

**Renaming a species – Part 2 of 3
Poem by Graham Atkin**

They have many religions
Some brutal and others benign
But their common trait is
Control of the masses

They have world wars
Controlled by despots
In which millions have died
And countless lives ruined

The planet is controlled
By a few using their Internet
To increase consumption
And greenhouse gases

They now plan a metaverse
Digitally separated from reality
Where they can
“Socialise, work and play”

(To be continued)

**Madness of Mind
Poem by Shawn Elford**

Craziness is crowding my head
Ready to explode in pain
Breaking point at its peak
How do I handle the madness
Unstable with grief
Confusion engulfs my mind
Trying to make sense
Releasing the trauma
That transpires within
God take away the uncertainty
Make my life whole again
Peacefulness will exist in me again
Time to just release and let go

FREE POEMS



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

**I Made a Mess
Poem by Zember**

Snow falls in broken pieces
I imagine picking it all up again
Across the street, under Church lights
Every flake
My little foolish hands
For me or you but mainly for me
Because
You don't seem to care that
I filled the ground with “I love you”
But I do
And I wonder
Can I pick this up too?

**Plundered
Poem by Cathie Panteluk**

They've chopped her down, cut her limbs
Bit by painful bit
The ancient home of the big black crow with
the white wing has fallen empty to the ground
Her tenderly lined nest carelessly trod upon
and blown away
Squirrel was shaken from her secret hole
with an ear shattering buzzing
It was her safe place in that roughly ridged
white oak,
Now, I will no longer see delicate buds and
catkins
Swell in spring
Blow in a breeze
Turn in the wind
Dappled sunshine will not dance on
pebbled grass
And my canopied relief for a hot summer day
will be a sliver of dark
where I can barely hide
But I miss the old friend with her
click and rattles
Who woke me loudly each morning
To see a starlit night birth a rosy
dawn as I unfurled my mat
and saluted the sun in
quiet moments of gratitude

**Awakening
Poem by Zoe Scott**

When does it begin—
That stirring from deep within the soul?
Pangs of unrest, fuelled by pulses of passion

Are we born drenched in light—
Pure of intention,
But tainted by the truth?

Is it a slow transition—
Or abrupt awakening,
That leads us to see with eyes that aren't our own?

Yesterday the world painted in grey,
Today drenched in the colours of humanity

Dancing through our veins
Until we're convinced,
That we're no longer content standing still.

**The Top Drawer
Poem by Gillian Webster**

I worry about the fire alarm.
When it goes off, for real, which photos escape?
Because my photos collect dust and curl up.
Sorting through them takes painstaking time,
A ritual I try to avoid; you will understand.

I place the winners in the bottom kitchen drawer.
And a week later, I make the second cut.
Those migrate up to lie next to my passport.
But winnowing down can be a mistake,
And I have to retrieve one or two from the bin.

When I'm old, I will need them, my precious ones.
More than the knives and forks, and exotic coins,
Which lie next to my passport, knowing that
When I'm old, I would rather use my memories
Than the knives and forks in the top drawer.

Still, sometimes, I cut out a few valuable ones,
And run downstairs, but the garbage has gone.
So I worry that when the alarm goes off,
As it will, one day – I'll remember the boxes
I still need to sort – the oldest, the best.

**Repast
Poem by Nathaniel S. Rounds**

Did you want me to tell the story once again
of the happy family in the little house
which stands on the little hill
facing the ocean?
But I can't say it like mother did,
and she is dead,
gone
like the small house
that once stood on the little hill,
facing the hungry ocean.

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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| Editor: | Georgia Atkin |
| Layout: | Erica Allanach |
| Communications: | Jim Hoyle |
| Secretary/Treasurer: | Janet Brush |
| Website: | Tim Covell |

**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

*Publication of any item does not imply endorsement of
opinions or beliefs expressed by the author(s), and are
not necessarily the views of any OHF volunteers.*

Print off copies, photocopy it, email the PDF to friends
Beautify the world by sharing these words...

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

Houston’s Voluntolds
(after Stan Rogers, Barrett’s Privateers)
Lyrics by Robert Dawson

Oh, the year was twenty twenty two,
(How I wish I’d kept my mask on now!)
When the Premier put his best suit on
And said farewell to Omicron.

*God damn them all! I’d been told
It would only kill the sick and old,
We’d wear no masks, have no fears,
So what the hell am I doing here
In a ward full of Houston’s voluntolds?*

Oh, the Omicron bug was sickening still
(How I wish I’d kept my mask on now!)
But a bunch of truckers with their horns on high
Informed us all they’d rather die.

God damn them all!...

So Premier Houston cried the town
(How I wish I’d kept my mask on now!)
For a million Nova Scotians who
Would test his theory the plague was through.

God damn them all!...

And here I lie in the ICU
(How I wish I’d kept my mask on now!)
With a tube in my throat I’m breathing by
And I don’t know whether I’ll live or die,

*God damn them all! I’d been told
It would only kill the sick and old,
We’d wear no masks, have no fears,
So what the hell am I doing here
In a ward full of Houston’s voluntolds?*

Outside & Inside
Poem by Claudette Bouman

It’s falling,
Beyond the frontiers of sight
Into the circle of touch.
A timid flick on the nose,
Picture below
Pinpricks of blacker on black pavement,
Stones, manholes.
Next a tiny staccato pick-picking of dry leaves
Inside the edges of sound
A soft tinkling on tyrant winter’s leftovers.
Still falling beyond failing eyes
But contained by smell’s borders
Petrichor — warm, earthy, acrid
It goes clear through, piercing.
Is it drizzle or mizzle?

The mourning dove tells
Its laments create haunting airs
Reaching inner ranges of waking ears
Just before falling off the hearing cliff,
Getting inside sad-cooings and outside silences.

Fetch
Poem by Gordon Young

As always this morning came,
And will come again.
Tomorrow like today
It will say,
“Wake up, it’s light ...
Come out from the night.”
But can morning possibly take
What still echoes through my ache,
And holds me back
Tangled in the cold and black,
Even as the darkness broke
I am still left to cope,
Unable to find
A place to leave the wound behind
A shard of ebony
Gifted me
By your sweet company.

How Sweet
Poem by Rod Stewart

Was it only yesterday,
I heard a warble
Beyond this frosted pane,
And spied a prick
Of eager green
Pry slyly forth,
Through puddled earth,
Yielding its pungent promise,
To sprout those first bouquets
Of vanilla, gold and crimson blush,
That my sunshine daughter
Would gather soon,
To poise proud
With love and joy,
Upon my kitchen sill.

war machine
Poem by Mark Ryan

roll war machine roll.
roll war machine roll.
forgive dear daughter, the political state
freed of account, tethered to hate –
forgive dear sister, the patriarch state
appointed bodies to stack, ye’ harbingers of fate –
roll war machine roll.
roll war machine roll.
roll soldier, thunderous o’er turrets and slaughter
roll senator, treacherous from wretched nuclear coffers –
flee refugees from pockets of corporal greed
lashed to stock market phantoms, oil slicked seed –
roll war machine roll!
with cock swinging might!
as tanks upon mud!
as blood upon hand!
as death upon entry!
as stake upon land!
sanctioned or bombed,
bandaged or succumbed,
Dante’s footpath to hell
via starvation or shell –
goodbye, mine neighbor, witch in the well
no medals of honour lest bid thee farewell.

Pushkin’s Merry-Go-Round
Poem by Matthew de Lacey Davidson

When an autocrat shall take a lover,
society’s seduced and then beguiled.
Enamoured, all the people soon discover
that their faithfulness becomes reviled.
Eventually, though, it’s superseded,
when the “Needer” then becomes the “Needed,”
because destruction doesn’t make much sense
when there isn’t any recompense.
Is that which does not kill, so sure to make us tougher?
If all that’s shown is just a second face,
how often does the Hydra’s head replace,
in this land which G-d had meant to suffer?
When duelling ends, or where it all begins,
the tyrant (almost always) wins.

Granny’s Garden
Poem by Brian Harding

There, in a part of the garden I rarely go,
Sits Granny’s old wheel barrow.
Almost overgrown now,
Like a ship-wrecked galleon of old,
Storm battered, the remains washed by winter storms.
Poor old Granny, long gone.

I can see her now, filling that wheel barrow, even now,
Not with “Gold” from far flung shores,
But with pots of flowers
Ready to plant
In that part of the garden I seldom go.

Granny would sometimes put you and me in that ship.
Around and around in her garden we would go.
We were “Pirates.”
Granny was the Captain minus the beard.
Oh, what fun we had
So very long ago.

Every garden should have a “Ship Wreck”
Where memories are stored.

Picket Fence
Poem by Cathy Hanrahan

Hung on the rungs
of a white picket fence
swings the child’s talisman.
A locket and chain
shimmers white, like the frame,
and the mangled remains
hoard her burden of pain.
She strokes them quietly,
this adornment of what’s past.
Turning over the locket,
unlocking the clasp.
And, as the ringlet floats down
joining dust on the ground,
she remembers.
An innocent child
once trusting and small,
who found her nemesis
along that white picket wall.
A shadow casts its cloak
and the wind blows a chill
while that child, for a moment,
stands very still.
Then, the sky opens up
with the sun shining through
and that period of woe,
concludes.
All those memories of hurt
are hiding within and,
outside, stands a girl
kicking hard at the dirt
to bury that curl.

The Capturing Of An Essence!
Rectangle Poem by Harry Garrison

When a chess piece is taken,
that’s known as a “capture.”

Describe the thing in words,
however many words it takes.
Capture the thing’s essence.
Do not trap it; make a copy,
leave the original in place.
Take a photo of the subject,
or make a portrait in paint.
Let the works of art escape!