

OpenDoor magazine

YOUR WORDS MATTER.

SMALL
TREASURES

NEW AUTHORS
TO CHECK OUT

UNCERTAINTY

FAVORITE

THINGS!

NEW BOOKS TO
READ!



--- WELCOME TO THE ---

**OPENDOOR MAGAZINE
SEPTEMBER ISSUE!**

Where did the time go?! This is our 12th issue. 12 issues of opening doors for new and established poets, artists, authors, and songwriters around the world. And this magazine has become one of our favourite things – and we have been told by others that it is one of their favourite things as well (color us so honored!) so after a few issues of more difficult subjects – we are excited to bring in the fun around “Favourite Things!” We still see such a variation in the theme and issue and have loved reading through them!

Join us as we explore FAVOURITE THINGS through the words and minds of these writers and artists.

We continue to get more submissions each month and we are so thrilled and honored to continue to get and be trusted with your words. If we could, we would choose everyone and every piece. It is heartbreaking that we can't. But we ask that if you submit and are not selected – please keep submitting and sharing. Even if you aren't selected for a specific issue – your words don't matter any less.

Thank you for continuing to share our magazine with your friends and family and allowing our audience to keep growing.

- Kassie & Mel

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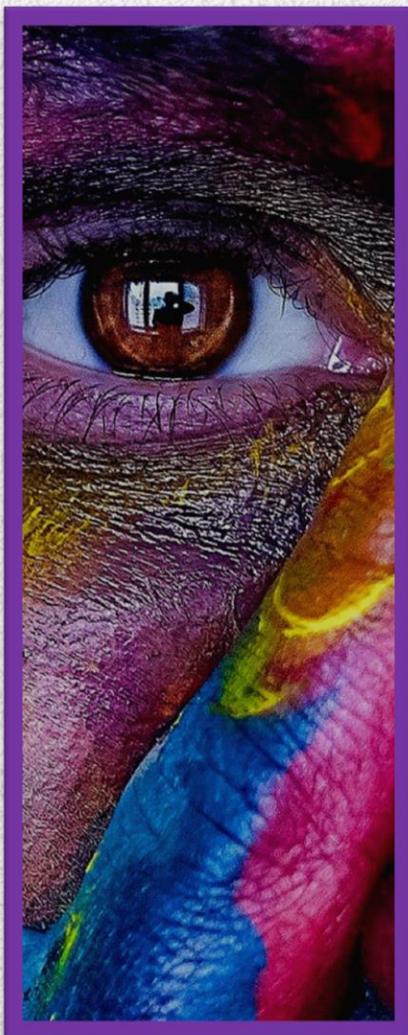
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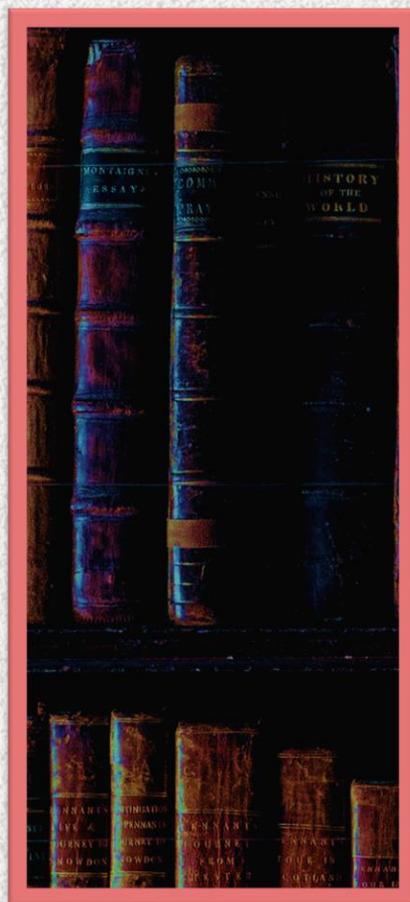
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What
are our
co-owners

up
to?



KASSIE J RUNYAN

Co-Creator



Watching:

Ted Lasso Season 2 – already just as delightful as season one – yes still fully on this!
Buffy The Vampire Slayer – popped up on Prime and I still love it as much as I did 20 years ago

Writing:

Books books books – oh so many books. Really just the focus on final edits on my upcoming novel, The Death and Life of John Doe. This is my life right now and for the next 3 weeks as I finish the pre-order prep!

Listening:

Something was wrong – season 9 – just waiting for each Thursday for a new episode to see what is not what it seems!

<https://www.KassieJRunyan.com>

<https://www.Facebook.com/kassiejrunyan>

<https://www.Instagram.com/kjrunyan>

<https://www.Twitter.com/kassandrerunyan>

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLvSEcLEfE196OE_Ya2LNNN3kjFp82Ktt2

KASSIE J RUNYAN – CO-CREATOR

RAINDROPS

Kassie Runyan

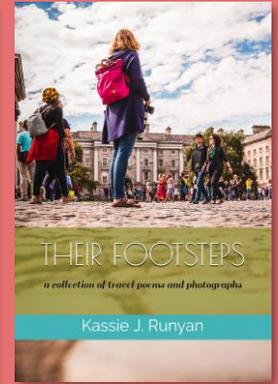
United States

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grown girl running down
the slick sidewalk
laughing as the rain
drenches her hair
and soaks through
her thin jacket
yellow rainboot
splashing down into
a deep puddle
causing a wave
cascading down the side
of the street
pushing the paper boat
followed by the
giggling boy
his boots matching
the ones she wears
hers now gone around the block
running towards home
still laughing at the sky
as the boy keeps splashing
in the city rivers
flowing from one corner
to another
and he imagines himself
captain of his boat
as it soars into
the unknown
and the raindrops
splatter his face



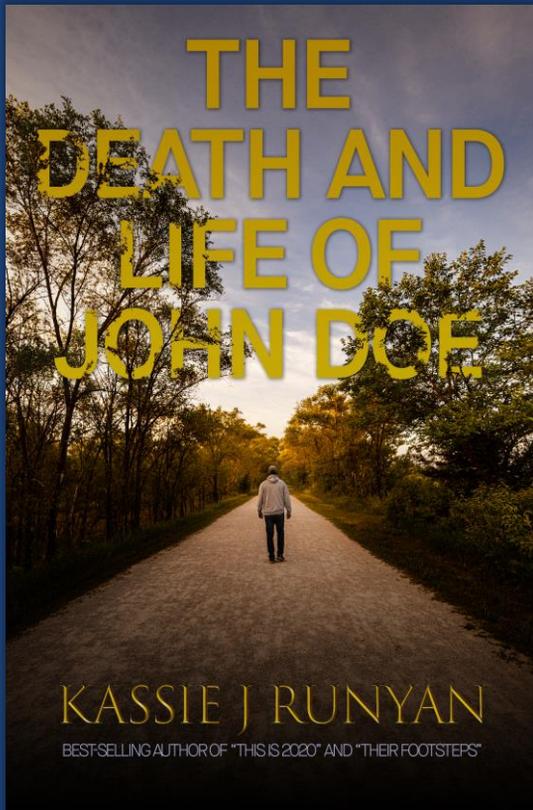
Purchase your
copy of This is
2020 [HERE!](#)



Purchase your copy
of Their Footsteps
[HERE!](#)



This is 2020 Part Two [HERE!](#)



Walking out the door – November 16th

Pre-Order in September

Stay informed:

<https://www.kassiejrunyan.com/thedeathandlifeofjohndoe>

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

From best-selling poet of “This is 2020” and “Their Footsteps,” Kassie J Runyan, comes her debut novel, “The Death and Life of John Doe,” which takes a deep look into trauma, the human psyche, and the struggle of living on the street.

Our nameless nomad walks out the front door of his suburban home, leaving his life behind. Not knowing what it is he's looking for... or what it is he's running from. He closes the door and walks into a world full of the pain and joy that waits for him with each step. He keeps moving forward; driven by a desire to find a reason for his life and to discover his forgotten past. What he wasn't prepared for were the dreams.

What is your name?

"The Death and Life of John Doe is a mesmerizing book that takes you on a cross-country journey and makes you question your own perception."
- Blurb Review

"The Death and Life of John Doe is a riveting novel that feels like a thrilling movie! Every chapter keeps you guessing until the last page!"
- Brittney Marie, Award-Winning Poet and Author

MEL HAAGMAN

Co-Creator

Watching:

Modern Love available on Amazon

Each episode is based on a different love story that has been inspired by the New York Times column 'Modern Love.' It currently has two seasons with the second season only recently dropped. With an all-star cast, Modern Love delves into the complexities of love through a variety of unique stories that will leave you wanting more. My favourite episode of Season 2 was episode 1: **"On a Serpentine Road, With the Top Down."**

Where Minnie Driver portrays a doctor whose unreliable, classic car was her connection to a lost love.

Listening:

Maisie Peters – You Signed Up To This



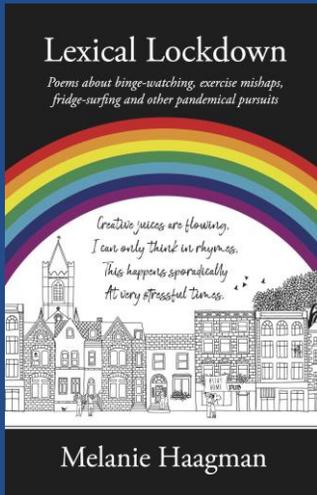
<https://www.Facebook.com/girlontheedg>

<https://www.Instagram.com/girlontheedg>

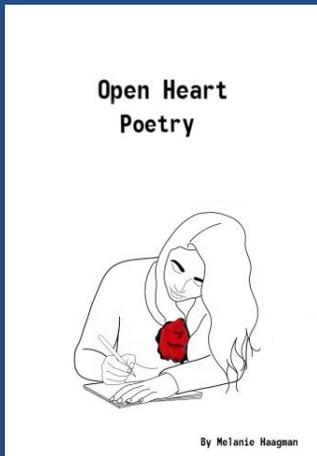
<https://www.Twitter.com/girlontheedg>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCjh8b4Y7gSFGKewzPKZH8lw>

MEL HAAGMAN – CO-CREATOR



Purchase your copy of
Lexical Lockdown [HERE!](#)



Purchase your copy of **Open
Heart Poetry** [HERE!](#)

MY FAVOURITE THINGS

Mel Haagman

United Kingdom

<https://www.facebook.com/girlontheedge90>

The smell of coffee roasting,
The sun shining bright,
The notion of acceptance
And it's going to be alright.
The hard-work paying off,
Seeing friends succeed,
And the true joy you acquire
From a satisfying read.
Learning from mistakes,
And truly laughing hard,
Being the authentic you
And letting down your guard.
Dancing in the kitchen,
And running for no reason,
Dressing for the autumn,
Cause, that's my favourite season.
Not having to explain yourself,
But communicating with a look,
And know you made your point,
An expression's all it took.
Playing tennis and doing well,
When the ball is in full swing,
Knowing that in this time,
The brain won't fear a thing.
Writing all the poetry,
Offloading inner chat,
These are my favourite things
And I'll leave it as that.

SMALL TREASURES

BY DEBBIE HEWSON

Debbie Hewson lives near the coast, likes to walk on the beach, loves to write, and dances very badly

The box sat in the very middle of my dressing table, where it had been for years, since the day I moved into my own place, and before that, at my Mum's house. A pretty little box, with a lid that open and closed on a hinge, where my favourite things were kept. None of them were very valuable to anyone else, but they were to me.

I pulled open the lid and slipped them out onto my hand. A tiny fake flower that had been in my hair when I was a bridesmaid, a fluffy white weather I had found on the pavement, a small pebble from the beach where I had met my first love, and my most treasured possession.



SMALL TREASURES – DEBBIE HEWSON

I had owned it for nearly fifteen years. The day I found it had been so special, and over the years that followed, the day had taken on almost magical properties. Memories can be like that. I had been staying with my Granny and Grandad, because Mum had to work, and Dad had been gone a while. It was summer, and the days were long and sunny. I was going to be twelve, and there had been talk of a cake and fizzy drinks.

The morning of that day, the postman had knocked on the door, and Granny had taken in a parcel, shaking her head at Grandad, when she found it was addressed to him. He had jumped up from the table, his toast and marmalade forgotten.

“It’s here! Lucy! Come and help me open it.” He had danced around the living room and into the kitchen, singing at the top of his voice. “Stop, wait a minute Mr. Postman.” Laughing his high-pitched giggle, and finally brought back to earth when I sat on the floor and tried to open the box.

Inside, there were sections which needed to be joined together. We sat happily with a spanner and a screwdriver, but even when it was put together, I had no more idea than when we started what it was.

Granny was clearing away the breakfast things by then and smiled slowly. She told him to load the car, while she made us a picnic, and we set off to the beach. My Granny was probably glad of the peace. We were, however, Grandad and me, officially on an adventure. He refused to tell me what it was, and I spent the journey in the car shouting out more and more bizarre guesses. When we were with Granny, we had to be a bit calmer, but left on our own, we were loud, and silly. I miss him.

At the beach he parked the car, and we took his new and exciting thing onto the sand, he slipped the headphones onto my head and told me to listen for beeps. Immediately, he held the plate shaped end of the contraption up to my belt buckle and the beeps came loud and strong in my ears.

“It’s a treasure finder!” He declared. “Any treasure on this beach is ours, Lucy!” Setting off at a good pace, so that I had to trot to keep up, he scanned the sand, backwards and forwards until we reached the cliff. “You try. There has to be some treasure here somewhere!” He handed me the handle, and I passed over the headphones. All morning we took turns scanning the sand and listening to the beeps that never came. We stopped for lunch and found that Granny had packed pies and sandwiches, crisps and bottles of juice. “Do you think we’re doing something wrong?” Grandad asked me. “I thought we would find much more treasure than this.”

“Maybe it’s supposed to be hard to find, otherwise, someone else would have found it?” I asked him, not sure if what I was saying made sense. He snatched me up and swung me through the air.

“Genius!” He cried as I swooped through the air. “I have a super-humanly intelligent granddaughter.” We laughed, falling onto the sand, waving our feet and arms in the air.

SMALL TREASURES – DEBBIE HEWSON

“We could try further down, now that the sea is further out, I suppose.” He jumped up, grabbing my hand and the metal detector.

“Fantastic idea. Come on.” He ran to the surf, and we listened and scanned, for another two hours. I believe that he was about to quit, when I heard the beeps.

“Grandad! It’s beeping.” I shouted. He scanned back again, watching my face, and then grabbed the small shovel that had been hanging from his belt all day, for just such an occasion.

He dug, and I dug. We kept going, until we found an enormous, rusty, six-inch nail. He sat on the sand, clearly disappointed.

“I’m not sad that we found this. It’s not just a nail, Grandad. It’s a nail from a pirate ship.” He took the nail that I held out to him.

“Yes. This nail has probably seen some battles at sea, and maybe even some shipwrecks.” His eyes grew wide in his face. “It might have belonged to Black Beard himself.”

“Best treasure ever, Grandad.” I felt my hand in his, the sand rough on our skin, the salt from the water on my lips, and we walked back to the car, packing up our treasure carefully.

Twelve years later, I had reminded him of the day we searched for treasure on the beach, and we had laughed. Not so loud, and with less jumping about, but the feeling had been the same. The beeps I had listened for that day, as he closed his eyes and slipped away, had been the hospital machinery, and the treasure had been his heartbeats, which stopped. The silence had been devastating.

Today, I have another special favourite thing to add to the box, and the other treasures will, I hope, make me brave enough to do what comes next.

In the box, next to the pebble, the feather, the fake flower, and the rusty nail, now lies the white plastic wand, with two blue lines in the window. My stomach is still flat, but that will change over the next few months.

I close the lid of my box carefully and rest my hand on the top of it. I wish my Grandad would be here to meet my baby, I hope I can be strong enough to go on this new adventure without him. The sun shines in through the window, and I remember that the summers are short, and I should go now, and walk on the sand, before the wind changes, and brings clouds and rain.

Slipping my flip flops off my feet, so that I can feel the sand, I walk the length of the beach, keeping my eyes peeled for any treasure I might find.

Favorite Things



September Theme: Favourite Things

MULTIPLE AUTHORS

IT'S ABOUT UMBRELLAS IN THE RAIN

Linda M. Crate
United States

one of my favorite things
is the memory of my
best friend telling me that
she loved the way my face lit
up when i talked about
the things i loved and was passionate
about,
or when she told me that i was
so pretty that she wanted
to take a picture;
everyone talks about grand gestures
but it is really the little things
forgotten and buried
in the subconscious that bring me
the most joy—
because sometimes it's not about who
can move mountains,
sometimes it is who will bring you
an umbrella when you are caught in the rain.

COMING OF AGE

Janette Ostle
United Kingdom
https://www.instagram.com/janette_wordsthoughtspictures/

Rag doll
homemade, handmade.
A book of nursery rhymes
dog-eared and faded. Building blocks
paint chipped.

One bear
well loved, tin cars,
bent jigsaws, a train set,
tissue papered in the toy box,
lid closed.

SCOUT

Antoni Ooto

United States

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/antoniotoo/>

<http://www.ooto.org/blog/>

Do you still watch the door?

After all this emptier time
what should we make of our days together.

I don't know why it is
me staying, you going.

We had the same gate in our step,
mine, a chronic shamble,
yours, with a confident plummy tail.

And we teamed in the woods
where, around the burn barrel
you guarded with one eye open,
dozing, content.

Yes, content, both of us.

As seasons change, the days shorten.
Let this morning bring what it will.

I'm going for a walk now.
Your leash is still handy.

I get used to changes.

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FOOD FOR THOUGH

(by D'oh-Raymese)

Ken Gosse

United States

<https://www.facebook.com/ken.gosse/>

Doughnuts are my favorite food;
raging pleasure and delight.
Me? I'm always in the mood,
fondly eating, day and night.
Solace with each bite I chew;
lots for me and none for you;
teeny crumbs—here, have a few!
Now it's time to eat more dough, dough, dough,
d'oh Nuts! It's all gone!



CUPPA

Helen Aitchison

A warmth in my hands, a sigh of contentment,
I'm mesmerized by your sight.

A gentle blow to cool, my senses soaring,
holding on, embracing tight.

Will I dip a biscuit or two, a digestive, a bourbon,
a tasty ginger snap.

Maybe half the packet will get consumed, as the
saucer rests on my lap.

Your wonderful colour, just the right shade,
milked to the perfect degree.

A hug in a mug, the answer to all, heaven in a
cup to me.

“Fancy a cuppa”? “Time for a brew”? “Shall I
put the kettle on”?

Always a good time, for a cup of tea, night
through to early morn.

One of life's pleasures, a way to show you care,
a hot soothing liquid gold.

Makes a bad day better, a morning brighter, a
warm cuddle in the cold.

My favourite thing, an everyday must, a
delicious cup of tea.

How do you take it? I'd love to know. No sugar,
just milk for me!

CAMPSITE AT WELLS

Judy DeCroce

United States

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/judydecroce/>

there then, there always
baking under a faithful mountain sun
like that old tent shouldered on the hill

Sitting Rock, Elephant Rock,
Whale Rock, named before I was young
for more years than known—

gentle boulders unchanged
surging rapids, high summer,
jumping rocks - chancy footholds

still humming in high summer
and scent of pine needles
there always

there now
each and all
a seasoned adult now too careful

a teen's first crush,
and still there at eight

SHE'S NOT THAT THING

Mihaela Melnic

Italy

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100066419592107>

<https://telluricverse.wordpress.com/>

Your saxophone is long gone, sold, never forgotten though
your lips are still here, but they are dry
like a forbidden kiss
given beyond the tomb.

A sinuous piece of brass will always be
your favorite, I can see it in the corner of your mouth,
no matter how much a woman throbs with love for you
she's not That Thing that makes you really breathe...

The beast you gave yourself to
stripped off your personality
and now you stagger in a tormented maze of memories
seeking for proofs
that once you were alive.



HOME ON FOUR RUBBER LEGS

Linds Sanders

United States

https://www.instagram.com/resounding_bell/

<https://lindssanders.com/>

Branded with the mark of downsizing
(I remember pressing each seed underground.)
and what was sold to grow to fit to sink to away.
Who owns the sentimentality I traded for cash.

Silver webs tie the trees together in chaos,
(I imagined dying easier than creating older versions.)
seen by the sun, weight shifted back and forth:
glinting, glinting, gone. Broken through and spit out.

Sitting in the company of mayflies ,
(I divided with the water across three oceans.)
transparent wings and upturned tails,
clear and symmetric seemingly without effort.

A daughter to paint with, another for company.
(I wanted two kids when they weren't real.)
It's remarkable I own two pairs of scissors
when I only need one.

Snorkel mask pulling my upper lip taunt
(I search for those pieces I lent to the rivers)
swallowed like breadcrumbs broken in the water
by tourists wanting color plated fish to need them.

Do you remember where you went?
(I note what to ask my dying self.)
Did your warm-blood survive off learnership?
Will you come back?

Blown across the street, king tided on shore,
(I navigate past and through and towards.)
parked in front of a gate, asked to move,
everywhere is home without being home.

THINGS I LOVE BEST

Kathy Jo Bryant

United States

There are certain things
I love the best
My favourite things
Above the rest

Writing about
My favourite things
Just tickles my heart
So it truly sings

Family is awesome
So I love to know
Lots more about them
As research can show

Sewing and quilting
Are really a blast
Just make sure your fabric
Is colorfast

Poetry is awesome
Poetry is grand
Really, only a poet
Can best understand!

ODE TO MY PERNAMBUCO PENCIL

Neal Whitman
United States

If my pencil
had an odometer
it would return to o
after a million words

had a GPS
it would find
the Coast of Bohemia

had a tire pressure gauge
it would blink
when there is a low leak

If my pencil
had a 1962 Alfa engine
it would need to be filled
with high octane lead

had standard transmission
it would be able
to switch gears

had cruise control
it would be able
to pick up the pace

If my pencil
had a DMV manual
it would qualify
for a poetic license

had an owner's manual
it would specify
its parts of speech

had a jack and air pump
it would fix
flat prose

If my pencil
had a trunk
it would have a place
for indefinite articles

had a car radio
it would play a Greek lyric
on a classical station

had signal lights
it would never
make a wrong write turn

If my poem
had power brakes
it would know
when to stop

it is completed
and closed
like the day

a favorite thing
my Pernambuco pencil
is now put away

MY FAVORITE COLOR

Mark Hudson
United States

I don't particularly ever prefer
one color to another, but I can assure,
a great printmaker like Albrecht Durer
created prints with colors much purer.
Colors are something to open the mind,
you'd miss that all if you were struck blind.
A color is not a reason to condemn,
colors not us, and colors not them.
When my nephew was quite young,
he made a comment, the laughter stung.
"My favorite color is pink!" he said.
His classmates laughed, was his face red?
Is pink really the color of girls?
Not every time, do pigs have pearls?
"Do not cast your pearls before swine,"
What kind of saying is that to define?
Colors leap out at us from every angle,
look around you, things start to dangle.
So many colors to see with your eyes,
but you don't think anything a surprise.
Films used to be black and white,
but Technicolor made it more bright.
In those days movies had a good plot,
nowadays, sometimes just not.
As a painter, the color scheme I use,
may not be perfect, it's bound to confuse.
But if the sky outside shows a tint of blue,
then that's a good reason to love the view.

MY GARDEN

Martina Robles Gallegos
United States
<https://www.martinagallegos.com/>

My garden is small but full of life.
Besides the weeds I pull out each day,
I get to watch hummingbirds and butterflies
feed from my flowers, milkweed, and zapote leaves.
I enjoy watching the small off-white butterfly
my cat tries to catch, or the big monarch
she actually did catch, and I rescued.
I sit under my guava tree and wait for the
hummingbirds,
and when they arrive, click, click, its picture time,
and I know they'll be back in fifteen minutes.
And while I wait for the hummingbirds, I snap
pictures of bumblebees that feed on the magenta
flowers.
And when neither the hummingbirds nor bees are
around, I go after the tiny butterflies my cat scans
and tries to catch but misses.
And when no creatures make their presence,
I snap pictures of different kinds of leaves,
front and back to see the different designs.
And because at times I get bored, I go weed
my front yard because weeding relaxes me.
And I avoid going inside the house at all costs,
because nothing else is more relaxing or enjoyable
than being around green or colorful things.



FOXFIRE

Don Edwards

United States

<https://www.facebook.com/don.edwards.3382>

I was there when the forest floor glowed like vigor —
Its brilliance a mystic change from dull to bright —
A chance discovery where no thing was altered but all was born in light —
Not a moon's reflected glow but a spark emanating from within —
A cool but constant effulgence that turned the mundane to delight.

I can't forget the angelic brightness within the night's dark curtained scene.
Green eyes blazing as forest floor cast shadows into the gloom,
The untouchable thing that turns the unnoticed to fascinating and unique —
A new thing not to be ignored full of a timely brief magic
That is freely given — then as quickly removed.

To have that yet again would be my greatest thrill.

But then this life ends — Its attraction disappears.
The darkness resumes as the excitement clears.
All fades along with the glow — Its fire extinguished —
Its life complete although the bodies remain.
The daylight replaces the mystic spark, overpowers the delicate incandescent blush.
Like life itself, special and delicate and brief only there for a moment then cooled and dark, Gone as a
memory with nostalgic longing — Fairies luminescence — A cool and fiery bliss no more.

MISS YOU MOM

Ranjeeta Prajapati
India

I miss you
I miss you
I miss you my dear super Mom
Miss your selfless love and goofy songs
The unconditional and unique bond
For me you are A lady with magic wand

High toned , diligent, couter July born
Who performed every task with great aplomb
You are the backbone and my pillar of strength
A lady at times cool
At times a bomb

Whenever I was down with no hope
You were there with your encouraging words and support
It's you who gave me the strength to get back on my feet
Those precious memories I cannot delete.

Though today you are not alive
Your actions and words I have kept in my hearts archive
Your blessings and your positive vibes
Are enough for my life to thrive.

God on earthmy mom
My life line

THE WAY WE WERE

Colin Butcher
United Kingdom

Ball kicking, flower picking, kite flying,
laces tying, rounders batting, racket
smacking, race running, tunes humming,
hill rolling, cricket bowling, sea
swimming, jokes grinning, roller blade
skating, new friends making, bike
speeding, knees bleeding, over the top,
no time to stop, your lunch eaten early, a
huge Curly Wurly, wagon wheels, Vesta
meals, trips to the zoo, an advert that's
new, chomping cucumber, cars like a
Humber, Vauxhalls and Fords, Holidays
abroad. Golden beaches in Spain, an old
steam train. Days at Clacton, last tram to
Acton, Museums and sites, the Christmas
lights. Santa's sack, playing right back,
eating your dinner, never getting thinner.
Skin on rice pudding, Coats with a hood
in, cold days at school, the itchy feel of
wool. Your nan's knitted jumper, Bambi
and Thumper. Airfix models, doing it's a
doddle. Sticky gluey hands, elastic bands.
Black and White films, old brick kilns.
Days out in Kent, the smell of wet
cement. Doing a bunk, caught there's a
thump. That first cigarette, your fluffy
little pet. In the woods after dark, a kiss
for a lark. A first sip of cider, your best girl
beside yer.

All gone now, but never forgotten, an
endless showreel in the privacy of your
head.

BREEZE WITH SONS

Anila Arun Pillai

Unaware I laid
Perhaps longer than longed
Purpose unknown
Trifles kept along.

Flowers smiling and delighting,
Kept aloof.
Wind that soothe,
Seldom graced for long.
Forlorn was owned.

With life in me,
Started seeing
Those known unknowns
Wondered why feel wondrous than remorse!

Shunned were the deep tight upheld grief.
Started loving two beats kicking within.
Drizzles never sound so cadence.
Flowers never had made fell such delight.

Full circle of my life achieved or not
Know not.
Life started been worth living and precious.
Waited for life with each awakening.

Children the greatest joy
I sensed and imbibed.
Learned and preached myself too,
That I needed to be with them without expecting
them to be another me.

They added light, colours and cheer
With them I lived the way life had to be lived.
With them I grow and thank life.
They gave purpose with sorrow and joy,
Equally I accord with feelings such.

There jumping with joy for jelly
My hiding tricks when need to travel
There bursting out on my very presence
My cuddling them whenever I feel
They're surprising me usually with the same bake
My delight to share for hours when they sleep
Each and every moment I feel graced
What more would I wish than to keep them health
and blessed.

THE RHYTHMIC SOUNDS OF BIRDS

Keabetswe Qobolo

Lesego Mahlakwane

South Africa

https://www.instagram.com/betswextee_/

The rhythmic sounds of birds
That hums through the woods
To heal all scars and wounds
With its sweet and gentle melody

That wipes a woman's tears
And washes away all the fears
As it never goes moody,
It hums all day on its feet
And never tires nor go to sleep

It hums all day proudly
And no one gets tired of its sound
And crys all day so loudly
While every note has its boundary

And to heal it is bound
As it hums with its gentle healing sound
I'm surely bound to heal all wounds
And it's sound is full of magical breve

While humming aloft a beautiful rowan
Every sound is one of a kind
And still continues to blow my mind

FIRST, THIS

Lisa Keeton
United States

The red of our barn was only the color of a building.
There were no losses to count on my fingers, only
mother's growing belly and then you came out.
One was for the view of corn top rows from father's shoulders.
Two was for little girls who dance pigtails and romp bottoms
and the sizzle of fish pop popping the fry pan every Sunday.
Three was whistling into blades of grass to bent air sing.
Four was for lemonade ice cubes swirling mother's tea.
Five was the crackle of marshmallows
in the fire and scary stories being just that.

What I remember most is that
the door to your bedroom was
the door to mine.

*The final three lines are borrowed from "I Remember" by Anne Sexton

WE ARE THEY

Zaneta Varnado Johns

United States

<https://www.zanexpressions.com/>

This is our season
our summer in the midst of winter
where we shed our coats, our boots
We leave behind the joyful chaos
of family and friends
We shed the stress
of everyday life
We steal away to our happy place
of paradise
We arouse years of memories
our minds free, schedule clear
ready to create this season's story.

Do you remember that couple
the elders we admired in '97?
We are they!
From the restaurant's lanai
we watched as they walked
hand in hand
Their stride as one
moving in blissful unison
down that tourist filled
sidewalk in Kona
Perhaps returning from dinner
or strolling for exercise
I imagined they were residents
fortunate to live there
In that moment
I claimed that sidewalk for us.

Twenty-four years later
we are that charming couple
walking hand in hand
claiming sidewalks wherever we go
We long for that sidewalk today
in Kona or Kihei, Kapaa or Princeville
We long for days without structure

no boundaries or stress
Only joy with time devoted only
to us, that elderly couple in Kona
Occasionally we part
only to enhance
our savored time together.

Hours and hours of favored music
songs repeated and songs anew
Our wondrous day rides
enthralled with island splendor
Our bewitching nights
enthralled in glory—ours
Sunrise awaits with roosters crowing
tropical birds serenade our walks
fragrant flowers, brides, and grooms
lava flows and tropical mist
We're seduced by the ocean
enticed by waterfalls
intrigued by rainbows
mesmerized by sunsets
radiant and golden, just like us.

What we need this year
is imagination
to encounter the pleasures
of that sidewalk in Kona
Here we are
better . . . wiser . . . cautious
held captive by winter
with willful summer mindsets
Still laughing
Still loving
Still holding hands
Still hearing that music
Still seeking rainbows
Still enjoying our sunsets
Still together
Because you loved me
in stereo
with both your heart and mind!

MAN'S BEST FRIEND

Hilary McRee Flanery
United States

A man's best friend
If you please
Is not a dog
But cheddar cheese.

A cheese whose taste
Runs sharp or mellow
Why cheese with beer
Can help a fellow

And make him look
Like a handsome hunk
When he passes some
To a girl that's drunk

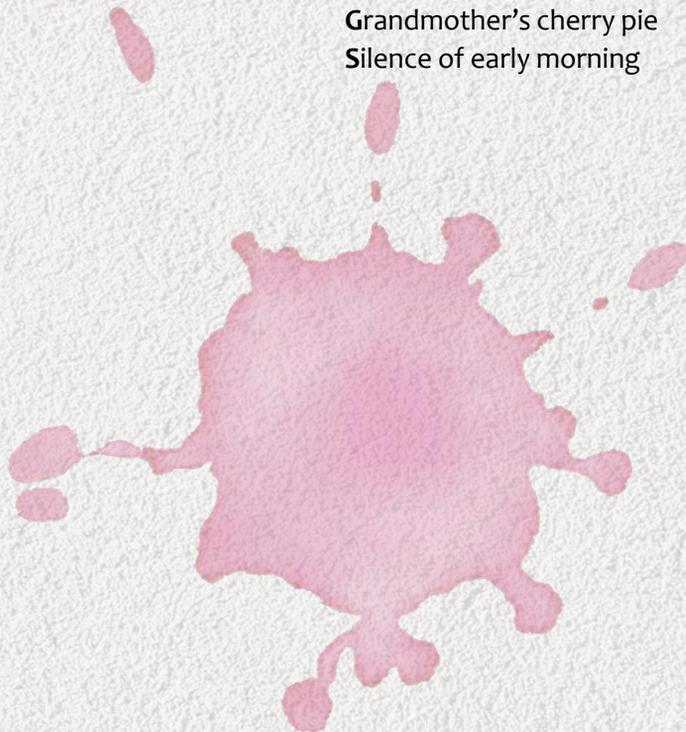
In the local pub
If truth be told
When the girls get silly
Then cheese is gold

Where drafts of beer
Make you look better
As she gulps them down
With a side of cheddar!

MY FAVES

Julie A. Dickson
United States

Feathers etched across blue sky
Air cool with promise of Autumn
Violets and purple iris, vibrant view
Orion's Belt on a starry night
Red Rocks in Arizona desert
Ice cream dripping down my hand
Tears shed during romantic film
Elephants wild in a herd
Torrential rain-washing pollen away
Holding hands walking a path
Infinite piles of books
Nobody going hungry
Grandmother's cherry pie
Silence of early morning



CURLED UP

Susi Bocks

<https://iwriteher.com/>

lazy sunday mornings
cuddles with flannel
and flesh
sly smiles
with closed eyes
and tousled about hair
where the toes
say hello
and reconnect
but the brain
hasn't quite
arrived
giving in
to an abandoning
after six days of being on
succumbing to a fluid
unscheduled, unhurried
relaxed funk

ROSES

Daya Jagers

United States

<https://www.centerandempower.org/>

the roses
sit in glory
with no way
to touch
with no arm
for reaching
and yet
touch they
do
their fragrance
surrounds
me
envelops me
the most
enticing aroma
reaches depths
of my soul
i've forgotten
in their
still beauty
i am
filled with a
radiant feeling
remembering
we have
touched before

BIRTHDAY PRESENTS FROM STARRY NIGHTS IN HELL

Nicolette Soulia

United States

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

La-didi-dada

La-didi-da

These are a few of my favorite things...

You know, my birthday is in September.

Falls in the season of falling leaves,

crunching under my feet

after they've lost their green of

spring youth and

hope without abandon.

Falls in the season of apples

ripe off the tree,

collected in a wooden basket

and made into a thousand different concoctions

that involve slicing,

baking,

mashing,

and - somewhere along the way - adding

so much sugar

that we forget the tang

that comes with consuming something with

nutrients.

Falls under the boiling sap steam

sent wafting into the air

from the maple barn of the

Vermont State Fair back when

there actually was a fair to go to and

plenty of cows and goats

to feed all the grass and oats to.

Two words: Hoodie Season.

... If you know, you know.

September is the month where

it's still warm enough

to forget that winter in Vermont fucking sucks

and that I hate shoveling snow

but cool enough to

warrant the

campfire AND a blanket

to help the beer along in warming my body

once I can see my breath after dark.

September... used to be quiet.



Birthday Presents from Starry Nights in Hell by Nicolette Soulia cont.

The quiet of starry nights with only cricket chirps to accompany them,
of children sent to bed early because school nights
are back to being a thing parents can use to get their adult time,
of staying in to read a book because there aren't five different BBQs
I'm obligated to attend...

And,
once upon a time,
the quiet of not having war, politics, and xenophobia
gift-wrapped in the American flag and
left on my doorstep as my
first and most persistent present come
the morning of my birthday.

Eleven is no longer my favorite day.
La-didi-dada, first-world problems
to bitch about birthdays when thousands of others
no longer have them.

Which is precisely why I celebrate,
don't you get the insult in refusing them?
I'm not sorry for the day I was born.
I'm ALIVE - and that's how I can honor them.

And you will see me plug my fingers into my ears,
sing la-di-da-lala over my nation's tears,
but make no mistake,
for it has nothing to do with guilt,
or shame,

or pity on my name
for having to feel happy on the day when
others can only blame
the languages they can't speak
or the faces they can't tame
with the values of my ancestors in the quest
to conquer their lands.

Make NO mistake,
I don't want to hear of it,
but it's not because I can't handle the truth
because the truth is that humanity's evils
will always fall before reaching
past the la-di-da's when there are
still so many things to save me.

I plug my ears to the nationalism that
threatens my ability to live gratefully.

MY FAVOURITE THINGS

Koyel Mitra

India

<https://koyevergreen.wordpress.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/koyel.mitra.7982>

To spice up my monotonous life,
to escape from the humdrum routine work
I flee to various garths
with verdure, plants bearing luscious fruits
and freshly blossomed flowers.
Then I pick a piece of paper
and pen down my unsaid words,
my hidden bruises and bleeding wounds.
Sometimes what I write reaches
some deaf ears: I make them listen
to their voices of conscience.
Sometimes my poems reach blind eyes:
I make them see the naked truths
of oppression and tyranny in this world.
Sometimes my words soothe tormented
souls, or even bring smiles
in their faces, or suppress a tear.
I love to empathize with people
in their joys and sorrows
and speak for them with my pen.

THE LONELY BOOK

Nolo Segundo

United States

I took a book out of the library,
Where it had stood amongst
Its brethren for 25 years, unused,
unborrowed—I know this because
Its pages were crisp, never bent
By a greedy reader, and were yellow
From time's effect, a drug that
Ages books as it does readers....

Someday I guess all books, both
The virgins and the overly used,
Even abused, will be no more: all
Replaced by sterile zeros & ones,
And my future self will never again
Have the soft pleasure of turning
Crisp pages and feeling tangible
The words of a stranger's mind.

FAVOURITES OF THE PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN

Sonia Pal
United Kingdom

Literacy and Numeracy
Cake and candy

Toys and presents
Teachers and friends

Lunchbreaks with play mates
Sleep overs and Play dates

Colouring and rhymes
Prayers and lullabies

Bonnet hats, Santa and snowman
On Easter and Christmas Fam-jams

Daddy, Mummy,
Naana ,Naani,
Uncles, aunties

YELLOW TIN BOXES

Mike Ball
United States
<https://www.facebook.com/harrumph>
<https://twitter.com/whirred>

My mother called me at work to say,
“Bill is here. He’s taking *everything!*”
My uncle came to his mother’s last apartment,
to load pickup and station wagon.

His two sisters had triaged and cleaned.
The trio’s parents were both dead now,
leaving neither castle nor treasure chest.
To the truck went appliances and furniture.

Even tiny inheritances prove grace or greed.
“If you want anything at all, *tell us right now.*”
I had coveted nothing but could quickly answer,
“I want her recipe box and the photo box.”

May he have as many fridges as he can use.
I curate a century of faces of family and friends,
and the tin box of hand-written index cards,
each holding one of Mabel’s food moments.

Bill got the loot. I got the treasure.
We both got what we wanted.

FAVOURITE THINGS

Pankhuri Sinha

India

<https://www.facebook.com/pankhuri.sinha.56/>

Wow! So many
Love of friends and family
And all things that convey it
Of course, love is not a thing
But such a deep emotion !
Expressed in words, gestures, touch and look!

In the smile of my mother
And the said words of my late father!
The glitter in the eyes of all my pups ,
And in the voices of the kittens in the neighbourhood
Glistens the moistness of happiness and my favourite things!
And when a stranger begins to endear
And the body has a new sensation
Of course, falling in love
Is the prettiest of feelings
More fulfilling than watching a flower bloom!

But till that happens
There are flowers around!
Colourful and beautiful
Charming and graceful
Symbols and motifs
But flowers are flowers !
Always and nonetheless!
Taking your hand
Into the wilderness
Asking so loudly to never be tied in a bouquet!
The wilderness is so dear
So peaceful, so healing
So calm, so pretty
Its my favourite place
Favourite thing!
Am sure its yours too!
Nothing like a walk among wild unknown flowers
Clouds floating, pollen laden breeze, scent of rain on dried soil
River gushing, the cry and call of birds
The fall of the waterfall
Space enough to bend and sit
Lie down and laugh, without being stalked ,
Space is the dearest of all things!

THE MOST BEAUTIFUL THINGS

Brittney Marie
United States

Sunrise
Sunshine
Painting nature is divine.

Summer
Sunset
Moments we don't forget.

Pumpkins
Black cats
Hanging up spooky bats.

Love
Laughter
Is what we're after.

Hugs
Kisses
Please, grant our wishes.

Kindness
Caring
It's fun to be a little daring.

Cheesy pizza
Meatballs and spaghetti
Let's toss rainbow confetti!

Fresh seafood
Sushi rolls
Ordering delicious poké bowls

Chocolate
French fries
The smell of warm apple pies.

Cozy sweaters
Snow days
Going on winter getaways.

Saltwater
Palm trees
Spending time in the Florida Keys.

Fall foliage
Whitecaps
Are each part of my life-maps.

Writing
Poetry
Are what set my soul free.

Gratitude
Open heart
Each day is a brand-new start.

Babies
Faith and wings
Are the most beautiful things.

NOW

Richa Sharma
Singapore

In paradise, all lovely things come to be
Shining lights and, perhaps, angels to see
Some people's ideas of paradise is different
perhaps earthly, irreligious, irreverent
spirituality found in the smile of an urchin
lost cause of mother earth to fight for and win
activism beyond the hapless keyboard
cleaned up space, to declutter and unhoard
smile first thing, every morning, to none
leisure walks in the woods, a stroll, or a run
paintings to draw and projects to try
tears of happiness and buckets to cry
fragrant nights of drizzles and petrichor
cups and cups of endless tea to pour
to wake up in the arms of love
even if my own, that is enough
finding pareidolic solace in the clouds
a lone raft of assurance in a sea of doubts
my mother's hands cupping my cheek
good hair days and eyebrows on fleek
silly laughter I share with my brood
a novice's baking or experimental food
Gratitude after a long hard day
These are a few, I daresay
Favourite things are blessings to count
Treasures to be cherished and memories to be found
Keep them close and simplify the wants
The 'Cans' don't challenge as much as the 'Cants'
Favourite things are relegated to a 'later time'
Why not 'now' is your time to shine?
Come now, give yourself more reasons to smile
Life's running all this while
That walk in the park, that meeting with friends
That hunger to read which never ends
Own it now, live this life in your favourite things
Tomorrow too late for the delights it brings

A FAIRY TALE (HAIBUN)

Vidya Shankar

India

<https://www.instagram.com/vidya.shankar.author/>

I ate the chocolate without sharing it with him. It upset him. I know he was pretending, yet I felt bad about not sharing the chocolate with him. But that was the last piece of chocolate in the fridge. And, it wasn't such a big piece. Moreover, it was my favourite chocolate.

“Dear _____, Please find attached the video recitation of my poem for your anthology. Hope it comes up to your expectations. Regards, _____”

I shouldn't have eaten the chocolate all by myself. Maybe he wasn't pretending to be angry. I have never known him to make such a fuss about chocolate. He knows I love those sweet treats.

I am not going to think about this anymore. It is making me feel miserable. And it diverts me from this email I have to send out.

We made my recitation video together today. In the little space we have in our cosy, one bedroom apartment, he arranged for me to sit as if in luxury and placed the tripod so cleverly, that the light fell full upon my face without creating shadows. I read my poem like a queen. I had let my long hair down, untied, not in its usual braids.

After the recording, we sat shoulder to shoulder, watching the finished video. He took my hand in his, snuggled his face in my long tresses and proclaimed he was falling in love with me all over again.

Little did we know we would quarrel over the chocolate in a while.

Beyond childishness
And seductive philtre cascades
Love's magnificence

THE BEST MEMORIAL

Lakshman Bulusu
United States

(On Robert Frost farm in Derry, NH)

Derry farm bears *a boy's will*,
as he poetized his experiences on this farm.
It retains its originality along with the verses.

The kitchen with old cups and plates,
The dining table with forks and spoons,
the bedrooms, and more--
each sight of them seems to evoke a verse.
And complementing this,
the ink bottle and beside it the pen with its nib.

Each sight surrounding the farm
seems to capture the light of those days,
of a *strolling bard* of New Hampshire,
on this farm.

This homestead with its farm,
bordered by a rocky fence,
breathes an air of fragrant yester years,
to immortalize itself as the best memorial,
as ageless as the poet and his poems.

My three-year-old grand-boy, moody from his nap, drags his blanket to the patio, sits down to wake up, watches me watering flowers. Suddenly he jumps up, points, no longer half asleep, "Papa, you're making magic!"

ARBOR ARTIST

Carl "Papa" Palmer
United States

<https://www.facebook.com/carlpapa.palmer.1/>

garden hose rain
showers flower baskets
spraying pastel prism mists
onto rays of summer sunshine
papa painting rainbows in the sky

papa painting rainbows in the sky
onto rays of summer sunshine
spraying pastel prism mists
showers flower baskets
garden hose rain

Starry Nights Cafe

The wild beat of booming music
Reverberates through the cafe
Songs fly out the windows
Filling the balmy night with joy
Energetic dancers weave
around and in between the tables
Pouring into the street
a long line of laughing
hand holding revelers
Frantically trying to keep up as the
music accelerates faster and faster
Waiters maneuver large trays
of enticing delicious dishes
amid the crushed room
The rustic brick walls and rafters
are pulsating as everyone
is up, out of their seats
Alive with fantastic, exotic dancing
Partners and singles mixing
to the changing, charging beat
Dots of swirling, multicolored lights
Reflect off their happy faces
Paper napkins and confetti rain down
Illuminated by sparkling chandeliers
Carefree dancers lost in the music
Forgetting their troubles in the starry night

STARRY NIGHTS CAFÉ

Jane Fitzgerald
United States
<https://www.facebook.com/JanePoetry/>
<https://www.amazon.com/Jane-H.-Fitzgerald/e/Bo1MSW2FLO>

UNCERTAINTY

By Andy B. Hook

United States

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

<https://twitter.com/andybhook>

<https://www.andybhook.com/>

My tastes are changing with age.

I sit quietly, drinking coffee, and watch the weather. I do not have a hangover this morning as I fill the bird-feeder and wait. Two birds arrive shortly after I pour the seeds into the tray. The promptness of their arrival surprises me.

The birds are small and yellow. One is slightly bigger and brighter than its companion with a red spot on its head. The smaller bird has more gray on its wings than the larger bird. I decide that the larger, more colorful bird, is a male, and the smaller bird is female based on my extremely limited knowledge of birds. Like ducks, I assume.

I could very easily learn what type of birds these are, but I don't. I may be old enough to spend the mornings of my vacation watching birds, but I'm not old enough to learn their names. Ageing is a strange process. The aches and pains do not surprise me: I earned those. Nor does the fascination with bowel movements shock me. What seems odd to me is the way that my tastes age. I find myself watching more documentaries. Not because I feel that I should expand my understanding, but because they genuinely seem more interesting than that show people keep talking about. I read Hemmingway. I listen to Led Zeppelin. I eat brussels sprouts.

UNCERTAINTY BY ANDY B. HOOK

I watch birds.

The birds take a bite. They look around, nervously. They eat some more. They look around. A larger, red bird, lands on the feeder. The yellow birds drive it away. Then they eat. Then they look around.

The last time I visited the Hawaiian Islands I stayed in a big house with a load of friends. We ate, drank, and inhaled substances while rejoicing in our youth and friendship. They have children now and live-in various suburbs. Last month I too moved to the suburbs.

Perhaps if I had children, I would be at a resort right now, working on my swing while the kids played in water and “the wife” got day-drunk on colorful drinks with umbrellas. I don’t have kids, and never will, so I drink coffee on a quiet patio in a remote part of an island. And I watch birds.

On the second morning the same yellow birds return to enjoy the seeds. I assume they are the same birds, but if they were two different birds of the same species, I would not know the difference. This time a local cat notices the birds and takes an interest. The cat walks low to the ground, moving slowly. He hides beneath my chair. I know that the cat is a male, because I have confidence in my knowledge of mammalian anatomy.

The birds eat. They look around.

They fly away.

The cat walks casually out from beneath me, and looks at the feeder, disappointed but intrigued. I scratch his back for a few moments before he wanders off. I reflect on this cat-and-bird drama that revolved around this little wooden box, that is shaped roughly like a human house, for some odd reason. I pretend that I just enjoyed a view of unbiased nature as I stared at a nine-inch cube of fashioned wood suspended from an awning.

I look down at the rolling hills, blanketed in flora, descending toward the ocean. I cannot count the number of birds that I can hear. Birds fly from tree to tree, eating berries and seeds that I cannot name out of trees and shrubs I rarely even notice. Life is defined by what it does. Life engages in chemical reactions. I still haven’t had a movement today. Life has complexity. Life develops and evolves.

Life reproduces.

So, what am I?



**“THESE ARE
A FEW OF MY
FAVOURITE THINGS”**

*Our September
Features*

PRATIBHA SAVANI

Author Feature



https://www.instagram.com/pratibha_poetryart/

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

Everyone has a journey, so here's mine....

I'm Pratibha, a poet and artist from the UK. I never knew I was writing poetry when I first started to write. Pouring my emotions out onto paper, when I was struggling with eczema as a teenager over 20 years ago, which affected my mental health, which, at the time, I didn't realise. Writing it down helped and so my writing began as a student. I would re-read them later, amazed with the rawness I had written, knowing one day, I wanted to publish them, to help others facing similar situations. Fast forward to October 2020 and I finally published these poems into my debut poetry book "Tangles + Knots", a journey of hope and self-belief, intertwined with my mindfulness art and mental wellbeing themes.

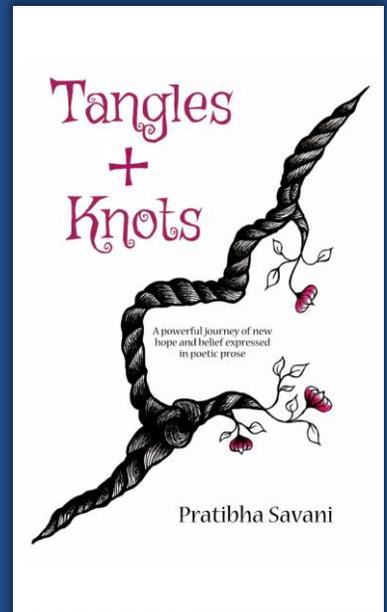
Since my book release, I have been active on social media, whilst learning about the world of poetry and publications!! I got back into writing again that same year (March 2020), during the UK Covid lockdown, publishing online on Cosmofunnel. I discovered I could still write! It helped me build my confidence and my poem "Night" won the April 2020 contest. Recently, my poems have been published in two anthologies - "Jane Austen: thoughts and opinions" and "Peace and Love Inks Around the World" and I have gained recognition for themed contests on "The Passion of Poetry" facebook group, such as coming first place for "Hands of Time."

PRATIBHA SAVANI – AUTHOR FEATURE

This August, "Tangles + Knots" was the featured book for the "Garden Book Club", a global online event. My book was truly embraced within this group and it created an amazing positive vibe and adding colour to my mindfulness art was enthusiastically received, giving my book its total uniqueness. I actually got back into drawing again, creating the cover and artwork for my book, starting with the "Tangle Tree of Life" (back cover) and then the other illustrations followed in the same style, with the leaves and flowers representing our ability to grow and move on.

I am inspired by nature, science, spirituality and art and mindfulness continues to play an important role in my explorative writing, with my Instagram page, of bite sized mindfulness quotes on "Pratibha Poetry Art". Between working part time in education, being a busy mum and planning a little mindfulness book, I still enjoy the freedom of being creative and writing in my sketchbook without any lines or rules!!

“We are all extraordinary in the ordinary things we do”
With Love, Pratibha x



My journey begins as a teenager struggling with eczema and experiencing mental illness. Expressed in poetic prose in its original form, giving a real insight, conveyed across five themes: What a Nightmare it has been, If Only I could, some Hope to change it all, Complete Faith for my spiritual needs and to escape into my Unreality.

Gaining new strength and belief and a path of self discovery, my Tangles + Knots is here to represent hope in your everyday journey. Incorporated within is my artwork to bring some mindfulness and peace, another element from my heart as you read my words with ease.

https://www.amazon.co.uk/Tangles-Knots-Pratibha-Savani/dp/1916276695/ref=sr_1_1?crid=1POA7J5OFID1D&dchild=1&keywords=pratibha+savani&qid=1628627995&srefix=pratibha%2Caps%2C149&sr=8-1

DREAM ON

I see it so clearly and I believe it is real
Yet I cannot deny
This is a figment of my imagination
However, dreams create something special
Some hope and a road to walk on
It is like the unconscious world
Is speaking to you about
Your next move in life
It is like seeing the vivid pictures
In your head before it has even begun
But then again
The other purpose is of escapism
The fantasy world
Lives on in the dream world
As it can never be in reality
It can in the figment of my imagination
It would be amazing to leap into
The dreamy unconscious world
Anytime I desired
So that I cannot tell from fantasy and reality
They submerge together
And exist to complement each other
You see the dream world can exist in the real world
If you let it
So let it

MIRROR MIRROR

“Mirror mirror on the wall
I see you looking at me
And I do not like it at all!”

“Mirror mirror on the wall
You are an illusion
I hate you all!
Don't reflect on me
Because that reflection
Is not as real as me!”

HOPE

The strength to go on
To face my troubled mind
To face my delicate skin
To reach deep inside
And pull out my soul
So to slap me across the face
The realisation
To wake up now
And see what you're doing
The strength to fight back
And change the future
Forever
Reclaim your life
And bring together new hope

JOHN CHINAKA ONYECHE

Poet Feature

John Chinaka Onyeche (Rememberajc) is a poet from Nigeria, writing from the metropolitan city of Port Harcourt Rivers State.

He is an undergraduate student at Ignatius Ajuru University Of Education Port Harcourt Rivers State, Nigeria. He is Pursuing his first degree in History and Diplomatic Studies

His writings are more on spoken word poetry and have appeared in many journals/magazines online within and outside Nigeria.

Places like Spillwords, Melbourne culture corner, Nnoko, TunaFishjournal, Moreporkpress, Nymphspublications, Ethelzine, Youthmagazine, Acumen, Zindaily, pawnerspaper and conceitmagazine.

John Chinaka Onyeche (Rememberajc) loves to pen down every thought of his heart and he wishes to be found in the soil of literary world someday as he works on his first poetry collection titled: I AM FINDING MYSELF



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

<https://twitter.com/apostlejohnchin>

MY ANCESTOR'S ANXIOUSNESS

In their anxiousness to win favours,
In the eyes of the navigators, men across the sea
They gave them our most valued possessions
Our young and vibrant men and women
The strength of our fatherland,
Even the gods were silent and blind
Remembering not our dances at the full moon
And we became like birds without nests
For the prince over the sea foresees
My ancestors and their anxiousness
He found nothing else to equal his favour
But the strength of his fatherland
The nourished bull milked to death at will
African young men and women
Shipped across the high Atlantic sea
Some against their own will cried
And many for the evil sown as conquest
Volunteered on board the ship of no return
In my ancestor's anxiousness to gain
From the men at the seashore as gods
He gave his land for exploitation and siege
Human and natural resources exploited
Our devotion to worship the gods
In turn, diverted to the men seen at the sea
In their anxiousness to gain, Africans sold their future

1441

The indefinite that became definite,
You could have looked for a way out.
Bringing with you to my ancestors,
Good news instead of humiliations.
You are a curse to the events of time alas!

Antam, you who hunted to and fro,
The sea lions in the souls of kinsmen,
You hunted them like a good hunter,
Valuing their labour as the oil,
And their blood on the vessels cries,
Africa is hunted as sea lions ashore.

Rio de Oro the land where stood first,
Prester John the legendary priest of Africa,
At your name, men were captured alas!
Looked upon to see if they could find you,
Men presented to you oh! Prince Henry,
For we understand humanity at heart,
You rather have chosen to raid and enslave us,
Quest for the annihilation of people.

1434, the footsteps are seen at the shore,
They were not the lion skins you seek,
but of my kinsmen's backs, you torn,
1441 the blood of my ancestors' dirge
Flowing in the Atlantic Ocean red
They were not the oil of the sea lions
Their gold, in your quest you made them cry

JOHN CHINAKA ONYECHE – POET FEATURE

FRIENDS OF TIME

Friends of time
Years in number row
we count the stars
With our backs lay on
The ground we rolled out
Like rains in the skies
Falling to make mighty
Ocean on the earth surface
The paths we trod on

Friends of time
We stood hands round held
With fist pointing upwards
Gazing at the glittering moon
The wake of a new era echoes
We see the moon is older now
But our love withstood times

Friends of time
In the washing sand, we built
Our homes like memory lines
The abode we reside not in
Because it washed off on our wake
Trees we climbed together tells
Memories are to be a reminiscence

Friends of time
In time we wandered like
From whence the time goes
Like a push, it aimed at us
With just a push we launched in
Like strangers, we staggered
And time tells what becomes of us

Friends of time
In wars, we lay behind
Each other we fought with joy
Glancing at each other's face
The hope of victory in this battle assured
The realities of love surpassed wars
Lite the candle again tonight
Beam the rays of this light
Friends of time

DYING LOVE

There was a time your portrait
Is on this wall end hang as
The most prestigious award
That I won your heart at last

Each night before my sleep
I would gait tiptoeing there
Having a gaze at the image
The only imprint you left off

The echoes of the night birds
And fears of your preference
Of wealth over true love sting
As the walls rheum in dust

The cracks at the spot where
You left the only remembrance
The choice portrait of yourself
They speak of your dying love

SARFRAZ AHMED

Author Feature



Sarfraz Ahmed lives and works in the East Midlands UK, and is professionally trained as a careers adviser, and has branched out as a trainer, assessor, and careers writer. He has been writing poetry for over nineteen years. He has contributed his poems to many anthologies published over the years, including *Paint the Sky with Stars*, published by Re-invention UK and many others by the United Press, as well as many other contributions online. His debut collection of poetry, *Eighty-Four Pins* was published in 2020; it was well-received, receiving great reviews globally. He published *My Teacher's an Alien!* a children's book in collaboration with illustrator Natasha Adams. <https://green-cat.co/books> (November 2020)

In January 2021, he published 'Two Hearts' A Journey Into Heartfelt Poetry with Annette Tarpley, this book became an instant Amazon bestseller, and reached a global audience.

He is also a moderator and administrator for Passion of Poetry, and will be involved in their first anthology. He is a collaborator and has written many poems with other poets such as Jack Tomlinson, Dennis Brown, Annette Tarpley and Pratibha Savani to name a few.

In May 2021 he was recognised as a World Contributor Poet, recognised for his contribution to poetry by Administrators, Poetry and Literature World Vision, decided to feature the contemporary poets of the world who are globally renowned, acclaimed or recognized, distinguished or personalised poetically.

He has a growing legion of fans online, on Facebook, also on Instagram Page [#sarfrazahmedpoet](#). He is also a regular on the open mic circuit and has done many sessions in the New York / USA. His poetry is also available on YouTube subscribe to the YouTube channel 'The Poets Lounge'.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/sarfrazahmedcareersadviser/>

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

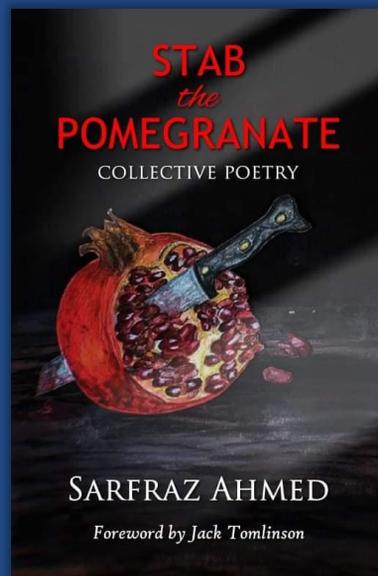
<https://twitter.com/Sarfraz76194745>

SARFRAZ AHMED – AUTHOR FEATURE

Stab the Pomegranate, is the fourth book by poet and writer, Sarfraz Ahmed, whose first book 'Eighty-Four Pins' published in 2020, introduced his work to the world, subsequently followed in the same year by My Teacher's an Alien! It was in 2021, that he entered the global market with Two Hearts a Journey into Heartfelt Poetry co-written by Annette Tarpley that became an instant bestseller on Amazon.

Stab the Pomegranate – Collective Poetry, is essentially two books in one, the first part introduces you to the world of 'The Secret Poet' a short autobiography that tells the story of how he began writing in secret, and how he branched into become published and expanding his fan base globally. 'That was Then', is essentially a retrospective of many years of writing and includes his early successes including 'Stan the Pomegranate' Cactus' and a 'God's Teardrop Exploded', which were all published in anthologies and journals. He is also an administrator for Facebook site 'The Passion of Poetry'. His work has appeared in many anthologies and collections over the years and is also available on YouTube.

Stab The Pomegranate – Collective Poetry is my fourth book, this collection is very personal and intimate collection, a bridge connecting my early work to my present. This collection of poetry brings together some of the much loved early poems together with some new work, a collection that demonstrates boundless creativity together with an endless love of poetry.



Stab the Pomegranate, is split into two parts; This is then, the first ten years, and 'This is now, where I am now at as a writer and poet, essentially both chapters brings together the first twenty years of a journey to a full circle, the first twenty years of a poet.

https://www.amazon.com/Stab-Pomegranate-Collective-Sarfraz-Ahmed/dp/B09CRNQ5W3/ref=sr_1_1?dc_hild=1&keywords=sarfraz+ahmed&qid=1630461834&sr=8-1

SARFRAZ AHMED – AUTHOR FEATURE

I STILL REMEMBER

I still remember,
Sitting in those stay out late cafes,
And those cocktail bars,
Walking in the moonlight,
Dancing under the stars,

I still remember,
Looking into your eyes,
All night long,
They seemed to be saying,
Something to me,
Just like a jazz song,

I still remember,
Waking up next up to you,
Staring for hours,
At a truly beautiful view,

At the beauty of your face,
Time seemed to stand still,
And took me to another place,
Where I am standing next to you,
In front of a congregation,
I am saying the words;
“I do”.

AROUND HERE

I remember the bread and butter drama,
Of the kitchen sink,
When the plates went flying,
I began to think,

Hiding in my bedroom,
I became another teenager,
Lost in rock and roll,
The music went through my ears,
And consumed me whole,

Out of my bedroom window I could see,
Kids playing with skipping ropes and other things,
I would often join them in the park,
And ride on the swings,

In the summer I'd sit and watch the girls go by,
Although we never got the courage to go up to them,
To give it a try,

I'd spend hours lying on the grass,
Looking at the shapes the clouds made,
Just having fun,
Doing this and more,
In the hot summer sun,

A day lasted forever,
But we still wanted more,
Even after we'd eaten all the bubble gum,
From the playground floor,

Now I am all grown up,
And a thousand miles away,
I sometimes think of those days,

I think about these memories,
And wish they'd never disappear,
The memories of my childhood,
When I used to live around here,

BLOW ME A KISS

Blow me a kiss,
The stirring kind,
Warm and gentle,
Strong enough to blow my mind,
To lift me up,
Take me far, far away,
To a brand new heaven,
To a brand new day,

To a place where everything is brand new,
Where I am surrounded by such beauty,
Where I am surrounded by only you,

Blow me a kiss,
Let it penetrate and devour me,
Tower over me,
Let it rain all over me,
Penetrate through skin and bone,
Blow me a kiss,
So I know that I am not alone.

Taken from 'Eighty-Four Pins - Poetry Collection'

BEHIND YOUR EYES

Behind your eyes,
I've seen a slow demise,
Something once beautiful,
Now glazed over,
With a sense of loss,

These days there is no sunset,
There is no sunrise,
Behind your eyes,
I see only black fog,
A mist that blows,
Penetrates deep below,

That circles and spirals,
Sends a torpedo,
That runs rings,
Sends it spiraling out of control,
I see someone that is incomplete,
That is not whole,

Everyday I search for something,
That I can't put my finger on,
Perhaps searching for a love,
That is well and truly gone,

TAK ERZINGER

Author Feature

TAK Erzinger is an American/Swiss poet and artist with a Colombian background.

Her poetry has been featured in *Bien Acompañada* from Cornell University, *The Muse* from McMaster University, *River and South Review*, *Wilkes University* and more. Her debut chapbook entitled, “*Found: Between the Trees*” was published by Grey Border Books, Canada 2019. Her then, unpublished poetry manuscript “*At the Foot of the Mountain*” was short-listed by the *Eyelands Book Awards 2019* and *Willow Run Book Awards 2020*.

It has now been published by Floricanto Press out of California, 2021. Her first audio drama *Stella’s Constellation* has been produced by *Alt.Stories* and *Fake Realities Podcasts*, out of the UK.

She lives in a Swiss valley with her husband and cats.

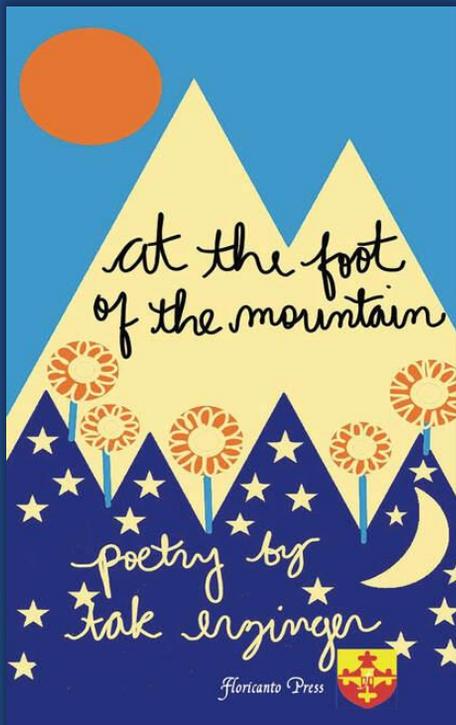


<https://www.facebook.com/poetryvabond>

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TAK ERZINGER– AUTHOR FEATURE



https://www.amazon.de/-/en/TAK-Erzinger/dp/1951088255/ref=zg_bs_nr_14167075031_15?_encoding=UTF8&psc=1&refRID=BV7ZoNDHoP7QGVMMW3KA

TAK Erzinger brings to radiant life the feelings of solitude, trauma, and healing in her poetry collection *At the Foot of the Mountain*. With deft precision, Erzinger puts tangible sensation to events and emotions that often exist only in the ephemeral space.

A child of multiple cultures, Erzinger weaves a tapestry of her Colombian/American beginnings in poems such as *Latin Roots* and *Menage a Trois*. Her soul is brought forth, unflinching, to answer questions of identity and belonging, like in *Canto de mi Sangre*. These are recurring themes that she examines with unabashed honesty. In the cataclysms of being lost and found, it is confronting the pain that brings forth the healing.

Mental wellbeing and the voyage towards it are shown through a lens of deep familiarity and gentleness, like a dear friend sitting at the kitchen table. Alongside her poems of heritage, Erzinger also writes of her home in Switzerland. Using images of nature, she reveals glimpses of her path from illness to thriving life, and how that path is never a straight line. The namesake poem at the end of the collection speaks of this riot of emotion: *wild/ fights that we've fought/wild/ trails through the forest /wild/ at each other's side /wild/ at the foot of the mountain*.

At the Foot of the Mountain is a celebration of life in all forms, from loss to love, from identity to family. It is Erzinger's remarkable ability to make real the unspoken that sets this collection apart.



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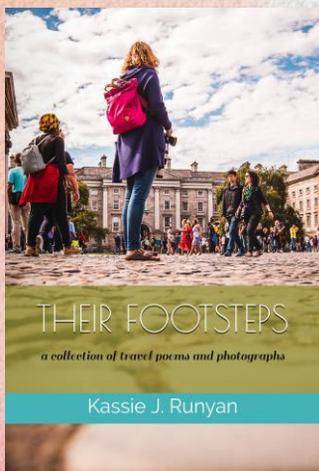
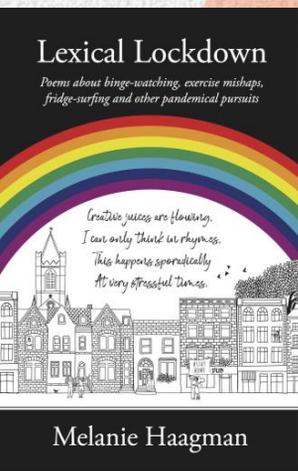
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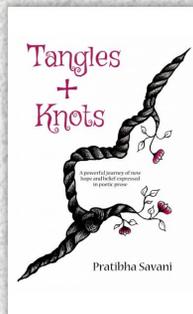
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RECOMMENDED BOOKS

TANGLES + KNOTS

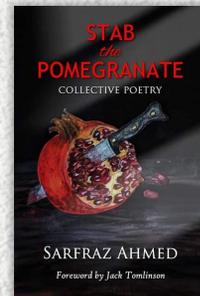
My journey begins as a teenager struggling with eczema and experiencing mental illness. Expressed in poetic prose in its original form, giving a real insight, conveyed across five themes: What a Nightmare it has been, If Only I could, some Hope to change it all, Complete Faith for my spiritual needs and to escape into my Unreality.



https://www.amazon.co.uk/Tangles-Knots-Pratibha-Savani/dp/1916276695/ref=sr_1_1?crid=1POA7J5OFID1D&dchild=1&keywords=pratibha+savani&qid=1628627995&srefix=pratibha%2Caps%2C149&sr=8-1

STAB THE POMEGRANATE

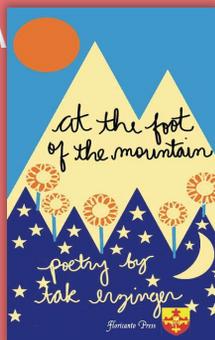
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FLIP REQUIEM

Poetry. "In this deft and prescient collection, D. R. James has both diagnosed our 'dizzy symptom' and scratched out the vital prescription: holistic poems that enact a rigorous mind's engagement with this tenuous age, or what James calls, with his wink-light touch, 'the more sober / though no less precarious rest of our lives'..."

- Chris Dombrowski



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RECOMMENDED BOOKS

Techno Flower

Techno Flower is a collection of poetry that is as vivid and as colorful as the title implies. From alcohol, to love, to the dangers of greed, Techno Flower covers all walks of life. Without holding any punches, Techno Flower is a collection of some of the most interesting poetry to come out this decade.



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RISING

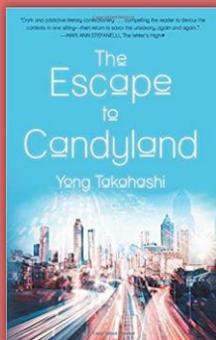
RISING reveals flashes of life's most intimate moments filled with love, hope, remorse, longing, and anguish. We root for the one who reaches for happiness but is not yet able to grasp it. We wince for the one who picks at festering wounds that never quite heal. We are breathless as we run alongside those who chase after a thirst that can never be quenched.



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The Escape to Candyland

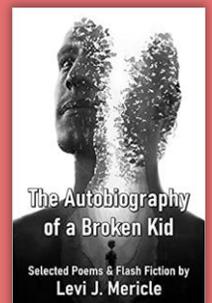
In Yong Takahashi's Atlanta, the immigrants, preacher's wives, strippers, and shopkeepers who pass each other on the street all have a secret story to tell. Caught between generations of family, regrets from their pasts, conflicting cultures, and even countries, each character has a reason to fiercely guard their secret lives, even as they learn that the truth must escape.



<https://www.amazon.com/Escape-Candyland-Yong-Takahashi/dp/1970137878>

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We find here an immense variety of poems. Most important from the literary point of view, the style of the poet has a richness of effect that creates an enduring fascination.

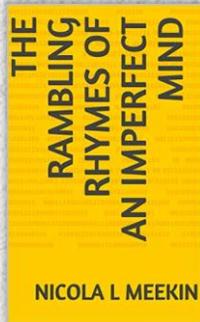


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The Rambling Rhymes of an Imperfect Mind

A matter of fact observation of modern day life, depicted in poetry, by a scatty 40 something year old woman. From heartfelt rhymes inspired by loved ones, to a sideways view of lockdown, this book covers many different themes.

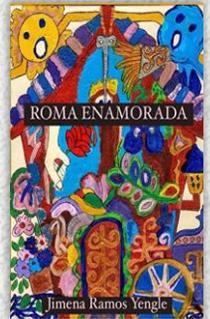


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Roma Enamorada: Retrato De la experiencia humana

Hay princesas que deciden creer. Pragmáticos incurables y duquesas empoderadas en el ajedrez.

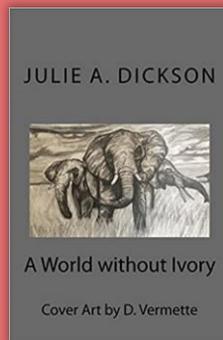
Trovadores que no entienden del querer, acuarelistas con dilemas y estrés. Pianistas italianos con el alma en alquiler.
Roma es como la ves



<https://www.amazon.com//Jimena-Sofia-Ramos-Yengle-ebook/dp/Bo8VQDDWQ4>

A World Without Ivory

N.H. Poet Julie A. Dickson presents a short collection of poems, poignantly written in support of wild elephants, as well as captive circus and zoo elephants. Proceeds benefit SAVE NOSEY NOW, Inc. [a non-profit Elephant education/rescue organization]



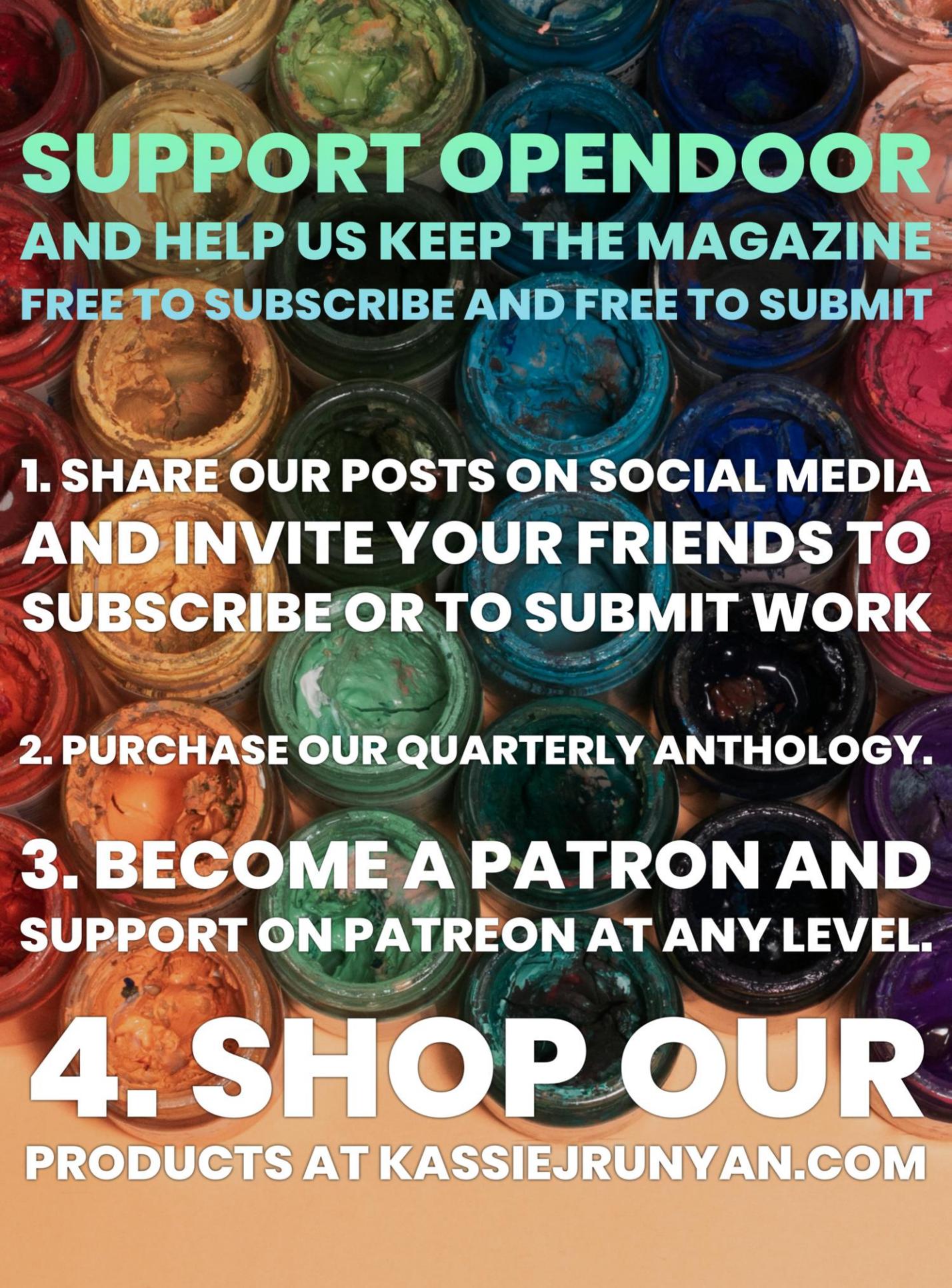
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