

**In the Long Nights**  
Poem by Georgia Atkin

A faint hum, unpractised.

Then a louder note,  
emerging in the silence  
like  
candlelight.

In spite of everything,  
my lungs still take in air  
and offer music in return,  
the bellows of my body  
transforming oxygen  
into stalwart vowels and consonants  
that catch the wind  
and carry me on;

each soft sweep of melody  
unfolds its wings around me  
and rises, winding its way  
towards stars  
in the winter sky.

**Good Trouble**  
Poem by Rick Brison

Children play on the beach  
I watch the crashing waves  
With some alarm as  
They roll up on the shore  
Aggressively noisily rudely  
Bouncing boisterously  
Across the sand  
Only to fall back again and  
Leave most of that great  
Effort undone sure  
All that energy  
Must be destructive  
Dangerous fun but  
Totally undiscouraged  
Again here they come  
And every time they do  
Another inch of ground is won  
Children play on the beach  
Unconcerned  
I watch the waves some more

# FREE POEMS



**Read a Local Writer!**  
**BE a Local Writer!**

**Virgin Ground**  
Poem by P. Minutiae

The first to be buried in the graveyard  
A lone Explorer of the underlying

before Its arrival  
The ground had known but daisies and the like  
Never flesh

Some grounds know flesh  
And the forms in which it comes  
They've held it for some time

This ground is hosting It  
Like the newness of the unknown  
And alone It rests to be discovered

Until It is joined by another  
who, when it comes, will be more known

**Shakespearean**  
Sonnet by Harry Garrison

Here's a question: to be or not to be?  
Romans, et cetera, lend me your ears!  
Briefly put, the soul of wit is brevity.  
The fault is in myself, not in my stars.

There's more things in Heaven and Earth.  
The world's just a stage on which I play.  
I overstate that I doth protest too much.  
Shall I compare myself to a Summer's day?

Brave new world with such creatures in it!  
I am forever to my own self true.  
Love is love, no impediments I admit.  
The course of true love never ran smooth.

Juliet, why the heck art thou 'Juliet?'  
Goodnight! Parting is sorrow so sweet!

**A Happening**  
Poem by David Mac Eachern

Rapid eye movement, fact or fiction mode  
Deep resting mind's relief displays a scene  
A sleep revealed mystery in subconscious code  
Caught in the action, not getting theme

Profound message, leaving impact on waking life  
Maybe a story, though without word  
Caught in the feelings which so excited  
As with pictured thought, though never heard

Meant to be expressed, love's flowing lotion  
Acceptance by an invite, a welcoming surge  
A heartfelt connection, devotion calmly in motion  
Constancy of the inspiration, beauty to merge

Wanting what is real to be found  
There shineth full composure, combined in persistence  
Looking deeply into hearts, love making sound  
Together now fully from dream into existence

**an afternoon with Jadis**  
Poem by Scott Lynch

first cog railway in the world, 1869  
our guide proclaimed  
Switzerland was second  
sighting a frock, rock frog  
we smiled in ascending  
trestles carried us further still  
the Appalachian Trail, or 10 feet of it  
anyway, we found between frozen cairns  
detraining we were accosted by 70mph  
winds and a grounded Junco exhausted  
and unable to fly  
extreme was the catch phrase  
and late season too  
highest recorded winds 231mph here  
atop Mt Washington at 6288 ft  
three hours we waited detailing  
the elderly, infants, the under dressed  
crops and shorts the toque less  
oompa loompa hats and angst  
pacing constantly consuming all available  
food as darkness fell we waited  
ice and gusting winds had derailed  
an earlier attempt to rescue us  
then came the announcement of boarding  
and Jadis led us to 'carriage C'  
we would be first down the precipice  
first to attempt the 37.4% slope  
our dark cabin quiet as death on decent  
rattled and bumped 'till shouts of ecstasy  
heralded our arrival announcement  
striking her best  
'come hither bad boy' pose  
we'll not soon forget the striking image  
of our white witch

# OPEN HEART FORGERY

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*Open Heart Forgery is a monthly journal of poems  
& lyrics that aims to energize local writers from  
the grass roots up.*

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**Send us your poems & lyrics for the next issue**  
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**Rule 1:** No hate. No sexism. No racism.  
**Rule 2:** Maximum 28 lines long, 43 letters wide  
Larger poems will only be considered space permitting  
**Rule 3:** Only HRM residents please, to keep Open  
Heart Forgery a local community journal

Print off copies of the website PDF  
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Beautify the world by sharing these words...

**let our voices be heard...**  
**Forge This Journal!**

**Christmas, 2019**  
**Poem by Scot Jamieson**

The occasional anonymous snowflakes were going about their business of falling, moving competently about, like wait staff place-setting before a banquet. The great banquet of the snow was to be held that evening, with all the guest cars and trucks seated in their front-row locations on the roads. A pedestrian poet walked to his house and opened the door to a hair-salon waft of air from the newly-sprayed wreath of holly and berries. He went up to his apartment, heard a clock-like ticking from the new plastic solar Santa shimmying slowly by the gray-sky window. No huggable wife in sight – out, likely. There were boxes around of decorations to hang, unopened so far, but he looked at the light on the boxes and felt too happy to want to change anything at that time . . . “not just yet.”

**Haiku to Winter Season**  
**by Marilyn Challis**

Frigid North winds nip,  
Jack Frost smiles round the corner,  
Embrace Wintertime.

**As Long as It's Swingin'**  
**Poem by Nathaniel S. Rounds**

I, the snapping turtle  
crossing the highway,  
have a certain aversion for said highway,  
but cross it nonetheless  
as my lake was poisoned  
thanks to the small mouth bass  
and its insatiable gentrification.  
I am fearful of 18 wheelers and curious coyotes  
but await the sweet soul music  
of a new stream.

**Winter is Coming**  
**Poem by Rod Stewart**

Autumnal glory now spent,  
All days tarnished dull  
In maroon and ochre,  
As elder spoken whispers  
Steeped fragrant as earthen tea,  
Boiled and burned dry,  
Bitter and biting  
To naked quivering lips,  
Licking their calloused cracks,  
That plead desperately  
For sweet evening balm  
Of cinnamon and cider,  
Ever weeping scarlet,  
Cursing against the face  
Of wolfen nor'westers,  
Breaking only for thought  
Of those other lips,  
Of a moist nocturnal nature.  
All days now drawn deeper,  
Into shadows and dreams.  
And hopes buried forgotten  
Like chestnuts folded away,  
Into our Mother's womb

**Wandering Thoughts**  
**Poem by Elzy Taramangalam**

Fallen leaves on grass  
Knowing all, shy smiling ask  
Is my country yours?  
The seditious part of the heart  
Refuses to accept  
This bedlam democracy.  
Eyes covered, lips sewed  
Hands folded, knees bend  
Mind filled with dark dread  
Fervently tasking for day break.  
Stamped - marked freedom unbound  
For saints, sinners, people of the mind  
Folks of the field  
And every child on land  
Living on the hinges of history  
That makes the world one.

**Return**  
**Poem by LeeAnn Wallage Brown**

Inside,  
A core twisted and bruised.  
Voices,  
Echo a song of pain.  
Aching,  
For a bleeding heart to be soothed.  
Gently,  
Listen, For the voices that echo.  
Through mute ears,  
Breeze,  
Once warm.  
Misses a soft touch.  
Sky,  
Above.  
Missing the beautiful hues of blue.  
Ocean,  
Without waves.  
To carry me,  
Back towards you.  
You.  
Heart.  
Pleading, one more time.  
Empty,  
Awaiting the journey,  
Back home.

**Fulmination**  
**Poem by Memel Pound**

Like antonyms in air  
The fronts collide in  
Spectacular derangement  
Of ions ripped that  
Tripped the switch  
And sparked the  
Pent potential  
Of the fair air  
We breathe.  
Who would harness the bolt,  
Would covet the power.

**Linda, In Many Skins**  
**For Linda Clark**  
**Poem by Mary Ellen Sullivan**

I wear many skins, each a tale.  
One thin, fragile, patched, when my mother cries.  
Another for the mystery symptoms  
with their fractured surface of shame.  
Taut surface of an escaped balloon  
rising beyond the ninth floor.  
I take it for a good omen.

Layered stories of surgery. One withheld.  
COMA.  
Skin of burnt flesh, ragged breaths.

Knitting together a guilt-burdened recovery.  
(Why should I still be thinking about it?)  
Rippling layer of heart-deep laughter.  
The contoured layer of a purple dress, butterflies...

My brain dances with stories.  
Minus the colloid cyst  
That life-threatening life-changer.  
Wow,  
I imagine slipping a silk skin over the cyst  
when it emerges.  
I must thank it for the stories.

**That Street**  
**Poem by Jari-Matti Helppi**

The cold north does bestow upon  
the wonton winter's leaven strong.  
The hearthful comfort of the blast,  
that comes from Hades smaller fast,  
and sits warming smolder's chilly will,  
like cold souls wined on frilly fill.  
There, as all and words do tend  
to set a mood and then defend  
the ones who'll gutter up repeat;  
like those old ones met upon that street.

**The Religious Pray**  
**Poem by Mike McFetridge**

The religious pray;  
The heathens stray;  
The adventurous explore;  
The greedy want more;  
The realists squirm;  
The educated learn;  
The pious preach;  
The teachers teach;  
The politicians lie;  
The workers try;  
The writers write;  
The fighters fight;  
And the down-trodden poor  
Knock upon the door...

And life goes on.