

Everscribe

M a g a z i n e

ISSUE NO. 12

SOMNIA ET CHARTA

Embrace the art of the written word in Everscribe's one-year anniversary issue, showcasing incredible works from our talented writers.

everscribemag.com



Table of Contents

Editor's Note	iii
Everscribe's Annual Report Survey	1
Scribe's Corner	2
Fictional Short Story	3
Zary Fekete Layers	4
Units	6
Carla Capizzi One Last Turn	8
Aryaman Aggarwal A Most Misfortunate Morning	11
Poetry	13
Susan Wilson Orchestral Manoeuvres in the Park	14
E. C. Traganas ROUNDEL	15
Sam Aureli Oars at Rest	16
Lost in Stanzas	17
Sabrina Tolve Fissure and Flame	18
Syed Ali Raza Naqvi Zenith	21
Alan Hardy In The Water	22
Tukur Ridwan Legend of Àbíkéú	23
Why I Hate to Tell of Feelings That Don't Dwell	25
David Stewart Things Unsent	26
Sanjeev Sethi Inspiritment	27
Cadency	28

About Everscribe

Everscribe is a non-profit digital literary magazine dedicated to showcasing exceptional writing and talent. We invite individuals from all backgrounds, experiences, and ages to share their work with us.

Our primary goal is to showcase writing that is impactful, beautifully crafted, and thought-provoking — stories, poems, and essays that leave a lasting impression! We want to break down barriers and provide opportunities for all writers to showcase their talent and creativity, as we believe that talent should speak for itself. Everscribe aims to be a launching pad for those who have longed to share their stories but felt limited by traditional publishing routes. Our submissions are always open, and our process is free, easy, and unlimited!



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Table of Contents

JK Miller	What the Dog Gets Out of It	29
Amaryllis Loven	As the Stars Omit	30
Debdutta Pal	Inherited Hurt	31
Sean Wang	The Locked Open Door	33
Debo-Badmus Olufolasi	Where's my person?	34
Uchechukwu Onyedikam	DIVINE COMEDY HOUSE	35
Andrea Tillmanns	A little more	36
Plamen Vasilev	Queen of the rain	37
	The strong	38
Arthur Neong	The Shape Of Rain	39
Ronita Chattopadhyay	A prayer for these times	40
Acknowledgements		iv
Future Issues		v

Everscribe's Platforms

Join the conversation and fun in Everscribe's welcoming community across various platforms.

Visit our official [Discord](#) server and reach out to us on [X](#), and [Instagram](#)!



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Editor's Note

Dear Scribe,

It is with immense joy that I write my first *Editor's Note* for Everscribe! Stepping into the role of Editor-in-Chief is an incredible honor, and I am deeply thankful to our founder, Dalia Alby, for her trust in passing me the torch. Her visionary leadership over this past year has built a beautiful, global community around the written word, and I am committed to nurturing and growing that legacy.

My mission is clear: to continue our dedication to publishing exemplary poetry and prose from authors worldwide and to deliver these carefully curated issues to you, our readers, every single month. To everyone who has been on this journey with us since the very beginning – this issue is in celebration of you! As a small token of our appreciation for your support, we've provided a special surprise for you at the end of this issue. Keep an eye out for it!

Curating Issue No. 12, *Somnia et Charta*, has been a profound privilege. In these pages, you will find some of the most beautiful and moving works I have had the pleasure of encountering. The authors featured here have gifted our editorial team with their dreams on paper, and I cannot wait for you to experience their magic.

Over this past year, Everscribe has attracted a strong and wonderfully talented audience of readers and writers. We have loved and cherished every single piece you've shared with us. Thank you for being the most vital part of this story. And to the future – we are just getting started.

Here's to reflecting on the past and reaching toward the future in Everscribe Magazine.

With warmth and appreciation,



Editor-in-Chief

◆ *You're Invited To* ◆

Everscribe's Annual Report Survey

In celebration of our one-year anniversary, we want to hear your experiences with Everscribe Magazine. Therefore, we invite ***all our readers and writers*** to complete our annual report survey!

Everscribe's Annual Report will be ***published November 1st, 2025.***



[Click here](#) to get your responses in
before the deadline!



Scribe's Corner



Word of the Month!

The Scribes have spoken... The word of the month is: **Ephemeral**!

Ephemeral captures the exquisite beauty of our first year - a dazzling collection of moments, each brilliant and unique. It is the shared spark of an idea, the last page of a journal, the quiet comfort of a community found. To name this year *ephemeral* is to honour the vibrant, living quality of every story told, every connection, and every issue we created together. These moments, like fireflies against the dark night, shine all the more brightly. They remind us to be fully present, to find magic in the now, and to carry the light of these memories forward as we begin our next chapter.

Want to help choose our next Word of the Month? Vote in our polls on Discord and social media!

Literary Technique Spotlight

This month, we turn our spotlight to **Anaphora**. Anaphora is the art of resonance, the deliberate repetition of a word or phrase that builds a cadence of thought and feeling. It is not mere repetition, but a rising tide—each wave of words lending power to the next, transforming language into a force of nature. This technique underscores urgency, underscores grief, underscores hope, until the meaning is as much in the pulse as it is in the words themselves.

Charles Dickens, in *A Tale of Two Cities*, writes:

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness..." With the steady beat of "it was the...", Dickens immerses us not in a single truth, but in the vast, churning sea of an era's contradictions.

Question for our Scribes...

This month, we mark a milestone that feels both vast and vanishing. In the spirit of the ephemeral, we ask: What is one moment from this past year - a feeling, a glimpse, a silence - that has stayed with you, too deep for words?

Send us your answers in our official Discord community, or post them on X, Bluesky, and Instagram using **#ScribesCorner**.

Fictional Short Story

Zary Fekete

Layers

Gabor's knuckles rapped against the Lakatos's door, the sound swallowed by wood. Behind him, his mother shifted the cake plate ...a dense *dobos torta* layered with caramel and chocolate... her knuckles white around the edges. Shoes shuffled behind the door, a chain rattled, and Mrs. Lakatos appeared, her eyes red-rimmed but dry. She clucked like a hen, ushering them into the dim foyer with brisk, practiced warmth.

"Köszönöm, köszönöm," she murmured, taking the cake. Her fingers brushed Gabor's mother's sleeve... a fleeting touch that spoke of shared history Gabor couldn't access. The apartment smelled of wax polish and stewed plums, undercut by the faint medicinal scent of old age. Mrs. Lakatos lived on the first floor; Gabor and his mother on the third, directly above the old man's bedroom where he'd taken his last breath yesterday.

Gabor had known it was coming.

"They clustered like crows, their voices a low hum."

For weeks, the building's rhythm had changed... the nightly coughs through the vents grew fainter, the elevator groaned less under Mr.

Lakatos senior's Sunday visits to church. At 98, his death was less a tragedy than a tired conclusion. Still, when his mother came home yesterday, her coat still damp from the autumn mist, her voice had wavered: "Apa Lakatos meghalt."

Gabor had stared at his calculus homework. "Do we have to go?"

"Igen. We'll take a cake."

Now, in the overcrowded living room, Gabor regretted his compliance. Ten faces turned toward them... all etched with lines deeper than his mother's, all belonging to people who'd watched him grow from a Cleveland-raised outsider to a lanky *gimnázium* student. He was the building's sole under-55 resident, a fact that felt like a neon sign above his head.

His mother joined the *fekete szoknyák*, the black skirts, by the window. They clustered like crows, their voices a low hum. Gabor accepted a porcelain cup of tea, the heat seeping through the thin china. Outside, Bartók Street glittered under streetlamps. Number 26 stood proudly despite its scars: Art Nouveau curlicues framing windows, bullet holes from '56 still pocking the facade like acne scars.

"A hatalmas orosz tank... a huge Russian tank," one woman murmured, her knobby finger tapping the glass. "Came through the alley, gun pointed right at Erzsébet's balcony."

"For an hour, *drágám!* An hour!"

"Nem, not an hour... ten minutes, maybe. But, enough to send us scrambling to the bomb cellar."

Gabor sipped his tea. The country had breathed revolution. His grandfather had fled during those same October days... smuggled himself onto a Vienna-bound train with nothing but a knapsack and a borrowed prayer book. He'd settled in Cleveland, married a Polish girl, and spoken Hungarian only in dreams. Gabor's mother had returned three years ago for a banking job, dragging her resentful son back to a homeland he'd only known from *paprikás* recipes and faded photos.

Why here? Gabor had demanded when they'd first moved in. His mother had gestured to the high ceilings and parquet floors. "It's real history, Gabi. Not like those concrete blocks in Újpalota."

Now, history pressed in from all sides. He drifted toward a gallery of black-and-white photos crowding the wall. Mrs. Lakatos stared back at him through decades: a gap-toothed child in braids (1938), a bride stiff in lace (1955), a young mother cradling a baby (1961). In each frame, Mr. Lakatos senior hovered at the edges... a mustached shadow growing gaunter with time. The final photo showed him two months prior, dwarfed by an armchair, a birthday cake like a tiny

island before him. His eyes were milky, unfocused.

Gabor's throat tightened. He remembered passing the old man in the stairwell last winter—how Mr. Lakatos had gripped the banister, each step a conquest, and rasped, "Fiatalember, segíts." Gabor had supported his papery arm, smelling camphor and decay, and walked him to his door. The memory felt like trespassing.

He set down his cup. Near the hallway, layers of newspapers rose like miniature sky scrapers. They lined both walls, chronological sentinels marching backward in time. The top papers were yellowed but intact; deeper down, the newsprint crumbled like dried leaves.

Curiosity tugged him. He slipped into the hallway, running a finger along the nearest stack... *Budapesti Hírlap*, 1990. Headlines shouted about change, democracy, hope. Further back: 1978, a report on the New Economic Mechanism; 1965, Kádár's bland smile. The air grew denser, dust motes dancing in the weak light.

At the hallway's end, the oldest stack leaned precariously. Gabor knelt, gingerly extracting a brittle issue from the bottom. November 5, 1956. The front page showed young people marching down a boulevard he didn't recognize. Their sign, hand-painted, read "HELPT HONGARY." Their faces were alight... not with fear, but a fierce, almost reckless joy.

"Apa's archives," Mrs. Lakatos's voice came softly. She stood holding a tray of empty cups, her gaze on the newspaper in Gabor's hands. "He saved every one. Even those ones." She pointed to the one in his hand.

Gabor flushed. "I'm sorry..."

"Nem baj." She set down the tray, her knuckles swollen with arthritis. "He'd be glad someone looked. Even if it's just before we throw them out."

"Throw them out?"

"Fire hazard." She shrugged, but her eyes lingered on the photograph. "That march was in London. Papa had cousins there. They sent him the paper."

Gabor studied the eager faces.

"Those papers... they were his witness. His proof he'd survived."

"Did they ever come back? After the revolution?"

Mrs. Lakatos's laugh was a dry leaf rustling. "No. They opened a butcher shop in Hampstead. Became English." She touched the edge of the newspaper. "Papa kept this to remember... not the politics. The people. The ones who tried to help."

A memory surfaced: Gabor's grandfather in his Cleveland kitchen, rolling töltött káposzta while the TV droned in English. "We

were ghosts to them," he'd muttered once, stabbing a cabbage leaf. "Freedom fighters? No. We were just hungry."

"Gabor?" His mother appeared, her hand gentle on his shoulder. "We should go."

Mrs. Lakatos clasped his mother's hand. "Köszönöm a tortát, Éva. And, thank you... for bringing the boy."

Outside, the night air bit Gabor's cheeks. He stared up at their building... its ornate cornices, its stubborn bullet holes.

"What did Mrs. Lakatos mean?" he asked as they climbed the stairs. "About the newspapers?"

His mother paused on the landing. "Mr. Lakatos lived through two wars and a revolution in this building. Those papers... they were his witness. His proof he'd survived."

In their apartment, Gabor went to the balcony. Below, the courtyard lay empty. He imagined a Soviet tank grinding through the archway, the terrified faces at windows. He thought of the young marchers in London, their misspelled sign hoisted high. He thought of his grandfather, boarding a train with a fake passport.

History wasn't a single narrative. It was layers... like those newspapers. Like the photos on Mrs. Lakatos's wall. Like the scars on their building's face.

He touched the cold railing. For the first time, he wondered what layers he'd leave behind.

Zary Fekete

Units

The Widow in 3/A
At seven thirty, she opens her kitchen window, the pane swinging out with a familiar creak. Her husband's wire hook, fashioned decades ago after a storm shattered the glass, clicks into place. The glass was replaced long ago, but the hook remains... a daily ritual, a quiet tether to memory. She lingers, fingers brushing the cool sill, watching the lilac-scented dawn filter through the courtyard. The city's early light paints streaks of red and purple across the clouds, and she breathes in, feeling both the ache of absence and the comfort of routine.

She glimpses a neighbor across the courtyard, plastic bag in hand, heading for the stairwell. The widow's own trash waits by her door, a silent reminder for her morning errands. Down below, a dog yips, a cat yowls, and the city's day begins to hum. She snaps a photo of the vivid sky and sends it to her daughter in the suburbs...her way of saying, "I'm here, I'm alright."

Her daughter calls often, urging her to move in with them, to leave behind the creaking elevator and the slow walks to the market. The widow always hesitates. This apartment, with its chipped paint and worn floors, holds forty-five years of laughter, arguments, and quiet mornings. The thought of leaving is too heavy, yet the pull of

her granddaughters is real. She wonders, sometimes, if she's being stubborn or simply brave.

She locks her door and presses the elevator button. The familiar clank echoes up the stairwell...a sound that once annoyed her, now oddly reassuring. On the street, arthritis slows her steps, but she greets the fruit vendor, who slips extra grapes into her bag, and waves to the young mother from 3/B, her daughter skipping beside her. These small exchanges, these patterns, are the threads of her days.

After shopping, she rests on a bench, watching her shadow, stooped, but steady, stretch across the pavement. She closes her eyes for a moment, letting the city's noise and scent wash over her, before heading back home.

Once she is back in the elevator her finger hovers over the button of the third floor. Then, in a moment of carefree hope, she instead presses the button for the top floor. The elevators rattles up, and as it rises, her spirits lift as well. By the time she steps out onto the top floor landing, she already has her phone out, ready to snap a few more pictures to send to her daughter.

—
The Caretaker in 1/B

Tuesday mornings, the caretaker oils his tools in the slanting light,

He limps down to the garden, the rhythm of his wooden leg... swing, tap, swing...echoing softly. The soil is damp, easy to turn. He digs up carrots and potatoes, murmuring to the stray cat that circles his feet. Sometimes, the ache in his stump reminds him of the tram accident that gave him the wooden leg.

He's had it long enough to not truly remember what his life was

*"These patterns are
the threads of her
days."*

like before, although he remembers clearly the morning many decades ago when he was twelve years old, running through the city streets with his friends. A game they used to play was to hop onto the sides of passing trams in order to catch free rides to the river where they would fish for carp. On that morning, he slipped as he jumped and a moment later the metal wheels of the tram severed his leg. He remembers only that much, because he passed out from the pain. What he was told later at the hospital was that several pedestrians ran up to his prone body, pulling him to the sidewalk and hailing a passing firetruck. The firemen threw him onto the top of the truck and drove

him to the nearest hospital where the doctor staunched the bleeding.

The hospital staff searched through the utility rooms, looking for a pair of juvenile crutches, but they were unsuccessful. Instead, one of the maids took two wooden brooms down to the shop where one of the maintenance men cut off

“Her daughter’s hand is small and warm in hers as they head out.”

the broom heads, stripped the flat board of the bristles, and replaced them, creating two makeshift crutches that were small enough for him to use. He hobbled up and down the hallway of the ward, getting used to his new equilibrium and dancing around the nurses who passed by doing their rounds. He was released from the hospital a week later, disappearing up the street with expert hops.

He smiles at the memory. After breakfast, he sweeps the front walk, careful around the broken glass from last night’s football revelry. Later, he oils the squeaky joint of his prosthetic knee, whistling a tune that bounces through the stairwell. He leaves the leg propped in the hallway to dry, enjoying the oddness of it... a silent sentinel on

the landing.

The Foreign Wife in 3/B

At seven thirty, the wife in 3/B helps her daughter into shoes, double-checks the kindergarten list: tissues, soap, colored pencils, erasers. The list is in the local language, but she’s proud of how much she understands now. Her husband is away on business, so the morning routine falls to her. She feels both capable and exposed.

The elevator groans its way down. At the entrance, the wife looks at the sky with a deep breath... the air outside a natural brace for her spirits. Her daughter’s hand is small and warm in hers as they head out.

At the fruit stand, the vendor... always cheerful... hands her daughter a lilac frond. The girl giggles, and for a moment, the wife feels at home. She exchanges pleasantries, practicing new phrases, then hurries toward kindergarten.

But at the gate, a note: school is closed today. She deciphers enough to understand her mistake. Alone on the empty street, she shrugs, smiling at her daughter. They wander home slowly, pausing in the vacant lot where birds sing and old benches wait. She snaps a picture of her daughter, lilac in hand, beneath the faded mural of

schoolchildren. The girl’s laughter lifts her spirits.

When they return to the apartment, the girl grows quiet.

“The doll,” she says. “She’s not here.”

They check the hallway, the elevator, the stoop. Nothing. She retraces their steps to the vacant lot, scanning the grass. A few purple petals, flattened. A pigeon takes flight. But no doll.

That night, the mother pulls out her dictionary and writes a small note. The girl draws a smiling doll in blue crayon at the bottom.

They post it near the mailboxes.

The next morning, just before school, a soft knock at the door. The caretaker from the first floor stands there, leaning slightly to the side with his weight on the wooden leg. In his hands, the doll... cleaned, brushed, wrapped in a folded kitchen towel like a sleeping infant.

“Found her by the fence,” he says.

The little girl clutches the doll tight. The mother bows her head, murmuring thanks in halting Hungarian.

Doll in hand, the girl and mother head out to the park.

Upstairs, the fourth-floor woman waters her plants and waves.

And on the first floor, the caretaker oils his joints again.

The neighborhood unfurls the day.

Zary Fekete grew up in Hungary. He has a debut novella (Words on the Page) out with DarkWinter Lit Press and a short story collection (To Accept the Things I Cannot Change: Writing My Way Out of Addiction) out with Creative Texts. He enjoys books, podcasts, and many many many films. Twitter and Instagram: @ZaryFekete Bluesky: zaryfekete.bsky.social

Carla Capizzi

One Last Turn

The train waited in the station, accumulating more delay. No announcement was made, nor could the conductors give a reason for those delays. Some blamed it on bad weather, although it was only drizzling. Others thought it was a foretaste of the next day's strike – whatever the reason for the delay, the train would have arrived by now well after 8:30 p.m., as scheduled.

Actually, it would have been strange if the train had left on time only now, a curly-haired, girl in her mid-20s thought. She had been trying to finish at least one of those crossword puzzles, but, that day, she felt so distracted that she could not remember even the simplest definition.

She huffed in irritation when, after a quarter of an hour, the train slowly resumed its run. "I'll never get there," she said, dropping onto the back of the seat, her gaze now fixed on the view out the window. She had not been back to Milan for more than six months, and that flat landscape, with its fog and fine rain, its scattered farmsteads and fields made her feel at home again. It was as if she had been lost for a long time and, at last, knew where she should be.

She huddled in her shoulders, shivering in her thin clothes, still dressed from that doctoral class. But, during that lecture,

surrounded by those people so different from her, all well-dressed, she finally awoke. Like the alarm clock she had been waiting for years, she had hurriedly booked a train for the evening. She had been trying not to think about her pre-doctoral life for months, and, above all, about him, their years together, the days spent at each other's homes, the endless chats. She had tried to forget, not to think about how out of place she felt in that new life and how much she missed him,

*"Like the alarm clock
she had been waiting
for years"*

whom she had always considered home. She had tried, until that afternoon. So, as soon as the class was over, without even saying goodbye to the others, she had rushed home, stuffed her backpack haphazardly to run to the station and catch the train on the fly.

But now, less than an hour from her city, her home, and the person she had run away from, the doubts had resurfaced.

"What if he doesn't want to talk to me?" she kept telling herself, "He would have every reason to..." – she had sent him away, six months earlier. They were together, in Padua, in her new, small home.

They had argued for days: she accused him of not understanding her, of judging her, of being fed up with her. He had tried to calm their tempers, as usual. No, he was not fed up, no, he was not judging her: he was just simply concerned, due to his love for her. Nonsense, so she had yelled at him, sending him badly out of the house. Since then, they had not heard from each other. Or rather, he had tried to write and call her, but she had never answered. Until he had stopped.

She shook her hand, trying to push away those thoughts and, without further ado, she picked up her cell phone. "Hello? Hi Betty, it's me... sorry to bother you. Listen, I'm on my way to Milan. You told me last week about him... I know, but if it goes wrong, is there any way I can stop by your place? I don't feel like going back home to my mother... Thank you so much! Yeah sure, I'll let you know... see you later."

With a deep sense of guilt, the girl hung up and looked back out the window.

She had not been in touch for months even with Betty, and, indeed, with any of her other friends. Ever since she moved to Padua in October, badly sending away what had been her boyfriend for almost ten years and her first love. She had cut ties with everyone

as well, silenced message groups, and never returned.

She had run away, to forget all the emptiness she was gripped by. She had disappeared, hoping to start over in Padua, among new people. She had tried to integrate herself, to understand those ways of saying, thinking, acting. Until, finally, she had understood where she should run. Or, perhaps, where she should return: maybe, those

“Enjoying the view of the place she had so hated.”

months of loneliness had allowed her to find herself. Or, perhaps, to find herself she needed to remember who she was, Carla, to accept her past, her choices... her feelings, even those toward him, which she had so forcefully extinguished when she had lost herself completely.

“How ungrateful I am,” she said, thinking of Betty’s enduring friendship, despite her treatment.

The jolt that the train made, finally reaching its destination, woke her from those reflections. She had been so overthinking not to even notice they entered the station, and that she was home. “Almost home, indeed,” she thought.

She put on her jacket, grabbed her backpack and ran off the train to the subway. “Come on, hurry up,” she said once on the platform, realizing that it was already 9:30 p.m., and that in half an hour he would finish soccer practice, and she would lose any chance of seeing him.

After another, eternal, minute of waiting, the subway finally arrived and the girl entered without even sitting down, too flustered, too hurried, too worried. She shook her head. What was she doing? She drummed her fingers on the subway door’s glass, with the music still going in her headphones, yet barely perceiving the melody.

“Porta Romana stop,” said the electronic voice in the loudspeaker. Even then, as before on the train when she had arrived in Milan, the girl roused herself and prepared to get off at the next stop. “You’re almost there, come on, Carla,” she thought, ready to run away, yet frightened that he would still be angry, and the emptiness would come back for her.

“Lodi T.I.B.,” began the electronic voice, but Carla did not stay to listen, and, as soon as the doors had opened, she sprinted out, away toward the exit.

Once out, however, she stopped. And there, she lingered, observing the traffic circle and the traffic that still, despite it was almost ten o’clock at night, showed no sign of stopping. She observed that bike-path that, in the middle of the road, led to her home. Her stomach clenched reminding the high school summer afternoons, spent riding her bike on that bike-path with those friends she had abandoned now. Her heart clenched at the memory of the walks she took there with him, or with her sister, her mom.

“But why did I run away?” she wondered, putting on the hood of her jacket to shield herself from the fine drizzle that, although it was May, was so reminiscent of that of November. She stood still for a few

more minutes, enjoying the view of the place she had so hated and which, now, she was so happy to see again.

Then, after taking a deep breath, she rapidly cut across the bike-path, crossed the square, and then turned right, to her primary school. She turned right again, taking, at last, the long residential street that would lead her to him. There where it had all begun with him, where they had been since primary school after school for catechism and summer camps. There where he had never stopped going.

“Come on, one last effort,” she forced herself, her heart in her throat, feeling again butterflies in her stomach. And those butterflies increased when she had arrived in front of the oratory’s entrance: in a few steps, she would be in the soccer field. She lingered again, uncertain whether to enter. Some laughter from some boys, coming from the camp, made her come to her senses. “Is Andrea there too?”, this question finally convinced her to go inside.

It took only a few steps for her to recognize the smell of the cut grass of the oratory, combined with the sight of the courtyard and field, illuminated by several neon streetlights. Those streetlights brought back familiar feelings of those days spent with friends, waiting for the boys who were practicing. Or of those summer evenings, spent on the grass talking, drinking their first beers, become the last. Smoking and feeling grown up in their teens, or eating candy, feeling like children at 25.

Carla took the few steps that separated her from the courtyard, finally seeing a group of boys of her

age, coming out of the field. Had she not known that a couple of meters ahead was a door leading to the locker rooms, she would have thought that they were going right to her. But she knew that they would be turning shortly thereafter; and, indeed, they turned, laughing and cackling.

"Should I take off my hood?" she wondered, suddenly freezing, when a tall, lanky boy with a tuft of black hair, and a particularly prominent nose stopped. He was about to go to the locker room, and would have, had he not saw Carla's figure, wearing that hoodie that always made him smile. He would have recognized her anywhere – and even with the hood on, in spite of Carla's doubts.

The boy blinked, his heart in his throat beating wildly, trying to conceal the big smile painted on his face. Then, instead of turning, he walked straight ahead. Carla didn't linger any longer and, after a deep breath, approached him.

"Hey, Andrea," she said uncertainly, sketching a smile.

"What are you doing here?" replied Andrea, in a reassuring tone that she knew well.

Carla looked around, embarrassed. Where to begin? She nervously tensed her wet hands,

almost clammy from the cold, looking around for anything that might help her. Andrea moved a little closer to her, to stare into the very large green eyes of the girl he had loved (and continued to love, despite recent memory) so deeply. "Are you back?"

"Yes, for you!" She finally exclaimed after hesitating, incredulous that she really said that. She felt the gaze, equally incredulous, of the boy next to her.

"Didn't you say you never wanted to see me again?"

"I love you," she said, promised, her voice choking in her throat for having said, after years, the three words that were so difficult for

"Looking at her as if afraid she would disappear again."

her. Andrea looked at her again no longer concealing the smile he had previously sketched.

"I haven't told you for years. But it's always been that way. I got a little lost. I don't know when, I don't know why. I thought I was running from you and my life, but I was running from myself. In these months, I've been trying to find

myself: I was looking for a home, not knowing that you were that home. But I needed to find myself to understand it."

She said it in one breath, her heart pounding, feeling the rain beating on her hood. Finally, she was able to look into the boy's eyes. He didn't speak, not immediately at least.

"If you don't want me anymore, I understand," Carla added, in a broken voice.

Andrea approached her until he could cup her face with his hand. He bit his lip, looking at her as if afraid she would disappear again.

"You hurt me," he finally said.

"I know."

"It's just that... I know you," Andrea continued, "and I know you weren't well, and it wasn't because of someone else, or because you were fed up. It's that I know. But you hurt me."

"And... you want me anymore?"

Andrea lifted her face gently, trying to regain her gaze.

"I love you too, as always. But don't go away anymore."

"Not anymore."

Carla came back to Padua once in a while to finish her PhD. Yet, Andrea came too, always. She found herself after a long ride, never feeling lost again.

Carla Capizzi's professional background is as a PhD in Law, but creative writing has always been a profound passion and a cherished hobby. Carla finds it to be a unique therapeutic outlet, allowing Carla to express inner thoughts, emotions, and creativity through short fantasy tales, often featuring recurring characters and themes of personal growth.

Aryaman Aggarwal

A Most Misfortunate Morning

On an altogether pleasant morning, an altogether pleasant man, Herb Mortimer, was in the midst of lathering himself up for his daily shave. His morning routine was rote: brush, shave, shower, buttered toast, and on Sundays, a dollop of jam. But today wasn't a Sunday; in fact, it was only a Thursday, though that brought no less joy to Herb. A Thursday, after all, was just three days from a Sunday and, consequently, a dollop of jam.

Herb put the finishing touches on his neatly trimmed mustache and, briefly glancing at his pale face in the mirror, hopped in the shower. A half hour later, toast devoured, he walked down the narrow stairs of his brownstone to catch the 9:12 a.m. bus uptown, only to run into Mr. Harold.

Mr. Harold was a stern man, born quite some time after the war but seemingly still stuck in it, preferring the company of narrated black-and-white soldiers on a screen over the folk of Stilton. That suited Herb just fine, for Mr. Harold was also a most courteous neighbor.

Conscious of the time as ever, Herb stopped only briefly to wish Mr. Harold a good morning, but receiving no response, he continued on his way. This was unusual, Herb thought, for Mr. Harold was truly a well-mannered

man. Perhaps he was preoccupied. "Maybe Mrs. Harold's hip is acting up again," he mused and made a mental note to stop by the Harold household after work to check in on her and bring some of the apfelstrudel she loved so dearly. Peeking at the time again, he picked up his pace toward the bus stop, thoughts of Mrs. Harold and a slice of strudel still playing in his mind.

The bus arrived as he did, and without breaking a stride, Herb entered with a smile and "hello" for the bus driver, a sweet old fellow who had once let Herb ride for free when he had carelessly forgotten his purse. Once again, he received no reply other than a mild look of irritation. That was weird. "Perhaps he didn't hear me," he whispered, and determined not to let it bring him down, he swiped his card and was about to make his way to his usual seat at the backmost of the bus, when he noticed a stare. Not just a stare, but multiple, from all passengers in the bus.

A brief stare isn't unnatural. In a lot of cultures, it is not only accepted, but a compliment and an invitation. Children stare. Men stare. Even the most coquettish women steal a glance now and then. A collection of stares, however, was abnormal. And on a morning full of oddities, it was even a cause for concern.

Herb, typically unaccustomed to

stares, was momentarily paralyzed, and a little grateful for the jolt of the bus moving that snapped him out of it and turned the faces away. He quickly found his seat, and by the time the bus had reached the next stop, he had not only checked his hair in the reflection of the window but had also labored to check his shirt for any stains. Upon determining there weren't any and his hair was parted as usual, he began to think he was mildly ill. He certainly hadn't felt ill this morning, but now something felt amiss.

The bus stopped twice more on his way to work, and at both stops he received queer looks from the onboarding passengers. A bead of sweat broke out on his forehead, and patting it down with his handkerchief, he could swear he

"His stomach turned, and he felt ever so slightly nauseous."

began to glean whispers amongst the morning chatter, comments about hair and skin he was sure, but he couldn't be certain as to their origin or nature. His stomach turned, and he felt ever so slightly nauseous.

As the bus pulled up to its penultimate stop, a stroke of fortune struck, and Mr. Spasky

boarded the bus. Mr. Spasky was a portly man who worked not a desk away from Herb. He was a man known for his extreme bluntness, and surely, with him would be the answer for these unorthodox glances. He would be able to clear up whatever it was that seemed to be hanging over Herb this morning. Perhaps he had some butter stuck in his moustache or worn mismatched shoes; even though looking down, Herb could plainly see his shoes were both jet black, matched, and perfectly laced.

He looked at Mr. Spasky as he made his way over to the back of the bus, his eyes pleading, waiting for some reaction, for some

confirmation of normalcy, only to be met with a fleeting look of deep disgust, followed by a full-body turn, as Mr. Spasky made his way back to the front of the bus, choosing to sit beside another passenger rather than an unoccupied bench closer to him.

This was it. The final blow. Palpitations overcame Herb. Something was deeply wrong. He had surely missed something. He began to profusely perspire, staining the arms of his shirt, and nervously patted at his hair. He needed to lie down. He apprehensively checked his watch and determined to take the day off.

As the bus approached its final stop, he waited for all the passengers to disembark, his face buried in his arms. He got off last, and so preoccupied with hiding his countenance and catching the next bus back, stepped right into a puddle, muddying his shoes.

He journeyed back in deep distress, not stopping to wish the bus driver a friendly morning or see how Mrs. Harold was doing. He arrived home mechanically at 9:57 a.m. and without even stopping to glance in the mirror, lay down and died, soaked in a mixture of mud and sweat, hair frayed, mustache twirled.

Aryaman Aggarwal is an artist, writer, and creator. Raised primarily in Bombay and now based in New York, he explores a range of creative disciplines. His recent projects are available at aryamanaggarwal.com

Poetry

Susan Wilson

Orchestral Manoeuvres in the Park

The fruit of perfection grows beyond my window
where expert shots are aimed into shoots of greenery.
It's a fertile audience of hundreds, even thousands
as I rehearse my thoughts for imaginary faces.

For many years the cracked, black metal railings
have been the barrier guarding Millfields Park
but now they've been exchanged for golden rocks,
each railing drawn out slowly, without anaesthetic,
the sockets sighing with relief, whispering opportunity.
Attitudes such as metal are hard to bend whereas
rock can be chiselled into a pebble of a view.

Like you, I am an instrument of unique design,
gifted to translate horizontal lines into fencing
hung with tears of joy or bled with clots of pain –
expressions such as these are ours to be shared.

A series of notes rearranged may sound the same
and will continue to win the same criticism
that uses personality to oil a mechanism of rejection.
My hands are wringing with its grease.

As yet the sound of my little triangle is hammered
by an orchestra of talented and polished cymbals
but between the rocks that share their hue
I could slip not just one phrase of my choosing
but an entire symphony, before I leave the park.

Susan Wilson lives in East London and began writing poetry following the death of her mother in 2017. Her poems have been published by *Lucy Writers*, *Snakeskin*, *Runcible Spoon*, *Dreich*, *Areopagus*, *Streetcake*, *Rue Scribe*, *Amethyst Review*, *Lothlorien*, *The Candyman's Trumpet* and *100subtexts*. Her debut chapbook is "I Couldn't Write to Save Her Life" (Dreich, 2021). More recently her artwork has been published by *Inspirational Art Magazine*.

E. C. Traganas

ROUNDEL

Circles twist and swirl —
my garden swells and lures
with dangling loops and whorls
of earth delights

A sugar-ripened peach
cloying stone within
exposes wormy fingers
drunk on honeyed mead
writhing upwards
towards the convex light
hands clasped in silent praise

Globes of gold-hued grapes
glint and burst in sunlit disks
pools of sticky nectar
drowning startled wasps
and swarms of circling bees

Sunflower heads bow low
eyes pocked, necks snapped
seedpods puff and shout
exploding with the season's glut

One hazelnut throbs and glows
round and warm preserving life

A world in the palm of my hand

Novelist, poet, concert pianist and visual artist **E.C. Traganas** has published in 100+ literary magazines. She is the founder/director of Woodside Writers, a NYC-based literary forum and Editor-in-Chief of *The Woodside Review*.
www.elenitraganas.com

Sam Aureli

Oars at Rest

Mist hangs like a soft veil
over the lake, and I am not here
to wake the silence.
Dreams rise like breath,
thin, flickering in morning light.
The boat rests, held by the water,
motionless as a thought.
I could row—shatter the glass—
or remain, letting the world lie as it is.
A shadow passes through a stillness
older than speech;
beneath it all, the lake holds me.

Sam Aureli

Lost in Stanzas

I sit, pen in hand,
thoughts slipping like rain down glass.
The words refuse to settle—
breaking apart mid-sentence,
drifting into half-formed stanzas.

Has language turned against me?
Or have I wandered too deep—
conversing with Father Time,
dipping my toes in the beyond,
wondering what waits on the other side?

Perhaps I should knock on love's door,
see who answers.

The rain taps its dull refrain,
uninspired, indifferent.
Even the cat, sensing my disarray,
slips into the shadows,
ashamed for us both.

My mind—a cluttered attic,
stacks of thoughts toppling in the dust.
Some days, meaning drifts beyond reach.
Sense and sensibility slip through cracks.

But the clouds will clear.
The sun will return.
And for that, I'll wait—grateful.

Sam Aureli is a design and construction professional, originally from Italy, now calling the Boston area home. A first-generation college graduate, he's spent decades immersed in concrete and steel. Poetry is what truly feeds his soul these days. With retirement still a decade away, Sam balances the grind of his day job with the refuge he finds in writing. His work has appeared in *The Atlanta Review*, *West Trade Review*, *Chestnut Review*, and other journals.

Sabrina Tolve

Fissure and Flame

1.

When the storm climbed back into the sky
chewing it all up,
we saw the black
meld into the green —
a dense sandstone pit
against the rainbow already awake
on the other side of the shore.

2.

From the golden depths the cup is reborn,
it is life — each baptism a scale,
a shining tail.

I uproot branches on the height
already wounded and nearly bare —
I will come.

3.

I was an inaccessible mouth,
full lips,
violet by birth.

The sea devoured
and did not see
the broken bones,
softening the taste
of the pressure that clung.

I let myself be inhabited.

Sabrina Tolve is an Italian poet residing in Ireland. Her work explores the intersections of memory, landscape, and the body, often reflecting on the natural world and human connection. She has been published in various literary magazines and online journals in both Italian and English, and her writing frequently engages with the liminal spaces between interior and exterior, myth and lived experience. She also works as a translator.

Syed Ali Raza Naqvi

Zenith

I am the wind's cousin,
the river's confidant,
a guest at this infinite table
where no chair is mine to keep.

My roots drink from all soils,
yet my branches refuse
to owe the sky an apology
for growing.

Syed Ali Raza Naqvi's autobiography is still an unfinished story...

Alan Hardy

In The Water

I stand in sea water.
The swill of the wave
rising up my body to fall away,
makes me stumble.
I let its rise and fall hit against me like medicine.
I, without the memories of things
to make me, feel alive.
Just standing in the sea, letting the swell caress me, roughly,
like moments of good news hitting
I never wanted to forget the feel of.
Salty water rises and falls against me as I stand still.

Alan Hardy has for many years run an English language school for foreign students (in UK). As well as *Everscribe*, he's been published in such magazines as *Ink Sweat & Tears*, *Envoi*, *Iota*, *Poetry Salzburg*, *The Interpreter's House*, *Littoral*, *Orbis*, *South*, *Pulsar*, *Lothlorien*, *100subtexts*, *Fixator*, *Chewers*, *Feversofthemind*, *Suburban Witchcraft* and others. Poetry pamphlets *Wasted Leaves* (1996) and *I Went with Her* (2007).

Tukur Ridwan

Legend of Àbíkú

I

A child came, saw, and returned to the woods.
Not just with his body as a feast to the soil,
Not just with his limbs, a function of instinct
To poke his mother's womb—a weary woman
Giving maternity another chance—but also
With promises to recycle this torture like a sadist.

II

Returning as a girl, no amount of incisions
And incantations would clip her sinister wings—
Flying in & out of the birth cage.
If you ask her why she reneges and relapses,
She would say, to fluctuate and alternate
The loose ends of mortality are not her will.
She would say, to drain her mother's eyes
And her father's pockets are not her will.

III

Stripped of their little bodies, their souls feel homeless
Like a parasite without a host. Naked,
Yearning for the welcoming terrestrial hands,
And the expensive shawl bought with anxiety,
And the breastmilk dripping with unhinged lactation.

*Not my joy to despise my mother's
Laborious journey of replication
With the stunted growth of my tissues.*

*Not my doing, to dwell in the walls,
The trees & the eyes of the moon.*

*I still wonder why I fall with the rain
Like my mother's tears—maybe the moon is a woman
Commiserating with this elegy, this fertility
That suffers the fatigue of futility.*

*Blame the spirit world
For their incessant calls—
They had named me before you could.
They have called me before my christening.*

*Tell the orthodox-medicine people of my mystery.
They may find the diagnosis and semantics for my kind.*

They may have what I want to make me stay,
To help me cope with the consequences
Of the inverse intercourse of genotypes,
Since your blunt blades & lengthy chants
Of my surreal pedigree land of deaf ears.

Then I wouldn't run into the walls or woods,
Or the shiny portal of the night in search of a life
Without a body. But for now, you may keep calling me
Àbíkú, while I answer with the pride of my coven.
Finding my way in and out of your household.

In the poem, "Legend of Àbíkú", the Yoruba term "Àbíkú" refers to a child that dies after birth, only to reincarnate through subsequent births (and deaths). This belief is peculiar to the Yoruba mythology surrounding stillbirths and sickle cell patients with shorter life expectancy, until the scientific intervention of orthodox medicine.

Tukur Ridwan

Why I Hate to Tell of Feelings That Don't Dwell

Q: Why do transient moods fail to fill my mouth?

I'm the guard of my body clock,
But I might lose my guard

When I speak & feel my tongue waver
To the sways of life's climate.

I can be a lonely sun, till the clouds visit
As angels with silver wings

On the day's walk across the desert,
Or a budding stem prepping to make a forest.

I pass this cycle like the clock's unequal hands.
I do not want to tell drunken tales

When tomorrow, my tongue
May shapeshift into a teetotaler.

I do not want to curse life,
When tomorrow, death may scare me

With its Jason's saws & the jaws
Of a deep blue sea.

I do not want to say it's over
When what kills a voice could die

To the touch of my next breath.
I do not want to proclaim my gloom

When I may not even announce
My happiness, like an ovation—

A festival of applause and pats on my back.
I want to breathe the moment's heat,

The mist of the harmattan dust,
And the winter chills.

A: They are birds to which my teeth are cages/
Ghosts whose apparition gets swallowed by momentum.

Index: Sad, maybe.
Happy, soon enough.

Tukur Ridwan (He/Him) writes from Lagos, Nigeria. Shortlisted in the Bridgitte James Poetry Competition (2025) and the Eriata Oribhabor Poetry Prize (2020), his works also appear in *Afrocritik*, *Kelp Journal*, *ArtisansQuill*, *The African Writers Magazine*, *Cordite Poetry Review*, and elsewhere. He won the Brigitte Poirson Monthly Poetry Contest (March 2018), authored *A Boy's Tears on Earth's Tongue* (Authorpedia, 2019), and *The Forgiveness Series* (Ghost City Press, 2022). He loves black tea, sometimes coffee. Twitter/IG @Oreal2kur

David Stewart

Things Unsent

I wear their weight, the unsent words
in the iron gut of a server, now
the anger that you drafted. Muzzled.

A flicker of the cursor, the re-interred
voltage-ghost, suspended
in strata of cold current, denied delivery.

What blade of reason stayed your hand?
What split-second swerve?
I'd give my own good quiet to dig
out that bitter trove

to read the lines whereon your knuckles whitened
unveiled, unvarnished
that which, you thought, before you thought again.

David Stewart was born in Glasgow, Scotland. His work had featured in newspapers, magazines, and online journals. David is a senior copywriter with a digital marketing agency. In his spare time, he writes poetry and long-form prose.

Sanjeev Sethi

Inspiritment

Steadily, I create a sanctum where words fly
without fretfulness, where ideas
seek no endorsement.
They are happy to be happy
by themselves.

This marriage fills me up.
There is a certain buoyancy
to the beat.
It settles the shrillness,
and the horns leave for other homes.

Sanjeev Sethi

Cadency

Diffuse poetry with as many definitions as you deem fit
It matters little as long as the processes are accessible
to pursuers. Be the closest to your core and in concert
with your co-conspirators.

Engage with the certitudes. No theme is taboo. No
delivery is dated. Flow with your intrinsicity and
that which informs your pique. What matters is the
final draft and its effect.

Sanjeev Sethi has authored eight books of poetry. His poetry has been published in over thirty-five countries and has appeared in more than 500 journals, anthologies, and online literary venues. He edited *Dreich Planet #1 India*, an anthology for *Hybriddreich*, Scotland. He is the joint winner of the Full Fat Collection Competition-Deux, organized by Hedgehog Poetry Press, UK. He lives in Mumbai, India. X @sanjeevpoems3 || Instagram sanjeevsethipoems ||

JK Miller

What the Dog Gets Out of It

I'm going to make my oatmeal with honey, blueberries and banana, and you're going to get one tiny slice of banana.

I'm going to clean the counter where your friend, my daughter, poured a bowl of cereal after she came home late last night, and I'm going to sweep two Cheerios to the floor for you.

I'm going to sit on the couch and put my shoes on, and you are going to crawl on your belly through my legs, as if it were a tunnel of love.

I am going to tie my laces, and you are going to flip onto your back and with mock punches, kicks and snarls, wait for a rub.

I'm going to walk out to the bridge and back with you, and I am going to talk with God.
You will sniff the air.

JK Miller is a poet and storyteller, a former third grade dual language teacher, who lives on the edge of cornfields. His poetry has been recently published, or will soon be, in *shoegaze literary*, *Midsummer Dream House*, *Harrow House*, *Autumn Sky Poetry Daily*, *Academy of the Heart and Mind* and *Rat's Ass Review*, among others.

Amaryllis Loven

As the Stars Omit

“Hello,” we whispered to the moon with soft giggles
The innocence we once grasped so dearly
The kind which fades, gradually, yearly
Her Highness perhaps recalls our exchanged epistles

They, soon, will be forgotten by all
For now, our hands are clasped tight
Watching the far off, flickering light
Recalling how we are infinite yet small

“I love you,” we whispered to each other with countless tears
Nothing and everything counts for anything now
Wishing that our approaching fate we could disavow
A million, too many to number, and yet null, zero fears

“We had very many things to do yet.”
The statement held weight
The absence of things we would miss due to fate
“Yes, but each person, when their time comes, has such a regret.”

We stood in silence, how could we shatter it?
Heads rested upon shoulders, comfort in our end
Fate’s will is strong, she shall not, only for us, bend
Smiling, despite, as the stars above the sky elected to omit

Debdutta Pal

Inherited Hurt

This heartbreak
doesn't have crevices
because its constitution
is uniquely unfamiliar,
it cannot be shared
with others
hoping to collect comfort
in the form of "I've been there too,"
because he's still alive.

And I don't feel any regret
when I don't diminish
ever diverging distance.

This pain
lives in a text message
bookended with guilt
while you do his bidding
yet again
reminding me with a sigh
"he's not good with emotions."

And I swallow my wet laugh
and the urge to respond with
"he was always an expert,
at pulverizing mine."

This grief
doesn't have five stages
because you can't lose
what you never had
what was expected in prayers
what was supposed to be
even though you hate
those two burdened words.

You don't want to want,
he raised you to be tough
taught you that needing
always leads to

unfastening stitched scars.

This rage
is from rejection
from the first man
who was supposed to
love me
but only glimpsed me
as a glitch
unless I obeyed
like a programmed bot.

Yet I'm supposed to
be grateful
because he provided
and never lifted a finger.

This loneliness
is a by-product of
playing the villain
the prodigal daughter
who never returned
who cannot act
her pre-written part
in the suburban family sitcom.

"It's never too late to try,"
they said
when you bared your heart.

And you simply wished
you could somehow exhibit
the infinite hollow inside
that he meticulously sculpted.

Debdutta Pal would rather be watching Netflix, but her brain demands some conscious decluttering. Her work can be found on Medium and Substack.

Sean Wang

The Locked Open Door

The wind slips through the cabin—
inside, countless doors
flutter like sparrows' wings,
opening and closing in an eternal sky.

I reach toward one,
but it slams shut—
a dead shark
hooked on a vanished line.
I turn the knob—
it holds, cold and inert,
as the collapsed core of a star.

Again and again, I try each door,
a whale lost in stardust,
searching for the sea.
Some plaques gleam—
untouched by any name,
as if waiting for mine.
Others rust into silence,
turning away from me.

Exhausted, I return to the window—
my blurred face stares back,
a silhouette smudged
on yesterday's newsprint.
I strike my chest—
and suddenly,
the doors begin to murmur,
a corridor of candles
igniting one after another.

Yet I fear—
the doors were never locked.
What was sealed
were the silent faces
behind them—

watching me
without a word.

Sean Wang is a PhD candidate in Australia. His poetry has appeared in *dadakuku*, and his work is forthcoming in *Cerasus Poetry Magazine*.

Debo-Badmus Olufolasi

Where's my person?

Walking through a crowd, everyone going in different directions.
Moving through the unfamiliar faces, looking for a way out.
You bump into some, you apologize, some reciprocate,
some don't, some yell at you, some hiss.
This journey is stressful, uneventful.

You halt, your eyes meet a familiar feature, you grab their hands, but you're met with resistance,
when light hits their face, you let go, it isn't them.
You get tired of rubbing bodies with strangers, you hate that their sweat has mixed with yours.
You fear that your masked scent will render you unrecognizable.

You decide to take a break, but the crowd keeps moving.
You fold your knees and fall to the ground, your hands shielding your head.
They don't stop moving, their determined legs hitting your torso and everywhere exposed.

You wish your person would pick you up, you wish they would find you first.
You expose your head to see the people still moving, their pace increased.
You yell at them but they don't answer, you are not their person.
You stand upright pulling some strangers down, slowing them down, you begin to walk with them.

The smell of your person still faint at the back of your head.
The crowd has no destination, just like you, it's a walk that lasts forever, you keep going hoping
to spot that familiar face in the crowd.
You hope your face is familiar to them too. That their heart longs for you.
That they know what you smell like.
That they are waiting for you. Looking.

Debo-Badmus Olufolasi is a young poet and story writer, who has been writing since the young age of 7. He is currently a student studying Psychology. He claims that writing is release for him; his form of art expression. Art to him is created through pain, and is willing to suffer as much pain to keep creating art.

Uchechukwu Onyedikam

DIVINE COMEDY HOUSE

In the spotlight of the evening
the other guy and I witnessing
the darkened cloud riding away...
and galloping on the bumps of the sky.
Then from the lips of its Paradise
cracked a mighty roar, budging our posture
with an uneasy smile that hoards the
caricature in small bags of laughter,
to the offer and to the Eaver!
We both leaned into the crackling
lines of strange streams that the
unprecedented comedy has
marked on our faces.
We tapped the hips of the moment
as we swayed away shamelessly
watching the circus night and its
spirit leading us on to places
we never knew. These places are
where we would recognize human
experiences in brevity without
biological senses — a stretching
madness of everything: a chaste style
in self composition.
We could walk the house and pace
across the face of the audience,
feeling the *hardness* on the heels
of our feet, then, we followed where
all this *hardness* were pointing at.
Behind the curtain, we eventually
settled in, switched on the lights,
and ripped out the veil from our
long-traveled curiosity, and sit for
listening on our hurdled adventure
until the breaking of the morning.

Andrea Tillmanns

A little more

A little more
for you and me and everyone else,
always hungry, even right after eating,

bit by bit
laughter
 wonder
 oh-how-cute,

just a little more,

a little
new
 old
 did-you-know,

don't miss a thing
always be informed
always be there
always hungry
always

Andrea Tillmanns lives in Germany and works full-time as a university lecturer. She has been writing poetry, short stories and novels in various genres for many years. More information can be found on her website www.andreatillmanns.de.

Plamen Vasilev

Queen of the rain

I know her.... her eyes covered.
She draws hearts on the glass.
Sometimes she's too quiet.
She doesn't smile. Maybe because
she's all woven from rain.
Her life is a flooded ship.
She was once in love with a man.
Now she's a cloud - dark and cold.
I know her... When she listens to sad songs
Loneliness overflows from her eyes.
To swim without being able is not easy,
especially when your dreams are dead.
But there are days when, between the drops,
a dream slips into the pupils...
Then She smiles briefly
To the sun, to the spring, to the birds,
who have long flown away
From her sad, and great house.
And again the days go by... Still Sundays.
And the memory the rain in the eyes brings back...
I know her... But the name of a voice
I'm terribly afraid to speak!
Because She... that's really... me!
And it's still raining...
And it's getting harder to swim...

Plamen Vasilev

The strong

The strong cry alone.
They do not shake hands. They do not shout.
They don't stick daggers in their backs.
And do not bow down to anyone.
They master the world,
without losing their souls.
But they go on and on
On and on!
In spite of eternal fear.
In spite of every deception.
No one can do without them.
There is no shoulder for the strong.
They know how to forgive,
How to serve the good.
They don't look back
And speak not unnecessarily.
They are sudden sparks
From heaven bestowed.
Their will creates
New, unknown universes.
Despite all the sorrow
And lifelong envy -
still drag their cross
And endlessly give themselves away.
Torment does not break them.
It makes them more powerful
The strong weep alone.
But the times are turning.

Plamen Vasilev is an award-winning freelance writer/poet with published works online and in a dozen US magazines. Plamen has been writing since the age of 10. Plamen has won numerous writing contests and have awards from different parts of the world. Plamen is a creative person with big dreams and also loves to help people. Plamen also has Certificates on Creative Writing.

Arthur Neong

The Shape Of Rain

You would never know it's raining
But for the shape of rain:
In the lamppost, luminous drops
Hanging in the air, all lighted up
An open umbrella, drops and beads on the surface
Windscreen of the car, windows, smears and trails
Patter and spillover from roofs and leaves
And grass, puddles and drops on roads
And ground, its gelling to hair ends
Soaked clothes and moist skin
Drips, a still life, crystal glass and flesh
A million stars on bodies of water

Arthur Neong is Malaysian Chinese hailing from Sungai Petani. Having taught for 11 years, he now channels the maelstrom of thoughts and visuals into lines, hoping to make sense of it all. His poems have appeared in *Particle*, *Borderless*, *Malaysian Indie Fiction*, *ZiN Daily*, *Alien Buddha Press*, *Eclectica*, *Eksentrika*, *Everscribe*, *Men Matters*, *Porchlit Mag*, *SARE*, and elsewhere.

Ronita Chattopadhyay

A prayer for these times

When so much
around us, within us,
is coming undone,
may we still
somehow find
hope and
care and joy
at least in part
(because abundance
is in short supply),
and also homes
in words
that never die.

Ronita Chattopadhyay is an Indian poet and writer. Her micro chapbook *Preparing to be Wrecked* has been published as part of an anthology (*Grieving Hope*) by *Emerge Literary Journal*. Her work has also appeared in *The Hooghly Review*, *Akéwì Magazine*, *streetcake magazine*, *RIC Journal*, *Everscribe*, *Porch Lit Magazine*, *FemAsia*, *Atrium*, among others, and anthologies by *Querencia Press*, *Sídhe Press*, *Rough Diamond Poetry* and *Bare Bones*.

Acknowledgements

We extend our sincere thanks to our amazing writers for shaping Everscribe into an accessible path for remarkable authors. Your unique voices and stories are what make this publication special.

We also want to express our appreciation to our dedicated Editorial Team whose hard work and commitment have brought this incredible issue to life. It's a true labor of love, and we couldn't have done it without you.

Additionally, we thank our founder for envisioning a platform for young and emerging writers, as well as our partners for their invaluable support. Lastly, a big thank you to everyone who has contributed to Everscribe in any way. For inquiries or feedback, please reach out to us through our website, socials, or at info@everscribemag.com.

Future Issues

We're thrilled to announce that our next issue, Issue No. 13, *Khrysē Graphis*, will be coming soon! Everscribe releases a new issue every 1st of the month, so stay tuned!

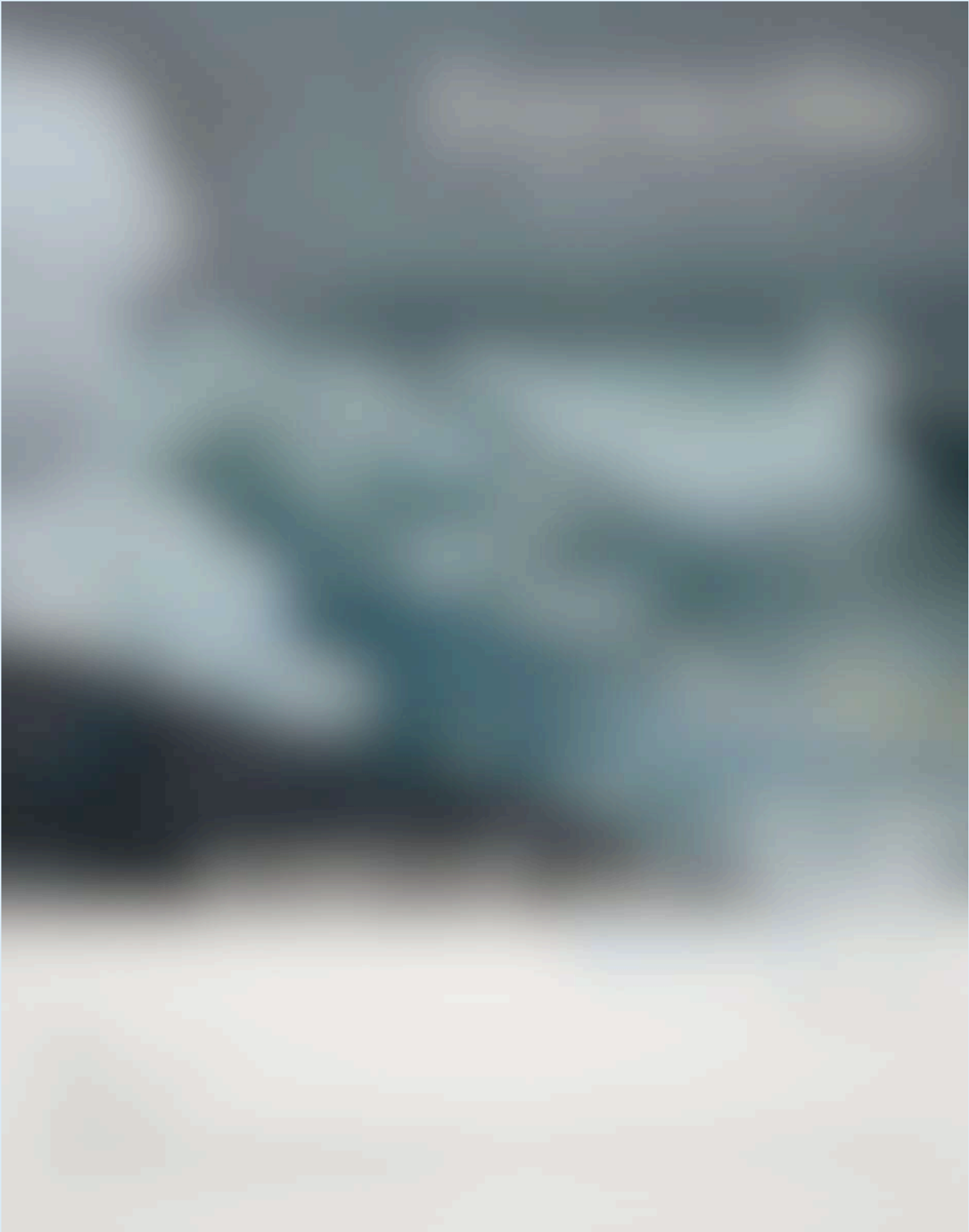
Writers can always submit their works through our website at everscribemag.com. Join our community by connecting with us on our [Discord server](#), where both writers and readers are welcome. Stay updated on issue releases, special opportunities, news, and more by following us on [social media](#).

For inquiries or questions, feel free to reach out to us at info@everscribemag.com. We hope you enjoyed reading Everscribe's ninth issue, and we extend our thanks to all the writers for making this dream come true!

Until next time,
The Everscribe Team



Next Month...



See you there.