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Featured Poetry - JULY, 2022

POUR FÉLICITER

By Pavol Janik Ph.D. (SLOVAKIA)

Translated into English by Zuzana Sasovova.

May everyone be happy,
 who owns love,
 who is not home alone
 but surrounded by their family.
 Enjoy together
 all festivities.
 Let the New Year's spirit prevail.

END

Pavol Janik Ph.D., is a poet, dramatist, prose writer, translator, publicist and copywriter. He has worked at the Ministry of Culture (1983-1987), and in media and advertising. His works have been published worldwide.

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THE HEART OF GUILTY MAN

By Mathews Mhango (MALAWI)

Hands crossed on my weakened and guilty heart
 As I figure out the loss of love
 The guilt of my actions
 Keep playing in the back of my mind
 Like a horror movie
 They give me nightmares

THE JANGLED WORLD

By Mark Evan Chimsky (USA)

You make your uncertain way down
 the long hall of days
 as if in a house that belongs to someone else.
 But when you sit at the piano, your fingers prod
 the keys and out of the clatter
 a ribbon of melody floats up
 like poetry rising from a chaos of words.

Your eyes once held me in dim recognition
 and I was grateful that my name lingered still
 in so far a place within—a shining prize
 in the dark reach of a cave.

I laid out the blue pills and the red capsules
 as if they were pieces from one of our old board
 games.

“Give me the nicest ones,” you would say,
 smiling so I would not see
 how small choices have their tyrannies.

I think of how you would be
 in a different century, a jangled world
 when there was nothing
 to subdue the nightly terrors
 or stop the whispers in the mind;
 a time when sand ticked each second
 and leeches pricked the skin.

They reality I have to face with no funfair
 The love I cherished and loved most
 Keeps drifting away from me
 As dews on a patch of grass melting
 To the scorching sun, burning my heart
 The skeletons in the closet, are really mine
 And keep scaring me, haunting me
 A reminder of the pain
 I have caused in this love journey
 As I am fighting the demons that keep staring
 At me when I look at the mirror
 A true reminder of my actions
 I am fighting for my redemption
 To gain the love that I have lost
 The pain to lose this love
 Is too much to bear
 Looking from a distance as it drifts away
 Like a sun setting in a distance horizon
 With the spark of love that still remains
 In my weaken and guilty heart for this love
 Am fighting for the redemption of this love
 That I can heal and gain this lost love with you
 So the pain of your sorrowful heart to all be memories.

END

Mathews Mhango is an Internal Auditor by profession working in the public sector. He likes to write poetry on different issues that affect society.

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ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE NIGHT

By Eduard Schmidt-Zorner (REPUBLIC OF IRELAND)

One day you wake up
 and realise you are alive.
 It is such a mind-blowing feeling,
 that at first you cannot discern it.
 Family and relatives enraptured
 and delighted surround the child's bed.
 First, I saw only black and white
 like the fields of the chessboard.

The 'King' and the 'Queen'
 who looked at me,
 Then the 'Rooks' and 'Pawns',
 uncles and aunts,

Now, without the plain count of the daily regimen –
 blue pills, red capsules – you
 can't find my name at all
 and you shudder, cursing the stranger
 who holds your hand and calls himself your son.

END

Mark Evan Chimsky's poetry and essays have appeared in publications worldwide. Mark is also a recipient of the Anna Davidson Rosenberg Award as New/Emerging Poet.

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SECRETS OF LAUNDRY DAY

By Rohan Facey (JAMAICA)

On Laundry day
 She pulled secrets from his pockets:
 a forgotten note, a crumpled photo of a woman
 as breath-taking as the latest model of a luxury car,
 loose threads; along with candy wrappers.

She saw also - lip prints on a snowy cotton shirt
 she had pressed two mornings ago

Dirty Linen

tumbled before her -
 defying the power of detergents.

END

Rohan Facey is a high-school teacher and a multiple-award winning contemporary poet, songwriter and playwright. He has contributed to both local newspapers and international anthologies.

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OUR SPRING ROMANCE

By Rubilyn Bollion Cadao (HONG KONG/PHILIPPINES)

Flowers bud in thy delight
 in crimson, radiant and bright.

As flowers bloom with thy sweet smile,
 my heart flutters not just for a while.

As love blossoms like petals budding,
 my heart gleams with the grace of Spring.

opened the view to colour
when snow and ice disappear
in the coldest month of the year,
me, born into ruins and poverty
as a quasi-new beginning.

A fibrillation of hope.
Shy, peculiar, and quiet
the little child.
There are already images
in the mind
that are a foundation,
to build a life on,
a predestination.

END

Eduard Schmidt-Zorner is a translator and writer of poetry, haibun, haiku, and short stories. He writes in four languages, and holds workshops on Japanese and Chinese style poetry and prose, and experimental poetry.
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FAMILY OF TREES

By S. D. Kilmer

Have you never seen
A solitary tree?
Even the Joshua Tree
Is never alone in the Mohave Desert.

There are families of trees.
They nurture one another.
They shade the youngest.
They preserve the eldest.
Self-perseverance together.
This is a family whose roots
Are known, grow deep in the earth.
They know their place.
They know their race.
Roots that are interwoven
One tree with the other.
Identity is assured.
A familial community
With all the right virtues.

Where might there be

Petals unfold as you hold me close,
Your tender kiss, gives my heart a dose.

With the silver rays of the sunshine, we slide.
As the flowers flicker as we dance and glide.

Buds blossom with thy delight,
and blooms with thy love's pure light.

Captivating my heart to fall,
with your endearing heartbeat's call.

As the spring grace the season dearly,
our hearts entangled true and clearly.

Our love prospered as we take a reason,
flourished through the freshness of the season

Like the bees swamped buzzing over the flowers,
you conquered my heart, guarding it forever.

END

Rubilyn Bollion Cadao is Filipino, and works as a domestic worker in Hong Kong. She started writing poems when she was in high-school; writing about love, nature and life's struggles.

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UNTITLED

By Abd al-Karim (NETHERLANDS)

Translated by Catherine Cobham

I want to say here what could not be said there
In that room where there were three of us
Refugee, interrogator, translator
This is the disappointment that precedes regret
A lesson in extreme eloquence
That says clearly
Your arrival at your destination
Doesn't have to mean you've survived
It's disappointment whose exact number I don't know
But it's less than a shock
After all we're living in Dante's Inferno
In the time of black comedy
When nothing is as it should be

A similar family among humanity
With all the right virtues?

END

*S. D. Kilmer is a retired Existential/Pastoral Therapist,
Pastoral Care Specialist, and Family Conflict Mediator, and
has been writing poetry since 1968.*

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WAIT A MINUTE

By Lali Tsipi Michaeli (ISRAEL)

Translated from Hebrew by Oded Peled.

I want to release you. I'm not holding you here by force
but
Until I get to my place I want to tell you about a place
without a place
I want to tell you about the dove I rescued today in the
stairwell.
I do not know from which hole she entered to land
exactly
On my inherited floor
but
I created a momentary conversation with her between
good friends. Maybe more than that
She listened to my whispers. You were wounded by
your death. She stopped flying from height to height.
Did not move.
I built trust with you.
You do not understand what nobility was
In this painful state
but
Before the connection was made she really went
berserk
She slammed her head into a grid that caught her neck
as she came in and out, she went in and out
Couldn't get out of the trap
I wanted to hold her softly
Lower her and release
but
Suddenly I saw a hole
Of poured water
A large hole blocked in two bricks
I took out the bricks and using my body movements
I made her fly there

I am a boat from the third world
A boat that shows signs of sinking
A thread shaking in the womb of a needle
A poet who has built his ruined world in instalments
In streets where dogs die of heart attacks
In poems always selected for rejection
In demonstrations that I escaped from alive by sheer
chance
On posters that read "Tomorrow will be ours"
In the drawings of Van Gogh that icon
Who experienced another kind of pain when he cut off
his ear
As a reaction to bouts of hysteria
In bars where we forget everything
I'm a poet
Who writes to mountains that show signs of withering
Who plays tunes that rustle in the ear of dying flowers
Plays madly
On a matchbox
The matchbox where thirty or more streets have
settled
A poet
Who believes to some extent in the sanctity of colours
that vanish one after the other
In the resurrection of rivers subjected to arbitrary arrest
And believes more in Cavafy's terrifying words
Since your life is ruined there it's ruined everywhere
Nothing can resist this absolute refusal
I realise that or almost
But something had to be said
It was possible the pain would be excised here
It was possible that tomorrow
Would be an extraordinary day
And it was possible
That I would gain a little peace of mind so I could
shout
Through loudspeakers I've done it
But
This place is not mine
There's another country involved
And Dublin is the holy god of fingerprints
As you say
These evocative words do not change fates
But they do what they can and more
I accept the refusal but I cannot accept the reason ...

The stream of air that drew her
 She went in and got stuck in the middle. A real
 purgatory
 And out of fear that she would regret it
 And come back
 I laid down a first brick
 From the repulsion she flew
 I immediately laid down the second brick
 And I wanted to cry with great happiness that I
 succeeded in this delusional situation and with great
 sorrow
 For the eternal moment between me and her
 I was released.
 that's it. I bought candles in Jaffa.
 I can grieve now.

END

*Lali Tsipi Michaeli has published six poetry books, has
 attended a number of international poetry festivals, and
 was part of a residency program for talented writers in New
 York.*

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WHAT ARE THE CULTURAL AND LITERARY
 IMPLICATIONS OF
 COEXISTENCE WITH FOREIGNERS, RELATIVES AND
 OTHERS?

By Douglas Colston (AUSTRALIA)

To give,
 in addition to minute talent,
 coexists with the optimal potential of each emerging
 moment –
 education harmonising the humanities is significant ...
 'to be' is something!

Participation or interference
 (including agreement, supporting, befriending,
 fighting, coping, comparing, electing or choosing),
 alienation, distance and exclusion
 is scattered everywhere.

Physical, psychological and moral qualities or
 conditions
 together with cherishing, harbouring or retaining

END

*Abd al-Karim is currently seeking asylum in the
 Netherlands.*

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WELCOME TO THE WORLD. SORRY ABOUT THE
 MESS

By Lawrence Hopperton (CANADA)

smile and look to me
 shudder and ecstasy

sing your worried
 grey-green moods

back-lit, wind gold
 cradled and skies

roil, rain drives
 synchronous tree-bent

cadences and nuzzles
 this private crook

END

*Lawrence Hopperton is the retired Founding Director of
 Distributed Learning at Tyndale University in Toronto. He
 has had a number of books published, and his work has
 appeared in literary journals worldwide.*

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BLACK HOLE

By Janelle Finamore (USA)

Rushing towards extinction on a Ferris wheel of doubt
 The heavy night air like an elephant thickens my heart
 with lust

You look in the mirror at the unmasked moon and beg
 for its glow

The wind clothed in desperation and desire striving to
 become a quiet monk

clarity, truth and certainty
repeatedly changes and transforms
(in short, it is 'enlightenment' or 'civility').

Gentle, kind, peaceful and temperate patterns
(including writing, social phenomenon and etiquette),
learning, knowledge, meaning, sense,
charity, freedom, justice and morality
are perfect
and miscellaneous.

Tiny and insignificant groups of poems
(or people [including troops])
are artificial –
they are made by humans, false, misleading and
unnatural.

Anticipating or expecting repetition
to add up to commodities or currency
conceals the 'target'
(the optimal potential
of each emerging moment).

Existing with charity, love and kindness scattered
everywhere
alienates conflict.

Fighting foreigners, relatives and others rapidly causes
–
respectfully –
castration (metaphorically).

'Being' is the goal.

Patterns become echoes.

Patterns realising, learning, comprehending,
understanding and studying
sense, meaning, and right conduct
are perfect ...
of course!

END

*Douglas Colston holds a BA, a BSc and a post-graduate
Psychology qualification. His poetry, fiction and non-fiction*

You strangle the wind while the circles whirl, us a
tangled mess

Licking my wounds as the darkness swallows us into
it's mouth.

We fear a black hole ending
As we move recklessly, sliding down the throat of the
night sky.

END

*Janelle Finamore is a musician, poet, teacher, and fairy-
tale writer. Her writing is inspired by the beat poets, and has
published internationally.*

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LONELINESS

By Francisco Azuela (MEXICO).

*To the Tarahumara, indigenous Rarámuris from northern
Mexico.*

*Translation from Spanish by the poet Reynaldo Marcos
Padua.*

Now that the song of the birds is gone
And at night, the storm
Has a pitiful and lonely barking of dogs,
And love has withered.
Loneliness I know you, at last.

Goddess of silence and of a hollow branch,
Ere once the birds wove their nests.

Great deaths appear to my mind,
Immense characters
And their glorious times.

Kings, poets and warriors,
The freedom of the nations has been very high,
Blood has flowed
As much as the rivers that flow into the deep sea.

A strange insect has prowled your soul
And you have gone with him
In an act of devotion so similar to an absence.

You've already forgiven great injustices.

has been published online and in print, in addition to appearing in a number of anthologies.

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OUR SPRING ROMANCE

By Rubilyn Bollion Cadao (HONG KONG / PHILIPPINES)

Flowers bud in thy delight
in crimson, radiant and bright.

As flowers bloom with thy sweet smile,
my heart flutters not just for a while.

As love blossoms like petals budding,
my heart gleams with the grace of Spring.

Petals unfold as you hold me close,
Your tender kiss, gives my heart a dose.

With the silver rays of the sunshine, we slide,
As the flowers flicker as we dance and glide.

Buds blossom with thy delight,
and blooms with thy love's pure light.

Captivating my heart to fall,
with your endearing heartbeat's call.

As the spring grace the season dearly,
our hearts entangled true and clearly.

Our love prospered as we take a reason,
flourished through the freshness of the season.

Like the bees swamped buzzing over the flowers,
you conquered my heart, guarding it forever.

END

Rubilyn Bollion Cadao is Filipino, and works as a domestic worker in Hong Kong. She started writing poems when she was in high-school; writing about love, nature and life's struggles.

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The mutilated men claim
Their right to be heard,
And only you can feel a bitter wind
Breaking your heart in the deserted mountains.

Be brave, comrade of the dawn.
It ´s not far the awakening;
You can interpret all the illusions of these people,
This village immersed in the poverty of life;
Make sing again the white blackbird of old solitudes,
Make it be heard the song of the goldfinches
And of the troubadours,
May the world turn it ´s face
To be grafted onto the afternoon spike
Where a sun dreaming of hope is setting.

Make that dawn chant and so with it your soul.

END

Multi-published, multi award-winning Francisco Azuela is a writer and acclaimed poet. He served as a diplomat in the Mexican Embassy in Costa Rica, and later in Honduras.

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THE HUMAN PROMISE

By David Sparenberg (USA)

When the Human Promise shut her eyes
she saw what was unseen – heart
of the human heart – soul
of the human soul. Light
like the softness of flowers shone
around everyone whose task in
life was truth and within
every deed done for sake of the
goodness of life. Keeping the Possible open.

When she opened her mouth
a river flowed out
joining the ocean of light. In
the melodious waters of
life a river of fire
turned pain into smoke. Anguish
of cruelty was washed to ashes.

When the Human Promise opened her eyes

BROKEN

By Kathy Sherban (CANADA)

Fam Jam
 intricate beast
 fire breathing
 tricky peace
 One, two
 gut punch luv
 tongues workin
 push 'n shove
 Twisted sista'z
 rank 'n file
 prodigal son'z
 apple child
 Madd clan
 pedigree plus
 blood transfusion
 parental bust

END

Kathy Sherban is a poet and author, and her work has been published in several global anthologies and international literary magazines.

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AT FORTY

By Heidi Seaborn (USA)

I found failure or it found me
 like moths to cashmere.
 There's running and then
 there's running away.
 I perfected both.
 You could tell by the way I laced
 up my sneakers, set my iPod to Seal.

It was a time when I flew everywhere
 but felt wingless. I look back and see
 the sun had already burnt a hole
 in my horizon at forty. Scorched
 the garden but left the zinnias

she saw the person beside her
 simple and smiling and
 quietly responding in talk of peace – a
 sounding of intimate dialogue, spontaneously
 ignited between them and us
 with the freedom of laughter.

Eyes of concord shone
 with a poem of letting go
 in poetry of belonging, letting
 be. Poems repeated, chanted
 to keep the Possible open.

When the Human Promise opened
 her heart
 thorns that had been the
 source of suffering
 became roses. Every rose
 flowered into a tree of life. Every
 tree took root
 in a cornucopia of compassion. Compassion's
 fruit is justice. The fruit-seeds fall
 onto the grounds of salvific orchards.

Rivers meander gently, slowly, natively
 unobstructed through valleys of
 black soil. Sun has become the tenderest lover.

Those who but sought
 power amid trash amid trinkets knotted
 in the clasp of death were
 surrendered to death. Those who built
 tabernacles in the wilderness of
 love gathered at the prayers of life.

Allegiance holds fast
 to bring love home at last -at last!
 to the scorned and the scorched and the homeless
 Earth

END

David Sparenberg is an author and internationally publishing essayist and eco-poet, living in the Pacific Northwest.

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to the buzz of teens. How alive
the hive of us. The five of us.
Or so we seemed to passersby.

But I'd already lingered too long—
past the happy hour's fading smile,
past the bartender's knuckles
rapping Last Call, gotten sloppy
on the hard liquor of our marriage.

I had only wanted to keep drinking
the champagne of my children,
bubbles rising.

END

After a raising three children and a long business career, Heidi Seaborn started writing poetry in 2016. Today, she holds an MFA in Poetry and is an award-winning author of a number of titles.

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A HORRIBLE HIDE AND SEEK

By Vanessa Caraveo (USA / MEXICO)

A child sobs into her cell phone,
sending one last text home.
In the background, gunshots,
as a disgruntled student roams.

Whether you blame it on stress,
lack of guidance, or bullying,
the end result is all that matters.
And this end will be worrying.

How many dead and gone today?
Less or more than tomorrow?
Families wait outside in horror
for news of fresh scars and sorrows.

She never gets to finish the message
and a few words are left unsaid.
It's hard to comfort your mother
when you're already dead.

END

FEBRUARY ICE

Dr. Thomas Reed Willemain (USA)

After they buried her first-born
in the frozen earth
her second-born saw her become
a small birch that had borne
too much ice

bent way over
staring into the ground
as if she'd forgotten
where they'd lain the body.

Her husband remained rigid,
a maple with strong branches snapped,
ragged stumps in their place,
a broken symmetry.

The surviving son,
pulled from the passenger seat,
spent his life in futile repair
trying to straighten and mend,
ignoring their resentment
that he was the twig
neither bent nor broken.

END

Dr. Thomas Reed Willemain is former academic, software entrepreneur and intelligence officer. His poetry has appeared in numerous journals and publications.

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THE MAN

By Sanda Ristić Stojanović (SERBIA)

Translation Sonja Asanović Todorović

The man,
protrudes into the idea of heaven as a register of pain,
he is palpated by the kinship of pain and chaos,
spawn by tectonic disturbances of words at
the plateaus of battles, sense, survival.

The man,
squeezed between two ideas of life and death,

Vanessa Caraveo is an author, published poet, and artist who has a passion for promoting inclusion for all and helping others discover the power within them to overcome adversity.

the girdle of darkness tightens him, anticipating the protruding position of the word freedom.
Assaults of the afternoons, centuries, falls, seas summarize him into themselves.
Uprisings of words, centuries, furrows of our speech flow down the face of the revolution.

The man,
bold as blood and all what blood utters,
face to face with the metaphysics of tearing,
vower of the last surrealism of life,
filled from top to bottom
with honed symbols of earth and sky.

The man,
The node of the tide of the unspoken,
the flywheel of the diamonds of his own ruin,
removes the crown from the head of registrars of everything and
treads like fixing the gaze of angels and demons.

The man,
arose from the invention of time
organizes the metaphysics of rebellion in the dense content of angels and demons

END

Sanda Ristić-Stojanović graduated in philosophy, and is the author of 15 poetry books. Her poems and short stories have published in numerous collections of contemporary literature, and in several anthologies of poetry of the twenty-first century.

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