

I am not an optimist
Poem by Rachel Miller

I see this life
A beautiful struggle, constant change
Flux and flow
Between growth and decay
Just look at the seasons
Are we not the same?
This struggle to attain
Growth and newness
To discover and gain
A higher understanding
A sense of belonging
Of freedom, and finding
Ourselves as we know us
And as we really want to be
But really,
Deep down, we know
It's not just about being happy
It's really about living fully
In the moment, every moment
That you're truly happy
Living so involved,
Immersed in this life
Celebrating, though committing
delving deeper in the moment
You find you're much too busy,
Too occupied to consider
Whether or not you are happy
Because you just are

Dearly
Poem by Nicole Myers

 alas
there is a place for calm
walking snow-filled streets
 & stopping
under an imposing spire to
meet in secret
 at arm's length
 we smile at each other
in heralding silence
 your profile in a slight
sliver of city sun
 in a mere instant
filled a lingering emptiness with
infinite joy
I could not remember when I had
 been so happy

FREE POEMS



Read a Local Writer!
BE a Local Writer!

Lapsed
Poem by Nathaniel S. Rounds

I used to be a prophet
But I got lost
In cool jazz

I used to be a mercenary
But my enemies
Told these great jokes

I used to be a model citizen
But my neighbor
Critiqued my lawn

Trails
Poem by Earl Bradford

Perspiration... fraught
Dragon fly-whirring through
Damp foliage – cold grey
breezy gust of forest vermilion,
Decadent moss, rustic blanket
Of storm cobwebs, ashy
conflagration – murky swamp tides
rouged organic swarms feasting,
chittering foragers, timber canopy
– Furtive cushion of streaked arrows, granite camouflage at Trail edge,
gauging quarry, timorous dark eyed
maunder... darts ambling
furtive into brush, overcast –
brushing wood louse from brow
removing pack & marking compass,
quaffing gulps, shudder in gullet –

Fairy Castles
Poem by Ella Dodson

White mist steams, swirls off brick patio,
As the hose jet herds fallen rose petals
Into the rock gardens below.
Child in sun suit, frizzy curls circling her face
Skips through the mist
Into the world of dreams and magic.
She crouches amid rocks, petals, and bluebells,
Building fairy beds with shells, moss, and soft rose coverlets
Creating pixie paths from pottery shards and lost beads.

Even as the sun wilts her mother, collapsed in cool shade,
The young architect persists, scouring for treasures,
Considering as the grape popsicle coats her grimy hands,
Acorn and bottle caps for cups and plates
A bark table laden with walnut shell bowls,
Plucks empty locust shells off elm tree for tuffets.
Her mother's soft snores give her permission
To collect forbidden berries and blossoms for the fairy table.
She moves quickly, silently to finish her city.
It must be done before the fireflies come out.

Abusers
Poem by Holly-Lynn Bourgeois

Childlike imagination
I fear looking into eyes
They steal my daydreams

I create a world in which it is true
And wonder
How long have I been used?

rare
Poem by Scott Lynch

the company of joy
a wedding
a summer afternoon
the consummate combination of
circumstance
after 2 years and 2 covid shots
a grandmother's back yard
with family and friends
a \$2500 portable port-a-potty
a food truck
appropriate libation
a helicopter flyby
giving pause to vows
a celebrant just slightly off program
but all the serendipity
and love a true force of nature
reminding us that crying and laughing
and the union of twos
can be perfect

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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:
ohf@ohforgery.ca

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
Photocopy it at work · Email the PDF to friends
Beautify the world by sharing these words...

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

**A Montreal Exotic Dancer
Works a Three-week Shift
at a Sault Ste. Marie Club
Poem by Tim Covell**

One more week of lousy food
Et j'ai mon voyage!
At least the money's good
And tips in Yankee coinage

The boys from the land of the free
Across the bridge and border
Come here to see what they can't see
By Michigan's public order

The steel and wood factories
Are closed or barely exist
Thank goodness for the lotteries
Call centres, and tourists

These dying, quiet, mill towns
Just stages on the road
For all of us, bereft of crowns
Who dance for what we've owed

Wednesday night and just four here
Three watch sports on an old TV
While one nurses his beer
All trying not to stare at me

Je m'en sacre, I get paid
And quiet nights I read
Their visit here a break from staid
This night meets all our needs.

Author's note: "j'ai mon voyage" is
Quebécois for "I've had enough," (literally,
I'm done this trip), and "je m'en sacre" is
Quebécois for "I don't care" (literally, I
curse myself)

**Philosophy
Haiku by Harry Garrison**

It's easy to know
that you have free will, but it's
difficult to prove.

**Been Where?
Poem by Rod Stewart**

The neighbors say,
You're clad in pink
Flip flop, flip flops,
Before the June bugs buzz,
And nearly 'til
The pumpkins grin.
I've heard so often
Your footsteps patter,
Beneath the treetop din
Chirping brightly
From dawn to dusk.
Or even when,
The summer sighs
With burdened gray,
Your mother's said
You've skipped
Through mired lanes
Of ocean puddles
With circled smiles.
So whisper please
Of your travel tales
To imagined lands,
And we'll blame the dog,
For the mud and dirt,
When your mother comes.

**Transfixed
Poem by Elzy Taramangalam**

At the edge
Life slipped
From calm to chaos
Covid plain or on steroids
There is nothing to do
But go forward
Until the fierce rapids
Dwindle to calm deep
In the heart of the herd
Transfixed by the invisible microbe.
Everything upside down
In the twenty first year of twenty first century
A doppelgänger
Search for the perfect word
In our imperfect world.

**Shithouse Luck on the Bay of Naples
Poem by Memel Pound**

I'm thinking about San Marzano tomatoes
as I swelter in the walk of Pliny the Elder.
He's out there somewhere, feeding the vines.
Red, succulent, no other tomato goes in my sauce.
We can thank the sleeping giant for the dirt
Oh and he ain't dead yet.
"It's hot" she says, but not the hottest day they've seen.
Pliny was here on that day;
perhaps a day like this day.
Maybe he was thinking about tomatoes.

**"Raindrops racing down the window pane"
Limerick by Richard S. Payne**

Raindrops racing down the window pane.
Each one zigzagging in its own lane.
Mesmerizing to watch,
Whilst sipping a good scotch.
It is great therapy for the brain.

**Lightning and Junebugs
Poem by Kathryn Bjornson**

This is the month of lightning
and Junebugs,

hospital vigils, watching
him fade. These are not

my usual grudging, stilted tears.
These are the deep, choking sobs

of grief that push past
pride and leave me

faceless, breathless,
blotched and exposed.

This was once
the biggest man in the world,

fighting his hospital bed,
the thunder still there.

Enter an empty house: bugs
throwing themselves against light.

**Idle Hands, Play with Me
Poem by Elle Lee**

Where is my deal? My devil has lurked far too long
Perhaps my soul is not worth the swindle, Or my numbness is sign of husk
A mere golem among men
Perhaps I already have my receipt, Meaning I wasn't worth much.
Maybe they know I'm already burning
Idle hands around my neck
Calling for the devil to ease me
Moments of calm make eternity seem laughable
Heaven for a second is worth eternal hell
Let the smile burn on my face and it'll light my path
No wonder he never calls
Why offer entry to your subjects
Why offer water to the drowning
Why care for the forsaken.
I'd fall down the pit till the last grain ticks
Just let me fly now, Let me win
Stack the numbers, Bet my blood on red
Give me the time to get fat
Give me the time to finish this poem
Rob me of my art so I can breathe
Pen piercing on my brain so it's always writing
Millions of stories never to be printed
My mind's a library with no Dewey,
No story is finished, No clasp to seal them
A sea of conscious thought filtered through trauma.
And I wonder why he never calls
desperate am I for his idle hands
But he knows he can punish no greater, Than I punish myself

**Breaking Bread with My Brother
Poem by Elizabeth Myers**

My brother, my friend, my hero
He has cancer, and how long he is in this world, is unknown
I share food with him. When we get together,
The breaking of bread!
His encouragement, support and advice, throughout
this life,
I will miss our talks
I will miss our walks
Joe is my brother!

**History Is a Mystery
Poem by Mike McFetridge**

History is a mystery to those of us living today;
Recorded by the winners, glorifying the sinners,
History is simply a reminder to say,
'Tho humanity rules, it can be raw and it's cruel,
And an interpretation of the past today
May seem proper and right, but lost in the night
Are the stars, when clouds drift over their way.

**Ode to Flinty Cat
Poem by Graham Atkin**

Cat of my past
But not in my memories
I can remember you now
How you purred
When I caressed you
How you touched me
With your paw
All that wisdom
In your eyes
That we humans
Will never have
To you I raise my glass
To your life we shared
I feel privileged
To have met you
Flinty Cat