

# FREE POEMS



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

## **In Her Breath Poem by Teresa Kilbride**

We are in Her breath  
you are quiet  
while I talk about trees.

We gaze into that rich darkness  
imagining what nests there  
then our eyes light  
upon the shades of green  
on edges of leaves in the sun  
and we know angels.

She sees us  
with our warm hearts  
guessing at a Universe  
in fullness with trees.

While I speak and you listen  
we are in Her breath.

## **Crow Poem by Janet Brush**

Noisy, raucous, annoying  
We complain, vilify their existence  
CAW! CAW!

But wait – look at this photograph.  
Two crows on a branch  
They sit quietly, heads turned slightly  
So their foreheads touch.  
They look almost demure  
Almost smiling  
A tender moment.

The other side of crow  
*Caw caw.*

## **Protect Our Beloved Earth Haiku by Marilyn Challis**

Green January,  
Mother Nature warns, “look out,”  
Ocean levels rise.

## **Our Beloved Mrs. Smith Poem by Rod Stewart**

Remembering now,  
Of way back when,  
About two score and ten,  
Our rowdy Grade Four,  
Run by an old country hen,  
Cackling barely above  
Hushed snickers and snorts  
From her two dozen ducks,  
Ever as loud and odd  
To the other’s chagrin.  
Upon recess she’d wag  
A stern finger, or glare  
If fun boiled over to sin,  
And “Now there...there...”  
Our tears and scrapes  
With iodine, all over again.  
Barely a memory remains  
Of chalk screeching,  
More than she did,  
Only the warmth,  
And a glimmer of fondness,  
Of her maternal care,  
From an unwavering heart  
To coax her motley brood,  
To grow kind, true and fair.

## **The One Poem by Mary Ellen Touesnard**

As you hold me tight w/ warm embrace  
I enter realms of soulful grace.  
Your mind, your love, your profound caress...  
Fills me w/ such happiness!

## **part i: the stadium Poem by Mark Ryan**

what sounds carve morning sheets?  
is it those of glass tempos, iron trusses –  
blue bleachers dampened by Friday night’s ash?  
perhaps a chorus in 4/4 time –  
raised sticks to silence the cheering,  
esophageal groans of broken jawed henchmen;  
caricatures bent and carving until heat rises  
from the quadriceps of adolescence  
laid to rest in dawn’s stitched sheets.  
Sheets, ploughed and sewn  
beneath boilermaker’s union banners,  
lexicons, lesions, and lovers –  
melting into the blues and reds of  
April’s pinstriped, potholed, parking lots  
whilst the echoed whistles ricochet  
off tin walls and empty into the Bay,  
the immaculate Conception.  
Victorious handshakes turn to  
goalposts, makeshift silhouettes  
cast upon cucumbered sunsets,  
ideological vacuums –  
now elbows pierced by roadside gravel,  
knees wrapped in scuffed leather and duct tape remedy  
wait for the first inhalation,  
the stadium’s chilled bravado –  
trimmed of defeats anchored on fabricated memoirs  
or lethargic verse –  
or Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid

## **New Age Haiku by David Mac Eachern**

Sounding like morning  
The beginning in volume  
Alarms that elate

# OPEN HEART FORGERY

**Vol.14 No.1, February 2023**

*ISSN 2369-6516 (Print)  
ISSN 2369-6524 (Online)*

**www.ohForgery.com**  
**Halifax, Nova Scotia**

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

This issue’s writers:

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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

*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!**

**interloper**  
**Poem by Marissa McKean**

many hours  
gazing at the sea  
such was my childhood—  
isolation  
an ever-present theme  
starving for connection  
but my efforts  
always in vain  
for i was the outcast  
an interloper  
amongst my peers  
amongst land lovers  
forced to live  
with an absence of authenticity  
to just survive—  
the only fragment of truth  
being the salted air  
in my lungs  
and the cold, hard kiss  
of the atlantic  
the magnetic pull  
between her and the moon  
tormenting me  
a constant ache  
to be free  
to go home—  
to be one with the sea

**Silver**  
**Poem by Georgia Atkin**

Caught  
by surprise, I see  
the tiny strand of silver  
in the mirror—  
it's an unexpected guest  
in my reflection,  
but at this moment  
all I can think  
is that it's kind of amazing  
my hair will one day be  
the colour of bright sea  
the morning after a storm:  
raw sunlight hits the water,  
blazing down from cracks in the sky  
and dazzling the eye with its beauty.

**swimming lessons**  
**Poem by Chloe Bailey**

My head falls under.  
Despite what my mother says  
I open my eyes.

Not much to see.

The sand beneath me moves between my toes  
as waves crash above me.

I can hear it but it is quiet.  
Softer than the people above.

I get comfortable.  
I enjoy the silence.

I resent my mother for the swimming lessons,  
instinctually I come up for air.

The quiet is gone.

The world feels louder than ever.

**Suits**  
**Poem by Bill Jones**

Loamy asphalt afternoon neurosis  
Portfolio – straitjacket cacophony...  
Overlapping waves plopping against pier

Blundering streetlights, couples cringe  
Red Light Pedestrian rains, rusted fenders  
Commodities simmer, pandemic tissues...

Rogue Sandstones, ruddy jowled watches  
Sidewalk muses, umbrellas shake... sinuous  
cobalt anxiety stares... cafe windows weep

**Behind the Mask**  
**Poem by Catherine A. MacKenzie**

In the dark and doom of night,  
In the midst of buzzing stillness,  
I see his face and my reality is real.

My tears careen with abandon  
For I'm alone, not forced to  
Don sunglasses or avert my face.

These are moments to grieve,  
Unlike breaths in day's light or dark  
When I hide the aching pain.

Behind my mask, I avoid lies and  
Ceaseless "time heals all wounds"  
From the well-meaning clueless.

I accept but abhor this invisible burden.  
Time does not heal all wounds,  
My unseen wounds will bleed forever.

**Stay Inside**  
**Poem by Mike McFetridge**

Stay inside today is what I say,  
Let it rain and snow, and let it blow;  
Stay inside today where it is warm  
Beside the wood stove, huddle your form;  
And watch the burning fire within,  
The dancing flames, forget the din  
Of wind and rain and sometimes snow,  
Coming down amid the windy blow;  
Stay inside, enjoy a break,  
Life can be good, for heaven's sake!

**making friendship bracelets out of calamity**  
**Poem by Echo Carter**

disaster's got a taste to it, like tangerines and pine,  
hints of echoing rosemary  
catastrophe's got an eye-burning colour  
(only seen with eyes wide shut)

and chaos has a name written among the rubble  
ruin's got a friend buried below  
you and i, we whispered nothing in the cellar  
we gathered all we couldn't leave behind  
and left the rest to tragedy

nights were long and days were short  
but we were sure to be the sole survivors  
we didn't expect much but sage and summer  
we wished for the red sky to run blue

but survival,  
that was the one outcome  
we weren't prepared for.

**Me and My Mind**  
**Poem by Holly Currie**

Me and my mind are two different things.  
But we are also the same.  
My mind tells me one thing,  
Then I tell myself something else.  
Your mind is that inner voice in your head,  
Telling you your deepest thoughts.  
Me, I'm just the receiver.  
I don't say those thoughts out loud.  
I say what I want to hear.  
I twist the words of my inner thoughts and make them mine.  
I get mad at my mind.  
It tells me things I don't want to hear.  
It thinks things I wouldn't want to think.  
Me and my mind are two different things.  
But are we the same?  
No.  
We are not.

**I Am**  
**Poem by Lorie Morris**

I am, me.  
I am, a woman.  
I am, a mother.  
I am, a sister.  
I am, a wife.  
I am, a friend.  
I am, a healer.  
I am, a care giver.  
I am, a woman.  
I am, me.

**Initiating**  
**Poem by Tim Covell**

You haunt my dreams, the dark corners  
Where your furnished basement room  
A single bed, no frame, your strong drugstore perfume  
linger like the way you dressed  
in baggy clothes, hiding your breasts  
revealed, once, awkwardly, to me.

Is it always like this I asked  
And tides and time carried me past  
My words absolving me  
My words were always like this.

And my dreams flood with memories  
your furnished basement room  
a single bed, no frame, your strong drugstore perfume  
resurfacing too late, and too often.

**2023**  
**Haiku by Harry Garrison**

Twenty Twenty Three  
is a salad with lettuce,  
peas, and broccoli.