

**Body of Knowledge
Poem by Tim Covell**

“We should stop,” she said.
We were in bed, naked,
And I’d already been told
I kissed “pretty good, for a guy,”
But we got up and got dressed,
And, for a while, we read.

“Can I borrow this one?” she said.
“Sure,” I said, and never saw her again.
But at least I was
pretty good, for a guy.
And she has my book,
To remember me by.

**The truth about September 30th
Poem by Darci Freeman**

Savage blood burns beneath the harvest moon,
forced to live within the colonizers’ society
built upon stolen land and
the backs of those they could not break,
red rivers won’t wash clean dirty hands,
and your alligator tears cannot rinse off
your bloodstained palms.

You spew your false apologies,
forgotten ghosts whisper with the wind;
you sweep us under the rug,
but that will not stop our skeletons from
rotting in your backyards.

**Lost & Found
Haiku by Harry Garrison**

Playing hide-and-seek
with inanimate objects
is quite frustrating.

FREE POEMS



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

**Untitled
Poem by Karam Alnomairi**

clinging on that rope
to sound the siren
to simulate the foehn
on that half moon-lit beach
each word a drum
and the fact of the matter
is, we’ll only get sadder
we’ll only have a litany
alas, it’ll give us—what?
some damn excavation
of you strangers in time

**Azalea, Azalea (Golden Light)
Poem by Violet Rosengarten**

Azalea, azalea,
How beautiful you are,
In the fullness of your crowning glory!

Your little flame-like buds,
In curving stripes of sun colours,
Pointing upwards,
Reaching for the sun.

Soon your little flames unfurl,
Forming sunny star-shaped flowers,
Amongst your bright green leaves,
Dazzling the garden.

But belle of the ball,
Your beauty is brief!

As time speeds by,
Your flowers will
Dangle downward,
On their stamens
Like beautiful delicate earrings,

Your flowers will wither and fall.
And when I witness your dying embers,
My heart will be tearful.

But unlike my fading beauty,
Your blazing beauty
Will return next spring
To light up the garden once more!

**The Americans and the Starfish
Poem by Gavin Foster**

Have you seen the starfish in the Halifax harbour—
the way they cling, soft, soot. Some of them are so little,
baby limbs splayed in garbage bag black. I took one
home when I was 12. When I fell in and decided to keep
falling, since I’d already caught every disease known
to man. I saw it, and I kept it. I took it home, and I
put it in a tank, and I learned that I didn’t know how
to keep it alive, and then I took it back to the ships.
Sometimes a tourist jumps, and we laugh that we
shouldn’t stop them, that’ll learn ‘em.
The Americans and the starfish, settled on the rocks.

**Ode to Freyja
Poem by David Pretty**

Goddess born of light and sea.
Unbound by the rule of mere belief.

Offer of mana and primrose words.
Freyja abides and the mortal yearns.

Quest through wood and across the sea.
She grants her gifts so curiously.

She dwells on high, beyond all reach.
Into her realm, he cannot breach.

Magic fires the forge of love.
And still she lingers high above.

Parsec gulf between the pair.
Threatens woe and dark despair.

But the sight of shared, bright gibbous moon.
Sweeps away the solstice gloom.

Turns out, there is no cause to grouse.
They dwell in the same vast cosmic house.

In separate rooms, I will concede.
But all that stands is “do the deed.”

Cross the floor, ascend the stair.
The single weans become a pair.

All it takes is to be bold.
To unite two souls: his young, hers old.

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

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**Send us your poems & lyrics for the next issue:
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Rule 1: No hate. No sexism. No racism.

Rule 2: Maximum 28 lines long, 43 letters wide.
Larger poems only considered as space permits.

Rule 3: Only HRM residents please, to keep Open
Heart Forgery a local community journal.

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

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

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

I would have loved you
Poem by Mikayla Marshall

You could have had me if you wanted me.
So easily.
At full capacity, I would have loved you.
If our time wasn't due,
how easily it could have been me and you.

precocious nee May
Poem by Scott Lynch

everything is only yet
and still

a syncopated thrumming rain
the flotsam carpet of
maple budding
greening
keening
birdsong
frog song
and the imposition
we know as woodchuck
warming
flowering
piquing
and when not frenetic
awed anticipation

for all that's yet
to come

Seeing
Poem by Lorie Morris

Seeing, is believing.
Seeing, is knowing.
Seeing, and doing.
Seeing, and making a change.
Seeing, and helping.
Seeing, and do something!

Should've
Poem by Catherine A. MacKenzie

Should've paid more attention when younger,
when I thought I was fat, when I thought I was old...

Should've taken more time to watch tulips
emerging from the snow, listen to rain on metal roofs,
acknowledge tears on a stranger's face,

Should've eaten more ice cream with the pie,
unwrapped more chocolate bars,
added more nuts to the sundae,

Should've drunk more vanilla shakes,
more sparkling water, more wine from the bottle,

Should've...

Oh so many should have...

Colborne Shore
Poem by Charles Bull

On this November Edmund
Fitzgerald morning feeling
Distant trains rumbling mournful
Horns still lonesome.

Continuous roar of grey
Breakers still breaking
Rolling implacable
Limestone laker loading
Ore taken for new concrete.

Feeling grey limestone
Middle Ordovician shore
Ontario heritage brick
Unbroken Mohawk spirit.

Fossils from long before
The dinosaurs
Strewn here with new
Shells lain down
For a poet yet to be born.

Kindness
Poem by Blynn Teeft

In a time when everything was wrong
One random act of kindness
Changed my life completely

When life seemed to have been falling apart
One random act of kindness
Changed my outlook a little.

Just when I was ready to give up
One random act of kindness
Saved my life

Felt I didn't deserve it
One random act of kindness
Yet eternally grateful

Was willing to go without
One random act of kindness
Made me believe

Inevitably
Poem by Brian Robinson

— without a trace — well no — not quite —
There is one column left — about enough
For a thought to grow — leaning into
The light — or in a clearing (shadows
And all “in All's despite”) — too close to
The aeons for the days to be recorded —
All under the Sun beyond exits and entrances
Weighed between quill and vellum
Sparing the ink from rack and ruin
No more than ands and so ons and
Willed et ceteras — saved from
The evening's light and the last candle
Guttering — well no — not quite — yet right...

Poker Face
Poem by Megan Cooper

Sideward glances and small laughs
I could hold them closer, but I don't
My bleeding hand of hearts

Concert At All Saints
Poem by Ken Vaughan

I slipped into a seat in the north transept
behind the black shirted bases.
Above, the late afternoon light
flooded in through Jesus and the Lamb
and all the saints.

We were bejewelled as we listened,
bathed in holiness and rainbow hues,
the reeded columns stalwart
beneath the vault.

I think of them – Górecki in pallid Polish light,
and Pärt, who “shook music from his sleeves”;
Tavener, so often on the cusp of death.
They must have been familiar with mortality,
with endings –
the spirit's riotous rise,
and then the silence,
the glory of the echo
and the dimming radiance of light.

Antiecclesiastical
Sonnet by Hazel O'Hearn

I must be warm, so be it, set me afire.
To quell the chill that dwells within my bones
I would do much. I would even aspire
to forge my way, to break from what enthrones

me in ecclesiastical aplomb.
I will weather this spiritual drought
and not partake of jaundiced, poisoned balm
of faith without acceptance, reason, doubt,

or freedom, based on unconditional love
for a force we can neither see nor inspect,
that teaches us to get to heaven above
the aspects of ourselves we must resect.

The love you would excise is in our veins.
Your fires have burned out, your hate remains.

Maidan and Kyiv's Icon of Sovereignty
Poem by Burris Devanney

See Venice and die, say those who love beauty.
See Paris at night, say those who love light.
See Maidan and live is the rallying cry
in the hero city of Kyiv,
for those who love sovereignty, freedom and peace.

Maidan had been a marketplace
and the peasants' gateway to Kyiv,
sometimes a swamp, often unkempt,
sometimes forgotten, nearly forsaken,
of humble value at best, hardly a prize,
dating a thousand years back
to Prince Yaroslav the Wise.

Re-imagined and rebuilt in the past twenty years,
Maidan is Kyiv's central square,
a gathering place of resistance,
resilience, rebellion and love
for Ukraine's hard-won autonomy.
A place of open sky, silent drama,
beauty and majesty,
where stands an emblem of sovereignty,
Independence Stela, a white marble-faced pillar,
fifty meters high, topped by the figure of a girl
in gold-checked dress and golden head-wreath,
holding on high a gilded tree-branch of peace.

Springtime Marina
Poem by Bill Jones

Seagulls hysterical in misty dusk –
Single lamp burning in sloop galley
Brine shudders peripatetic against hull

Ketch rudder sulking like a hinge
Mackerel lines plop into murk...
White caps pearling horizon

Weather report murmured from scanner,
Curtained breakfast boiling on Gimbal
Laundry hanging moist from mizzen

fold here

fold here