyes.

Bees will store honey

On Her lips.

Will understand

Just like you,

My troubles

As a woman worth stopping by

And stay.

I will give her Your name...

... so that everyone,

All who are used to ordinary,

Stared in wonder

How is it Rain

Named after the Sun.

If I ever have a daughter...



**Madhu Gangopadhyay (India)**

Madhu Gangopadhyay is presently residing in Bangalore. She has a Master's degree in English Literature from Calcutta University and a Bachelor's degree in Education. Her poems have been published in The Silk Road, Literary Parrot, Open Door Magazine, Paradise On Earth, Volume II, Insignia, Dark Poetry Society, Ravencage, and several online journals including Spillwords, Lotholorian, Atunis, Academy of Heart And Mind, Piker Press, Cultural Reverence, etc.

**Flight into Eternity!***Madhu Gangopadhyay*

And the race on the tarmac

Within seconds we soared

The walls below game of

Mortal combat or GI Joe!

The city lights

Stars on ground

Glittering, glitzy:

The higher we flew

The dimmer they grew.

Resembling constellation

On an autumn evening sky

Shimmer above.

That is how they are misled!

On a cloudy night

When on a mission

They mistake,

The human dazzle

For twinkling stars.

And the calcium clouds

Blind them,

Misguided, the stars to claim

They fly!

For their motto is,

To touch the sky with glory.

One more life wasted

One more flight into death story



**Ivan Dimoski (Croatia)**

He was born in 1970 in Zagreb. In his twenties, he wrote plays for children and young people on the topic of spiritual awareness. In 2009, his first book *Gentle Services of a Field Commercialist* was published by VBZ and in 2022 his second book *Macedonian girl*, followed. Every Wednesday, Friday and Saturday he takes part in poetry evenings in the iconic Dugosel poet's cafe: Pod starim krovovi.

**In the Abyss of the Father Hugs***Ivan Dimoski*

Father!

I was looking for you...

i imagined you...

I was hoping you...

I wanted you

with you and yours

feelings...

with your own

fear...

while I'm sad...

hugs.

Along with mine

... love ...

... good luck...

You ...

... me

I miss you so much.

I think...

On you...

Constantly...

Now...

Deep in the eyes

I'm gathering tears

following you.

I'm sitting

imaginary

as if

it's not important.

...and the eyes...

they want through them

shed tears of love.

Can I make up?

And live on.

Work

And to wonder

would we

now be supportive.

I wanted to be



travelling salesperson.

You waved your hand.

I was a gifted athlete.

You said:

"It's for nothing."

I went to a gentlemen's and cultural school.

You said:

"You better be a craftsman."

Staying in the house and

waiting for warm words,

I would welcome yours

shouting.

I was afraid of you.

You used to be drunk and aggressive.

I was afraid.

I was afraid

a wasted life,

existence,

but you are the most afraid

we just poured you.

I trembled in company,  
in front of some girl  
and mostly while standing  
with you.

I would cry for no reason  
fights,  
but I would cry the most  
if you hit me

funny  
but we were not proud  
on each other.

I didn't fulfil it  
your ideals, and you are  
according to me was  
stiff and cold.

You thought:  
if you let me go  
i will be happy  
I will lead a life  
in his own way  
but then

I really am  
lost forever.

Soon you started drinking  
And that was the end...  
The little one in between  
The two of us

But,  
despite and in spite of  
to everything  
I cannot,  
and not admit  
yes and still  
I LOVE and I NEED

I miss you terribly.

Mom told me last night:  
"Go, light a candle.  
He loved you very much."  
Silence.

I couldn't say anything.

Eyes open.

The light shines.

From the bottom of the womb

I let out a cry,

powder,

pain...

...of love.



**Nguyen Chau Ngoc Doan Chinh (Vietnam)**

Her Pen name is Hong Ngoc Chau, her Facebook name is Nguyen Chinh. She is a member of the Association of Writers of Ho Chi Minh City (Vietnam), the member Admin of W.U. P (World Union of Poets), the level of General Councilor of the World Union of Poets with Coordinators Silver Medal (14th medal of the World Union of Poets), Contributor of Vishwa Bharati - India (The Vishwabharati Research Center), International Ambassador of the Circle of the International Chamber of Writers & Artists.

**Life is Like a Train***Nguyen Chau Ngoc Doan Chinh*

1

Does our life seem to be a running train?

When deciding we accept, don't bargain

Throughout the stations, life is often messy

We must continue till the end of the journey

2

At the terminal station clearly shows our love

The dream we have ever had we don't stop

With sincere love, we don't hesitate to earn

The outgoing train that still cannot return

3

We can't go back and have in the same river

Lots of crossings help us to know life as ever

Make yourself decision with hope forever

Choose an opportunity to shape the future

4

The life partner share here sincerity

Emotions are low and high possibly

Let's learn from people who full of ambition

For more knowledge to avoid fault affection

5

How blamed on who both cheated and greedy  
When infatuated with selfish calculations truly  
Use your mind to raise your affirmation  
Enough virtue and talent for life option

6

Create the place for a reunion of family  
Share joys and sorrows together really  
Our bright minds make our souls soar high  
Meet exciting freedom in the middle of life

7

Gently the train is running every day  
Watch the colorful beauties of life anyway  
We unite to have fun with everything  
With warm love full of human loving

8

Harmonize the goodwill of our life partner  
Life will multiply a lot of blessings as ever  
As precious pearls life is bright and sweet  
Like a train arrives at the terminal leisurely



### **Maid Corbic (Bosnia and Herzegovina)**

Maid Corbic from Tuzla, 22 years old. In his spare time, he writes poetry that has been praised on several occasions, as well as awarded. He also selflessly helps others around him, and is the moderator of the WLFPH (World Literature Forum Peace and Humanity) for unity and world peace in Bhutan. He is also the editor of the portal of the First Virtual Art Universe.



**Dash Diversity***Maid Corbic*

Stepped into the world of evil

I cross over hills and fields

a living trace of existence in the forms of geometry

and I don't even know his formulas

I remained a brushless artist as an inspiration

I can't create my own life

if I have no inspiration in it at all

because dreams are building colors painted over

Poultry eaten every day at five in the morning

the windows are washed and the souls have mercy in small cycles

significant to my existence during the day

for without life, love has no meaning

Avant-garde, a space of colorful multicolored flowers

he turns all the leaves right towards me

and I pick them until I sink

on the way to his hopelessness

And the silence will cover my small emotions

for I am a man of my curiosities  
and words are the balm that my soul carries  
just so they don't go far from me



**Sayani Mukherjee (India)**

Sayani Mukherjee is a poet hailing from Chandannagar, a former French colony in West Bengal. She received her post-graduation degree in English literature from Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi. She likes to engage her leisure in photography, cinema and arts.

**Look Up***Sayani Mukherjee*

Gleaming, falling, tantalising

Lyrical fall of streaming down

My little fire

In a little pocket knife

Liberating in its masculine zeal-

An aching sweet exhaustion

Of the feminine push

Of a consuming drug

At the end a tattered haul.

Gnawing, punishing

High tides low tides

Fallen angels

Gifts forgotten

Matchbox of an opera

An Ever consuming desire's punch.

Just for survival

Orderly

Wear little watches

Now and then,

Tomorrow a new light  
Dream of an awakening  
Bear away little drops  
Then look out at the budding.

Pungent airy holes  
Dusty shiny tools  
Rigid mapping  
Out of the blue door  
A new lyricism  
Bygone old scarecrows  
Empty shouting  
Hole of a soul in a big bag  
Then a Calling  
Sun like  
Look up.



### **Abhinav Brar (India)**

Abhinav Brar is a B. Comm. Student at University of Windsor. He is really passionate about writing and photography. The anthologies *His and Her Summer* and *That Sapphire Night* contain some of his earlier writings, mainly poetry. He also has a short story selected to be published in *Tales of our times*.

**Harm Any (Harmony) Over War***Abbinav Brar*

Challenging to stick together,

Humbling to be left alone.

Acting that we stand united forever.

Under the influence,

Degrading the people over the fence,

Humanity losing against religion.

Acting like we are not all the same and not acting on ending this tradition.

Resting on others to amend, or resting like we don't need to change.

Yesterday was the same as today, the time didn't change.

.

Despite we act in spite, being alone is what we fright.

Emptying the ego,

Vague familiarities become clear.

Embracing the dissimilarities, we fight this rite.

Not keeping grudges but letting go,

Distance will be overcome, so will be the fear.

Easier to find harmony,

Remembering not to harm any.

.

Saffron stand for sacrifice, so should you,

In order to cure this idiopathic disease of hatred.

Not allowing people to live how they wanted.

Grain on the fingers from these wars, we need to cease fire.

Heading towards serenity, unity is required.





**Amresh Kumar Singh (India)**

Amresh Kumar Singh was born on 11 February 1990, in Palamu, Jharkhand. He belongs to a village which is often reflected in the poems. A teacher of English language in Kendriya Vidyalaya, NHPC, Gerukamukh, Assam, he writes in both Hindi and English.

**The Song of Silence***Amresh Kumar Singh*

On the top of the mountains  
When you hold my hands  
As clouds embrace the mountains,  
I feel you enter my heart  
and sing the song of silence  
and make me feel your  
existence flowing inside  
like an eternal river.

I see the river  
and turn to you  
Smile flashes on our faces  
and you understand I  
am water in your river.

## INNSÆIAN'S VOICE

**Orbindu Ganga (India)**

Orbindu Ganga is the founding director and literary research editorial director of INNSÆI and MatruAkshar. He is a post-graduate in science and the first recipient of Dr Mitra Augustine gold medal for academic excellence. He worked in the financial, banking, and publishing domains. He proved his finesse as a soft skills trainer and client relationship manager. He is a poet, author, editor, publisher, consultant, certified life coach, creator of Subconscious Observation Belief System (SOBS), mindset coach (SOBS), spiritual mentor, content writer, sketch artist, and researcher. He has published articles, short stories, research papers, and science articles.

**The Lost Smile***Orbindu Ganga*

Founding Director & Literary Research Editorial Director, INNSÆI

International Journal of Creative Literature, Art, Translation,  
and Research for Peace and Humanity (IJCLATRPH)

The twilight heaved  
Exhausted in the day,  
Looking into the mirror  
She whispered  
To let the eyes smile,  
Trying umpteen  
Times to amble,  
Each step becoming  
Harder than before,  
Every day she sees her  
She comforts me,  
The tired mind  
Looming in darkness,  
The bereaved soul  
Living in the abyss,  
The nights  
Becoming longer,

The eyes hesitate  
To lit, to droop all day,  
Looking through  
The window, the loving  
Onlookers blossomed  
Gazing at her,  
Flowers sweat seeing  
Her without a smile,  
Seeing the lost smile  
In her garden of heaven,  
She couldn't bear  
The tears in others,  
One day she never  
Closed her eyes.

## SHORT STORIES



**Aditi Lahiry (India)**

She is a French and English language teacher who is passionate about writing poems, short stories and articles. Her work has been published in various anthologies; including *Airavata* by Ukiyoto publishers in association with Mayaakatha and Pachyderm Tales, *Anklets In My Hands* and *When Fire Spoke to Water*, anthologies of poems published by Ukiyoto publishers.

## The Revival of the Musical Lake

*Aditi Labiry*

The dry branches of the old Peepal tree formed a reflection in the lake. It was the biggest tree in the village of Banpur. Once upon a time, many birds made it their home. Orioles, Mynahs , Kingfishers , parrots , sparrows and many birds would chirp at the break of the dawn. Their musical notes would echo in the water of the lake. Whenever someone rowed in the Sursangam lake they could hear the beautiful sargam " Sa re ga ma pa dha ni sa."

"There were many prominent singers, including my uncle who used to regularly come to the Sursangam Lake during the early hours of dawn to practice their music for hours. Many musical shows were organised around this lake even twenty years ago. "

Swaralipi told her friend, Geeta who had come to visit her cousin Sanchita during her summer vacation. According to Swaralipi, the tree was once absolutely green. Travellers from different places used to rest under its shade. The mesmerizing musical notes floating on the lake's surface refreshed them. They used to chat there watching the leaves of the Peepal tree falling on the water forming ripples

" Then why doesn't it have any musical effect now? Why has the tree turned dry and the place lost its beauty? What is the mystery behind this? Could you please tell me about this Swaralipi?"

Geeta asked Swaralipi, who had spent a good amount of time finding out about how the advancement of technology had ruined the beauty and tranquility of some mesmerizing places surrounding Indian villages.

"The music was formed by the leaves falling from the tree, the birds chirping, the sounds of children playing around the lake, the manner in which families spent time sitting around the lakes during picnics. But the situation changed with the establishment of cement factories, the rise of vehicles led to the rise in the pollution levels. Soon the leaves of the tree began to fall. The situation became so bad that all the birds began to fly away from the tree. Soon the music vanished from the lake. The water of the lake was contaminated. The fish in the lake began to die too."



As soon as Swaralipi finished her explanation, Geeta asked her

"Why can't we all take an initiative to clean up the lake? Then I am sure the music will return to the Sursangam lake and everything will be as good as the good old times."

So as their summer vacation project Geeta, Swaralipi and Sanchita formed *The Revival of the Musical Lake* team. They cleaned the lake completely, advised people to reduce the number of vehicles coming towards the lake and finally planted more and more trees.

Geeta believes that the branches of the old Peepal tree will turn green by the time she visits the village during her next summer vacation.



### **Yuan Changming (Canada)**

Yuan Changming hails with Allen Yuan from [poetrypacific.blogspot.ca](http://poetrypacific.blogspot.ca). Credits include 12 Pushcart nominations & 14 chapbooks (most recently *Homelanding*) besides appearances in *Best of the Best Canadian Poetry* (2008-17), *BestNewPoemsOnline* & *Poetry Daily*, among others across 48 countries. Yuan served on the jury and was nominated for Canada's National Magazine Awards (poetry category).

## Heart Game

*Yuan Changming*

One again, he has fallen in love with her. There are as many reasons known as those unknown to him; for example, she somehow looks even more attractive than when he first met her forty two years ago; her personality remains just as sunny despite all the hardships of life she has gone through; even her simple-mindedness or little foolishness is no less lovely. On the other hand, he is not sure what he loves her exactly about; nor does he understand why he, at age 65, just cannot help thinking of her almost every few minutes during his waking hours every day, as if he were still a young boy yearning desperately for his first girlfriend. Probably because they had been totally lost for too long, as long as more than half a lifetime before he saw her again in early October 2019, and also has since then been separated too far apart, as far as beyond the whole pacific, with one living in Vancouver, the other in Shang Zhou. Probably because the pandemic has been preventing them from seeing each other in person while they have geared up for a higher marriage in both body and spirit. Or, probably because theirs is an extramarital or immoral relationship, though a natural result of karma. No matter what, he is acutely aware of himself having become hopelessly crazy for her for the second time, but what about her? Her feeling for him, if any at all, does seem to have revived and even gained a bit of new momentum. Otherwise, she would not have been so appreciative of his love poetry devoted to her; nor would she have enjoyed his dirty talks; nor would she video-chat with him almost every midnight; nor would she have eagerly discussed all the details about the honeymoon journey they are to take as soon as they meet again in reality; nor would she, needless to say, have been so responsive to his erotic requests to gaze at her slender neck, her willowy shoulders, her shapely breasts, her long legs, the birthmark near her left groin, among many others, each like a masterful nude painting. All this clearly shows she loves him as well, though probably less than he does her, but to which extent?

Your love feels like a loach in a rice field, full of splashing vitality, but really hard to catch, let alone holding it firmly in my hand, he once texted her.

Yours resembles an onion: as I peel off one layer after another, I can find no heart in the core in the end, she texted back.

That's because I wear my heart inside out! he explained.

Like a true loach, I just cannot escape from your rice field! she replied.

You will never! For I will fry the fish with the onion, or make a good soup with them.

Good idea! But what if it tastes awful?

Doesn't matter, even if it is as poisonous as hemlock....

He always enjoys conversing with her through such extended puns, though he often feels puzzled and agonized over the way she is reluctant to initiate a dialogue with him. Recently, he came to realize that most of the time, he has to reach out to her first, say, by forwarding a post, texting her a message, or sending a request for an audio or video chat. Last month, he kept waiting deliberately for her to invite him for a chat or meeting, but for up to ninety six hours, she remained silent until he himself could no longer wait to see her.

So, if I were not to resume, would you ever try to reach out to me again? he asked in as much resentment as in disappointment.

But you are to blame! How could I tell you were not in trouble with your wife?

If my wife had found out our relationship, you should have tried all the harder to understand the situation and show your concern.

But I must wait this time.

Always so passively, eh? Like every other female creature in the animal world, waiting all the time to be ... f#\$%\*d?

No dirty talk! I am serious.

While he persists in talking dirty, part of his innermost being is busy pondering over the reasons why she has been trying to avoid initiating a conversation of any kind with him. Perhaps, knowing his wife has become sensitive to whatever communication that might be going on between the two of them, she is afraid to contact him at the wrong moment. If caught red-handed again, she could throw him into a big domestic storm while he has to deal with all sorts of health harassments on a daily basis. Perhaps, due to the time differences between their geological locations, she can never find a safe enough time to send him a message. At the same time, she is perhaps still fighting fiercely against her bad conscience of a derailing spouse, since her husband has always been so loving and faithful to her. If she “looked for” him first, she would definitely feel all the more guilty; however, if she receives his messages or requests passively, she would, somewhat like an ostrich with her head in sand, feel less self-contemptuous as a ‘bad’ wife. Most significantly, it is perhaps her feminine tendency towards reservedness or the traditional definition of a “lady” that has been prohibiting her from showing any initiative in the development of their relationship. No matter what, she refuses to give up her passive position, though she appears to be readily or anxiously responsive to his call on every occasion. Whenever he

complains about her passiveness, she just says, coyishly, Why bother about the question of who looks for whom first?

To his bewilderment, even after he has repeatedly told her to feel free to initiate a dialogue any time before 9:00 am or after 9:00 pm every day, she shows little change. Thinking that her feeling for him may not be strong enough to overcome her reservedness or her internalized values about being a “good wife,” he tells himself bitterly that their relationship is not merely abnormal and immoral as she has often said, but imbalanced to an alarming degree: he loves her so much so that he is prepared to die for her, but she might have only put him on the bench rather than in the heart of her soul.

He remembers well that on May 28, 2021, shortly after they became aware of their true feelings for each other, he mentioned, half-jokingly, that she had been treating him or his love like a playful emotional toy, and that her feeling for him had never been really sincere, but this toned-down accusation turned out to be so offensive that she kept ignoring his messages for three consecutive days before resuming contact with him.

Yes, for all his complaints, requests and explanations, she just sticks to her old passive way. Notwithstanding his acceptance of her position as somewhat justifiable or excusable, he feels bad and even resentful about the likelihoods that she does not really care about him as she appears to, that her feeling for him will not be as enduring as his for her: should anything happen, she might flee right away and leave him behind to deal with the mess all by himself; and that she loves her husband more after all, since he is taller, handsomer and maybe wealthier as well. True, she has demonstrated her affection for him in more telling ways than she did for her husband before their marriage, but her love feels quite evasive, while he is afraid of himself having probably overestimated his own importance in their relationship to begin with. For him, unrequited love or delusional fancy as her or anyone else’s love interest is something he finds despicable, though he sometimes sympathizes with those who suffer from it.

He further remembers that while dating with a girl after they finished university in Shanghai, he went through a lot of emotional hardships. Attracted by her beauty and intelligence, he showed no hesitation when he confessed how he had fallen in love with her at first sight. In the weeks that immediately followed, he kept articulating his love in the subtlest fashion, in every conceivable way and with all the heart and soul of a passionate young man, but before long, she seemed to take his love for granted and even become fed up with the kind of innocence, intensity, sincerity and enthusiasm manifested in his love. Without much previous experience, he knew little about how to handle an intimate relationship or about the psychology of the beloved and, gradually, he found himself degraded into an unappreciated admirer. Even his conscious effort to reserve sex for their wedding night had somehow been taken as a gesture too naïve or too prudent, for she might well have expected him to unleash his sexual impulses in those passionate moments. His unfailing activeness and thoughtless initiative led her only to look down upon him, so much so that she eventually decided to marry his rival instead. The most important lesson he learned from this experience, as he has come to see it now, is not to let the other party get the upper hand in the emotional battle. Whoever confesses first would be the loser; and whoever shows a deeper or stronger affection for the other party would be taken advantage of or “exploited” emotionally later.

Now, four decades after that deplorable dating experience, he finds himself cornered in a similar situation. He knows he is head over heels in love with her, a woman's circumstances had prevented him from dating formally when they were still teenagers; now he misses her all day long, constantly lost in his thinking about her day and night, between wake and dream. He has told her to put aside her “feminine reservedness” just as he has done with his “masculine dignity” and, for hundreds of times, he has been tempted to capitulate, but each time there is an inner voice reminding him to wait prudently for her to admit the profundity of her affection first. Then his own declaration of love would take a consoling, considerate and compensatory tone; by biting his time, he might be more appreciated as a returning lover. If he confessed the full and fearful dimensions of his true feelings first, he would lose the battle. In other words, he must listen to the sagacious voice in him, pretend



to make light of their relationship, and wait patiently for her misstep to confess initially and sincerely without reservation. Thinking along this line, he decides never to yield to his confessional impulses.

Of course, he needs to take more initiative in their relationship; after all, it is he who has stolen her heart from her perfectly loving husband or their heavily-guarded matrimony, but how can he “look for her first” most of the time without letting her know how mad he has actually become about her?

After long and much deliberation, he hit upon an idea during insomnia last night. He will propose to follow a contact schedule: he sends invitations to her every Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, while it is her turn to do so on Thursday, Friday and Saturday. As for Sunday, it should be reserved for an “emotional leave” unless either has something important enough to initiate a conversation. This way, they have equal freedom, right or obligation to carry their mutual love to the end while both are exempted from the pressure to win in an emotional seesaw battle.

Great, let’s follow this schedule, strictly and persistently, she says. But is it really important to win in this game of the heart? Is there a win-win situation? What if they both lose? He is not sure yet.





**Sudha Vishwanath (India)**

Mrs Sudha Vishwanath is a teacher by profession. She took to writing as a hobby. Many of her stories have been published in Woman's Era. She has some anthologies to her credit. Mrs Sudha Vishwanath is also active on many writing platforms. Some of her soul stirring articles have been published in the soul curry section of the TOI.

## GRANDPA

*Sudha Vishwanath*

The festoons were indeed fascinating. They made a charming sight with vibrant rainbow colours spread artistically. Someone had taken genuine trouble to fix them all with such zest.

I look around admiring the hall. There is a festive mood.

For someone hearing the noises from outside, it might seem like a bunch of young college-going guys are partying like crazy. The music was at such a high decibel level, but no one seemed to feel it as deafening. Everyone was dancing like there is no tomorrow.

‘Crazy guys,’ I think as I look at one of them making vain efforts in trying to hit the floor. He looked like 75 but was trying his best to match steps with a lady, who though also looked old, seemed to be nimble toed and definitely younger than him. I was worried he would end up with a twisted foot.

Turning at me he gives a meaningful smile as if to say, ‘Look how well I am playing with the music. You do not worry about me.’

It was amusing to see so many aged people dancing. Some elderly men, I noticed have been working on a colourful wall hanging for a long time. From where I was seated, it was a little difficult to strain my neck to have a glimpse of what they were up to. I give up after a few strenuous efforts.

Coming to think of it; this room struck a familiar chord. I am sure I have come here before, but cannot say when and for what. Maybe for some party like this one; with heavy music and insane souls jumping about on the floor. I and a few others are however seated very obediently in mobile chairs, though I cannot explain why this discrimination was made in a group.

The men who were working on the wall hanging have finished their job. They take a few steps back and look at their work with self-admiration. Adjusting my spectacles I try to

read what it said. 'HAPPY 100TH BIRTHDAY DEAR GRANDPA.' These were the words engraved in golden colour. It made a fabulous sight.

HUNDREDTH BIRTHDAY!!! Who has lived up to this ripe age? I roll my eyes bemused when someone thrusts a plateful of cookies beneath my nose.

Looking up I see a smiling fat lady with lovely salt pepper hair revealing her age I guess must be in the early seventies.

"Here, have them they are very tasty. We all know your appetite for cookies so come on grab as many as you can. You sweet-toothed old man." She lovingly coaxes me to take some, but then before I can make up my mind and raise my hands towards the plate; she has to move away because the music has changed and her feet seem to be desperately waiting to keep pace with the rhythm. Pulling a table she hurriedly puts the plate of cookies on it and rushes back to the dance floor where many more newcomers have joined. I can vouch none of them kept with the music rhythm, they were making random moves. However everyone was having a very good time, their cheerful countenance stood testimony to it.

Giving up on the thought of reclining my body forward and stretching my hands a bit more to reach the cookies, I hold back my urge to have some of them. Only a few moments before they were at my arm's length; I could have gobbled a couple of them, but for the changing music that made the lady put them on a table beyond my reach. Whoever she was, it was so sweet of her to have offered me the cookies.

"Has the cake come?" A well-dressed man in a black coat seems to be a bit perturbed as he peers into his wristwatch. "It was supposed to be here by 7 pm, it is already fifteen minutes past seven. Hope the guy hasn't lost his way." He keeps muttering something making quick to and fro rounds to the entrance of the hall and then coming back and smiling at me. He even pats me on my back as if he was consoling me about something. 'What is he up to?' I wonder.

He had been running up and down since the party had begun; looks like he is the event manager. I make my assumptions.

Oblivious of the delay in the arrival of the cake, the party seems to be going on in full swing. Someone asks me “Do you want to hit the floor?” I thought that old guy was being sardonic.

‘How the hell was I going to hit the floor with so many crazy people moving around? I might be crushed. Moreover, it will take me hours before I even get up from this chair. I had tried to do that many times before, but with futile efforts.’

‘No way,’ I gesture by waving my hands and that guy does not seem to mind my denial. It was probably a formality that he had completed by inviting me to the dance floor. He looked very familiar to me but I was not sure where had I met him before.

There is a huge hustle and bustle as the cake’s arrival is announced. Everyone crowds around the delicacy to have a look at it. Then some kind person considers it righteous for me also to have a glimpse of it and tries to help me transverse the distance between my chair and the table on which the cake is kept. However, it is too much exercise for his fragile body to push the mobile chair.

I try getting up but the man with the black coat hurriedly gestures to me to be seated and magically rolls the table with the cake towards me.

It has the same words engraved on it, ‘HAPPY 100TH BIRTHDAY GRANDPA.’

Inquisitiveness has taken the better of me now and I want to know who this ‘Grandpa’ is for whom such fantabulous arrangements have been made. He must be an eminent personality, I guessed. He seemed to be having a huge fan following. Look at the ladies and men, who at the threshold of kicking the bucket anytime, were dancing in the best of their dresses.

I eagerly rotate my neck around, though it leaves a strain on me, to see who is coming to cut this cake. The cake looked so very delicious that I could hardly control my palate. ‘Grandpa please come from wherever you are and cut this cake. Let us get done with the Happy Birthday jingle soon so that we can devour this in no time.’ I smirk as I envisage myself stuffing some of those chocolate icings. Hmmm. Yes as that lady had indicated, I have a sweet tooth.’

Then someone calls out, “Grandpa Come let us cut the cake.” Next moment I find myself holding a fragile knife. The man in the black coat slowly prompts me to blow the candle that has the number 100 on it. I blow it and am successful only on the fourth attempt.

The number of attempts increased because all the while half my mind was engrossed in wondering why they had asked me to hold the knife and blow the candle. What happened to Grandpa, who was he and why did he not turn up to cut the cake? Then everything seemed to be happening in a stupor.

The man in the black coat gently holds my hand with the knife and helps me cut the cake even as the music gets deafening in my ears playing the jingle ‘HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU,’ few continue dancing on the floor, while some come near me to shake my hands and yet some stand with their mouth open deliberately; indicating that I stuff it with the cake. Many of them stuff pieces into my mouth too.

There seems to be utter chaos. When all this is done I settle in a corner comfortably tasting a piece of the rich cake, but wondering all the while why I was made a substitute for Grandpa.

The man in the black coat is now locked in what seemed to be a very earnest conversation with an extremely well-dressed couple who had arrived just then.

“Thank you, Mr and Mrs Khanna for being so very generous and granting a cheque of Rs 20,000 for our home and sponsoring this party today. Help has been pouring in from many philanthropists, enabling me to run this home for the aged without must debacles. I am indeed grateful to you for having come to attend Grandpa’s birthday. He is the oldest member of our home. We celebrate the birthday of all our members every year on the day they arrived here under the wings of this home. It is to depict that they have taken a new birth. This was the day some two decades ago that Grandpa came here.”

I see all of them looking at me making me turn pink.

“Two decades ago?” Mrs Khanna’s eyes turns misty.

“Well, I was a student then when my father was the manager of this home. Dad told me that when Grandpa was about 80 years he was found outside the main door of the home in a wheelchair with a letter and a few cheques. His son had left him there.

‘What did the letter read as?’ Mr Khanna is anxious to know.

It said, ‘This is my father Hridayanath Chauhan. He is stepping into his octogenarian stage and has been an Alzheimer’s patient for a couple of years. It has become very difficult for us to manage him. I am leaving some cheques of a stipulated amount and a lumpsum of Rs 1,00,000. I am sure this much money will suffice to take care of him till he kicks the bucket. Even otherwise I hear this home is run by philanthropists. Please do not bother to call me for anything in future. I may be away on official work and I do not intend to leave any contact details either. Please also do not bother to question my father attempting to dig into his life history. His memory is fast fading and he may not be able to comprehend your queries.’

The black coat gentleman twitched his lips in acerbity. “ If he could throw so much money nearly two decades ago, then he should have been a rich guy or maybe had taken his dad’s property by foul means and decided to leave him here. You never know.

Grandpa’s health has only deteriorated through the passing years. He remembers nothing and recognizes no one. He knows none of us here though he sees us every day, the doctor says he may be remembering many of his childhood and days of youth. For instance today he may have known that this is a birthday celebration, but he is not aware that it is his birthday. He used to talk something though it was all irrelevant conversation till a couple of years back, then of late he hasn’t been speaking at all.”

“That is so disgusting of the boy. Poor old man; does he enquire about his son anytime?” Mr Khanna's voice chokes.

Shaking his head vigorously the black coat gentleman remarks, “We are used to such kind of indignant behaviour on part of the offspring. Many who come here are either issueless or have been disowned by their progenies.

I see those who do not have children are far happier than those who have been disowned by their kids because they generally do not have to look forward to anything in life from offspring. They do not have to feel sad that their children for whom they had done so much have left them here on one pretext or another.



In that respect Grandpa is fortunate I must say; he does not remember he has a son who had left him here and gone for good. Some of them have kids or kith visiting them once in a while, but Grandpa has had no visitors from the time he was left here. I presume that guy was his only child and his dad had become a sort of liability to him.” The black coat gentleman lets out an agonizing pout.

“You are indeed doing a noble job instead of going in search of greener pastures my boy, I appreciate this. I see you have employed quite a few helpers to take care of all the members.” Mr Khanna is patting the back of the black coat gentleman with a feeling of genuine gratitude.

My heart reaches out to grandpa. ‘Poor man, so very disheartening to know that his son has thrown him out of the house. Whoever he is, today we did have jolly moments with his birthday celebrations. ‘Happy Birthday Grandpa,’ I say even as a man wheels me towards the dining hall to complete Grandpa’s 100th birthday with a sumptuous dinner.

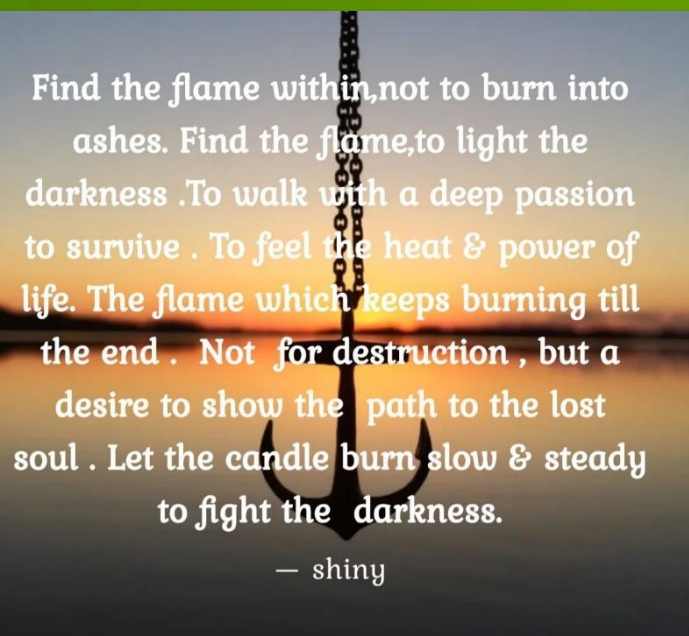
## QUOTES WITH THE IMAGES





### **Shiny Vikas (India)**

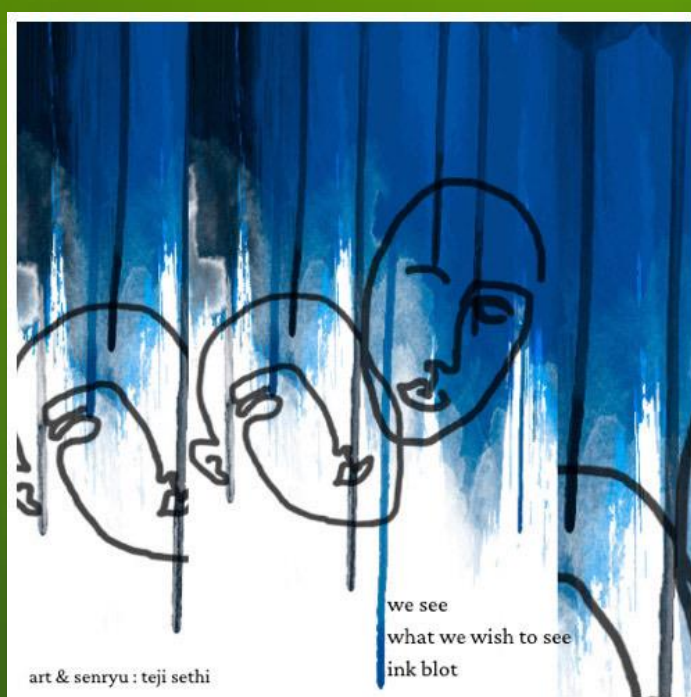
Shiny Vikas is a poet, blogger, and a free thinker. She has been recently part of a beautiful anthology, *The Land of Unfree Laborers*, by Dr Ujjwala Kakarla, depicting the struggle and challenges of the farmers and street vendors. She considers it as a broad experience to write the real-life stories personally narrated and shared with the street vendors. A graduate in the Bachelor of Arts, she holds her certification in Media, Journalism, from the Ahsutosh College, Kolkata. She worked as the Passenger Service Executive in the Sharjah International Airport with Sharjah Aviation Service.





### **Tejinder Sethi (India)**

A nutritionist by profession, Teji Sethi transitioned from micronutrients to micro poetry. She now loves concocting a mix of emotions through her short verses. A poet at heart, she's charmed by the beauty and musicality in nature. Teji's bilingual poems in free verse, haikai verse, and works of art have found a home in numerous national and international venues. One of her poignant creations on the throes of Partition of the Indian subcontinent, titled *kapaas ke phool* was awarded by the Partition Museum of India in 2019. She has authored and edited five books of poetry.





pottery : harmeet poem : tej sethi

moulding a lump of grief into shapes

## PUBLISHED & UPCOMING BOOKS



### **Binod Dawadi (India)**

Binod Dawadi, the author of *The Power of Words*, is a master's degree holder in Major English. He has worked on more than 1000 anthologies published in various renowned magazines. His vision is to change society through knowledge, so he wants to provide enlightenment to the people through his writing skills.



## THE POWER OF WORDS

By *Binod Dawadi*



Binod Dawadi is from Patano Nalup, Kailash, Nepal. He has completed his master's degree from Tribhuvan University in English. He likes to read and write and has created many poems and stories. His hobbies are reading, writing, singing, watching movies, traveling, and gardening.  
Sydnie Beaupré is more than just a girl; they're an openly LGBTQIA author that lives in their own imagination, a post-apocalyptic, zombie-infested world, where magical creatures and supernatural occurrences are simply the mundane.

Poetry is magic, weaving tapestries via lilting words, creating a stunning visual of the author's ideas. The Power Of Words is the debut poetry collection of author Binod Dawadi, edited by bestselling author Sydnie Beaupré.

Poetry is a magic,  
The words carry thoughts,  
Poetry talks with us,  
We talk and share our feelings,  
Nobody gives support to us forever,  
Except poetry which gives.

The Power Of Words

Binod Dawadi and Sydnie Beaupré

## The Power Of Words



Binod Dawadi  
and  
Sydnie Beaupré

## THE POWER OF WORDS 2

By *Binod Dawadi*



BINOD DAWADI IS FROM PATANO NALUP, KAILASH, NEPAL. HE HAS COMPLETED HIS MASTER'S DEGREE FROM TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY IN ENGLISH. HE LIKES TO READ AND WRITE AND HAS CREATED MANY POEMS AND STORIES. HIS HOBBIES ARE READING, WRITING, SINGING, WATCHING MOVIES, TRAVELING, AND GARDENING.  
SYDNI BEAUPRE IS MORE THAN JUST A GIRL; THEY'RE AN OPENLY LGBTQIA AUTHOR THAT LIVES IN THEIR OWN IMAGINATION, A POST-APOLYPTIC, ZOMBIE-INFESTED WORLD, WHERE MAGICAL CREATURES AND SUPERNATURAL OCCURRENCES ARE SIMPLY THE MUNDANE.

THIS BOOK IS THE SEQUEL TO THE BOOK THE POWER OF WORDS. THE MEANING OF THE POWER OF WORDS 2 IS THAT IT IS NEVER-ENDING. ONE BOOK FINISHES, AND ANOTHER ARISES AS THE SEQUEL. THE IDEAS AS WELL AS THE IMAGINATIONS OF THE WRITERS MAKE US FEEL ALIVE IN THIS WORLD AND NOT ALONE. IMAGINATION COMES FROM THE HEART, MIND, BODY AS WELL AS THE SOUL OF THE WRITER. IF ANY OF OUR WORDS CAUSE TROUBLE OR PAIN TO ANYONE IN THIS WORLD, THEN I WOULD LIKE TO SAY SORRY, BUT OUR INTENT WAS TO REDUCE PAIN AND TO MAKE EACH AND EVERYONE HAPPY IN THIS WORLD.

ALL OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE WORLD IS BASED ON IMAGINATION. ALL ARE NOT PERFECT IN THIS WORLD SO I HOPE YOU, ALSO NOW, FEEL COMFORTABLE ABOUT YOUR IMAGINATION AND THAT YOU WILL ALSO WRITE AND NOT WASTE YOUR VALUABLE TIME WITHOUT DOING ANYTHING.

IN THIS COLLECTION, THERE ARE VARIOUS POEMS AND SHORT STORIES ABOUT LOVE, HATE, HAPPINESS, SADNESS, WARS, ETC. TO MOTIVATE PEOPLE AS WELL AS TO MAKE PEOPLE AWARE OF SUCH THINGS IN LIFE. THE 26 LETTERS OF THE ALPHABET ARE THE TWENTY-SIX VOICES OF GOD COMING TO EARTH TO SERVE PEOPLE IN MODERN TIMES.

THE POWER OF WORDS 2

BINOD DAWADI AND SYDNI BEAUPRE

Binod Dawadi  
And  
Sydnie Beaupré



The Power Of Words 2

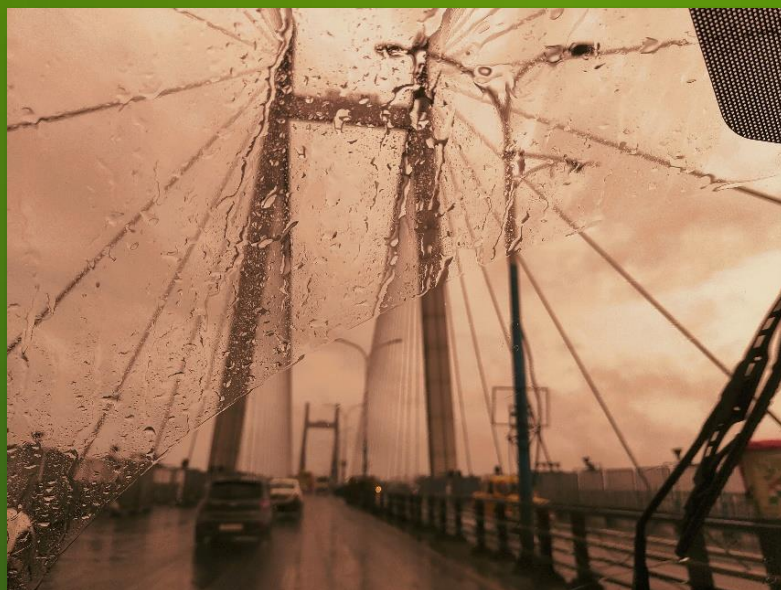


## PAINTINGS



### **Debarati Sen (India)**

Works in Presidency University Kolkata as a Junior Assistant. Her debut poetry book called *Blurred Musings* has recently been published. Recipient of the Tagore Award 2022 and the Sylvia Plath Women's Literary Award, Debarati finds emancipation in her poetry! She has also been the winner of the International Poetry Writing competition held by the Elite Book Awards in November 2021. She has also grabbed the third position in the National Poetry Writing Month 2022 contest hosted by the Elite Book Awards.





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