

librettist

Selected Poems & Shorts



THE ONLINE LITERARY MAGAZINE

MERAK

librettist

Selected Poems & Shorts

a Merak Publication

*I want to sing like the birds sing,
not worrying about who hears or what they think.*
- Rumi

CONTENTS

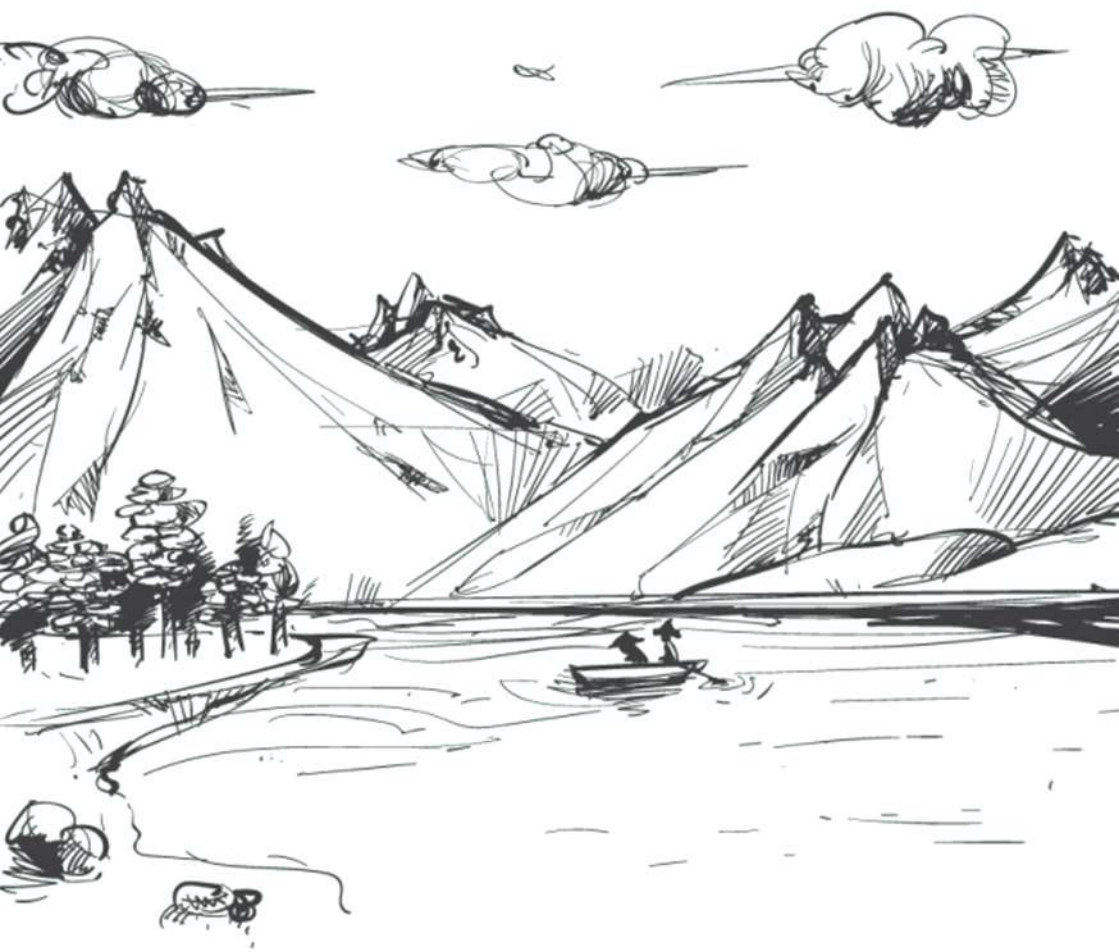
Lake as a Meditation by Dah	01
The Pinnacle by Feroz Mohamed	02
Midnight Wonder by Scott Thomas Outlar	04
The Journey by Muna Ally	06
Kismet by Christine Tabaka	08
The Origin of Morality by Idowu Odeyemi	10
She. by Hend Sobhy	11
Unspoken Love by Femitha Majeed	12
Awaiting Death by Shambhavee	13
The Godfather by Austin Cerny	15
Finders Keepers by Nuskiya Nasar	16
Without Light by Linda M. Crate	17
Three Balloons by Nuha Faiz	18
Dear Anxiety by Nameera Anjum	20
In a night club by Angel Edwards	21
Trembling Towards the Sun by Scott Thomas Outlar	22
Lake Cottage by Sunil Sharma	24
Metamorphosis by Danielle Nolan	25
Peace by Sudeep Soparkar	27
Wagner in Seattle by Marcia Kester Doyle	30
At the End by Azra Wazeer	31
Hauntingly Beautiful by Belinda Brady	32
Hearts Lamentation by Maryam Abdhur Rahman	34



There's greater pleasure in this world. One of them were -
Putting this anthology of pieces of art together.

To all the writers - for doing an excellent job.
And to those who aren't - what are you waiting for?

The Editor
Librettist | Merak Magazine.



Lake as a Meditation

by Dah

Below the spoken world,
In scales and brilliance
The blade-like fish
Shimmer
In the water's sky.

I look down
At the relaxed voice
Of the lake
Holding morning's light
Then again holding change.

The sunrise as lamp
And shadows from birds
Damp in the ripples
Damp in the mud
Touching seedlings
As fragile as finger bones.

Speaking in a whisper
Beneath the leaves
There is compassion
For the floating insects
In how their dead faces
Arrive as reflections.

I stand by a wicked smile.
Holding grudges over desert lines.
Gods being menaced by moths and flies.
Veils fail to save when the evil dies.

The golden snowy showers from above.
Sins can wait - This moment is euphonious.
The bitter wrath of eerie nights in love.
Death and Ghosts scoring in torment.

You are next, the grave echoed.
Aids are at halt - life is abandoned.
Cancers and Geminis. Death must attend.
The blood stains for the weakest and
The wrist-cuts :
For the Devil's sermons.

The wicked smile is not mine.

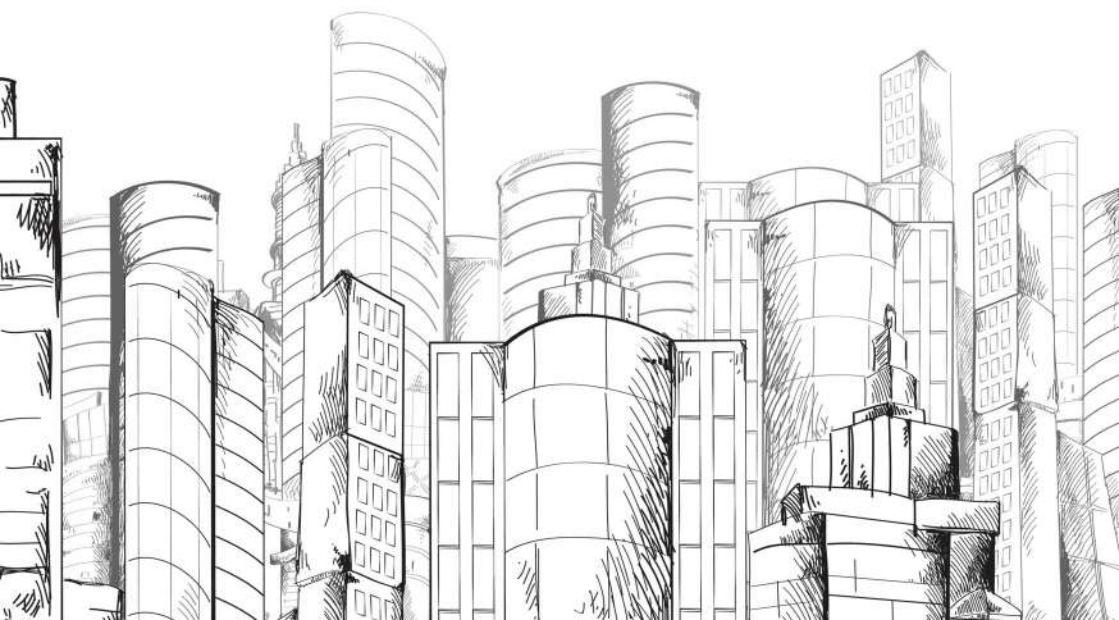
THE PINNACLE

by Feroz Mohamed



Scott Thomas Outlar's

MIDNIGHT WONDER



Head in the clouds,
Soul on the brink

Of salvation and/or annihilation
At any/every moment.

The signs in the sky
Appear to point out our future in space.

The signs in my mind
Seek to find the path home to source.

But the signs on the street
Are marketed for entirely different ends,
Singing their songs about realtors
Who have erected
New neighborhoods
As far as the eye can see
In this suburban wonderland
(Call Alice;
She might know
The truth by now).

Chopping down trees,
Chasing deer
From their home.
Come meet me at midnight,
My friend;
We'll stare straight
Into heaven's void together.

I too know
What it is
To roam.

Perhaps what we recognise is pain,
Perhaps it is exhaustion,
Fatigue from the burn of life.
Perhaps her eyes are telling you,

'Remember me,
do not forget this dusty space coloured in vibrant hues,
this humble abode which has nurtured our existence.
The doors of which we are birthed and we depart from.

' Perhaps it is love,
A recognition of her beauty,
A celebration of her strength.
Perhaps what we leave with is a lesson,
A spiritual promise of resilience,
A reinforcement of intentions
A reminder of our duties,
To keep on striving, forever more.





Muna Ally

THE JOURNEY



The narrow door opens
As the wide door shuts.
No portal is accessible
For wanted success.

Toil, as you might,
Research, yearn, sweat,
All spent in futility.

Mother's words,
Father's example,
Teacher's lesson,
All for naught.

In the end,
Luck is the overlord
Of our destiny.

Right place,
Right time,
Wrong disposition.
The presentation fails!

The eagle flies away,
Her prey in taloned grasp.
Hope escapes her victim.

Fate deals the cards
For the hunter and the hunted,
Kismet is her name.



Rismet

Christine Tabaka



I will be happy if you kill me
Because you didn't leave me
to experience much of the tragedy of this world,
At least I will not be blamed; it is you they will blame.
The sin would be upon your soul
But before you kill me

Let me know the truth:
whether heaven is real or not.
If it is real, I will amend my ways
If it is not real, then I will like to enjoy to the fullest.
I will not marry
but I will have sex without essence.

I will not be drunk
but I will drink to my fullest.
I will not steal
but I will have everything

Before I die:
Give me sunlight
To find myself
In this abstruse darkness
Faith had given unto me.

The Origin Of Morality

Idowu Odeyemi



She.

Hend Sobhy

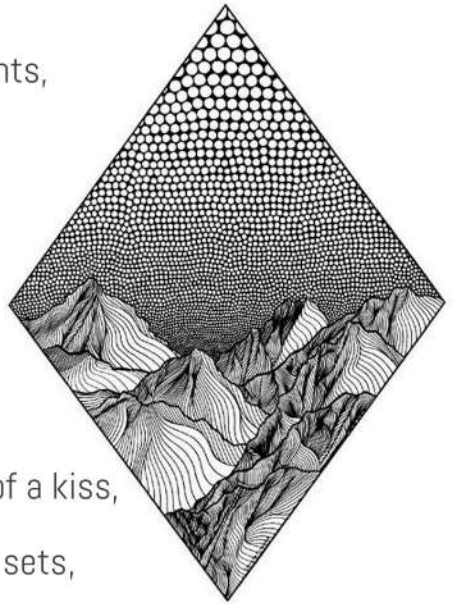
How beautiful would it be,
If you remember,
That I don't like milk in my tea.
And that my favorite poem
Is Donne's "The Flea".
And that my whole being has been shaped
By my living by the sea.
And to bear in mind that
Blue Forget-me-nots and
Violets are never received with a glee.
P.S. Try Red tulips and roses,
They never fail to allure me.
And finally, how adorable would it be,
If you would bother to see
A whole world beyond the pronoun "She".

My warm breath encircling your thoughts,
With eyes closed,
You imagine a softly ran meadow,
With golden sun ray-ed grass,
A freshly bloomed morning,
With no other soul around;

Lost in the thoughts of,
The heat,
The love it announces,
No words spoken,
With a skin light touch and leaf blow of a kiss,

The light fades and in to an evening it sets,

With love, the clock ticks.
Everyday.



Femitha Majeed's
*Unspoken
Love*

Shambhavee

AWAITING DEATH

The blazing fire did not seem bright
As darkness was closing in
It seemed to take its own pace
As it was not in haste
Some find that grateful
Yet, it wasn't so for the one by the chair
For the one gazing into the fire
Wished that darkness fell soon
For, he found darkness inviting
Much more inviting
As his days of light has passed
Thus he wished to be at peace
Found amidst the darkness with ease





Giving your poetry a Voice it deserves...



The poets at #Merak and their works stand a chance to be chosen for the weekly podcast of Poetry Recitals.



In the line of sight
We watch the horizon,
As it has no age
No enemies
No deceit
And no confusion.

We see from Afar,
As it is all mystery
All infamous
All profound
And all knowing.

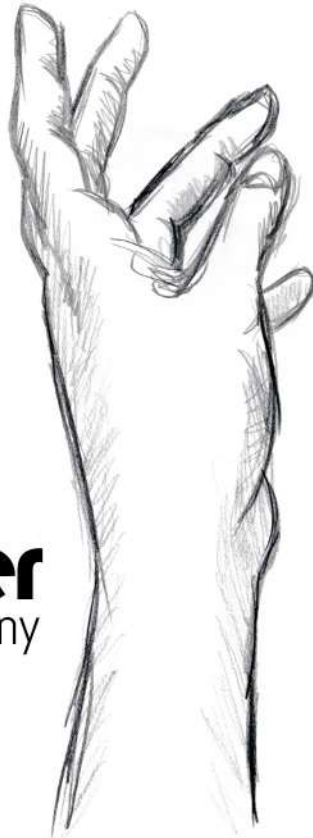
In the line of sight
We touch the horizon,
As it gives no fantasy
No burdens
No abstractions
And nothing but reality.

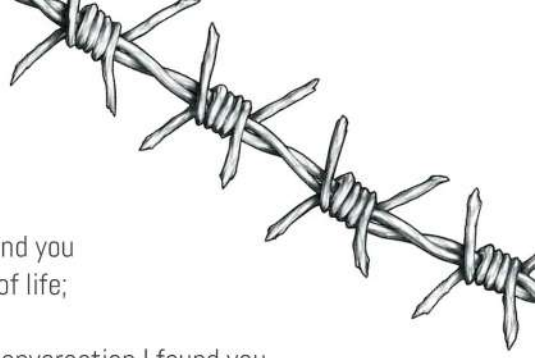
We feel from Afar,
As it shows all undiscovered
All entirety
All absoluton

And everything but humanity.
Which is why
The horizon is the hero
You need
You want
And you already have.

The Godfather

by Austin Cerny





Within life's chaos and busy daily routine I found you
Trying to teach me some of the best lessons of life;

Within the first, weird and funny ice-breaker conversation I found you
Opening up a little by little, even in disagreements you weren't really that strife;

Within daily giggles and deep defined conversations I found you
Getting closer and closer, being supportive and calling it the I got your back sort of
favor;

Within work, recreation and having an amazing time off with friends I found you
Giving me time, making sure I was alright taking up the role as my knight in shining
armour;

Within the first fight consisting of confusion between leaving and letting go I found you
Getting upset for the first time for this wasn't how you expected it to be, never about
closure;

Within my busy life of work and hustling towards my goals I now find myself putting
your happiness above
Oh tell me, tell me, tell me I am not the only one who is madly falling in love.

We never really know about God's plans and where we might actually end up in a few
years of time
Yet if I could choose between how long I'd want this to last, I'd undoubtedly choose a
lifetime!

**Finders
Keepers.**

by Nuskiya Nasar



Heavenly light
Pouring through the sparkling lens
Of my window.
Dancing rainbows
Of light
Against my brow.
I always thought I was too
Undeserving of heaven,
But I realize I am too strong.
For hell,
Because I could never be the nightmare
Or monsters who broke me;

I have no remorse for being who I am—
So many people have tried to drown
Or water me down.
I am the mountains, flames, and tempest
Of heaven;
I refuse to stay on my knees.
When I was born to walk, swim, and fly—
I give both flowers and thorns
Because i am both light and darkness.
Yet I choose the spark of light every time
Because without light darkness
Wouldn't be so beautiful.

LINDA M. CRATE
WITHOUT LIGHT

Three Balloons

by Nuha Faiz

"I want three", she shrieked as she handed the little silver coins she had gathered from her old piggy bank and the balloon-man handed her three Red balloons as she desired.

Overwhelmed, she could not wait till her siblings returned so she could play with them. With the threads of the balloon clenched in her little hands, she stood at the high wall that her Papa had once told her that kept 'Satan' out. The little kids of Aleppo, the colored balloons and their laughter made the place look like a little gala but the only person looking all glum had been Hajer who had several times wanted to run around with her balloons like her friends but had not because she waited for her two brothers' return.

"Why don't you hand me the two balloons and go play", the old lady who looked after the children had asked her, "I will give it to your brothers once they are here". The little girl had refused because she wanted to take care of the balloons for them.

'They will soon be here and we can run around far far away in the meadows then' she told the balloons with a giggle trying to reassure herself that she could still wait after so many hours had passed.

Hajer looked at the sky, the clouds were getting darker and she was getting terrified. The other children had flown in for shelter because the old lady had warned them of a heavy shower.

"They must have lost their way home", she cried to the lady as her eyes drenched in tears. "Let us wait inside, my dear. Your brothers will be here very soon" the old lady had convinced Hajer and taken her in for shelter.

The poor girl could not sleep that night. She tied the three balloons to a stone and left it beside her little mat before she had slept.

'They will be here by morning. Papa will guide them home. Please don't fly away' she told the three Red balloons as a prayer and closed her eyes. Next morning she woke up to look at her balloons. She noticed that they were not big and beautiful like they were the previous day. 'They will be here already', she exclaimed as she untied the three Red balloons and ran outside, back to the wall.

Hajer decided to quickly hide the three Red balloons behind her as she noticed many vehicles entering the village. 'They are here!!' she cried as she ran near a vehicle in which she guessed her two brothers must be. To a young man in white she asked, 'Are they here?' with a wide grin and the balloons still clenched behind her back. No sooner she had asked, a loud wail took Hajer aback in fear and excitement. Confusedly she watched many women running toward the vehicles.

'Give me back my son alive!!', a woman cried as she hugged the blood stained body of her little son in a stretcher. Hajer, still confused, stood on a rock, trying to take a better view of the vehicles that were now crowded around by many women. The three balloons swayed with the wind blowing fast but she did not let them go; they were clenched stronger than just like the hope she had in heart to see her brothers again. She got off the rock as she noticed some more men getting off another vehicle.

'There they are!!', she screamed as she ran towards them. She stood near the vehicle and waited for her brothers to get off. 'C'mon! I have a surprise for you two. Hurry up!' she laughed. Four men got off the vehicle, a pair carrying a stretcher in hands from both sides. Hajer looked at the stretchers. She noticed familiar faces and recognized it to be her brothers. She took a deep breathe, more excited now than she had been. With the grin still stuck on her little face, she moved further towards them.

'Look at these when you wake up!' she giggled in joy as she took in front of their blood-stained faces, the three Red balloons.



Nameera Anjum
DEAR ANXIETY.



Sometimes, you sweep me off my feet. I mean, literally. I wish I knew how to stand on my own without trembling like a leaf betwixt your grip. As you tighten your hug I wonder why I let you build a cocoon inside of me. My eyes dart from across cozy corners at a cafe and the sidelines where I've found an abode. My life isn't four walls but four corners of the big room. The greys help me blend perfectly with the walls so no one can yield what lies beneath. Like a constant reminder you stay in the back of my head, in the sweat across my palms and the shivers down my spine. You're in my stutter and the shutter I hide behind. You're the heartless human trampling upon my veins like you would on dead leaves that lie naked every autumn.

You're the antagonist in the story of a girl who bleeds poetry in a desolate corner of some cafe and sips her coffee in between,

Smacking her lips as isolation leaks down her city.

Dear anxiety, you've ruined me.

In A nightclub
Done up like a church;
Stained Glass windows,
Frankincense and myrrh,
White candles melt
Chilling even in July,
Haunted haunting

Homey,
Welcoming,
Bar behind an altar,
Red wine, white wine
Shining in gold chalices,
Patrons kneeling,
The wine sipping,
Oblivion,
Welcoming,
Spilling, Oaken pews hard as crime,
Bells ring,
Hands clapping,
Keeping time.

IN A NIGHT CLUB

ANGEL EDWARDS

How much distance and difference is there
Between a mountain and a molehill?

And how far are you determined to climb
To insure your problems amount to blessings in the end?

How tenacious is your will to peace?
How deep is your reservoir of faith?

When you weep with me
Do so not out of sorrow
But exultation
And know that even in our suffering

There shines a light of salvation.
How many skeletons are there living in your closet

That rattle bones when you can't sleep at night?
And how tired are the dragons that guard the secrets

Hiding in the shadows that haunt your soul?
How dedicated is your tongue to truth?

How strong is your resolve in the fire?
When you dance with me
Do so not in half steps
But full measure

And know that every movement
Guides us closer to the stars.



How many millstones hang around your neck
As you drag your cross from earth to sea to sky?

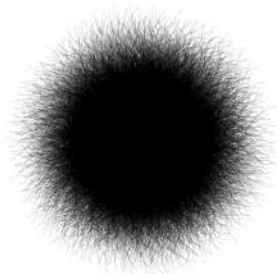
And how many psalms do you recite in darkness
As a prayer for healing to arrive with dawn?

How inspired is your passion?
How embedded is your urge to ascend?

When you sing with me
Do so not in low key
But high spirits
And know that this language of lyrics
Is born of revival.

SCOTT THOMAS OUTLAR

TREMBLING TOWARDS THE SUN





On the edge of a lake,
A cottage,
Nestling among trees,
A mere spec from the shore.
Some songs un-born,
Reside in a grieving heart,
Seeking solitude in that
Already-isolated community
Fleeing from contact!

Lake cottage

Sunil Sharma



DANIELLE NOLAN

METAMORPHOSIS

I don't remember how I got here. Before, I was drifting. I try to recapture my dream but except for a brief glimmer of clouds and blue sky it is gone completely.

Time to wake up then, I guess.

I attempt to stretch. Nothing. Call out. Nothing. I open my eyes and see nothing. What is going on? In a panic I frantically search for an explanation and draw upon nothing.

I don't remember how I got here. I don't remember anything, full stop. My head is foggy and I am so hot. Overwhelmingly hot. Mystified as to why I hadn't noticed before, I attempt to move once again, desperate for relief from whatever is making me sweat and suffer. This time I manage a feeble kick but it doesn't get me anywhere. I am immobile, trapped and afraid.

No matter how much I panic, no matter how much I wish for this nightmare to stop, it doesn't. After a while I have no choice but to stop struggling. I am powerless.

With nothing to be done, and only myself for company, my thoughts start to wander. So close to surrendering to sleep, I am almost lost. Then, intoxication. The smell was impossible to describe but if I had to try I would say that it was sweet and alluring; perfectly lovely. At last my instincts start to kick in. Muscles that I didn't know existed, spring to life. At last, my wings unfurl and the chrysalis tears.

It is a struggle to break free from my prison but I don't care. My first view of the world is upside down but I am no longer scared. My will is set and my focus is fixed. It's her, it's her! She is waiting for me and it is time to fly. The struggle continues and I begin to make progress at last.

Suddenly, there is light. Contained only by fresh air and beautiful blue sky, I am drawn to her colour. Brilliantly orange, like the leaves in autumn, she shows off her bold, black stripes by flapping her wings, just for me. I will my wings to work, and at last I am beside her, breathing her in. I have never been so content.

As the two of us fly above the water, I look down. At last, I am reminded of my dream. The reality of flying was far better than I had ever imagined. We were two monarch butterflies, together and free at last. The world was ours for the taking.



Rallying around
Holding candles
Doesn't really support a cause,
Peace needs to be within,
Not combined with a jolt.
Peace is that state
Where you don't increase
Your negative karmas,
You strive always to
Unbind your past mantras,
You seem unaffected
With negatives around you,
Happiness is sort by you
In all conditions created.
Peace is a frame of mind
And not an emotion to be fooled,
Let it dwell within us
And let our actions speak it
Aloud!



PEACE

by Sudeep Soparkar

I can always tell how long it will last
Or how much it will hurt,
by how we hold our hands.

with obligation
awkwardly
not at all.

or intertwined and tightly gripped fingers
that communicate all on their own
our shared hesitations and advancements.

Palms full of heat
the only part of us not fighting our magnetic pull.

When our lips fall quiet and ears grow tired
our hands continue to meet like old lovers
bumping into the other at the market
returning to embrace after decades apart.

Fingers that lock naturally between the other
leaving the space between each
suddenly very empty upon their absence.

This kind of puzzle piece hand holding
leaves you like you lost just that, when it's gone.

Something that fit so well, but left anyway.



Iman Metwally

HOW WE HOLD OUR HANDS



FOLLOW OUR SOCIAL MEDIA
FOR UPDATES AND INTERESTING CONTENT



My father sleeps with an atlas,
Each night a vacation
To the Seattle opera
Where melody becomes his religion
Changing prayers of light
To soft, tenor cadences.

His bones thirst for Wagner
Ring Of The Nibelungen
Rattling the keyholes of a dream—
Lost in the splintered teeth
Of Montana mountains
He hears a symphony of light
Knitting the road ahead.



Marcia Kester Doyle's

Wagner in Seattle

AT THE END

Azra Wazeer

Trapped amidst towering pernicious trees,
Skin soaked and bone burnt,
Dribbling saliva down his chin,
Hollowed and cursed, he waits.
Trembling legs and clenched fist,
Stung eyes cannot mind the mist.
Leaves, odiously green, twist and twirl,
Coursing and stretching out it's coiled claws.
Weeping, the cowering clay cringes away.
Muddy mounds prod and shove,
Nails snapping, toes slipping
he pleads and prays for forfeited deliverance.
Split and snarl, the branches threaten,
Fangs ravenous and inching to strike.
Blighted insects, hissing and seething,
blister and pinch prissy bottoms.
Tracing fatal trails on the ground,
Sizzling water and rain celebrate redemption,
Rewarding punishments long due.
The wretched stream screams it's way around,
Gushing out agonies, singing elegies.
Clapping thunders and blinding lightening
smother and quell his hoarse breath.
Shuddering hands reach out one last time
Only to be slapped away by the baleful wind



Hauntingly Beautiful by Belinda Brady

Abbey opened the mailbox, tentatively looking inside. Her heart skipped a beat when she saw there was a letter, a long-awaited letter, from a well-known music studio. She knew what it was about; her submission. A keen pianist since she was a child, Abbey had been submitting a melody she wrote to various studio's and music companies but to no avail. The melody in question was a haunting piece she had spent the best part of a year perfecting and although her friends and family told her how much they loved it, she needed that validation from an outsider that her music was worthy of being released to the world. She wanted people to love the tune as much as she did. Before she could stop herself, Abbey tore open the letter and read it.

'Unfortunately, it is just not what we are looking for at this time. Thank you for your interest....' The words blurred as small tears started to fall, despite her best efforts to stop them. Abbey promised herself she would not get her hopes up about this submission, but secretly she really hoped this would be the studio that would be interested in her piece. Now she would be adding this letter to her ever-growing rejection pile.

Abbey stood at her mailbox and sobbed as she thought about all the rejection and heartbreak she had faced over the last year. She loved music – she lived and breathed it – and she had hoped it shone through when she played the piano, her hands effortlessly playing the notes she dreamt about in her sleep. She loved it too much not to try and get her music out there, but she feared it was just not going to happen for her. It seemed her music was only destined for the ears of loved ones.

Abbey was turning to go back inside when she heard the voice of her elderly neighbor, Esme. "Hello, Abbey dear, how are you today?" Esme asked in an ever-present happy tone. She was a wonderful neighbor and her and Abbey were always engaging in deep and meaningful chatter over their mailboxes. Before Abbey could stop herself, she turned around and let her neighbor see the tears, see the mascara streaked down her face. She needed to be comforted and she craved the positive, wise words Esme was sure to soothe. "Oh, my," Esme gasped, "Whatever has happened?" Pouring her heart out, Abbey told Esme everything. The rejections, the time she spent pouring her heart and soul into this melody, the love she had for music. She quietly admitted she was nearly ready to give up. "Oh no, never give up, dear, never. If you enjoy it, you keep at it," Esme gasps, "I hear you play and you are breathtaking. You have a real talent there kid." She then starts humming a familiar tune and asks, "Is that the piece you've submitted?"

It's such a beautiful and memorable tune, it reminds me of my late husband for some reason. It's reminiscent of happy times but also stirs up some sad memories, in a wonderful way of course. It's brilliant. They are nuts to knock it back, nuts. What's it called?"

Abbey breaks into a grin as she realizes her neighbor is not calling her bluff. She does hear her music and has heard her tune, and likes it. She had touched someone. That thought alone made the pain of all those rejections worthwhile. "Its name?" she asks, "I have called the melody 'Hauntingly Beautiful,' as that's what it is for me – haunting and beautiful. It's been with me a long time and I have only just begun to get it out there."

"Hauntingly Beautiful," Esme repeats, "What a fantastic title, and appropriate. Well, I tell you what, the world needs to hear this my dear, it does. Keep at it. No matter how down you may feel, keep going. Even the greats got rejected before they got their break, you know, and they kept going. You should too. Besides, you make this old duck happy with your music, and that has to count for something, right?"

Laughing, Abbey pulls Esme in for a hug, thanking her and feeling a little uplifted after their conversation. Saying her goodbyes, Abbey went to go back into the house when Esme called out, "Tell me dear, do you have any plans Saturday afternoon?" Shaking her head Abbey replies, "No, why?" Smiling, Esme answers, "Why don't you come over to my house for afternoon tea. Oh, and bring your 'Hauntingly Beautiful' piece with you. I assume you have it on disc, or whatever you kids call it these days, right?" Confused Abbey replies, "Of course." Turning toward her house, Esme casually calls out, "Perfect. See you around four o'clock, and don't forget that tune!"

Once inside her home, Esme picks up her phone and dials a familiar number. A voice on the other end announces she has reached a rather prestigious music studio. "Yes, I'd like to be put through to the CEO, Ms Doris Pass, please", Esme requests. After a brief hold, Esme is talking to her old friend Doris. Thick as thieves, they grew up together and share the same taste in music. Doris started this company and could have retired long ago, but her love of music has kept her there and the girls often chuckle that she will be doing this job until the day she dies. Esme knew Doris had to listen to Abbey's tune. She would love it.

"Hello, Doris!" Esme exclaims, "Listen, what are you doing on Saturday afternoon? There is someone I would love for you to meet and a piece of music you need to hear. They're both hauntingly beautiful."

Maryam Abdhur Rahmaan

Hearts Lamentation

A malady with no remedy,
Entered my heart
It was too sturdy,
which made me so feeble
Nobody around me could comprehend -
the inadequacy
I tried my best to elude from it,
but it never abandoned me
Nobody could give me an aid,
for it was I who could grope over it
Which made life severe and difficult to survive.





Words are our most inexhaustible source of magic
J. K. Rowling



THE ONLINE LITERARY MAGAZINE

MERAK

MERAK
TURNS
ONE

BECOME A MERAK
CONTRIBUTOR
TODAY



Books Culture Feminism
Journalism Love Movies
Music Psychology Religion
Science Social Technology
Travel Teen Health
Humour

APRIL
10TH



www.merakmag.com



librettist

Selected Poems & Shorts

Librettist™ is a trademark of Merak Inc. UK. Any articles used in this publication are subjected to copyrights protected under the UK Copyrights and patent act of 1988 and the legal authoring rights only belonging to Merak and their respective authors. Reproducing this or part of the book in any way, is strictly prohibited. © 2019 ALL RIGHTS RESERVED | www.merakmag.com | L8 ORG, England.

THE ONLINE LITERARY MAGAZINE
MERAK



REAL PEOPLE
POETRY