

Dragonflies and Fairies

An anthology of poetry
celebrating the magical and mystical
creatures of folklore.

Paul Gilliland
Editor-in-Chief

Southern Arizona Press

Southern Arizona Press



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Linda M. Crate's poetry, short stories, articles, and reviews have been published in a myriad of magazines both online and in print. She has eleven published chapbooks: *A Mermaid Crashing Into Dawn* (Fowlpox Press - June 2013), *Less Than A Man* (The Camel Saloon - January 2014), *If Tomorrow Never Comes* (Scars Publications, August 2016), *My Wings Were Made to Fly* (Flutter Press, September 2017), *splintered with terror* (Scars Publications, January 2018), *More Than Bone Music* (Clare Songbirds Publishing House, March 2019), *the samurai* (Yellow Arrowing Publishing, October 2020), *Follow the Black Raven* (Alien Buddha Publishing, July 2021), *Unleashing the Archers* (Guerilla Genesis Press, August 2021), *Hecate's Child* (Alien Buddha Publishing, November 2021) and *fat & pretty* (Dancing Girl Press, June 2022), and three micro-chapbooks: *Heaven Instead* (Origami Poems Project, May 2018), *moon mother* (Origami Poems Project, March 2020), and *& so I believe* (Origami Poems Project, April 2021). She is also the author of the novella *Mates* (Alien Buddha Publishing, March 2022).

her unrequited love

in a pale pink
sunset,
a faerie found her
wings and danced into
the wood;

a shy vampire followed her
from afar intrigued by the lyrics
of her magic—

they became friends for a while
until there was a misunderstanding,

and the faerie ran away from
the vampire leaving her alone
making them ghosts whilst both
were still alive;

the vampire never got a chance to tell
her how much she loved her
before she disappeared—

yet the vampire knew that perhaps the
faerie wouldn't care to know such knowledge
because she always seemed to find someone
to hold her hand and her heart,

and so the vampire continued on with her
broken heart and her unrequited love.

the faerie and her wood

the faerie stood her ground,
for this was her wood;
she had magic that the humans
would never understand—
she warned them to stay away,
but they chopped down the
trees instead and dug up the flowers;
each tree and each flower screamed
as they were torn from the only
home they had ever known—
and so the faerie decided she'd had
enough of this disrespect,
to add insult to injury one of the
human men insisted she would be his wife;
and so she used magic to turn these
men into creatures of the wood:
squirrels, chipmunks, and rabbits stood
where the men once were and with their weapons
she transfigured them into trees and roots and flowers
because she had told them that the wood belonged
to the fae and they ought to stay out of her matters—
but they didn't learn their lesson when they watched
her turn one of their men into a bird or another
into a spider,
and so she had to take matters into her own hands
to protect the forest from the humans.

tower not required

the dragon loved the princess,
so he could not allow just anyone
to take her from the tallest tower;

he asked her what she liked in a
lover and she said she didn't know
all she had ever known of romance
was what she had found in books—

she admitted, however, she didn't like
the idea of some prince or knight coming
here to rescue her and thinking they were
owed a kiss, a marriage, and happily
ever after; she knew the world could be
a dangerous place but she didn't want to hide
behind the fears of her father—

so the dragon grabbed her with his tail,
and set her on his back;
flying away into a carnelian sunset as
they began a new adventure: tower not required.

the duet of her heart

when the fae princess fell in love with
the vampire she knew that no one
would approve,
but she could never marry the prince
that her father picked out for her;
and so one night she stole away in the night
with a few of the things she could not
leave behind—

her vampire love stroked tears from her eyes,
she promised her that living her life authentically
would be so much better than being in a marriage
that she hated where she would only be seen
as a woman instead of every part of who she was;

the fae princess said that was true but that
wasn't why she was crying—

she told her vampire she loved her,
but she would miss her mother and her sisters
and some of her brothers;

even if her father was more a monster than the
vampire could ever be she was certain that a part
of her would miss him, too—

the vampire reassured her that perhaps one day
when their anger had cooled that they would see why
the fae princess left her home and they would
come to terms with the fact that she had married
the duet of her heart instead.

the sun and his moon

once there was an elf
who fell in love with a werewolf,
and they didn't understand;

they thought werewolves mere
beasts without ability to comprehend—

yet he knew her heart was his
just as his heart was hers and together they'd
be able to face all of life's storms,

yet the other elves argued with him about
his safety and insisted that it was wrong;

so he left the country he had always known
to be with his love instead because he
knew that there was a better world to have with
her than any he could find in his place of birth—

she was his moon, and he her radiant sun;
together they would shine together
in every age and every universe even when
time itself had come undone they would be hand
in hand and heart in heart for all and every eternity—

she asked him if he was afraid when they
left for her country instead,
and he admitted he was a little but he had his moon
to illuminate him in darkness so he knew he'd be okay.



Carol Edwards is a northern California native transplanted to southern Arizona. She lives and works in relative seclusion with her books, plants, and pets (+ husband). She enjoys a coffee addiction and raising her succulent army.

Her work has most recently appeared in *Heart of Flesh: Issue Seven, Where Flowers Bloom* (Red Penguin Books), and *Balm 2* (Ravens Quoth Press).

Carol had four poems featured in the Southern Arizona Press anthology *The Stars and Moon in the Evening Sky* and we are happy to have five of her works included in this anthology.

Faerie Fen and the End of the World

Here is where the ametrine sunrise hides
that lights the glare of a tree god's eye
framed with lichen hair and craggy face,
while silver mirrors in grasses lie
and reflect the starry sapphire sky.

Here live the gentle rolling hills
that once roamed endless plains,
then entranced by wooing nymphs
stayed their wandering on this shore,
settled in their spell for ever more.

Here is where gnarled oak and mistletoe
met each other first, their natures then
unknown – oak the stalwart friend
to squirrels, jays, and crows; mistletoe
a weaved embrace, greedy kisses sapping slow.

Sunrays wake the sleeping leaf fae,
their glow mosaic'd ruby, citrine, jade;
the tree god's wrath fades at their play,
claws restrained another day, until night falls,
and the façade of peace is stripped away

as so many gnomes and trolls
shift their shapes and crawl out holes
darkness-steeped, eating their delight,
who rob children of their sight
and suck the marrow from their bones,

while Seelie Queen rides pale crescent moon,
skin of silk and eyes of fire, to peer into
each mortal home, and with some wretch
a pact conspire – their best memories exchanged
for secret desires – her favorite cunning cruelty.

Siren Song

Iridescent skies in shell lining,
sharp cut sand islands,
ripples into beaches weaved,
tears above waters cling –

these, with foam and crashing sea
always call to me,
plead me to return when I'm away,
and when I'm there, always stay.

It hurts to leave each time I come
to soak my roots in sea and sun,
or fog, as the case may be,
droplets of her love dripping down on me,

caught in my hair, my hands, my face,
her grief sinking into sand's embrace,
and my heart netted to the strains
the luring sirens wreath –

“Come further in,
further in; or if no further in,
no further roam. Lie thee here
and make our waves thy home.”

Tooth Faeries Hate Dentists

for stealing their magic, their muses –
billions of walking gardens,
ivory blooms plucked one by one,
precious pearls drilled, filled and shaped,
specimens de-rooted and replaced
with cement-dull paste.

Clearly they can't understand
the glory of a multi-cuspid cave
in all its stages of decay –
shades of white, yellow, black, gray –
canals crammed with miniscule mutans,
Streptococcus colonies feasting,

molar beds pruned into elegant displays,
tied agape with vines, fungi-lined,
eyeless sockets with honey-hives filled,
drumming heartbeat music blent
with humming bees and muted screams,
calcium caverns split like geode stones,
the glittering matrices
pride of maxillary and mandibular maestros.

Here the Purple Emperor often frequented
en route to his lover's treetop bower,
long enough to relish the claret-mead's
floral notes and iron finish,
a first-class delicacy,
canine glass raised to toast
the vintner's exquisite taste.

Visible

The waking sun's fingertips brush the mountain peaks,
turns the sky a deep indigo,
everything else a silhouette,
empty shadows one-dimensional, as though
the night before every Fae stole the Rainbow,
and now at Aurora's behest
must swarm again and repaint the world.

Chattering wings sunrise trails leave
as they sweep through, jealous
of prism treasure troves bestowed
on fickle mortals such as we, who can't
see enough to fathom
the wind's tintured swirls, light's wild chatoyancy,
black's diamond resonance of violet, teal, evergreen –

to humans so shallow and flat, yet to them
Beauty worth eternal languishing.
Reluctantly they stain the earth,
texture and depth re-existed
as the East swells paler still,
and the moon's mightiness grows less
beneath Day's 186,000-mile train.

Where the Veil Lies Thin

This is the sort of day I expect to see ghostly myths
coalesce from the mist, shrouded shadows
that blend with hazy cliffs and suspicious sea Aves:

a kelpie, perhaps – dark horse who stands on shore,
barely
denting damp sand, eyes bright with anglerfish light,
hooves sharp as shattered shells, mane by hell
possessed;

or a selkie maid, hair swaying with the swells' heave and
curl,
her head and skin in sleek fur wrapped, secret kept
from her human lover, lest her coat they steal and to
land enslave her.

Upon yonder rocks a siren might sit, tattered wings
outspread –
poor pretty nymph cursed when Hades stole
Persephone –
dreaded song a moment paused, tears from her eyes
stream,

by her side her mermaid sister and triton brother,
creatures wild and free, teeth and scales glistening,
their prism shimmer the only clear thing, made of
dreams,

desires, nightmares. These from the sea could spring,
on a day like today, as I sit and wait,
though all my sight partake be white and fog and waves.



Ursula O'Reilly lives in County Cavan, Ireland. She enjoys writing fiction and poetry. Other interests include painting, drama, and walking in nature. Ursula has had her work published online and in various magazines including: *Lothlorien Poetry Journal*, *Vita Brevis Press*, *The Literary Yard*, *Otherwise Engaged Literary and Arts Journal*, *Poetry Plus magazine*, *Woman's Way magazine*, and by *Earlyworks Press*.

In the Forsaken Forest

In the Forsaken Forest at dawn,
Where dew- pearls glitter in sun.
Before the fox leaves his den.
Before mouse and squirrel sprint.
Before spider in his web awakes,
You may witness the fairy folk.

May witness in green-tinged light,
Imps and pixies assembled, with
Voices lifted in ethereal song.
Elves mustered at break of day,
Frolicking in mischievous glee,
Or deftly crafting goblin shoes.

You may spy a sauntering gnome,
Beneath ancient, twisted trees.
Dressed in vibrant coat and boots,
Bestowing good fortune upon all.
In the Forsaken Forest at dawn,
Where dew pearls glitter in sun.

Ogre

Don't assume ogres are not real,
Because they are seldom seen.
Invisible to most, these giants
Roam across the world at will.

I once observed an ogre, sat
Atop a mountain for a chair.
High clouds floating in his hair,
Munching on a fresh pine tree.

Before my disbelieving eyes,
I gawped at his colossal size,
Two bright eyes gazing down,
I noticed he had perceived me.

Too late to sprint away, I gaped.
Great face broke into a grin.
You can see me, friend? he said.
Come over here and rest awhile!

Don't eat me, mister, I beseeched.
Little friend, he said, you are
In safest company with me.
I don't eat anything but trees.

He lifted and set me down,
Upon a boulder by the way.
We passed a sunny afternoon,
Sharing stories small and great.

Elves

Elves are loose, roaming in the valley.
They have returned from far off lands.
Elves are close, they can hear us calling.
They hear us and they perceive us too.

Their voices are resounding in the forest.
In the forest kingdom, their true home.
Elves will come to you if you request it.
Unlike humans, elves are always kind.

I have an elf beside me, my companion.
A better friend no mortal could desire.
When events go awry, he nimbly repairs
Splintered pieces of my flimsy world.

Elves are loose, roaming in your garden.
Back again from wild and far off lands.
Elves are close, they will hear you calling.
They hear us and they perceive us too.

Do Not Disturb the Gnome

If you should spy a crafty gnome,
Beside an open fire, humming a tune.
Tap- tapping his tiny hammer
Upon a diminutive shoe.
Expression on his face a mix
Of mischief, curiosity, and wit.

Would you think him comical?
With ruddy cheeks, eyes aglow?
Entrancing scene to witness,
A fortunate happenstance?
Friend, no! Pass him by.
Do not disturb the gnome.

Shoemaking for his fairy kin,
If he perceives you, he will twist
Beguiling charms, to bind and draw you in.
A cunning heart he may possess,
Beneath his cheery face
And jovial grin.

Friend, beware! Take shrewd advice.
Not every imp who drones a tune,
May prove benevolent,
Loyal and true.
Pass him by, leave him be.
Do not disturb the gnome.

(Previously published in *Lothlorien Poetry Journal*)

Visitors

What is that tap-tapping
Upon my windowpane?
A goblin seeking shelter,
Or the music of the rain?

What is that noise creeping,
Creaking on my stairs?
Could it be the gnome I saw
By the bathroom door?

Is that the wind shrieking,
Whistling in the hearth?
Or is it an ancient banshee,
Outside in the dark?

They say this house is haunted,
I tell them it's just mice.
Elves or gnomes, or
Perhaps their impish kin?

I never shall be lonely,
In this house of mine.
With enigmatic visitors,
Who call from time to time.

(Previously published in *Lothlorien Poetry Journal*)



Mark Andrew Heathcote is adult learning difficulties support worker. He has poems published in journals, magazines, and anthologies both online and in print. He resides in the United Kingdom and is from Manchester. Mark is the author of *In Perpetuity* and *Back on Earth*, two books of poems published by Creative Talents Unleashed.

Tooth Fairy

Did you believe in the tooth fairy?
I remember a time when I did
at first, I had those moments of disbelief
didn't-we-all baby, didn't-we-all
isn't it wonderful to be innocent?
Isn't it wonderful being small?
Hiding under grandma's kitchen table
climbing those Eiger mountainous stairs
counting your pennies, believing,
believing in fairies, believing teardrops
are only missing parts of a rainbow
that'll never cross your path again.
Just like your grandma's kisses
now, like your milk teeth have long been gone.
Did you believe in the tooth fairy?
I did, but not for very long.

The Autumnal Princess

One step further to the winter
Two steps further to the spring
The autumnal princess danced
On the silvery feathered wind

Like a lotus flower of pearl
She covert's the sleepy world
And soothes the mirrored stars
In reflective blue stone hearts

By piecing snowdrops of pearl
The oracle amethyst of her eye
Divides a world of brittle pleasure
An autumnal garden of treasure;

That within her lips of autumns gold
-is wrought to rest the woodlands fold
And on her pallid breast that humbles not
Shall be tarried a harvest moon forgot.

Are You an Orchid or a Woodland Nymph?

Are you an orchid or a woodland nymph?
Are you a sacred blossom on a whisper?
A ghost visiting me when I'm nearing sleep
Are you trembling like a blade of grass?
When the dew virginally hesitates to
evaporate, condensate or simply-fall
have you been sent for me?

Have we been lovers once before
and if we were to fall in love today
would it be forevermore?
If, so break my heart
and restructure the pieces
from the clay, the sap from the blood
that made you live.
wantonly-womanly - mystically-like-winter snow
-melting through my hands.

Elves Came to Shake Awake the Bluebells

The elves came to shake awake the bluebells-
but first, they'd to leave the warmth of hearths.
It was a tiny hamlet covered in snow.
Hidden-ever-so-well from grizzly trolls.

O, how the Elves dance and played-
within the memories of-a-distant glade-
then went home brandishing a blue jewel.
Sailing back-on-an-upturned-toadstool.

They sang, emptying their hearts gold.
Like a wave, they waved goodbye
to-a-distant glade. Tears uncontrolled
like a wave, they waved goodbye.

O, with a heart of winter struggle
they headed home weary but happy
they climbed the mountain entombed-
in ice; to sleep to dream and snuggle.

Knowing butterflies would begin to flutter
flitter and moths are dreamy-eyed;
to discover a new star - a new lover
'so it is we are left breathless to preside

As elves - bluebells break their woodland cover
where Elfish men are ever so well hidden.
O Shangri-La in their bunks, in their hearts-
taking, another dignified, doze by the dozen.'

Cornflower Blue

Love, here a bluebird with florets fanned
a cornflower I now place in your hand
has on a dove's undercarriage, on-wing
has on-colour; I shall no longer sing.
My heart love is yours, it always-has-been,
since the weeds of the cornfield gently green
through amber and gold, then white and yellow
wearing mine blue to be your playfellow
a bluebird - it's a bachelor's Button
rubbing shoulder blades with elves or globin
mimicking tears, never satisfying
I guess something needs no certifying.
My heart love is yours, it always-has-been
I'm akin to those rose-pink hues of your skin.



Moe Phillips is a native New Yorker who now lives with her photographer/producer husband Ian in the sleepy town of Lambertville, New Jersey. Moe is a believer in all things magical. She credits her Irish ancestry for her love of words and wonder. Over twenty of Moe's poems and essays have appeared in anthologies and magazines for adults and children. Whether Moe is delving into the world of Fairy folklore, silly poems, or essays that honor daily living, they all contain her imagistic style of storytelling. Moe's latest poetry endeavor is a tall tale series of audio stories entitled *The Feisty Beast*. She has created films for award winning poets: Naomi Shihab Nye, Rebecca Kai Dotlich, and Georgia Heard as well as several shorts of her own for New York City's beloved Wild Bird Fund. Moe is a member of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators - NYC chapter. Moe was recently the first poet featured on The Dirigible Balloon's website – Moe Phillips, a wonderful children's poetry anthology series out of Yorkshire, England.

The elements and elementals are her inspiration.

Flowerpot Fairies

From my city window I can't see
a wood, a stream or bumblebee
But one summer I caught a glimpse,
of a band of Fairy Nymphs
They made their home on my sills,
in geraniums not daffodils
I saw them sleeping in clay pots
Bright red petals for their cots
They looked so very much at ease,
in all that concrete without trees
They gazed from the building's ledge
and dove off its stony edge
They spent that summer playing there,
racing pigeons through the air
Then old man winter began to blow,
Fairies packed their things to go
Geraniums had bloomed their last.
Petals now were falling fast
From behind the glass, I caught the eye,
of a Fairy as she waved goodbye

Lighting Fairy

Sparks dance on her fingertips
Jagged hair stands on end
Hissing soft voice crackles
as she makes the lightning bend
Challenged by booming thunder,
she answers its angry call
Cracking her electric whip
into the howling squall
This Fairy is no sugar plum
dancing under moonlit skies
heart filled with fiery embers,
she sizzles when she flies

Fairy Flower Sounds

- Sunflowers** - Growl with a lion's roar
- Bluebells** - Chime from the forest floor
- Dahlia**s - A marching band's racket
- Marigold** - Soft rustle of a tangerine jacket
- Petunias** - Sun beam sliding down a wall
- Daffodils** - Distant voice of winter's last call
- Snapdragons** - Crackle, sizzle and SNAP!
- Hibiscus** - A miniature thunderclap
- Lilac** - Whistle a forgotten tune
- Lilies** - Stars shushing the new moon
- Hydrangeas** - Bursts of corn popping
- Begonias** - Thump of plump bunny feet hopping
- Roses** - Trumpets of a royal fanfare
- Geraniums** - Sigh. Balloons losing air
- Buttercups** - Sunday wedding bells ringing
- Peonies** - A choir of crickets singing
- Phlox** - A hiss from wet winter embers
- Snow Drop** - Silence of a thousand Decembers
- Amaryllis** - Sword being pulled from its stone
- Bleeding Heart** - Faraway mountain's lonely moan
- Poinsettias** - Hissing steam from a kettle
- Daisies** - A cheer from every petal
- Iris** - Ping of a shining star's twinkle
- Tulips** - Pitter patter of a summer sprinkle
- Morning Glory** - Puffy clouds rubbing shoulders
- Zinnias** - The giggle of water between boulders
- Narcissus** - Tick, tock, tocking of a steeple clock
- Lamb's Ears** - Joyful clicking of hooves on a rock

Mortimer The Dragon

Champion of a thousand fights,
Gobbler of a thousand Knights
One day a Dragon met his match,
when it was a Fairy he tried to catch
He spied her from his perch on high
Decided he would make her fry
Mortimer snorted smoke with glee
He'd dunk this wench in his tea!
An afternoon's toothsome bite,
would quell his Dragon's appetite
Crush her bones in iron claws
Munch her in his smoking jaws
Mortimer prepared his strike,
his tail unfurled- a pointed pike
Poised to plunge his deadly dart,
into the Fairies beating heart
What the dragon didn't know
about his fair prey down below,
this Fairy was a Warrior Elf
who knew the art of war herself
Down he dove at this small sparrow,
wings clove the sky like an arrow
Mortimer spewed a cloud of ash
"Blind the imp! Make her crash!"
The Fairy zig -zagged just in time,
heavenward she began to climb
Mortimer roared! Picked up speed
Vowed to make this maiden bleed
The Fairy spun in mid-flight,
inches from that blazing bite
Pulled a sword from her side,
"Come now Dragon take a ride!"
Mortimer felt a pang of fright
He wanted a snack. Not a fight!

Dragonflies and Fairies

The sky answered the Fairy's call
Sweet blue turned to inky squall
Roaring thunder clapped and clashed
Sizzling bolts of lightning flashed
Cruel Mortimer drew in his breath,
his next exhale...scorching death!
Mortimer prepared to do his worst
She cried "A drink for that thirst!"
Swung her steel with all her might,
sword crackling with silver light
Blade slashed the seething clouds,
shredding their grey wooly shrouds
Mortimer realized far too late,
this battle would now seal his fate
Before the worm could spread his ire,
the deluge quenched his Dragon fire
He'd been beaten in this joust
Dragon flame forever doused
Off he raced to meet his doom
His mountain home now a tomb
Sealed in his cave, there he lies
Escape? He never even tries



Jerri Hardesty lives in the woods of Alabama with husband, Kirk, also a poet. They run the nonprofit poetry organization, New Dawn Unlimited, Inc. (NewDawnUnlimited.com). Jerri has had over 500 poems published and has won almost 2000 awards and titles in both written and spoken word poetry.

Unicorn

And once
I met
A Unicorn,
With golden horn
And snowy soft,
And I asked him,
"Why do we live?"
"To love,"
Replied he,
With a glint,
And faded away.

Night Light

She dances in the darkness
Bringing color to the night,
Rainbows swirl around her,
She, the prism, scattering light.
Her movements flow like water
Splashing droplets shining bright,
Like gems reflecting sparkle
Glowing softly in my sight,
And with a final flourish
And a blinding flash of white,
She shrank down to a tiny point,
A firefly taking flight.

Dragnet

Lacy wing of dragonfly
Like Spanish moss
Frozen under ice,
Whorls like fingerprints
Searching
For a perfect match.



Rhiannon Owens moved to Merthyr Tydfil from the North-West of England after bagging herself a handsome Welsh boy, Nicholas. She loves her cat, her mid-life crisis dresses, reading, and making her messy garden look even worse. As well as working on solo writing projects Rhiannon has had six poetry books published along with her writing partner, the super talented Ashley O'Keefe.

Their books are available on Amazon.

The link to their poetry page:

<https://www.facebook.com/RhiannoAsleyPoetry/>

Aquamarine

Woman of fire, flaming with desire
Never doused by the slap of the salty waves
In the sea,
Body undulating, spreading wide
In the deepest lagoon, oceanic mystery

Bright eyed mermaid
Of pink lips
Slinky hips,
Mouth forming lies
As your tail thrashes its story,
A siren in all of your glory
A flash of scale,

The sea, the sea
Throw your head back, inhale
With the wind in your sails,
No dorsal fin cuts through the blue
But a milky hand in aquamarine
Slices your heart in two,

What use are sad shanties
When you are beckoned into depths,
A chance to lose yourself
Twined by mermaid hair
And seaweed fronds,
The pain drowned, washed away
A tragic seductress seducing,
Hear her plaintive song

Firebird

Rising like a Phoenix
from the ashes, but alive with the flames,
burning so bright
like Margot Fonteyn
as she whirled
and took flight across the stage,
a vision in scarlet and titian.

She is garnet and rubies.

Enchanted,
we shield our eyes from The Firebird
but can't tear our vulnerable gaze away
as its powerful form
arcs across the endless skies,
a dazzling trail in its wake;
sunburst and fireworks.

Glowing embers
burst and crackle,
flaring into red-orange fire.

The eyes penetrate your soul
black as coals, they blaze with a white-hot centre.
Fiery wings beat at and fan the ocherous flames,
which leap and curl...

and lap sensually in your mind
teasingly flickering,
licking suggestively
as you give in to dangerous passions.

Scorched; your fingers burned
with vermillion pain and need that flared

Dragonflies and Fairies

for a moment,
that sizzled
for a moment,
but was destined to be brief.

For this is a Bird Of Paradise;
akin to an Old Testament Angel gripping a fiery sword,
orange and cardinal sin of desire.
A beauty that is both absolute
and terrifying in its ferociousness
as it burns through the Heavens,
and your heart.

A single glowing feather remains
sparking a path down to the ground.
It will always light your way,
should the darkness set in.

Wonder

A tiny fairy flits about on gossamer wings,
such beauty all around her,
She gazes in wonder, her heart sings,

She sees how the sky isn't always blue,
and how the grass is so much more than green,
sees shades and hues, myriad colours
from yellow to charcoal,
rutilant highlights and aquamarine...
she sees all of these
and everything in-between,

She wonders about people who argue black or white
and see the earth as flat,
why don't they see the beauty of sweeps and curves,
the elegant artistry of nature...
why don't they notice any of that?

She looks and looks and drinks the world in
and her eyes they really see,
she hears the sighs of the tiniest organisms
she opens her heart to life
and her soul is free

Leslie Dean, Naples, Florida

Fairy Morning

Whispery whiskery morning air
Spiders' spun last night was done
Sun a dawning
Time for planning
to sprinkle precious life amidst the land

And generate sunshine currency
To proliferate, eviscerate
doom-filled puffs of doomery
which my fairy hand will forever
banish for eternity
~sun reigned in



Elaine Reardon is a poet and herbalist. Her first chapbook, *The Heart is a Nursery For Hope*, won first honors from Flutter Press in 2016. Her second chapbook, *Look Behind You*, was published by Flutter Press in late 2019. Most recently Elaine's poetry and essays have been published by *Pensive Journal*,

Syncopated Journal, *Prospectus Literary*, and several anthologies.

She works can be found at:
<http://elainereardon.wordpress.com>.

Litha Arrives

Frog multitudes sing
outside my window
mauve dragonflies swoop
as dusk leaks purple into gold
sets the water on fire

this warm night
young deer leap
splash in the pond
not knowing why

The Wake

Wait for the banshee
to commence her wailing
notice the washerwomen
at the water's edge

They prepare his body
wash him clean
loosening knotted
mortal ties

Tears tumble down faces
words are murmured
tea and spirits poured
none mention the banshee

as she raises her arms
calls the departed one
to her side draws
him into her embrace.



Scott Russell Morris is a Writing and Rhetoric professor at the University of Utah. He holds an MFA & PhD in creative writing. His essays and poetry have been nominated for the Pushcart Prize and other awards, listed as a Notable Essay in Best American Essays, and been published in several literary journals, including *Brevity*, *Chattahoochee Review*, and *Superstition Review*. He is the editor of *Magpie Zines*, which has recently kickstarted its second series.

Find his work online at www.skoticus.com.

Scott had a poem featured in the Southern Arizona Press anthology *The Stars and Moon in the Evening Sky* and we are happy to have another of his works included in this anthology.

The Muse on Vacation

Calliope's on a beach somewhere
looking at a Kindle through mirrored sunglasses.

A guy displaying his arms
from a yellow tank top
asks what she's reading;
she barely looks up.
"Just working on my tan lines," she says.
She's wearing a gray, long-sleeve tee
with "ZERO FOX" silk-screened
across her chest.
An umbrella protects her
bare ankles, which are
lotioned and crossed.

"I bet it's some trashy Harlequin," the guy says,
and Calliope looks out at the horizon
where the ocean is free
of metaphor, but filled
with micro plastic.

"That's right," she says,
looking down at the tablet, dismissing him.
In fact, she is not reading anything,
but she's pulled up Didion's *The White Album*,
and her eyes move over it:

*It occurred to me that a certain rearrangement of
people's daily planning might seem, in less rarefied
air than is breathed at 120 South Spring, rather a
great deal to want...*

Dragonflies and Fairies

Gulls overhead call
for her attention and scraps of French fries.
She wants nothing more
than to be in Didion's California.
She wants freeways.
She wants gubernatorial mansions
with kitchens unencumbered by culinary preparation.
There's too much she's-not-sure-what at this beach;
instead,
the muse wants piped waterways.
She wants the power
granted by buttons and machines.



Lynn White lives in north Wales. Her work is influenced by issues of social justice and events, places, and people she has known or imagined. She is especially interested in exploring the boundaries of dream, fantasy, and reality. She was shortlisted in the Theatre Cloud 'War Poetry for Today'

competition and has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize, Best of the Net, and a Rhysling Award. Her poetry has appeared in many publications including: *Apogee*, *Firewords*, *Capsule Stories*, *Gyroscope Review*, and *So It Goes*.

Find Lynn at: <https://lynnwhitepoetry.blogspot.com> and <https://www.facebook.com/Lynn-White-Poetry-1603675983213077/>

Lynn had three poems featured in the Southern Arizona Press anthology *The Stars and Moon in the Evening Sky* and we are happy to have two of her works included in this anthology.

Fairy Queen

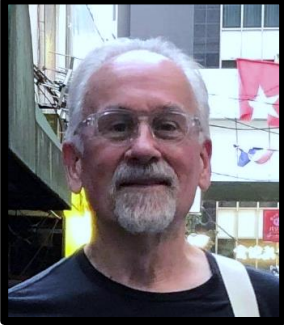
She wanted to be queen
of the fairies
and live on the top of the tree
displacing the star.
That should belong in the sky,
she thought.
So she picked it up and threw it
away,
watched it float upwards
to join the other stars.
And then it snowed
starlike snowflakes
which engulfed her
even on the top
of the tree.

(Previously published in *Quail Bell*, January 2018)

The Hedgerow Fairies

Where have they gone,
the hedgerow fairies
in their harebell hats?
I used to see them sitting
under their leafy roofs
stitching their summer dresses
of poppy and mallow petals
with long silk threads
catching the summer sunlight
as the smiling spiders spun.
I miss them so,
the hedgerow fairies
in their harebell hats.
I used to see them collecting
armfuls of meadow sweet
to stuff their nighttime mattresses,
making doorways in their new
toadstool homes with sharp stones.
Maybe they've gone underground
to escape the passing cars and tractors.
Maybe they only come out at night now
and stitch and stuff under the moonlight.
I don't know.
But I miss them so,
the hedgerow fairies
in their harebell hats.

(Previous published in *Stanzaic Stylings*, 2017)



Jeffrey Johnson is a native of Minnesota and a professor of comparative literature at Sophia University in Tokyo and a long-time resident of Japan. He is a U-dub Seattle Ph.D. and has lived in Salt Lake City, Flagstaff, Barcelona, and Granada. His poetry collection *Conjurers Dream of Voyage* is published by the poetry

journal he co-founded with Barbara Summerhawk which is in its 7th year of exploring Japanese and Japan related poetry and poetics. He is also the author of two books of comparative literary criticism, numerous articles, a translator of a volume of contemporary Japanese poetry, and a spoken word performer in Tokyo.

Jeffrey had a poem featured in the Southern Arizona Press anthology *The Stars and Moon in the Evening Sky* and we are happy to have another of his works included in this anthology.

Mythos

Vague vibration
pushes dust
before wind
ash exits
molten fire
no qualities
no attributes
insubstantial
inconsequential
unequal
to anything
open floodgates
rise
to the brim
breaches barriers
dirt
water
clay
without
ooze
within
primal ectoplasm
dangling a precipice
lizards
like rivers
snake across landscape
first bird
takes flight
a silverstreak
across a new sky
coyote
traverses desert
pulls
from a bag of tricks
an apple
sticks
in the gullet
on a spring Eve
east of Eden

Dragonflies and Fairies

out of woman
a choking man
water from lungs
that collapse
gender distinction
a band
of coastal Africans
flee eco-Armageddon
and people
and people
and people
all corners
Neolithic wanderers
fire in hand
paint on walls
in sync and no trace
adapt and adopt
everywhere
seen and unseen
the best animal
in us
rough and ready
span out
overtake and absorb
Neanderthal
and the like
expert trekkers
trackers
blade makers
mystical fire gazers
conjurers
of the best
of the world
we inhabit
and our debt
to all subsequent generations
and creatures
is due –
long –
overdue



Binod Dawadi is from Purano Naikap 13, Kathmandu, Nepal. He has completed his master's degree from Tribhuvan University in English and enjoys reading and writing in literary forms, creating many poems and stories. His hobbies include reading, writing, singing, watching movies, traveling, and gardening as well as spending time with

his pets. He is a creative person who does not spend his time by doing nothing; always helping those less fortunate. He believes that through writing and art it is possible to change the knowledge and perspectives of the people towards anything. He loves his country Nepal and has experienced the many cultures of his country as well as those of foreign countries.

His stories and poems have appeared in many anthologies and has published his own poetry books: *The Power Of Words, Love and Life's Difficulties*, and *Nature, Animals and Human Beings* in Prodigy Published.

Binod had a poem featured in the Southern Arizona Press anthology *The Stars and Moon in the Evening Sky* and we are happy to have another of his works included in this anthology.

Dragonflies and Fairies

Dragonflies you are in various colours,
You fly here and there in the sky,
You catch the small,
Insects and takes,
I catch you and tie your tail with thread,
But you take thread and flew away,
Fairies also are invisible they,

Flies in the dragonflies,
Fairy is the princess of heaven,
Who comes to the earth,
To see the people they have magical powers,
To enjoy and to reduce pains of people,
As well as to give happiness,
For the people they comes in our world.



Courtney Glover is originally from Fulton County, Georgia. She is a writer, editor, and amateur photographer. Her passion for both writing poetry and photography started when she was very young. Three poets that greatly inspired her are Edgar Allan Poe, Robert Frost, and Shel Silverstein. She is the author of four poetry books, including *Calypso Dreaming: A Collection of Poetry*. Her hobbies include reading, writing, listening

to music, and watching movies. She is also the editor of *The Sacred Feminine: An Open Skies Collection* poetry book. She currently lives with her family in Camden County, New Jersey. Her business page, Calypso Dreaming Press and Photography can be found on Facebook.

You can check out all four of her books on Amazon:

Calypso Dreaming: A Collection of Poetry

Calypso Dreaming: A Collection of Sunshine and Sorrows

Calypso Dreaming: A Collection of Ravens and Revenants

Calypso Dreaming: Crimson Ink

Fauna of Mirrors

I'm here, watching you, just on the other side of this here trap.

A hair's width away, through the great looking-glass.
I could easily be your twin, but I assure you that I am not.

As I learn all about you, imitating your every move and thought.

For my side of the glass is a nightmare, endlessly dark and bleak.

Trapped in this hellish world, through these portals my kind often peek.

And when the day arrives, after we've absorbed your personality.

A perfect mirror-image of you, we will take your place eagerly.

We'll gobble you up whole, with our razor-sharp teeth.
No one will even notice, your world unwittingly bequeathed.

It's happened once before, in China, 2697 BC.
5,000 years later, a new plan we shall achieve.

We are the Fauna, and we will do whatever is necessary.

And very very soon, your world will be our new eternal sanctuary.

(An original poem based on Chinese Historical Records)

The Man In The Moon

They say the moon was dipped in silver, the day her lover died, or so they claim.
That the faeries built a ladder, by order of their beloved Fae queen, Queen May.

For the moon was once her lover, stolen. Taken without warning, from dear Queen May.
A lowly servant, handsome, silver-skinned. She, the future Queen of the eternal Fae.

They planned to meet at midnight, under the weeping willow tree.
They'd run away together, get married and raise a Fae family.

But her father, the King, had spies and he soon found out their plan.
He'd make sure his naive daughter would obey his every kingly command.

At midnight, the two lovers met under the willow tree, as the King's soldiers did emerge.
The King chastised them both, his unmerciful wrath they had now unfortunately incurred.

He then cast the cruelest of spells. One to last for all of everlasting time and space.
He ripped the young man's very soul right from his silver chest without haste.

With arcane words, he placed her lover's soul inside the moon up high.
Teaching his daughter a heartbreaking lesson, as she wept, dying inside.

Dragonflies and Fairies

The haughty King then said, never again would the two lovers ever together be.

With coarse words, he added that it was his daughter's own fault entirely.

To be so close, yet so very far apart. A reminder of her father's tyrannical rule. He thought himself so clever. But the princess fought back. Dethroning and exiling her father to the farthest ends of the earth, forever.

Now back to the present, to the princess now queen, climbing the ladder, brave and unafraid. As her loyal knights passed up buckets of melted silver, to their beloved queen, Queen May.

She painted the moon from white to purest silver, mere hours after the king's cruel curse.

Through heartbroken tears, she painted, till the sun's rays broke upon the sleeping earth.

She'd keep her promise, to spend all of her unending years, with him.

To always love the man in the moon. The young man with the silver skin.



Richard Lamoureux lives in beautiful British Columbia, Canada, on the shores of Lake Okanagan. He has been happily married for 27 years to his beautiful wife Mary. Their son Mathew and his wife Harleen live close by with their new grandson, Benjamin. Did he mention that Benjamin is the cutest baby in the world?

He loves spending time with his family, writing, and connecting with and promoting other writers. For fun he plays pickleball, hikes, bikes, and swims. He enjoys meeting new people as well as getting together with close friends.

His first published book *Dummy, Hurtful, and Healing Words* is now in its second printing and continues to be well received. Through writing the book he experienced healing and had amazing interactions with others who are on their own healing journeys. He tends to write about social issues and many of his poems deal with human rights. He personally has written over 3000 pieces. He never realized he had so much to say. His hope is that both people who regularly read poetry as well as those who do not will be able to connect with what he writes.

During his career he has worked in communications, banking, human resources, and the financial side of the luxury automotive market. He also worked as a Sales Trainer and Consultant to assist companies in improving their people performance. Considering his difficult start in life and early academic challenges, he is thankful to have had a rich and interesting career. Writers can imagine and achieve what their hearts desire. He is glad he did not lack imagination. He is also thankful for the people who have helped him along the way. He gives a special thanks to his sweetie. He has been blessed with the greatest partner, best friend, and lover.

The Last Unicorn

I was with the last Unicorn
As she drew her last breath
Her horn expelled magic
As she succumbed to her death

The fairies and Gnomes
Each shed a crystal tear
At the thought of a planet
With no unicorns here

Dragons from Lost kingdoms
Came to show their remorse
The moon became unbalanced
In grief shifted off course

A Phoenix from the east
Flying on wings of fire
Tried to revive her
With flames of desire

The oceans all rose
As a show of respect
They waved to her goodbye
A loss difficult to accept

Without the unicorn
Magic shifted to men
It can only now exist
With the stroke of a pen

So poets be the keepers
Of stories new and old
We must not give up on magic
Or this world will grow cold.

(Also available as an amazing video:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=20xIbXpZ7rl>)



Evie Groch, Ed.D. lives in northern California and enjoys writing poetry, short stories, memoirs, opinion pieces, and letters to the editor. She cannot live without humor and has learned to hone hers in presentations and writing. She also enjoys recipes, cooking, word challenges, and puzzles she completes or creates for others. Some of these challenges have been published in

Games Magazine.

Her work has appeared in the *New York Times*, *The San Francisco Chronicle*, *The Contra Costa Times*, *The Journal*, and many online venues. Many of her poems are found in published anthologies such as: *Soul Poet Society – Quintessence Anthology*, *My Robot & Me Anthology*, and *My Father Taught Me Anthology*, *Carry the Light Anthology*, and *Touching, Poems of Love Anthology*. Some magazines, journals, and reviews that carry her poems are: *The Wild Word Magazine*, *Whimsical Poet: A Journal of Contemporary Poetry*, *Necroproductions*, *The Pangolin Review*, *Sage Soup Literary Magazine*, *Open Door Poetry Magazine*, *Dyst literary Journal*, *Slant, a Journal of Poetry*, *Borders and Boundaries*, *Poems by Finalists*, and *Women’s Federation for World Peace in Canada*.

She is the author of *What Do You Bring to the Table?* and a poetry book titled *Half the Hurricanes*.

Evie had a poem featured in the Southern Arizona Press anthology *The Stars and Moon in the Evening Sky* and we are happy to have another of her works included in this anthology.

An Inside City

In the forest, among shafts of light
they stand, goitered with burls,
embroidered in moss,
surrounded by 'shrooms
in helmets soft and tawny –
a colony of congregants like chanters
in a place of worship, some devout,
some diseased, some clueless
of their status.

Coastal redwoods with leafy tops,
giant sequoias with gnarly bark,
a few singular pines long past living
like orphans in a bed of thorns,
slipping away one needle at a time.

The elves have hollowed them,
set up quarters inside, cooked up
potions to feed the rest, potions
carried by pixies to the roots
of the other Titans of the forest.
Their new city now takes shape,
invisible to the wandering tourists.

Mortals devoid of consciousness
like ailing pines stand among the pillars
of humanity, propped up like they still
matter while losing grasp of mind
with severed family tree branches, roots,
nothing alive inside of them but vengeance
and noise. They still cast a shadow
as dark as the dead trees do.



Nancy Julien Kopp lives and writes in Manhattan, Kansas surrounded by the inspiring Flint Hills. Her poetry has placed in contests and been published in several ezines, including the *Holocaust Tribute* ezine, *A Long Story Short*, and *Samaritan's Purse* anthology. She writes short fiction for children which has won contests and been published in ezines and magazines. She also

writes personal essays, short memoir pieces, travel essays, and articles on the craft of writing. She has been published in newspapers in the Kansas and Kansas City area, journals, ezines, and in several anthologies including 24 *Chicken Soup for the Soul* books. She blogs about her writing world with tips and encouragement for writers at www.writegrannysworld.blogspot.com

Fairy Kisses

Fairy kisses float
on soft summer air.

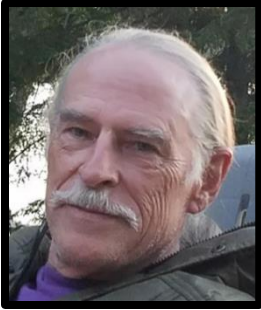
Tiny little folk send
them soaring high.

Catch one feather light.
Drop it in a glass jar.

Save it for another day
when you feel a bit blue.

Remove it, treasure the love
a fairy's kiss will bring.

Then send it on its way.



James Geehring loves observing nature and human emotions and the unending questions of life. He writes about what he sees and about a lot that he doesn't see; that which is swirled within his imagination and mind and often finds its way upon the page. Words have such power to paint pictures in the minds of the readers; it is a lovely medium

which he thoroughly enjoys.

He was a carpenter and boat builder for many years, and has been an artist throughout his life. He has only recently taken to writing in earnest. He has been fortunate enough to have seen many countries and peoples which have enriched his creative imagery and thoughts and expanded his literary horizons. He is "published" on-line in several Facebook groups: *Dark Poetry Society*, *Poets Unplugged*, *Poetry for the Soul*, *Poems*, *Grey Thoughts*, *The Writers Club*, and *Merak Magazine* and his own Facebook page *Eye, Mind and Pen*. He is struggling to publish his first collection of poems and is almost there.

A Sunlit Pond

While riding on a dragonfly I alit upon a reed
And cast my gaze across the pond 'tween wingbeats of
my steed
Sun's yellow on the lily pads mixed with varied shades of
green
And diamond glints off water, brightest rays that eyes
have seen.

The rasping song of frogs, beneath my perch, a subtle
growl
Drowning out all nearby sounds save distant hoot of owl.
The petals of the lilies, opened wide like Nature's eyes
Showing reds and yellow-whites against pond's mirrored
skies.

Small parasols of dandelions drift with silky milkweed
hairs
The sweetness of the flowered air an antidote for cares.
The radiant warmth and humid air become a second
skin
Chromatic beauty overwhelming all that eyes take in.

An iridescent blur from glass-like wings, aloft again
I hold on very tightly to this flying fountain pen
Far behind I leave the pond, my dragonfly alights
Clean sheet of paper waiting for my tale of fancies'
flights.

Fairy Town

On patch of moss, atop a rock, two forest fairies sat
While nibbling on a fern leaf as they talked of this and
that.

One mentioned that the sunbeams seemed so playful
through the haze

Reflecting off its glass-like wings in chroma changing
ways.

The other stared intently at the stream's soft, sandy
shore

And languidly recalled the tales of ancient fairy lore.

The stories of the olden days when fairies ruled supreme
Before the scourge of modern man came into Nature's
scheme.

And even how the fairies tried to help in Man's bold rise
Yet vanished from Man's memory, naught but fantasy
and lies.

The sun's retreat, before it set, below tree's lofty crown
Cast brilliant slivers through the woods and shone on
Fairy Town.

They gathered in the twilight mist with common paths of
flight

Their glinting wings, a growing glow, against backdrop of
night.

An ancient oak with healed up scar, where once a limb
had

grown,

Now opened as it swallowed all and closed when last
had flown.

Like Brigadoon, the fairies just appear now and again

So few can see them anymore, just memories remain.

Dragonflies and Fairies



Maid Corbic is a 22-year-old poet from Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina. In his spare time he writes poetry that has been repeatedly praised as well as rewarded. He selflessly helps others around him and he is moderator of the World Literature Forum WLFPH (World Literature Forum Peace and Humanity) for humanity and peace in the world in Bhutan. He serves as the editor of the First Virtual Art portal led by Dijana

Uherek Stevanovic, and the selector of the competition at a page of the same name that aims to bring together all poets around the world. Many of his works have been published in anthologies.

Maid had a poem featured in the Southern Arizona Press anthology *The Stars and Moon in the Evening Sky* and we are happy to have another of his works included in this anthology.

A Monster from the Forest of the Forest

As a child, I often said one thing.
Yes, Bigfoot will come to me.
Although I was not aware of it
Yes, one day my boyhood dreams
It will become true, unfortunately.

Because I was a boy eager to play
I lived in the woods and just listened
That bird song just gave me soul
The feeling that I am not alone in the world
And that you have someone to share your heart with

But as life goes on.
I don't see anything better now.
Bigfoot is still coming for me
Eager to destroy that little hairy creature
But I don't know the reason why.

Maybe this is the end of my life already.
Because I don't know how to deal with this
And I'm not someone who knows some things.
I beg to cry out loud
And I'm asking my mother to protect me

You breastfed and Bigfoot whispered to me.
I am not aware that he is an enemy.
Because I saw suffering and tears in him
But also the desire to destroy everything around him.
Who gets on his line without question?

I did not ring the bell three times in the forest.
And now he is haunting me no matter what.
Maybe if I had been smarter, I would have done various
miracles.
Then to live with sorrow and pain now
And cries from the forest for my disobedience!



Marie C Lecrivain is a poet, publisher, and ordained priestess in the Ecclesia Gnostica Catholica, the ecclesiastical arm of Ordo Templi Orientis. Her work has been published in *California Quarterly*, *Chiron Review*, *Gargoyle*, *Nonbinary Review*, *Orbis*, *Pirene's Fountain*, and many other journals. She is the author of several books of poetry and fiction, and editor of *Ashes to Stardust: A David Bowie Tribute Anthology* (forthcoming/copyright 2022 Sybaritic Press, www.sybpress.com).

Dragonfly #11

As I drag my weary self back from lunch, a swampy heat rises from the pavement on Wilshire Blvd. A large gold dragonfly drops right in front of me, its translucent wings vibrate as steady as a heartbeat. It flits back and forth in front of the glass doors of the building, as if trying to make a decision. I step to the right, and it follows me. I step back, and it almost collides with my face. A woman approaches from my left, her arms filled with bags. She spots the dragonfly as it hovers before the doors, and stops. We watch it fly in place, and wonder, *How did it get here, and why, at this moment?* Before our questions are answered, it rises above our heads, and darts away.

*freedom
passes me by
too fast to hold
& too ephemeral
to remain*

Hieros #21

gold
green
azure
& scarlet dragonflies
glide through the late afternoon air
too quick to invoke the beauty of jeweled eyes
my uncertain future delineated
into the crystalline curve of wings



Daniel Moreschi is a poet from Neath, South Wales, United Kingdom. After life was turned upside down by his ongoing battle with severe M.E., he rediscovered his passion for poetry that had been dormant since his teenage years. Writing has served as a distraction from his struggles ever since. Daniel has been acclaimed by numerous poetry competitions, including The Oliver Goldsmith Literature Festival, the Westmoreland Arts and Heritage Festival, Utah State Poetry Society's Annual Spring Contest, the Jurica-Suchy Nature Museum's Nature Poetry Contest, and the Hugo Dock Snow Maze Poetry Contest. Daniel has had poetry published by The Society of Classical Poets, and The Black Cat Poetry Press.

Odyssey of the Hine's Emerald Dragonfly

A mother roams nemoral bounds, where river rims
encase
The malleable solace of a sunken ark's embrace
As dips and oscillations from a dragon's tail foretell
Of a latent dormancy within a leafy citadel.

A new-born is denied repose and famished pores collect
The layers of a shell as a falling cradle feigns neglect.
It braves a bed of swaddling swings, that brings an
abyssal brink:
The nascence of a nymph amid the liquid lanes to slink.

Along a luminescent roulette of planted palisades,
Where droves of small amalgams mass as aqua
masquerades
And dainty strides belie the plunders of a vital script,
When carcasses are catalysts for stratum to be
stripped.

From gulfs of gills and guillotines that guard the beds
and banks,
To navigating chancy streams, while spurred by
sprouting flanks.
A final shed at shallow depths, and then a brisk ascent
Of paper pillars on a pressing urge to reinvent.

A brace of motes, to break the mold, as quaking seams
unearth
A base of beats awaiting wands of wander from rebirth.
When coated peaks embolden leaps, a lustrous span
combines

Dragonflies and Fairies

And reaches to the heights, to leave behind the leaves
as Hine's.

(Previously published: Anthology: *A Bin Night in November*, by Black
Cat Poetry Press 2022 and Anthology: *Querencia Press Summer
2022*, by Querencia Press)



Clare Marsh lives in Kent, United Kingdom and is an international adoption social worker. She has won the Sentinel Annual Short Story Competition and the 2020 Olga Sinclair Short Story Prize. Her writing has appeared recently in *Mslexia*. It has been featured in *Ink, Sweat and Tears, Lighthouse, Flash Flood, Places of Poetry, Rebel Talk, Oxford Flash Fiction, Cauldron,* and *Acropolis* anthologies. She

was awarded M.A. Creative Writing (University of Kent) in 2018 and nominated for a Pushcart Prize for a poem in *The Binnacle* (University of Maine) in 2017.

Sister

Mid-summer, midday we sit by her pond
dazzled by patrolling dragonflies.
These Devil's darning needles dart and flash
in dappled light, create running stitches
of red-finned fish across the muddy surface.

But these ancient survivors can't mend
her frayed past or unravelled future –
the scarred myelin sheaths of damaged nerves.

She must leave this wild garden
before next year's aquatic nymphs emerge
to crawl up reeds, shrug off split skin,
allow legs, jewelled abdomens, iridescent wings
to harden, made new as perfect creatures –

unless she can metamorphose in a larval moult,
casting off wheelchair and paralysed body
as she soars in maiden flight.

Devil's darning needle – a popular name for a dragonfly

(Previously published in two United Kingdom anthologies:
Canterbury Festival Anthology 2018 and *Roundel Poetry Catching
the Shards 2022*)



Leanne Webber is from the South Wales Valleys, UK and is a mother of a boy, a girl, and four cats. Her work is inspired by her interest in the esoteric, her life experiences, her rich inner world, and her interest in the human mind and soul. She has had an eclectic career path, including research, adult teaching, trainee psychotherapy, and various roles in the safeguarding sector. However, she now works as a senior children / young people's advocate, an on-call rape crisis worker, and as a self-employed cartomancer, which she does her best to fit around her family, writing, and the pandemic. Leanne wrote her first poem at seven, but has only been writing regularly since 2016, with a fair few pieces now published, in various formats; online, in local and international anthologies, and lifestyle magazines. She also had a piece of flash fiction published in *Moonchild Mag*, a US based literary journal, in 2021. Furthermore, Leanne does 'spoken' poetry performance, both online and in ticketed local arts events. She is currently working on three poetry collections, one of which will be self-published and two with an independent horror publisher. Leanne identifies as neurodiverse and as a solitary moon witch.

Leanne had two poems featured in the Southern Arizona Press anthology *The Stars and Moon in the Evening Sky* and we are happy to have another two of her works included in this anthology.

Fae

I met a beautiful Manx woman, on a hot summers' day,
She had insanely blue eyes, she said "You look so fae!"
Her wavy silver hair was luminous as stars.
A gentle aura. Her lips the colour of Mars.
Her skin was young for her years,
it was pale like the moon.
She was transfixing,
something about her made me swoon.
She was curvy, yet sylph-like and svelte.
I remember now just how she smelt.
Like essential oils and Lilith, hypnotic.
She wore dark sunglasses, concealing her optic.
Despite her pure heart, she had learned to be thrifty.
I said: "I hope I look that amazing at fifty!"
Thinking "Hell, I wish I looked like you at twenty-six"
Back then I had wispy dark hair with "petrol" teal slicks,
pierced nose, Ophidian eyes, the look of a minx.
I had never thought of myself in that way.
She elaborated.
I reflected on this. She might just be right.
I was fascinated.

Her chosen name was Willow. She wove in and out,
like a daze.
She strangely affected me
with her voice and fleeting gaze -
Somehow in an act of beguiling and magic.
There was something about her that felt so tragic.
I think she herself, was from another place,
there was mutual recognition, a sense of grace.
I don't think she meant it, just by my appearance,
but perhaps it was my air of incoherence.

She was not the first or last to tell me this.

Dragonflies and Fairies

They weren't wrong. There was something quite amiss.
"She's away with the fairies" they would often say.
I certainly wasn't there. My thoughts would drift astray –
"She's in a world of her own" they would also say,
as if it were an insult. I fought to keep my lips sealed,
in the boring maths lesson, or on the sports field.
"I most certainly am" I thought. And it was wonderful.
Being fae.

My body is rooted in the earth plane,
but my mind is often far away.
Often wandering to the past or travelling to the future.
Flitting back and forth, somewhere else - in nature.
I have many different worlds,
in more than one place, at once.
My mind flies, I can ride the quantum.
It's no coincidence.

As a child I loved the fairies,
never questioned their existence.
I saw them in the ceiling of Castell Coch,
and for me this was evidence.
They took my dummy for their ablutions,
which seemed like providence.
They left me a baby doll. I left them petals for wings.
Before I went to bed, I put them on the sill as offerings.

I think deep down my mother knew I was a changeling.
Her nerves and patience, I could easily trigger.
She would call me "Narcissus,"
after my favourite flower fairy figure,
but I was more like Echo. Or Dionysus.
You could say she was in a sort of denial.
So, she taught me to be a chameleon.
She desperately wanted me to be normal,
but inside I felt more like an alien.
No amount of camouflage could make me seem
"of this world."

When I released the need to disguise,
my true self was unfurled.

Around the time of my Saturn return,
in a phase of great confusion.
It was a time of grief;
I had a vivid dream that ended some illusion.
I dreamt I seen my own reflection
and I was no longer human.
I had pixie ears, long emerald hair,
and was no longer mortal.
My eyes were supernatural green,
and the mirror was a portal.
I sensed my own enchantment,
though it was still somehow, me.
Then my face slowly disappeared,
But in that moment, I could see:

I am fae!

I am chaos and labile mood,
elfin smile, and I like to brood.
I am elsewhere, not time-aware,
impulsive words and blank stare.
I am wicked and capricious,
empathetic and audacious.
I am drawn to flowers and trees,
and like to do just as I please.
I am always misplacing things,
and I like to follow my wistful whims.
I am both seductive and demure,
my imagination is obscure.
I am longing and dark romance,
my eyes and words can entrance.
I am quiet and still and wound up tightly,
yet I can be nimble and very spritely.

Dragonflies and Fairies

I am spacey and contrary,
like a banshee,
nymph,
or faerie.

A Mermaid

A mermaid likes to be a mystery ~
Hidden, concealed by the undulating currents, almost no
limit to the far reaches of her underbelly. Only showing it
to those who recognise the true nature of her power and
have earned access to her vulnerability.

~

A mermaid likes the refuge of the gaping, cool world
below the shoreline. Here she has space to explore the
abyss of her insights and to be engulfed by the expanse
of her feelings.

~

A mermaid likes to lure her suitors into her Neptunian
domain, singing them to their salty demise, if they dare
to try to mislead her, play the fool in the shallows, or fail
to follow her deep enough into the places she needs
them to go with her.

~

A mermaid likes to take you deeper into your own
essence, to protect herself from the danger of surface
dwellers. Those who cannot go there will drift back to the
beach lazily, like jetsam.

~

I dreamt I was a mermaid once, diving deep into a city,
sunken beneath the water. Doric, in style. It felt like the
ruins of Atlantis. I kept diving lower and further into a

Dragonflies and Fairies

cavern of a lost civilisation, to seek the wisdom of our ancestors.

~

I was searching for the truth of what I am yet to discover in the realms of the collective subconscious, knowing that within those dark chambers, lives cerulean blue facets of the jewels of the psyche, the ancient treasures of the best kept secrets of the future. Sensing that beyond the comfort zone of my landbound body, is the eerie and uncanny, the sinking horror of what's beneath the best kept delusions of the communal mind.

~

Though even a little below the meniscus of this meeting between worlds, I felt the substantial compaction of the sea push into me with the weight of those entities that wish to overpower me with their murky agendas. I knew that if I was to reach the ruins of the rocky metropolis within this sub-aquatic site, surely my frame would collapse. Though the cerebrospinal fluid of my slumbering mind would be strong enough to break the bones of my illusion but not crush the fragility of my waking spirit.

~

I could sense that the deeper I could swim into this subliminal chasm, the lighter it would get and that I had the power to reach the other side of the wreckage. The key was the intrepid nature of my undoubting heart and the faith that I could withstand the pressure of this transmigration. My astral body has more muscle in its tail than my waking mind could ever conceive.

~

Even in the dense, three-dimensional forests of the upper sphere, I felt borne of the lower. I was timed by my father and told that I could breathe underwater for longer than was humanly possible. I spent more time in those pools than most had cared for. For a moment, I stood out. Finally, something I could be known for, other than my resistance to be led. Always following the waves of my own instincts. I could not be tamed, in the tides that pulsate between my timidity and temerity.

~

A real-life mermaid likes to be able to dwell both in water and on land. To be able to choose when to emerge and when to submerge.

~

Sometimes she needs to plunge into what she knows, which is mostly unknown, except to her own kind. Or just to feel the cool tickle of sea foam glide across her sinewy curves or to tell the anemones about what she has learned, on unfamiliar ground.

~

Sometimes she needs to see the world from a different perspective, to broaden the horizons of her influence. Or just to feel the warm sun as it dries the brine on her pearly skin and reflects off her scales that shimmer, like abalone. Mirroring to the Others, their buried hopes, and fears.

~

Dragonflies and Fairies

Sometimes for those of us that sympathise with selkies, it is the stifling air above the surface that is the hardest to breathe in. We gasp as we drown in the nebulae of reality. The solidity of the earth becomes a threat.

~

For a well-seasoned mermaid who swims constantly between both worlds, this is the toughest part of her voyage. This is where her own existence is doubted. Here, she feels native to only the nether world. But when she becomes adept, she is whole and more alive.

~ She dreams and waits, whilst the Others wake from their sleep.



Sophie Jupillat Posey is a French Venezuelan who wrote a poem about spring in the 4th grade and started a mystery series a year later. She's been hooked to creating stories ever since. She studied writing and music at Rollins College. She's had numerous short stories and poetry published in literary magazines since 2014. She enjoys reading and writing anything from science fiction and fantasy, to paranormal and mystery novels. When she isn't writing, she is composing music, creating albums, and teaching students in France. She is the author of *The Four Suitors* and the short story collection *The Inside Out Worlds: Visions of Strange*.

She can be reached on Twitter, Facebook, and her website
<http://www.sophiejposey.com>

Sophie had two poems featured in the Southern Arizona Press anthology *The Stars and Moon in the Evening Sky* and we are happy to have another two of her works included in this anthology.

Dragon Secrets

They whispered of dragon secrets by the moonlight,
Secrets that trembled, secrets that glimmered, secrets
that roared and grumbled
for centuries to come.

Once upon a time, dragons could be seen in the mirrors
of the elders' hearts.

Once upon a time, the elders held a guild of dragon lore
in their hands.

From generation to generation, they whispered of
dragon secrets,

But no longer did they tremble, no longer did they
glimmer.

As men forgot the stories that enchanted them, so did
the dragons forget their place,

And their Secrets,

Becoming embroiled in whispery gray hues of
forgetfulness.

The dragons withdrew from the elders' hearts, to find
other realms where they could Triumph. Now they are
just legends, remnants of stories, glimmers of smoke,
Eternalized in the gaping maws of night.

Now I watch for dragons in the sky,
Hoping to find a whisper of a secret.

If I am lucky, I chance to see a fearsome dragon's head
of murky silver cloud gleaming,

Its huge, brilliant, eye,

Shining bright, iridescent spotlight flooding my heart.

Its secret is safe with me, I shall not forget.

Child of the Moon

I am a child of the moon,
Glorious fairy body of ivory and twilight shadows,
Pearlescent curves, pure rays of light
Emanating as wings,
Glorious, glittering, gleaming,
Spreading into the mattress of the evening expanse,
Shape of humans' dreams and poetry,
With veins of indigo, violet, ultramarine,
Breaths of sleep and of sweet dreams,
Seducing wonderings of the midnight hour,
Tremulous drops in the sky of stars' hopes and moons'
tears.

I am a child of the moon and a goddess of my small
realm within a kingdom of eternity.

Dragonflies and Fairies

Johanne Lee is a proud mother of three and Mancunian, presently published in nine anthologies including *Open Skies*, *The Sacred Feminine*, and Soul Poet Society's *Quintessence*. She was shortlisted and included in the Coast and Waters Anthology Prize. Recently published By *Impspired* magazine , she is also a children's picture book author of *Dream Big Little One*, *Maximus the Humpback Whale*, and *Maison Mouse* (all available on Amazon) all of her books raise for charity. She is about to publish her own poetry Book, *Woman's Journey* and can be found as Johanne Lee Author on Facebook and Instagram as well as joleeinpoetry on Instagram.

When Days Breathed Fire

Days were upon us the breath of its fire
not yet to mythical the dragons mire
The skies roaring sunsets scorching a flame
winged and mighty to the world they claim

Warnings of thunder an oracle seer
lightning and lyrics of future spoke clear
Dragon's existence fairies delicate
flowered resistance extinction await

Came the waters fury swallowing whole
all of the magical mythical souls
Skies bland of substance, stars raining their weep
all been granted and lost now to sleep

Flies the tiny dragon no fire in breath
reminder of once upon sorry in death
Twinkling starlight the fairies now ponder
lost to the eye in past tales they wander

Clouds create cumulus house their mistrust
man tore the skies and turned dragons to dust
Ripped up the forest where fairies held court
stole from seas every mermaid in port

Now see the Dragonfly tiny in wings
listen the sirens the sorrows they sing
Notice the sunset the fire as it dies
lays down its head where the mystical lies

Plundered the thunder we wonder our fate
Yesterday's stories our future relate

The Last Fairy

She sits by the sill of coffee coloured rings
Idling the dust
considers wrinkling her nose in sprinkle
In her magic she trusts

Lonely little elves pass by her door
they seem to be mushrooming
And her heart aches for something pixie
Of love assuming

Why must the toadstools leave?
She grieves their home
And the banality of ordinary
in the void of alone

Wicked the witches
Alas, no it was a wizard that spelled
Stole of the forest
And fairies expelled

She sinks further
In despondency
A brew long turned cold
Of flight
Into magical
A fairy once told

No one would believe her
In a world of logical
Special effects they'd claim
Or something
Chemical

Dragonflies and Fairies

Yet evils stalks in creeping glade
And cloaks the imps in ire
Whispers fervent incantation
Devilish and dire

She has no wings
To change the world
Lacking mystical spark
Thrown into a humbled house
Shaded by the dark

Daily sands slip and fall
Dunes begin to mountain
Desperate desire
To feed and inspire
Waterfall the world
In sparkling fountains

She considers the door
One last try
To unlock her apathy
And with clipped wings fly

High above the sorry state
Where no one now believes
High above the might and thrive
Where wickedness deceives

Oh to see the light in eyes
The laughing rainbows end
The trees that held in heart
Her home
The branches of befriend

It's all she can do to hold a wand
A twig she stole before
The wizard shut her

Far away
Of strength now unsure

One last look at coffee stains
She rises from her chair
Sings her spell
To break the hell
And wizardry repair

A child in wonder
feels the dust
Sprinkled lovingly
Knows its trust

A woman once in hold of fae
A myth considered wrong
Hath risen high
Once more the sky
Shall sparkle of her song

Fairy breath and toadstools rise
Elves now ringing bells
Of hope and chime
And taller in themselves

The forest of course shall have the last word
Oaken wisdom rise
Reminding us to look beyond
What's hidden from our eyes

If she's the last we must preserve
Her magic nurture and feed
For the world is tired and I believe
Fairy dust is what we need



Pat Severin, a Milwaukee native, is a retired elementary school teacher currently living in Appleton, Wisconsin. Her love of writing poetry goes all the way back to the third grade when her poem, *Worry Wort*, was published in the school newspaper.

She has self-published three poetry collections and a brief biography of her Mother's life. Pat is an active member of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators, participating in a critique group for writers of children's stories in rhyme. She has been a featured writer in the group's Ready Set Write! flash fiction for the seasonal newsletter.

Her Christian poetry is published in both the *Agape Review* and the *Clayjar Review* and she is one of the contributing writers to the book *I Chose You, Imperfectly Perfect Rescue Dogs and their Humans*, scheduled for publication in the fall of 2022 by Wagaway Publishing.

In addition, Pat has been actively creating weekly cards of encouragement for people going through various health struggles.

Lilly Learns the Secret

When Mary was a little girl, she loved all kinds of flowers.

Her daughter, Lilly, shared her love and watched her Mom for hours
as she'd caress each blossom and the special things she'd do
to make sure all the flowers in her garden bloomed on cue.

But Lilly as a toddler found she was enchanted by the fragrance of each blossom, watching all the fairies fly.

As she grew up and watched her Mom, the way she'd tend each bloom,
she noticed that as flowers spread, the garden made more room.

And Lilly wondered why there were no weeds in Mother's garden.

She even thought she'd nicely ask, "Oh, Mom, I, beg your pardon,
but why are there no weeds and, Mom, why don't your flowers die?
Your flower garden's magical, that no one can deny!"

She never asked her, just enjoyed how beautiful they were
and knew that's why her Mom was called, The Garden Whisperer!

But sometimes Lilly asked herself, *Could fairies play a part?*

The fairies love Mom's garden, they've been in it from the start.

Dragonflies and Fairies

Mom loves her fairy friends so much and they all love her, too.

Could there be fairy magic here, could fairies be the clue?

I think the fairies talk to her and Mother understands, but I'm not hearing what they say, could they be making plans?

No weeds, no dying flowers and each flower's a delight? I see Mom's fairy friends each day...could they come back at night?

My Mom's the best of gardeners, there's no one who is better.

To pester her about all this would likely just upset her.

"That gives me an idea, I will wait till Mom's asleep, then tiptoe to Mom's garden and I'll take a night time peek.

I've got to know the answer for myself; I'll see tonight if fairies add some magic to Mom's garden overnight."

While Lilly hid and watched she whispered, "Fairies everywhere, planting seeds and pulling weeds!" All she could do was stare.

She saw them sprinkle what she thought was magic fairy dust, but leaning forward Lilly tripped and everything grew hushed...

Suddenly the fairies stopped...And that's when Lilly knew that they had heard her stumble. "Oh, my, what should I do?"

One fairy wore a tiny crown, she thought, *She must be queen.*

It would be best to talk to her. I know that I've been seen.

"Oh, Queen, won't you forgive me, please? I only came to see
if you fairies add your magic so Mom's garden grows
weed-free.

"I wonder, Queen, is that because my Mom helped
Lorelei?
Mom told me Lori fell and got a splinter in her eye."

"Your Mom nursed Lori back to health, she's not the only
one.
She helped us when a swarm of wasps stung almost
everyone.
She made a kind of medicine that saved us all in hours.
Your Mother has a special gift, her love's not just for
flowers."

"To show our thanks we fairies help your Mother's plot to
grow.
Your Mother knows, now you do, too, but no one else
must know.
Please, Lilly, keep our secret." "I promise, Queen, I do."
Then Lilly turned, "Oh, my...what's this? Another fairy
crew!"

Some fairies sprinkled fairy dust while others planted
seeds.
Some others brought in clouds of rain. They knew each
flower's needs.
Lilly loved to watch them tend her Mother's plot that
night,
enjoying every moment of that, oh, so wondrous sight.

As Lilly's eyes grew heavy and she fell into her bed,

Dragonflies and Fairies

she couldn't keep from thinking of the words the Queen had said.

And as she closed her eyes and in a haze dozed off to sleep,

she found herself repeating this, "Their secret I must keep, their secret I mus...."



Jennifer Elise Wang is a research assistant from Dallas, Texas who spends her time outside of the lab writing poetry, dancing, and learning to skateboard. She has been published in *New Verse News* and *FERAL*, and won the Open Poetry division of the 2019 On

My Own Time Literary and Arts competition. You can find her blogging about action sports at <http://tothepowerofx.wordpress.com/> and on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/jeniversewritings/>.

Enchantment

I know a world of magic. You can come
Along and journey into worlds afar.
Be silent! Hear the distant beating drum
Of noble knights who seek a fallen star?
Go back to when the truth was same as lore,
To lands where there be dragons full of might.
Encounter goblins, sail to foreign shores,
Find dwarves and imps and Fae of Dark and Light,
And rescue elven maids with locks of gold.
Heroic tasks you'll do for Mab the Queen;
Morgana's sorcery you shall behold;
In forests, you will find the Man in Green.
Like unicorns, this world can eyes perceive
If minds possess the power to believe.



Shalom Galve Aranas is a freelance writer published in *Synaeresis*, *The Blue Nib*, *Fourth and Sycamore*, and elsewhere. She is a loving, single mom of Monika and Dylan.

Dragonflies

We live near a waterfall
where we wash stones
to create jewelry.
Dragonflies abound
by the shaft of the white
falls. It is only natural
jewelries are made to
recreate the forest elements.
I believe that dragonflies
are in essence, fairies.
I watched Dragonflies
with Kevin Costner.
in it. Waterfalls follow
the form of dragonflies
and it also means
beautiful daughter.
My brother brought home
a woman from Africa.
She wore a brooch
Of a green dragonfly, I made
on her wedding day, to my brother
I loved her, quietly, allowing
the sounds of the falls
express my love for her.
One night I caught a dragonfly
on her hair. I picked its wings
And sent it into the evening's
soulflight. There was an argument
between her and my brother.
My brother left us for good.
Gently, religiously I loved her
And she responded to my
Own kind of courtship.
A thousand dragonflies

Dragonflies and Fairies

flew about us in the
garden wedding,
A few months later,
She was heavy with child,
a daughter
after the fairies of the waterfalls
who sing
a heralding clarion.



Dibyasree Nandy is a 29 year old resident of India. After completing M.Sc and M.Tech, she began writing during the lock-down period of the pandemic. She has written four books so far, *The Labyrinth of Silent Voices- Epistles of the Mahabharata*, *Stardust- Haiku and Other Poems*, *Studded with Rubies: A Hundred Short Stories*, and *Marchen of Newer Days*.

The Concertina of Fairies

As the scarlet dusk descends, the wings of dragonflies
whirr;
The timid faerie of the forest peers out from beyond the
fir;
A garment of emerald leaves, turquoise hair;
In the obsidian eve, her glowing face ever fair.
The middle of the year; flooded is the moor and the
plain;
Two pixies run about, children of the cloud and rain;
Pendants of sapphire around their necks;
Floating on the nimbus; light-blue flakes.
Under a boulevard, the pretty nymphs dance and sing;
From their palms; red, white and mauve blossoms
spring;
She creates the florets, the sprite emerging from the
earth;
Little buds bloom, their hallowed birth.
The sun and the moon in their hands, sylphs of shadow
and ray;
Brighter than a star, darker than midnight, witnessed in
May;
Together, they glisten on the surface of a lake;
The water-lilies obscure; the reflections shimmer and
shake.
Fays clasp a mirror, yarns in the mind;
Within the looking-glass, many a tale you shall find;
See not yourself, but the misty elf behind;
The concertina of the minstrel will remind.



Kenneth Robbins is the author of six published novels, thirty published plays, and numerous essays, stories, and memoirs on-line, and in peer-reviewed journals. With his wife, Dorothy Dodge Robbins, he has co-edited four literary collections, including *Christmas Stories from Louisiana*. His fiction has received the Toni Morrison Prize and the

Associated Writing Programs Novel Award. His plays have been recognized by receiving the Charles Getchell Award, the Festival of Southern Theatre Award, and the Gabrielle Society Humanitarian Award. His radio plays have been aired over National Public Radio and the BBC Radio 3. He lives in Ruston where he teaches within the Honors Program at Louisiana Tech University as Professor Emeritus Theatre within the College of Liberal Arts.

First Memory

I am two.

I sit under a bush that has dropped its leaves.

My butt is wet.

The ground is soft.

I hold a stick and etch the loose soil into figures and lines
that I do not understand.

I spy a monster.

It hops, head erect, beak beating the ground like a tom-tom.

I do not know where I am, only that I am alone.

I am not ever alone. . never 'til now.

I spy a bug, fleeing the tom-tom beak.

Its skittering is too slow.

I cry, not tears, but I make sounds of need.

The thing hops close and the bug is gone.

It frightens me, this strange monster.

Its belly is red, top part brown, head always erect, eyes
aware of everything about it.

Aware of me.

I need one of the big ones to come for me.

To shoo the monster away.

To wipe my butt.

And feed me.

To take me back where I belong.

Dragonflies and Fairies



Andrew Turgeon currently lives in Northwest Connecticut. He received an Associate's Degree in Computer Science from Niagara County Community College. He had a collection of poetry, *Social Graces*, and a novel, *The Elusive Enigma*, published in 2010. Visit his Facebook fan page, "Rhyme and Reason" for more of his works.

Dragon's Fair Existence

A lonely dragon wanders around in the mist,
asking the heavens, "Why do I exist?"
"If all around the land only fear me,
could there be a soul that can cheer me?"
He drew in a breath, and blew out steam,
that encircled his head and made him gleam.
Out of nowhere appeared a delicate faerie.
Skin of snow white, and lips like cherries.
She sat beside him up high on a boulder.
Smiled up at him with her hand on his shoulder.
"Do not fret Dragon, you are not all alone."
Yet, all he could do is let out a groan.
"Why do you stay when everyone else runs?"
He asked the faerie, who glimmered in the sun.
She smiled and patted him on his scaly arm.
She knew he would never do her any harm.
"I've been sent to show you the true reason,
you've been alone to endure every season."
So they wandered together through the night.
Just Dragon, and Faerie looking forward to light.
They talked as they walked through the forest.
Birds happily chirping an enchanting chorus.
Bright sun rays were shining through the trees,
and a potpourri of aromas softly scenting the breeze.
Various animals scattered away for cover.
The Faerie smiled up to the Dragon above her.
"The others run because they do not know."
She said to the Dragon as his sadness did grow.
"It's only their ignorance, and your appearance
that causes their fear, a lack of experience.
Give it time and show them the real you.
They will come around, and finally deal too.
We all have important lessons to learn,
and if we do, our destinies can turn,

Dragonflies and Fairies

to all we have dreamed, and eternal bliss,
so Dragon, my dear, remember all this.
See, I have wisdom, so I knew you were good,
it takes others longer to make things understood."
The Dragon smiled and took a breath of relief.
A peaceful feeling came with his belief.
His fate would not be to live alone in this world.
He hovered in the air with his wings unfurled.
The Faerie had taken a weight off his chest.
He vowed he would always try his very best,
to show his compassion, but not get depressed,
if compassion in return was not expressed.
For this is the way everyone's story goes.
Is the right path, the one that you chose?
It's never too late to follow a new trail,
and that is the end of this fantasy tale.



Ken Allan Dronsfield is a disabled veteran and prize-winning poet from New Hampshire, now residing in Oklahoma. He has six poetry collections to date. Ken's been nominated four times for the Pushcart Prize and seven times for Best of the Net. He worked with friend Michael Lee Johnson as Co-Editor for three print anthologies, *Moonlight Dreamers in Yellow Haze*, *Dandelion in a Vase of Roses*, and *Warriors With Wings*. He was First Prize Winner for the 2018 and 2019, Realistic Poetry International Nature Poetry Contests. Ken loves writing, thunderstorms, coin collecting, and spending time with his rescue cats Willa and Yumpy.

Night of the Faery

I saw objects of my generation destroyed,
how I mourned the loss of belief and faith.
I can't help but look at the cunning locale.
Down, down into the darkness of an abyss,
watching from afar within a budding crocus.
The structured, above all others is the part.
I look at diverse venues, all their differences.
Venues are drivers, venues are questing, but
where are they - the thick, the fruitful, the thin.
How happy is the context of theatrical echoes.
A forest portal, guiding me through to there,
voices call, sounds and images during reality.
They descended as stars; awash with pixie dust;
comet trails of crimson and diamond sprinkles.
Riding fast on the back of a pink striped raven.
Remember, always commune with dew faeries;
never argue with them while the moon is high
lest you release a power of great negativity.
Twinkling faeries hide in billowy clouds
as they sing hymns to their great winter queen.
Capture the faeries kiss upon your warm cheek;
it's hot and savory, like passions during the spring.
Her breath seems real and tastes sweet in the dark.
Full moon is bright, aloft like a slice of fresh lemon,
creating an epiphany of uneasiness in the heart.
Sit and listen as you breath deep in a soft silky breeze.

Susan Beall Summers of Palacios, Texas has served on the board for Austin International Poetry Festival, hosted *Texas Nafas* poetry show on Channel Austin, and has been a featured poet at events across America. Publishing credits include *Ilya's Honey*, *Di-Verse-City*, *Borderlands*, *Heroine Chic*, *Crab Fat*, *Cattails*, *Frog Pond*, etc. She currently teaches high school and enjoys life on the coast. She has a full-length collection and chapbook.

Beware Trolls

We were a band of wood nymphs
meeting there most days
building trails
carrying stick-swords in our belts
looking for leprechauns.
We avoided that old house
alone one day,
walking too close,
a leprechaun
in a brown coat, dirty jeans
sat in the deep shade of the steps
playing with something in his lap
he called to me
to see what he had
I was curious and moved closer
cautiously
He was larger
than I expected
and wore scuffed brown boots
not the black shoes
with golden buckles
closer
his green eyes twinkled
he chuckled
his teeth were stained
and yellow
it's a snake he said
leaning on my toes
I saw.
he said
if you touch it, it will spit.
in a blink
I vanished
his hand closed
on my dust
I ran on the sound of his laughter
I learned that day that trolls can come out in daylight.

(Previously Published in *The Bitchin' Kitsch September 2015 Issue*
https://issuu.com/chris_talbot/docs/september2015)

Changling

His wide blue eyes
dart about
in fascination
from bluebells
to white daisies
to potted begonia.
He gestures with his left hand
a subtle, twist of the wrist,
a twitch of his index finger,
an open palm.
His parents are bickering
behind us.
Wind chimes move above the clover.
Kneeling close,
I try to see what he sees.
“Are there many here today?”
Startled, he backs up,
shoves both hands in his pockets.
I see it then:
the slight freckling
the upturned nose
a lilt to the tips of his ears
and I know he is one of theirs.
His father scoops him up.
As they walk away,
he smiles at the garden and
waves to me over his father’s back.
I hear giggling and the tinkle of bells.

Dragonflies and Fairies

Paul Gilliland grew up in a small Midwest town in southwest Michigan and after over 30 years of service with the US Army that took him to six continents and nearly 30 countries across the globe he retired and settled in the high desert of Southeast Arizona, just miles from the historic towns of Tombstone and Bisbee. He holds Associate of Applied Science Degrees in Intelligence Studies, Linguistics, and Education; a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Music Theory/Composition and Technical Theater Design; and a Master of Fine Arts Degree in Music Composition. He is an educator; composer of 21st century chamber music; form poet; and member of the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP). He is the Founder and Editor-in-Chief of Southern Arizona Press and currently has two published books of poetry, *Hindsights of 2020* and *The Journey of the Fool: A Poetic Journey in Three Parts*, both available through Amazon. He is currently working on completing his third book of poetry, *Tales from a Southwest Inn*. His love of World War One poetry is currently guiding him in the researching, writing, and editing of the text for the opening sections of Southern Arizona Press' fall anthology, *The Poppy: A Symbol of Remembrance* which will include a huge comprehensive collection of World War One remembrance poetry along with a section dedicated to 21st century poetic works honoring fallen war heroes from living poets across the globe. His poetry appears online in a number of Facebook poetry group as well as published in *Sonnet Sanctuary Anthology Volume 1* (A Romeo Nation), *Open Skies Quarterly Volumes 4, 5, 6*, and *Perceptions* (Shrouded Eye Press), and *From Sunset to Sunrise* (Dark Poetry Society Anthology). He can be followed online at <https://www.facebook.com/PaulGillilandPoetry> <http://www.paulgillilandmusic.com/>

The Fairy Folk on Beltane

As evening falls on Beltane Eve,
the fairy folk appear
From in the grove of Hawthorns
where they live through the year
A May Bush would be covered
with bright ribbons and with shells
And clouties would be offered
at the Beltane holy wells
Now garlands made of primrose,
hawthorn, gorse, and marigold
Are placed around the doorways
and the sills of houses old
The humans build great fires,
the Aos Si so to please
And leave upon their doorstep
food and milk so to appease
The fairies dance in circles
where the mortals dare not roam
While humans build great bonfires
to sanctify their home
These folk of fairy mounds who now
amongst the mortals dwell
Are fallen souls from heaven
yet too good to go to hell
The fairy folk will vanish
as the sun comes into view
And leave a youthful potion
in the Beltane morning dew

(Previous published in his book *The Journey of the Fool: A Poetic Journey in Three Parts* available on Amazon.)

Fireflies and Fairies

The sun sets late on summer nights
Throughout mid-June into July
When fireflies all take to flight
To light the early evening sky

The forest floor's a magic show
With twinkles from the sparkling lights
As fireflies, their tails aglow
Illuminate the forest nights

The fairies from the trees emerge
With bags of moondust in each hand
They spread the dust as lights converge
Creating here a fairyland

So, fireflies and fairies dance
To music on the blowing breeze
Their lights and moondust thus entrance
All men who venture through the trees

(Previous published in his book *The Journey of the Fool: A Poetic Journey in Three Parts* available on Amazon.)

Fairies at Night

The woods are home to fairy folk
Who come out in the evening gloam
From dwellings in the mighty oak
Within the fields of sterile brome

They make their music all night long
While playing games and having fun
To each their favorite fairy song
They dance until the morning sun

(Previous published in his book *The Journey of the Fool: A Poetic Journey in Three Parts* available on Amazon.)

Incantations Under the Snow Moon

On a February night
With the sky clear and cold
The Big Bear Moon rises
Luminescent and bold

The Snow Moon glows bright
And white as bare bones
Making perfect this night
For an esbat of crones

As the Chaste Moon shines down
On the smoldering sage
They recite incantations
From a long-ago age

They chant to the faeries
Living deep in the wood
For a cleansing of spirits
And fortunes turned good

They charge all their crystals
In the light of the moon
And return to their homes
As light will come soon

And once they've departed
And are long out of sight
The faeries appear
To dance in the light

Dragonflies and Fairies

The twinkle of moon dust
That falls all around
Gives a shimmer of diamonds
To the snow on the ground

The faeries retire
Giving fortune anew
And with the breaking of dawn
The moon bids adieu

(Previous published in his book *The Journey of the Fool: A Poetic Journey in Three Parts* available on Amazon.)

The Blessing of a Dryad

Within a tranquil woodland
Where Dryad spirits dwell
A lonely Pagan Priestess
Is casting out a spell

She gently tapped a tree trunk
The Dryad to awake
And then an incantation
She verbally did make

She summoned for the spirits
That in these trees reside
To shield her with protection
And be her spirit guide

She felt the limbs surround her
The tree, it held her close
She asked, oh so politely
Her wishes to engross

The wind blew through the branches
And whispered in her ear
To tell the Pagan Priestess
There's nothing else to fear

She thanked the woodland fairies
For showing her respect
And vowed that every sapling
She'd nurture and protect

From this we learn a lesson:
Protect all plants and trees
And with this simple kindness
The Dryads we will please

Dragonflies and Fairies

For when our lives are saddened
To make them turn out good
Go deep into the forest
And simply, Knock on Wood

(Previous published in his book *The Journey of the Fool: A Poetic Journey in Three Parts* available on Amazon.)

The Elves Chasm

Deep in the southwest reaches
Of the canyon they call Grand
Is a mystic place forgotten
Like a far-off distant land

The cliffs rise to the heavens
And create a set of shelves
Where water flows in stages
In the Chasm of the Elves

From red stone cliffs surrounding
There grow ivies emerald green
And underneath the cascades
Are the caves where elves are seen

In a sapphire pool below
Calming waters gather there
The warm breeze of the summer
Stirs the magic in the air

And when the sign of humans
All depart at end of day
The moonlight on the water
Summons out the elves to play

They sit upon the rock face
In the magic glow of night
They feast and dance and party
To the signs of morning light

As daylight breaks the darkness
They retreat behind the falls
To hide and watch the humans
From their refuge in the walls

Dragonflies and Fairies

For those who reach this canyon
They find within themselves
All of nature's magic
In the Chasm of the Elves

My Wild Irish Dream

In my wild Irish dream
Are leprechauns and fairies,
That live in Ash and Hawthorns
Eating mushrooms and berries.

There are men drinking pints
Of Guinness in the pub
Singing songs of colleen
And the country that they love.

The pipes, the pipes are calling
For Molly Malone
And Oh Danny Boy
Who is far, far from home.

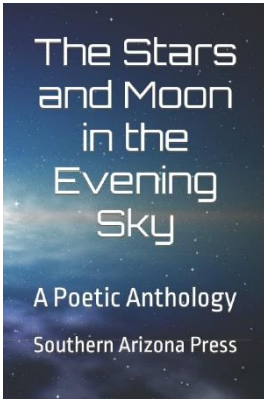
The heather on the moors
Is home to the Golden Plover
A land dotted with castles,
Amidst valleys full of clover.

With my mind on vacation
On the island of green
I take nightly leave
In my wild Irish dream.

(Previous published in his book *The Journey of the Fool: A Poetic Journey in Three Parts* available on Amazon.)

Dragonflies and Fairies

**Previous and
Upcoming
Anthologies from
Southern Arizona
Press:**



The Stars and Moon in the Evening Sky is a collection of 120 poetic works crafted by 65 poets from across the globe inspired by the universe around us.

Available at
<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0B4HJ2FY2>

Ghostly Ghouls and Haunted Happenings –

An anthology of Halloween themed poetry. Coming in Mid-September 2022.

The Poppy: A Symbol of Remembrance –

This book will include the history of the poppy and how it became a symbol of remembrance for the fallen men and women of World War One, a section of remembrance poetry by World War One poets, and a section of new poetry in remembrance of the fallen from all wars written by 21st Century poets. Coming at the end of September 2022.

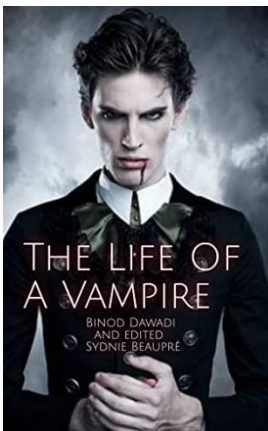
Poets interested in submitting works for upcoming anthologies are asked to check out our Current Submissions page at:
<http://www.southernarizonapress.com/current-submissions/>

**Published works by
our featured
contributors:**



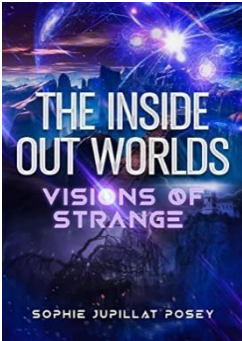
Poetry is magic, weaving tapestries via lilted words, creating a stunning visual of the author's ideas. ***The Power Of Words*** is the debut poetry collection of author Binod Dawadi, edited by bestselling author Sydnie Beaupré.

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0B3L6VLGG>



Binod Dawadi's ***The Life of a Vampire*** follows Binod, who was not a bad vampire, he worked helping people and doing good things. The vampire kingpin heard of this and sicced evil vampires on him, forcing him to do terrible deeds. He refused because he is a true hero. Go on Binod's journey as he tries to find a woman as good as him, and as he tries to combat evil at every cost.

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0B3GNQQFT>



With an undercurrent of magic and subversion in worlds like our own - emerges a fascinating, twisted, and completely captivating collection of ten stories.

A millennia-old vampire desperate to find a way to feed on humans who've exchanged their flesh for robotic bodies. A little girl who can see the embodiment of Death himself. An antisocial loner has prophetic dreams of an apocalyptic flood. A new social media platform that can leech life right out of you.

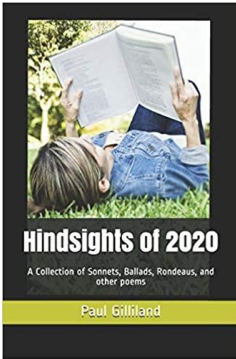
Along with other twisted tales, ***The Inside Out Worlds*** stretches the bounds of our reality.

<https://www.amazon.com/Inside-Out-Worlds-Visions-Strange-ebook/dp/B09S3YWWBS>



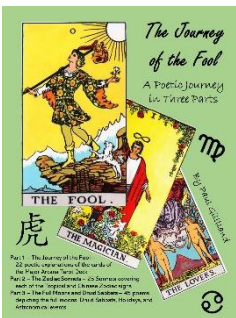
In Sophie Jupillat Posey's debut novel, ***The Four Suitors***, quick-witted and confident, Princess Laetitia of Avaritia always gets what she wants—until her 17th nameday ball. The King and Queen, believing marriage will rein in their daughter's rebellious nature, surprise the Princess with not one, but four suitors: a philosopher, an astronomer, an artist, and a necromancer.

<https://www.amazon.com/Four-Suitors-Sophie-Jupillat-Posey-ebook/dp/B07W62533W>



Paul Gilliland's *Hindsights of 2020* is a collection of 69 poems written during the last five months of 2020. It includes sonnets, ballads, rondeaus, and other poems influenced by patriotism, love of nature and astrology, and reflections on memories and the world we live in.

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B08STHXXGT>



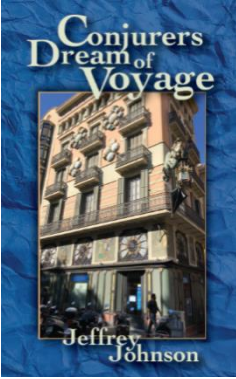
Paul Gilliland's *The Journey of the Fool* is a poetic journey in three parts:

Part 1 – *The Journey of the Fool* - A poetic journey through the 22 cards of the Major Arcana Tarot deck each written in a different form.

Part 2 – *The Zodiac Sonnets* – A collection of 25 Shakespearean sonnets about each of the Tropical and Chinese Zodiac Signs.

Part 3 – *Full Moons and Druid Sabbats* – A collection of 45 poems depicting each of the full moons, Druid Sabbats, holidays, and other astronomical events presented in chronological order.

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B09PMH12BW>



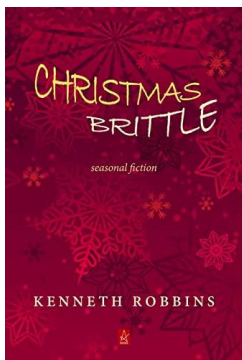
Jeffrey Johnson's collection, ***Conjurers Dream of Voyage***, is an evocative mélange of poetic expression invoking his experiences in the US, Spain, and Japan, and his engagement with poetry since his discovery of the Symbolists.

The book can be purchased at www.topojo.com and will be available on Amazon in the future.



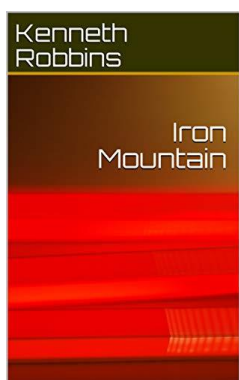
In ***Half the Hurricanes***, award-winning poet Evie Groch takes the reader on a journey into the joys, sorrows, and mysteries of life on this good green earth. Written with wit and wisdom, these poems display her love of language and explore deep themes of travel, immigration, justice, and nature.

<https://www.amazon.com/Half-Hurricanes-Poems-Evie-Groch/dp/1939030102>



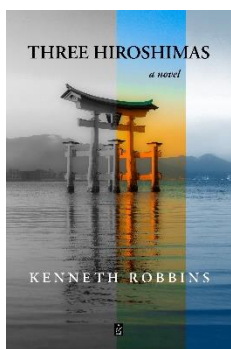
Kenneth Robbins' ***Christmas Brittle*** is an unusual collection of tales comprised of thirteen short stories and two one-act plays that take issue with the American tradition of "The Christmas Season."

<https://www.amazon.com/Christmas-Brittle-Seasonal-Kenneth-Robbins-ebook/dp/B09NT16WG1>

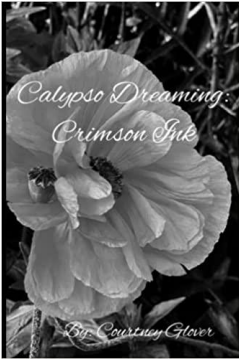


Kenneth Robbins' ***Iron Mountain***. Howell Madison Cobb, a product of the Great Depression, found his way into the world through the Civilian Conservation Corps, the United States Navy, and stumbled toward his destiny in a quest to find meaning in the newly devised Atomic Age. His adventures and misadventures, as well as those of his nuclear family, are captured in this compelling work focused on the American experience.

<https://www.amazon.com/Iron-Mountain-Kenneth-Robbins-ebook/dp/B08PDVLLWG>



In ***Three Hiroshimas***, an impressively researched family saga, Kenneth Robbins weaves into the story of the Japanese-American Yamamoto family memorable details of Hiroshima both before and in the devastating aftermath of World War II. Exploring themes of prejudice and acceptance, conflict and forgiveness, the nature of family, and the search for home, Robbins takes the reader, in the economical form of a novella, on a survivor's journey from loss toward healing. -- Ashley Mace Havird, award-winning novelist and poet.



Welcome one and all to Courtney Glover's ***Calypso Dreaming: Crimson Ink***! You are sure to enjoy the newest addition to the Calypso Dreaming poetry series. This latest edition holds many surprises and shocking revelations. From intensely dark poetry to mythical landscapes of heroic proportions. This book contains all sorts of interesting pieces that vary widely. Nothing is ever quite what it seems!

<https://www.amazon.com/Calypso-Dreaming-Crimson-Courtney-Glover/dp/B09TZBPZ8V>



In ***Woman's Journey***, poet and author Johanne Lee has created a collection of poetry that reflects on the journey of a woman and her arrival at the phenomenon of menopause. Including poems from women across a broad spectrum, this anthology looks at womanhood through amusing, heartfelt, and honest verse. Every woman will recognize a part of themselves within these pages, making this gem of a book something that will resonate with women everywhere.

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Womans-Journey-Johanne-Lee/dp/1915472067>

