

No Strings Offer
Poem by Charles Bull

Moving among the guests, tray
In hand, You come to me. With warm
Smile, You offer me an array
Of delights.

This one is Simple Happiness.
Over here Forgiveness.
Also, Peace, Perfect
Contentment, Total Satisfaction.
There's more, You say,
I've got all kinds.

Um, I brought my own, but
Thanks anyway. Sorry.
It's been in my pocket
For a few weeks now, but
It's really not that bad,
And it's what I know.
I've been having a hard time
And I just don't think I'm
Up to it right now.

No problem,
You say, when you're ready.
There's a right
time for everything. I'll be back.

Strawberry Stigmata
Poem by Elzy Taramangalam

A raw bright stigmata
On the left palm
On Ash Wednesday!
The sharp pointed knife
Meant to cut the frozen berries
Piercing my flesh instead.

Dripping blood, coagulating pain
Penance, Lent, pancakes
Marching hand in mouth
A Mardi Gras parade
To flagrant spring on earth
Spawning birth, renewal, miracles
And kingdom of heaven
Unfurling at mortal feet.

FREE POEMS



Read a Local Writer!
BE a Local Writer!

Daylight
Poem by Charlie Parsons

sun like silk on satin sheets,
velvet words and bustling streets
that burst with hope from a new day's dawn,
morning light that dances on
the freckles of your cheeks
that look more like stars to me.
we're all the morning's devotees.

part ii: a path
Poem by Mark Ryan

Once,
two souls shared the stage
dead men walking Ophelia wept,
one in the soil,
beneath the frost line in a linen tomb
or woven into the north-east wind.
One, carrion trampled
by bulls, or conquistadors –
reborn in a mantra,
a hymn.
Hallelujah! Ophelia wailed
when the sun splintered
the granite face of Cape Bonavista,
and *the secret chord*
was drawn out to sea.
Dead men walking
became a prayer, a recitation;
as reflection a burden,
burden a penance onto itself,
packed and roped upon the mule.
Fingers interlaced, we settled into our womb,
constellations became your poems,
cast in stone,
stars absent of eyes to grieve –
I planted Ophelia's in a garden,
amongst tulips and prostrations,
lest your *bleak mid-winter*
give way to mud-bound shoulders,
and spring's requiem.

A Christmas Eve Photo Op
in an Empty Russian Orthodox Church
Poem by Burris Devanney

The candelabras are lit, the dome lights are on,
Yet the magnificent cathedral seems hollow and cold,
Without patrons or music or choir or song.
But in clerical robes of pure white and gold
A solitary priest (or is it a bishop?) celebrates mass
At a secluded side altar in a long narrow nave,
A tunnel of loneliness, where posing silent and grave,
Like an innocent altar boy,
A pale-faced old man in dark suit and tie,
The Tsar of all Russians, is lighting candles (to what end?),
Attending mass on his own,
Without people, family, lover or friend...
Alone and forlorn,
Except for the one, silent unseen,
filming the scene.

Snow
Poem by Violet Rosengarten

Whirling, swirling snowflakes fill the air,
slowly descending, sticking to juniper
and yew outside my front window.

Now hours later the snow is like thick icing
moulding the tops of yew and juniper into
softly rounded forms rhythmically repeating themselves
in the darkness of night.

Beyond, in the light of the streetlamp,
the beauty bush, festooned with snow blossoms
is like a beautiful bride.

Storm Warning
Poem by Nicole Myers

recovering peacefully
from cumulus storm cloud
treachery beneath a
granny smith green blanket
or if I were fancy
venetian green
there were warnings
advisories

all of which I

chose to ignore
sudden drop in temperature
abrupt change in wind direction
didn't shutter my windows
didn't unplug corded appliances or
top up my first aid kit
buy water
storm chips &
other necessary
provisions
in favor of staying
put to binge-watch

RuPaul's Drag Race
& hold out for hope the power stays
on

OPEN HEART FORGERY

Vol.14 No.2, April 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.*

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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

*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!

Spring! Yes!
Poem by Rod Stewart

March morning breath
Shivers through twisted tangles
Of swizzle stick branches,
Dislodging an ashen flick
Of feathered “Caws!”
Through the ocean calm,
Breaking an echo
Across the aether,
Which bears the last
Bitter lick of winter.
Awaken now!!
To the whispered kiss
Beyond frosted panes,
From the gallant herald,
Ever noble, puffed plump robin
Dressed in blazing tux,
To our perennial delight.

Sunsets
Poem by G. Lucky Bolger

Another crushing sunset
Held up by the teeming asphalt
He used to share pieces
Of obscured grocery store wisdom
“Anything you can put in an omelet
You can put on some nachos”
I spent the next days mulling it over
I lacked the skill to argue with him
And I don’t think I want to

Area codes cling to life
Hoping no one picks up
That we don’t really need them
Theoretically
After all in the age of the global village
What good are sad fingers
Tying a knot of numbers and places

Somewhere someone is holding
That grudgey feeling in their stomach
‘Cause they got into a fight online
About which flower best represents
A character in a show two people watch
More of a comment than a question
Maybe forget-me-nots don’t deserve
To be argued about.

Capital morning
Poem by Scott Lynch

“The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls;
He watches from his mountain walls”
The Eagle – Alfred, Lord Tennyson

peering from my perch
on the fourteenth floor
of the Delta Ottawa City Center
the sleepy capital rumbles awake
late January and -13 C
frenetic movement below
blue and slushy city sidewalks
Michelin Men (regardless of gender)
buried beneath layers of warming
and toques scarves and gloves
to work to work
sommambulists on the slide
on Lyon and Slater
on Albert and Queen
icicles impressive heralds
ominous and large
ice lightening as the sun
emerges with the throng
breath billows
in comic captions
eyes and sometimes faces
give Medusa greetings
in passing
Tim’s and Starbucks cups clutched
as if in talons

My Dreams Are Elaborate
Rectangle Poem by Harry Garrison

I dream complex dreams,
larger than any screen.
They appear more costly
than the biggest budget
Hollywood could afford.
The costumes! The sets!
But no special effects!

Caring no longer about the spring
Poem by David Du

With grey hair and tottering steps
Down the aging path,
My back no longer straight,
Currently, even looking at the trees
Where grow some tiny green
Sprouts,
No longer lights a bright sparkle in my eyes.
And there’s lost brilliance in the rest of my life.
It’s like the old building in front of mine,
Letting the setting sun hide its scars –
My body, resting quietly, quietly.

Summer & Seasonal Depression
Poem by Holly Currie

When the snow melts,
And winter is over
I’m gonna stand on the grass,
In my bare feet.
I might wiggle my toes,
And listen to the birds.
Let the sun shine on my skin till it turns golden,
While jumping in the waves of an ocean.
I will be one with me,
I will be happy once again.

A Distant Destiny
Poem by Mary Upton

Hold onto my Soul as the river runs cold
Hold onto my Heart as we pull apart
For you are my destiny
Forever bound in the deepest unfound

Waxing Moon
Poem by Brittanie Horne

The waxing moon
A silver radiant grin
Growing ever the more merry
Until fully in her power
The grin turns to a full circle
A howl
The crescendo to completion
Luminous
Overflowing with love to us beings down below
Our internal tides ever under her thrall
Once cold and dark
She takes the fire of the sun
And cools it like quicksilver
To shine into our pupils below, cool and magical
I stare full into her glorious light
Soul filling, in the way the sun can never do.

It’s After Four
Poem by Mike McFetridge

It’s after four... again, once more;
Where did the day just go to?
Sitting here, alone, my dear,
It’s no wonder I just don’t go do
Something extraordinary.

It’s wintertime... a time to rhyme;
The weather gets so cold;
Boring days, unless one says,
Act in a way so bold
And extraordinary.

Easily said... just stay in bed;
But life goes on around one;
No rest for you, you just must do
Something extraordinary

Playtime
Poem by Tim Covell

Free after divorce
My nights indulge new pleasures
Fun time with strangers.

We meet through the app
Exchange a few intense words
For that double score.

Grasping Your World
Poem by Catherine R. MacKenzie

I’m constrained, cramped
yet secure and serene,
warm in the silence
as I’m caressed and touched.

At first I move slowly,
then not so gently,
pounding the pavement as it were
with my wee hands and feet,
floating within your lair of love
without knowledge of where I am
or where I’m coming to,
breathing through your hair
and feeding from your flesh,
occupying this cocoon
woven like silken threads
spidering across your chest
while I wait and wonder,
pondering my release.

Too soon I grasp your world
with my fingertips,
and while you endure
the pain of our love,
I steal your breast.

You Changed
Poem by Eitan Baida

To deny a leaf of its freedom to fall
To deny a phone its job to call
To deny a sea of its freedom to reflect
To deny a map its job to direct
To deny a snowflake of its freedom to melt
To deny a deck its job to be dealt
To deny a person of their freedom to change
To deny a person of their job to change