The Year of the Poet XIII

October 2026

Featured Global Poets

Sajid Hussain * Mohammed Al Gaddafi Masou

Marlon Salem Gruezo * Rayees Ahmad Kumar



The Mayan Civilization

The Poetry Posse 2026

Gail Weston Shazor * Albert Carassco * Hülya N. Yılmaz

Til Kumari Sharma * Caroline Nazareno * Mutawaf Shaheed

Elizabeth Castillo * Teresa E. Gallion * Noreen Snyder

Ashok K. Bhargava * Swapna Behera * Eliza Segiet

Tzemin Ition Tsai * Alicja Maria Kuberska * Khalice Jade

Kimberly Burnham * William S. Peters, Sr.

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The Poetry Posse

inner child press, ltd.
'building bridges of cultural understanding'

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Caroline ‘Ceri’ Nazareno
Ashok K. Bhargava
Alicja Maria Kuberska
Swapna Behera
Albert ‘Infinite’ Carrasco
Kimberly Burnham
Eliza Segiet
William S. Peters, Sr.

~ * ~

In order to maintain each poet’s authentic voice, this volume has not undergone the scrutiny of editing. Please take time to indulge each contributor for their own creativity and aspirations to convey their uniqueness.

hülya n. yılmaz, Ph.D.
Director of Editing ~
Inner Child Press International

General Information

The Year of the Poet XIII
October 2026 Edition

The Poetry Posse

1st Edition : 2026

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Publisher Information

1st Edition : Inner Child Press
intouch@innerchildpress.com
www.innerchildpress.com

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ISBN-13 : 979-8-953642-00-2 (inner child press, ltd.)

$ 12.99

WHAT WOULD



IFE

BE WITHOUT

A LITTLE



OETRY?

Dedication

This Book is dedicated to

Humanity, Peace & Poetry

the Power of the Pen

can effectuate change!

&

The Poetry Posse

past, present & future,

our Patrons and Readers &

the Spirit of our Everlasting Muse



In the darkness of my life
I heard the music
I danced . . .
and the Light appeared
and I dance

Janet P. Caldwell

Table of Contents

Foreword *ix*

Preface *xi*

The Norse *xiii*

The Poetry Posse

Gail Weston Shazor 1

Alicja Maria Kuberska 9

Til Kumari Sharma 15

Tzemin Ition Tsai 21

Noreen Snyder 29

Elizabeth Esguerra Castillo 35

Mutawaf Shaheed 45

hülya n. yılmaz 51

Teresa E. Gallion 55

Ashok K. Bhargava 61

Caroline Nazareno-Gabis 67

Swapna Behera 73

Table of Contents . . . *continued*

Albert Carassco 79

Kimberly Burnham 85

Eliza Segiet 93

Khalice Jade 99

William S. Peters, Sr. 105

October's Featured Poets 115

Sajid Hussain 117

Mohammed Al Gaddafi Masoud 123

Marlon Salem Gruezo 129

Rayees Ahmad Kumar 135

Inner Child Press News 147

Other Anthological Works 195

Foreword

The Mayan Civilization

Mayan civilization was a major indigenous Mesoamerican society. They lived from 2000 BC through the 16th and 17th centuries. They were from Honduras, southern Mexico, Belize, and Guatemala.

They didn't build unified empires; instead, they built independent city-states. Each city-state had its own king. A Maya king was called a k'ul ahau, a sacred ruler, or a halac uinic, a true man. The kings led armies in war, managed taxes and trade, and performed religious rituals.

They were divided into two groups- the commoners and the elite. Commoners comprised over 90% of the population.

They made major discoveries such as calendars, the concept of zero, and the written language.

Their writing system is one of the outstanding achievements of the pre-Columbian inhabitants of the Americas.

Bishop Diego de Landa ordered the Mayan books or codices to be destroyed because he said the books were evil. The Catholic Church destroyed the books

whenever they found them. The Mayan people were grieving and distraught. Only four books or codices survived: the “Madrid Codex,” the “ Dresden Codex,” the “Paris Codex,” and the “Maya Codex of Mexico.”

A lot of Mayan poets remain anonymous. They wrote about love, philosophy, ancient rituals, spiritual values, and the natural world. They wrote using poetic couplets and repeating phrases.
The Mayan people still exist today.

Noreen Snyder
Author, Poet, Radio Talk Show Host

Preface

We, **Inner Child Press International, The Year of the Poet** and **The Poetry Posse** welcome you.

We are now nearing the end of our 13th year of monthly publications for **The Year of the Poet**, we still continue to be excited.

This year of 2026, our themes have been about various civilizations. As we month by month poetically explore many current and past cultures, I hope you will join us.

For those of you who are not familiar with our story, back in 2013, a few of us poets got together with the simple intention of producing a book a month. That was our challenge. Since that time the enterprise has blossomed and brought forth a fruit that seems to keep on growing as evidenced as we enter 2026.

Our purpose is simple. Through our lyrical words and verse, we not only wish to share our poetic works, but we also have the poetic naiveté to believe that we can assist in the growth of consciousness of the things that have an effect our collective humanity. Therefore, we welcome your readership. For more about what we are attempting to accomplish, have a look at our Publishing Web Site . . . www.innerchildpress.com. If you would like to

know a bit more about this particular endeavor please stop by for a visit at :
www.innerchildpress.com/the-year-of-the-poet

Over the years, Inner Child Press has been socially active to bring awareness and catalog through literature the things that have an impact upon our world and its inhabitants. We have solicited, produced, underwritten and published quite a few volumes to that end. For more insight you may wish to visit : www.innerchildpress.com/the-anthology-market. If you are a writer, poet, or activist, you would be advised to keep a eye out for upcoming volumes should you desire to participate. All readers are welcomed as well. Note, that there is a myriad of published volumes that are available as a FREE PDF download as well as available for purchase at affordable prices.

We at this time extend to you our well wishes for your own personal journey and hope that you consider including us as a travel companion.

Bless Up

Bill

William S. Peters, Sr.

Publisher
Inner Child Press International
www.innerchildpress.com

The Mayan Civilization



This month at the *Year of the Poet* collective we look at Mayan culture.

The closest thing to a characteristic Mayan poetic structure is the parallel or semantic couplet: an idea is stated and then echoed, expanded, contrasted, or transformed in the next line. Repetition, paired images, sound play, and connections among landscape, ancestors, animals, maize, rain, flowers,

divinity, and the directions of the cosmos are especially important.

Ah Bam, a rare early Mayan poet, whose name has survived, is associated with Cantares de Dzitbalché, a collection preserved in an eighteenth-century manuscript. Some pieces describe ancient ceremonies, while others concern love, nature, grief, spirituality, and human experience.

He encourages us to ponder what themes show up in our own poetry, our thoughts and our lives in "The Mourning Song of the Poor Motherless Orphan," a lament contrasting the orphan's loneliness with the natural and social world around them.

Another piece written by anonymous K'iche' Maya poet-singers, the Popol Wuj is usually described as sacred narrative or mythology, but structurally much of it is poetry. In the opening Creation passage, everything is quiet and still before creation, and the creation of human beings from maize, where the successful human body is formed from the staple crop at the center of Maya life.

This brings two questions to mind. In the stillness before our day starts what are we thinking about, planning, hoping for? Take a moment each day to contemplate. What is our day formed from? Who will we be in that day?

A more modern poet of Mayan ancestry, Humberto Ak'abal (1952–2019) wrote in the K'iche' Maya language in Guatemala. His poems frequently involve birds, mountains, rain, trees, grandparents, memory, poverty and the sounds of the natural world.

In *Howl*, Ak'abal says, "A coyote drinks: his sad howl is all water, water, water." What do you imagine with these words? Do you see the coyote, the water, the sound? What does a sad howl sound like? What does water sound like?

Another poet, Briceida Cuevas Cob, from Campeche, Mexico writes in Yucatec Maya and translates her work into Spanish. The Mexican National Institute of Indigenous Peoples describes her process as composing first in Maya and then translating into Spanish while the emotional and sonic qualities of the original remain fresh. Her writing frequently uses deceptively simple everyday images of clothing, animals, darkness, home and family to approach much larger emotional subjects. In *Lady* Cob writes, "To look at you one wouldn't guess you suffer, wouldn't know that at the foot of your washtub you hoard part of your story."

Consider, if a stranger looked at you, what would they guess? What wouldn't they see?

A third modern poet, Pedro Uc Be is a contemporary Maya-language poet whose work is deeply connected with Maya landscape, spirituality, land, agriculture and cultural continuity. Uc Be learned to love the earth in the milpa, the traditional Mesoamerican system of maize cultivation that integrates corn, beans, squash, a plethora of native plants and the rhythms of the rain and sun. He explains, “I was born in the milpa. That contact with the earth, with the water, with the herbs, with the jungle … made me sensitive.” He encourages us each to value the land and community and ask ourselves, “What is it that makes me sensitive?”

Kimberly Burnham

October 1, 2026
Portland, OR / Spokane, WA

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Poets . . .
sowing seeds in the
Conscious Garden of Life,
that those who have yet to come
may enjoy the Flowers.



Poets, Writers . . . know that we are the enchanting magicians that nourishes the seeds of dreams and thoughts . . . it is our words that entice the hearts and minds of others to believe there is something grand about the possibilities that life has to offer and our words tease it forth into action . . . for you are the Poet, the Writer to whom the Gift of Words has been entrusted . . .

~ wsp

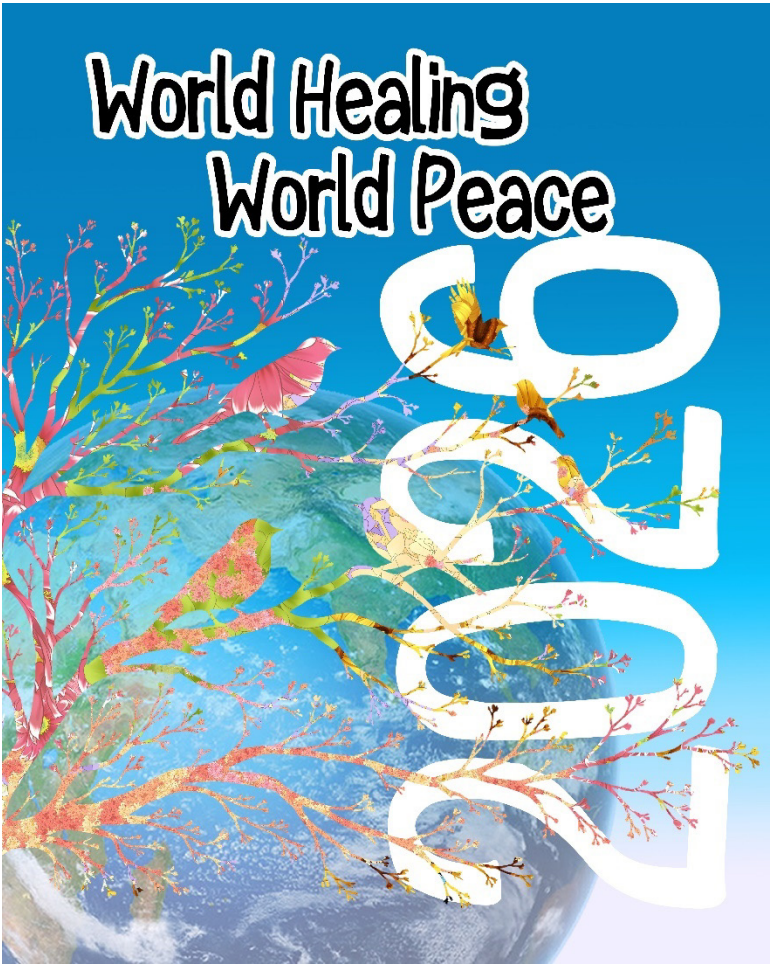




Poetry succeeds where instruction fails.

~ wsp

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worldhealingworldpeace@gmail.com

Gail Weston Shazor



Gail Weston Shazor is a lover of words. She is fond of the arcane, unusual and the not yet words.

Coining words at an early age, there was often a bit of trouble with teachers, but she always had her mother and aunt to back up her choices in expression. Born in Mississippi, she spent her early years with her grandparents. Each of the four left very careful influences on her pre-schooling. She learned in turn how women worked in and out of the home and how men worked in and out of the home to support the family. She learned that a lack of proper schooling was not the only way to learn and understanding life was a great teacher. As in most rural families of color, women had a greater chance of formal learning. Both of Gail's grandmothers read out loud to the family whether it was the bible or the newspapers and important documents to their spouses.

Gail Weston Shazor has authored (so far) Notes from the Blue Roof, A Overstanding of an Imperfect Love, HeartSongs and Lies My Grandfather's Told Me. The number of anthologies is too many to list with the premier accomplishment of one of the contributors to The Year of The Poet. Gail will always lend her ink to community projects and will purchase the books of fellow poets in the Inner Child Press family.

Mayan

We did not disappear
We did not fade away
We simply went home
Our time here was fruitful
Agriculture, Gold and Language
Living pure and true
In the jungle
It is always the same
With original people
Peacefully we live until
Someone else wants what we have
What they don't understand
Is that the stuff
Won't make them rich
Or elevated
Or enlightened
You can't assimilate a culture
But you can steal the shine
So like others before us
We chose to not fight
The usurpers
But to establish new
Places and people
That will welcome
What we can offer.

Summertime

I lift my fingers one by one
And watch the light prism
In the left behind spaces
Between swollen knuckles
The new bee sting makes
My throat itch
But I ignore the constant
Movement of the swallowing
So often accompanied
By an uneasy swelling...
But back to the light...
Kaleidoscopicly I watch
The greys and browns of storms
Mix with the red hot embers of pain
And I wonder how four small letters
Can expand to this
The muscles no longer
Are mine to command
Memories fade at the birthing
Each time I try to recall
What it was like the first time
I find that a fist is not possible
For that would leave
Too many open spaces uncovered
So I hold my pain, my life,
My love together
In open surrender
Under the palms of my hand
I once read about a man
Who took shrapnel
To his gut
He held his intestine inside

By splaying his hands
Across his middle
I wonder if he too
Could see his grace slipping
Through all his cracks

Untitled

I lost the title in my thoughts
So jumbled together as they were
Fleeting around the edges
Of memories, old, new and coming
Gone are the days
That we separated each other
By skin color
And when my generation dies
You will have to find colorism in a book
There is no forbidden love
No love that we have to be jailed for possessing
I can remember being bi-colored
High Yellow
Mullato
Mixed Race
And I only think on bears now
Would I fear a polar bear more than a brown bear?
Are my white relatives to be feared
More than my black or
My Indian tribe,
I don't think so
I wonder if sisters on each side
Of the Berlin Wall would genetically change
To enemies
Or did the Tutsis gain education because
They favored the Belgians more in complexion
Than the Hutus
All sharing a common language
For thousands of years with the TWA people
Why is a house slave better
Then a yard slave
Or a field slave

800,000 rumors on African soil
1 little girl on Mississippi soil
Who has never seen a bear free
Taught that life labeled dangerous
Had to be caged
And still clinging to the thought
Of Native ancestors that all life
Is cherished life
I drink water now
And ponder on the life that calls to me
From the margins
Jumbled together as they are
Whispering to be heard
This started as a Happy Mother's day piece
And so it goes
All women are wisdom bearers
And they exist to share the knowledge
Whether actively birthing or not
As they teach the children
All children
To see life
Question life
And protect life
So bears can continue to exist
Free
So we can continue to exist
Without labels
Free

Alicja
Maria
Kuberska



Alicja Maria Kuberska – awarded Polish poetess, novelist, journalist, editor.

She is a member of the Polish Writers Associations in Warsaw, Poland and IWA Bogdani, Albania. She is also a member of directors' board of Soflay Literature Foundation, Our Poetry Archive (India) and Cultural Ambassador for Poland (Inner Child Press, USA)

Her poems have been published in numerous anthologies and magazines in : Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary,Ukraina, Belgium, Bulgaria, Albania, Spain, the UK, Italy, the USA, Canada, the UK, Argentina, Chile, Peru, Israel, Turkey, India, Uzbekistan, South Korea, Taiwan, China, Australia, South Africa, Zambia, Nigeria

She received two medals - the Nosside UNESCO Competition in Italy (2015) and European Academy of Science Arts and Letters in France (2017). Ahe also received a reward of international literary competition in Italy „ Tra le parole e 'elfinito" (2018). She was announced a poet of the 2017 year by Soflay Literature Foundation (2018).She also received : Bolesław Prus Prize Poland (2019), Culture Animator Poland (2019) and first prize Premio Internazionale di Poesia Poseidonia- Paestrum Italy (2019).

The Daisy of Książ

Upon solid rock
a castle rises,
a witness
to turbulent times.
Its palace chambers
once welcomed many celebrated names,
inscribed
upon the pages of history.
Their names
sound indifferent today,
but Daisy von Pless
still moves the heart.
I wander through the park
following in the Duchess's footsteps,
immersing myself
in blooming rhododendrons.
People remember
the beautiful lady from Albion,
lonely
and dancing upon a volcano.
Kindness is difficult —
it takes courage
to leave wealth and glitter behind
for the sake of principles.

In Amber

I like to sink into silence,
like an insect in amber,
and hang suspended in time
between waking and dreaming.
Then the hours lose their meaning,
though the clock keeps striking
a steady beat.

For a moment, I am alone
with the rhythm of seconds
and all that remains silent within me.

Kukulkan

At Chichén Itzá,
when day
meets the night,
a feathered serpent
descends from the sky,
sliding down
the temple steps.
The god's shadow
moves in silence
over the ancient stones,
as though counting
the days of the year.
Lord of wind,
water, earth and fire —
feathers and serpent's flesh,
sky and earth
joined in a single form.
He came —
a man carrying
the power of a god,
and with him
the rain fell upon the earth
like a blessing.
The fields turned green.

Til
Kumari
Sharma



Til Kumari Sharma is internationally awarded poet, essayist, story writer, reviewer, translator and so on. She has got numerous awards through writing around the world. She is a best-seller amazon no 1 poet. She is a featured- poet around the world. She is a poet in world record book " Hyper poem". She has got World Creative Hero Award from LOANI. Anyway she is world famous author who was born in Paiyun 7- Hile, Parbat, West Nepal. Now she is in Kirtipur Kathmandu. Her portrait by Ukeme Udo is famous.

Unseen Pain

Pain is my wealth.
Tension is my building of the arts.
To console each minute, art is my survival.
The life is in the ringtone of death.
The love was the violence in the team of battlefield.
The tears are unseen to furnish the icy pattern.
The tension is my formation of tragic building.
I am poetess made from ashes.
The grave was earlier made.
The art wins against grave.
My art is my remaining fossil.
Nothing there as seed of me due to deceptive love.
I was defeated soul in love game.
So, furnishing artistic building is in the universe.
The unseen as my pain of heart,
Joked by so-called own people.
Mindless mad they were.
Talkative were they.
Losing the humanity in bone,
How to say same one vein to be in me?
I am different than they.
The inhuman cruelty of them brings flooding of tears and so on.

Vampire of Love

Unendurable would be the showy life of vampire,
To fetch true love in Nepali heart is like dead body in flooding of 2026.
The tearful love of vampire makes us sick.
To live or survive morally is challenge.
The love of vampire is fake.
True love does not see the height and showy fame.
The love without inner desire is fake.
Not to marry is better in fake love.
When someone sees age, height, caste and wealth that is the love of vampire.
The love is nothing good here.
Dramatic love provides only tears and fear.
No trust is planted there in false love.
Torture is planted in love of vampire and politics.
Love is fake and it's without hope.
Life seems in flooding only in false love of vampire.
The only fake love keeps idealism to give love in other's hand to bring happiness.
Love is there to show false who visits friends and relatives.
Love is illness when appear ant eye views bodily presence.

Human Civilization

Civilization begins with birth and new invention.
The human civilization can be seen in varieties of ways.
Some civilizations are developing today too.
Some civilizations are drowned.
The civilizations drown from history are Mayans civilizations.
Some fossils are enliven.
It is recognized as Mesoamerican.
Mayan civilization is older.
It has included higher writing, Pyramids of stones, calendar and so on.
Mayans were native people from Southern Mexico and Centre of America.
It was early modern civilization and it was agricultural too.
Seems to began from 2000 BCE with classic style,
It rose from third to tenth century CE too.

Tzemin
Ition
Tsai



Dr. Tzemin Ition Tsai comes from the Republic of China(Taiwan). In addition to being a professor of literature at a university, he is more committed to writing poems, novels, and proses. He is also an editor of “Reading, Writing and Teaching” academic text, an International editor of "Contemporary dialogues" literary periodical in Macedonia, and Vice-Chairman of the International Jury of the SAHITTO INTERNATIONAL AWARD in Bangladesh, and a columnist for “Chinese Language Monthly” in Taiwan.

In a wide range of literary creations, he is particularly fond of interesting stories or novels, and writing articles or poems about the feelings of nature and human beings. He has won many national literary awards. His literary works have been anthologized and published in books, journals, and newspapers in more than 55 countries and have been translated into more than 24 languages.

The Gods Made People from Maize; Grandmother Makes Breakfast

The Gods Made People from Maize; Grandmother Makes Breakfast
Morning mist in Guatemala searches the mountainside for its feet.
Grandmother has ground the maize awake; the millstone softly turns the light.
Our ancestors were made of white maize and yellow maize.
No wonder hunger makes us come undone.
Her shoulders shake with laughter; the tortilla in her hands nearly loses its centre.
A lick of flame brings the sun’s blush a little early.
Father bends over the field, pressing seeds into last night’s rain.
Bean vines climb; squash leaves shelter the soil from the fierce sun.
I once thought this field too small for the person I would become elsewhere.
Now I stand at its edge, my soles worn thin by the city.
Father asks nothing, only hands me the bag of seed.
Those few light grains in my palm slowly steady my feet.
All afternoon the rain holds back; leaves curl their thirsty tongues.
Grandmother pours out the last half-bowl of maize, sorting food from seed.
I ask why, when we are hungry, we must set aside tomorrow.
Her fingers pause, then put the largest kernel back into the bag.
Outside, my little sister chases chickens in my old shoes.
They are so large, they hold a few more years of road for her.

At dusk, a tortilla puffs its little chest on the hot clay griddle.
Grandmother presses it; it sighs like someone done pretending to be strong.
I take it, passing it from palm to palm against the heat.
A neighbour's child appears in the doorway, his eyes resting on the bread.
I tear mine in two, and half the setting sun passes into his hands.
Grandmother bends to feed the fire; for the first time, I feel myself taking shape.

Where No Address Can Reach

Since leaving home, I have carried dinner to so many people,
from brightly lit street corners to doors upstairs that will not open.
Some thank me through the door; some tell me to hurry.
Rain runs down my helmet and into my collar.
I hold the food bag close, as though guarding the last embers of home.
Mother always calls just before dinner.
She asks if I have eaten. I tell her I am eating now.
In truth, I am crouching beneath an arcade, waiting for the rain to let me through.
Reassured, she talks of neighbours, of the price of fish this year.
I dare not speak, afraid she will hear the rain along the whole street.
One evening, an old woman opens her door but leaves the dinner in my hands.
First she offers me a towel. “Dry yourself. You’re still dripping.”
There is no trace of home in her accent, yet her words bring it before me.
I bow my head and take a long time drying my face,
so long she thinks the rain outside has yet to stop.
At month’s end, I send money home and write, “All is well.”
I erase it, write it once again, then press confirm.
Mother writes back, “That’s enough. Keep some for yourself.”
At the cash machine, I look at the drenched figure in the glass
and draw my jacket a little closer, as though someone cared for me.

My Father's Bench

After Father died, evening came to the mouth of the lane without his bench.
He used to sit there, keeping a greeting for everyone coming home from work.
Whether they carried groceries or nothing, he welcomed them the same.
I thought him meddlesome, worrying even about other people's dinners.
Now, returning from work, I walk the whole lane in silence.
While clearing the house, I carry the bench outside, meaning to have it taken away with the old newspapers.
Just then, a young delivery driver pulls up downstairs and asks to sit a moment; he has not rested all day.
I tell him to sit, then turn to pour him a glass of water.
He drinks slowly and tells me an old man once lived in this lane.
In summer, he would call him in to fill his water bottle before he left.
Later, the door was often shut; he never liked to knock.
Looking at the dried mud along his shoes, I begin to understand
how much of my father's life had happened without me there.
That day, I give away the newspapers and keep the bench.
At dusk, I wipe it clean and set it where Father used to sit.
Someone passing thinks I must be waiting for someone.
"No," I say. "Come and sit awhile. It's hot today."
Then I move a little to one side, just as Father used to do.

Noreen
Snyder



Noreen Ann Snyder has been writing since she was a teenager. She writes a variety of different topics. Her favorite poetic forms are Sonnets, Blitz, Haiku, Tanka, and Free Verse. She always learning different poetic forms.

Noreen Ann Snyder is a poet, writer, and an author of five books, (four books are co-authored with her late husband, Garry A. Snyder.) Her poetry is in several Inner Child Press Anthologies. She is the founder ofThe Poetry Club on Facebook.

Mayan Codex

They worked hard to create the pages of Mayan codices.
The scribes and the artists used brushes to paint
hieroglyphs, numbers, and deities.
Here come the Catholics to destroy their beautiful works
whenever they saw the Codex
through the direct order of Bishop Diego de Landa
because he said it was evil.
No matter who you are,
no one should have the authority
To destroy the works of others
Because of what they believe.

Self-Worth

I get so busy helping others,
doing this, doing that,
pleasing others
but forget about me
taking care of me
I am worthy of me.
Sometimes I forget.
Sit and relax,
drink a cup of coffee
while praying to God
or listening to music,
doing my exercises,
and do my 15-minute walk.
It's so easy to forget
because we're too busy
helping others.
Let's not forget about you or me.
I am worthy. You are worthy.
I am important. You are important.
I love me. You love you.

Hand-Made Gift (Haiku)

Creating a gift

that you made with your own hands

is worth more than gold.

Elizabeth
E.
Castillo



Elizabeth Esguerra Castillo is a multi-awarded and an Internationally-Published Contemporary Author/Poet and a Professional Writer / Creative Writer / Feature Writer / Journalist / Travel Writer from the Philippines. She has 2 published books, "Seasons of Emotions" (UK) and "Inner Reflections of the Muse", (USA). Elizabeth is also a co-author to more than 60 international anthologies in the USA, Canada, UK, Romania, India. She is a Contributing Editor of Inner Child Magazine, USA and an Advisory Board Member of Reflection Magazine, an international literary magazine. She is a member of the American Authors Association (AAA) and PEN International.

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Facebook Fan Page

https://free.facebook.com/ElizabethEsguerraCastillo

Google Plus

https://plus.google.com/u/0/+ElizabethCastillo

The Jaguar Remembers

Through the shadowed forest
walks the jaguar,
silent keeper of ancient dreams.

Its eyes carry the moon,
its footsteps awaken
the sleeping earth.

Somewhere beneath the roots,
the old temples breathe.

The stones remember
the hands that shaped them,
the prayers that rose
toward the heavens,
the offerings made
to gods unseen.

And the jaguar remembers.

It remembers when the night
was filled with sacred fire,
when the stars were read
like verses upon the darkness,
when humans listened
before they spoke.

We have built taller towers
and traveled farther than our ancestors,
yet sometimes
we have forgotten
how to listen to the earth.

The jaguar does not forget.

It moves beneath the ancient canopy
as though carrying

the soul of a civilization
upon its back.

And when it disappears
into the darkness,
I wonder—

did it leave,

or did it simply return
to the place
where all ancient things
still live?

Whispers of the Maya

Beneath the emerald breath of the jungle,
where vines embrace forgotten stones,
an ancient voice still lingers—
soft as moonlight,
deep as the roots of ceiba trees.

The temples rise like prayers
carved into the bones of the earth,
their silent stairways
ascending toward a sky
that remembers every name.

I close my eyes
and hear the Maya speak—
not in words,
but in the language of stars,
in the rhythm of rain,
in the heartbeat of the sacred ground.

They knew
that time was not a straight road
but a circle returning to itself,
carrying yesterday
into the arms of tomorrow.

And perhaps
the ruins are not ruins at all.

Perhaps they are memories
waiting for us
to become quiet enough
to hear them.

For civilizations may disappear,
but wisdom does not die.

It becomes wind,
becomes stone,
becomes blood,
becomes poetry—
and waits.

When the Calendar Turns

There comes a moment
when the old calendar turns
and the universe whispers—

begin again.

The Maya understood
that endings
are never truly endings.

The sun descends
only to return.

The seed disappears
only to become a tree.

The river bends
only to find
another path toward the sea.

So why should the human heart
fear the closing of a door?

I imagine ancient hands
tracing the movement of stars,
searching the heavens
for the secret language of becoming.

Perhaps they knew
what we often forget:

we are not separate
from the cosmos.

We are fragments of starlight
learning how to remember
where we came from.

And when the calendar turns,
let it turn.

Let yesterday become wisdom,
let sorrow become soil,
let dreams become wings.

For somewhere beyond time,
the ancient sky is still watching—

and the universe
has never stopped
beginning.

Mutawaf Shaheed



C. E. Shy has been writing since the seventh grade. He continued writing through high school, until he became more involved in sports. After his graduation, he worked at the White Motors Company where he wrote for the company's newspaper. He started a column called: "The Poet's Corner." That was his first published work.

www.innerchildpress.com/c-e-shy.php

Mayan

Millennia brings into focus what
the people had say about their
lives and loves of the everyday.
Some of what they did helped
pave the way.

Describing the rivers winding paths.
The event that didn't last. Talking
about the futures that was forecast.

The medicines that they took. All
wrapped up in some kind of books.
About the rains that came and went.

The sacrifices that were made.
The women weaved baskets in the
shade, how the warriors fought won
and lost.

On how the children played. At the
peak of their classic stage, time was
doing what it usually does, it comes
time for things to fade.

Some may have seen the weather start
to change. Maybe the world will remem-
ber the contributions that they made.
Learning things from their past may help
us last.

Picked Up

The smile on your face says you are pleased
with me, but your eyes say blasé.

Since you returned there has been an
increase in wrong numbers from 33-1.

I never saw your bags unpacked.
I knew you were in London, not Paris.

You told me the conference went well and the flowers
that came yesterday were sent from your friends.

I saw a chocolate box that read Rue St. Germaine.
When I lived in Paris from that place

I bought candy and champagne.
I found the note you left on the bed.

It said, you would be right back; you went to get a
pack of cigarettes.

Language Arts

I interpret silent language
and eye contact.
I specialize in innuendos
and beating brows
back. Hearing the tongue
in cheeks,

I've been doing that for a long time.
Hubris is over rated. They refuse to
listen with or without hearing aids.
I listened to the teachers and
the preachers talks about things
they don't even believe.

I know what the
TV is saying and it ain't even on.
I get demeaning in the movies, that
ain't really me. I catch the lies in the
sky before they leave the satellites.
I knew it wasn't going to work, before
they tried to work it.

I explain tongue twisters and the
seven sisters before they tell you what
it means. I'll tell what the scheme is
while it's still in their dreams. I do all
that from the street perspective.
Language arts, don't you just love it?

hülya
n.
yılmaz



Liberal Arts Professor Emerita, hülya n. yılmaz [sic] is Co-Chair and Director of Editing Services at Inner Child Press International, a published author, ghostwriter, and translator (EN, DE, and TU; in any direction). Her literary contributions appeared in a large number of national and international anthologies.

hülya writes creatively to attain and nourish a comprehensive awareness for and development of our humanity.

hülya n. yılmaz, a traveler on the journey called “life” . . .

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The Mayans, I

The Spanish conquest . . .
Stopped their civilization . . .
Their legend survived

The Mayans, II

Not a unified
Empire but city-states
Were their legacy

The Mayans, III

Pre-Columbian
Mesoamerica saw
A writing system

Teresa
E.
Gallion



Teresa E. Gallion is a seeker on a journey to work on unfolding spiritually in this present lifetime. Writing is a spiritual exercise for Teresa. Her passions are traveling the world and hiking the mountain and desert landscapes of the western United States. Her journeys into nature are nurtured by the Sufi poets Rumi and Hafiz. The land is sacred ground and her spiritual temple where she goes for quiet reflection and contemplation. She has published five books: Walking Sacred Ground, Contemplation in the High Desert, Chasing Light, a finalist in the 2013 New Mexico/Arizona Book Awards, Scent of Love, a finalist in the 2021 New Mexico/Arizona Book Awards and Come Egypt in 2024. She has two CDs, *On the Wings of the Wind* and *Poems from Chasing Light*. Her work has appeared in numerous journals and anthologies.

Website: http://teresagallion.yolasite.com/

Mayan Jungle

In the lush green jungle
light streams awake to morning.
Pyramids whisper the history
of the ancestors.

The people work the open land
for the promise of tomorrow's meal.
Through drought and rain
each corn stalk struggles to survive.

The people hold a covenant
with the divine through DNA
and honor earth and sky
in the dark, ignited by stars.

Sacred Lineage

We have a lineage
I cannot speak about.
Your ears cannot unfold the truth.

My humble prayer
is your beautiful inner child
will hold that lineage sacred
and carry it in your love bucket.

May you wake up in the sunrise
of our next plane of existence
with a smile on your face.

I will be waiting at the gate
with a bouquet of love
to celebrate your arrival.

It is Coming

Cause I know it's coming.
That last day to rock the boat
on the physical plane.

This morning the clouds
told me the truth
I was ready to hear.

I bend in meditation.
A radiant smile embraces my face.
There' a circle of light

protecting my space.
I can feel the presence.
Cause I know it's coming.

Yes, love is coming.
It is coming soon.
It is coming to take me home.

Ashok K. Bhargava



Ashok Bhargava is a poet, writer, inspirational speaker and a literary consultant. He has attended poetry conferences in Italy, Turkey, India and Philippines. His latest book "Riding the Tide" about his battle with cancer has been translated and published in Arabic, Hindi, Telugu and Bengali languages. He is a contributing writer to several anthologies worldwide including World Poetry Almanac 2014. He has been published in numerous print and online magazines.

Ashok has won many accolades including Poet Ambassador to Japan, Kalidasa International award, World Poetry Lifetime Achievement award, Writers Beyond Borders Peace award and Tapsilog Leadership award for his community involvement. He is founder of Writers International Network Canada Society to discover, nourish, recognize and celebrate writers, poets and artists and to assist them to network with the community at large. He is the author of eight books of poetry and one anthology. He is Artist-in-Residence at Moberly Arts & Cultural Centre and also co-edits the literary section of The Link Newspaper.

Mayan

I keep asking,
Where is the Mayan spirit today?
Where did it go,
and what survived the passage of time?

There must be more than
ancient rituals hidden beneath the forest canopy,
more than forgotten stones and silent ruins
waiting to reveal their secrets.

I feel it in the sun's relentless heat,
in the layers of dried earth,
in buried cities once alive—

where voices, dreams, and traditions
still move beneath the dust,
like an ancient heartbeat
the earth has never forgotten.

Forgotten Song

You sing
what I had forgotten—

a line reawakening
without asking,
reminding
the way forward
lies not in distance
but in love.

As in that morning hour
when the rising sun
meets the setting moon—
rare,
beautiful,
fleeting.

Leaning
into one another's light,
becoming it.

Unseen Song

A hidden voice—
a seed stirring
beneath the earth,
the song taking root
in the dark,
not asking,
only opening.
And the path ahead—
not miles,
but a greening,
as if tomorrow
already breathing
in the heart.

As in that hour
before morning knows itself,
when the last star
lingers in the blue—
held,
uncertain,
about to vanish.

Leaning
into that fragile light,
opening toward the horizon.

Caroline
'Ceri Naz'
Nazareno
Gabis



Caroline 'Ceri Naz' Nazareno-Gabis, author of Velvet Passions of Calibrated Quarks, World Poetry Canada International Director to Philippines is a multi-awarded poet, editor, journalist, educator, peace and women's advocate. She believes that learning other's language and culture is a doorway to wisdom.

Among her poetic belts include **Gabrielle Galloni Memorial Panorama International Youth Award** 2022, Panorama Youth Literary Awards 2020, 7th Prize Winner in the 19th, 20th and 21st Italian Award of Literary Festival; Writers International Network-Canada ''Amazing Poet 2015'', The Frang Bardhi Literary Prize 2014 (Albania), Poet Journalist Award 2014 (Tuzla, Istanbul, Turkey) and World Poetry Empowered Poet 2013 (Vancouver, Canada). She's a featured member of Association of Women's Rights and Development (AWID), The Poetry Posse, Galaktika Poetike, Asia Pacific Writers and Translators (APWT), Axlepino and Anacbanua. Her poetry and children's stories have been featured in different anthologies and magazines worldwide.

Links to her works:

http://panitikan.ph/2018/03/30/caroline-nazareno-gabis/

https://apwriters.org/author/ceri_naz/

http://www.aveviajera.org/nacionesunidasdelasletras/id1181.html

Cycles in the Sky

Astronomy becomes the glyphs of windows,
The Mayan gaze lifts to numbers of wandering,
Star patterns and the hailed Venus,
Like special carvings in the sky,
Pulsating arcs of cosmos.

The cycle of baktun, vast and precise,
Science verses on gravity, eclipse, and solstice,
Rainfall, moonlight and the universe,
sung in ritual flame.

Circles whisper in rhythmic return,
Mayan poets etch symmetry of dawns and dusks,
Foretelling spiral of time,
where equations meet myth in eternal refrain.

Song of the Milpa

Hydrology calls the earth,
Mapping the chants for the soil,
Duet of quenching water and a fertile ground,
Three sisters dance in fractal measures,
The corn, the beans and the squash
Corn rises like a coded star,
The beans like a long dream-sent
The squash like the hush of light,
Nature hymns woven with ancestral breath.

Digital Transformations

Algorithms reach the synapses
Through the power of codes and light,
This silent thought creates circuits of doors,
each pixel a seed of possible worlds,
The dark of data rise.
Turning questions and prompts,
Like granted wishes in a jiffy,
Spilling threshold machine
Ripping windmill of ideas,
Fuels answers of the unknown.

Swapna Behera



Swapna Behera is a trilingual poet, translator, environmentalist, editor from India and author of seven books of different genres including one on children's literature on Environment. She is the recipient of International UGADI AWARD 2019, honoured from Gujurat Sahitya Akademi 2022, 2021 International Poesis Award of Honor as Jury, Pentasi B World Fellow Poet, Honoured Poet of India from Seychelles Government and International awards from Algeria, Morocco, Kajhakhstan, modern Arabic Literary Renaissance of Egypt, International Arts Council Argentina etc. Her stories, poems, articles are published in many International and National magazines and ezines. Her poem A NIGHT IN THE REFUGEE CAMP is translated into 67 languages. She has received over 60 National and International Awards. At present she is the Cultural Ambassador for India and South Asia of Inner Child and the life member of Odisha Environmental Society

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beatitudes for the Mayans

the heart of every culture
some symbols eternal
the Mayans called them the glyphs
independently developed
the mathematical concept zero
used a base vigesimal numbering system
the first to harvest cocoa beans ,chocolates
tracked the time
observing the Sun, moon and the Venus
collected rubber sap
to create durable bouncy rubber
built massive pyramids
cities raised besides roads
intricate calendar system: highly accurate
water filter system, turquoise paint pigment
hydraulic engineering
terrace farming
sophisticated writing system,
complex calendar cycles
organic path based on natural order
respect for mother nature
both cosmic and earthly influences
we have two minds
one thinks; the other knows
more you spend with the mind
more you know the spirit around us
the quote says it all
“I am another yourself”

lost address of the cactus

a bird has no address
a refugee has no home
hunger has no constitution
 the saint has no assets
yet, he is lost
in between love or lust
pollen grains fly
beyond the borders
marigolds on the tomb
may be the martyr
under the flag
the postmortem table
records millions of stories
injustice in the cocoons
missing monsoon melodies
head or heart
somewhere
someone is missing

time is the mystic melody

you may say
it is my superego
it is only the rhythm
but yes
like a baby
time dances, sings, blooms
why should I worry?
time is an angel
look at the school children
they are hopping
in the rain
splashing the mud
time is jumping
life is the dance
the pause between the words
is the real poetry
the tinkling air
hath the master stroke
time travels, swims
I am the potter's wheel
making the crown for time
I am the cosmic dot
I will decorate it
with my words and verses
we both will sing the eternal hymn
just a minute ….
wait and watch

Albert 'Infinite' Carrasco



Albert “Infinite The Poet” Carrasco is an urban poet, mentor and public speaker.

Albert believes his experience of growing up in poverty, dealing with drugs and witnessing murder over and over were lessons learnt, in order to gain knowledge to teach. Albert’s harsh reality and honesty is a powerfully packed punch delivered through rhyme. Infinite grew up in the east part of the Bronx and still resides there, so he knows many young men will follow the same dark path he followed looking for change. The life of crime should never be an option to being poor but it is, very often.

Infinite poetry @lulu.com

Alcarrasco2 on YouTube

Infinite the poet on reverbnation

Infinite Poetry

www.lulu.com/us/en/shop/al-infinite-carrasco/infinite-poetry/paperback/product-21040240.html

www.innerchildpress.com/albert-carrasco

Mayan

Architects built towers reaching where heaven seems to begin, kings ruled cities, the alignment of stars told them when. Knowledge was carved deep into stone, the jungle was their home these mighty warriors held thrones. They knew the science of survival, their mathematical skills overshadowed rivals. They wrote glyphs to put factual history on display to diminish myths. From Tikal to Palenque cities stood tall but plazas and pyramids rose above it all. Some cities where kings reigned got swallowed by the jungle and drowned by rain, history can't be erased, marks were made so history will infinitely remain. Temples watch over the jungle where souls sleep and the secrets ancient cities were meant to keep. Ashes to ashes, dust to dust, kingdoms rose and fell, continuing acknowledging the legacy of the Mayans is a must.

Headless Horsemen

I now levitate through the apocalyptic region as a reaper due to loosing my stallion while battling in the underworlds dominion, he was stuck in the heart with a speared pole, as I leaned over and decapitated my foe, he now rest as a caucus on the battle field of the lost, I vowed to hover forever in the realm of the infinite, the sun doesn't shine but the moon still glows amongst the shadows of freelance souls, it renders negative reflections. I hear yells and screams from down yonder on the eternal path of skeleton paved roads, as I get nearer the sounds become clearer, I see dark reapers awaiting at Armageddons gate for for new souls to appear, you hear the clinging of swords in celebration, I swing my sword with arbitration 1 2 3 4 negative reapers are now headless horsemen, now the souls of the lost kids that was screaming and yelling won't get stolen like mines was, I choose to stay in limbo, in the realm of the infinite, so my dying breeds souls rise up as spirits

Fast

They call the drug life " living fast", they ain't lying, money comes in a hurry, lives are lived quickly and taken early. Many have been taken from me, that's reality. The riches poured in, thats fantasy. I'm going to constantly warn y'all, before it gets to the point where moms, pops and friends mourn y'all, just like I'm mourning every morning on the ones before y'all. Since I've retired many have expired. In my era you was either a shooter hustler or a gangster, nowadays these dumb asses try to mix the three and have homicide, narcotics and the gang units putting on the pressure. These young cats advertise blatantly, I pop off, I'm gettn money, I rep my set, these cats on trial are the people's exhibits a b and c. When they tried me, before every lie you heard the word allegedly, that's the difference from the 80's to the 2g's. You know how many shortys I spoke to trying to instill truth, the response was, al you did you, I'm gonna do me, a few days later on the same block I tried talking to the hard head, I see a limo, a hearse, a lot of flashing lights, I salute, whisper rest in power, hard head is now dead. Zoom... living fast there goes a father, a son, a future brides groom, boom.. dreams exploded, ashes to ashes, a blood and epidermis mushroom.

Kimberly Burnham



A brain health expert (PhD in Integrative Medicine) and award-winning poet, Kimberly Burnham lives with her wife and family in Spokane, Washington. Kim speaks extensively on peace, brain health, and "*Awakenings: Peace Dictionary, Language and the Mind, a Daily Brain Health Program*." She recently published "*Heschel and King Marching to Montgomery A Jewish Guide to Judeo-Tamarian Imagery*." Currently work includes "*Call and Response To Maya Stein an Anthology of Wild Writing"* and a how-to non-fiction book, "*Using Ekphrastic Fiction Writing and Poetry to Create Interest and Promote Artists, Writers, and Poets*."

Follow her at https://amzn.to/4fcWnRB

Howl

The land of my mother's home
parched by the Utah summer
yet on this September day the wind howls
through the valley
as the mountains stand in a grove of clouds
hail bouncing off dry blades of grass
and weeds
the cement driveway
everywhere
dripping
pounding the land
the grape vines cut low to make way for a straight fence
between neighbors
on the fruitless blackberry bushes
frozen months earlier in the late spring
all the plants getting ready for the winter
looking ahead to spring

The Stranger on The Plane Doesn't See

My dad is gone almost a year now
I have just come from a visit with my mom
at 92 she lives among Utah neighbors
two of her children nearby
but she is alone at home

Her legs suddenly swollen
the skin weeping and splitting
edema
we don't know exactly why

Right now
but the doctors guaranteed her 10 years
on the replacement heart valve
25 years ago

She is down 20 pounds of fluid weight
since I arrived a week ago
to do a specialized form of manual therapy
integrative manual therapy and acupressure

She's almost giddy when she returns from the scale
"I am back to my normal weight,
or maybe a couple of pounds under"
gone for now is the talk of
"no convenient time to die"

My sister who lives nearby is going
on a much-deserved vacation for three weeks
I am headed to work in Portland
then home to Spokane

There is never a convenient time
to leave my mother's house
to hug her good-bye
and walk into an unknown future

The Sounds of Peace

“Tom tom” in Chuj
the cattle hear
Tom tom in a language of Guatemala
the field listens

Tom tom a pacifying call
the cow who will not be tied
softens beneath the sound

The rope waits hands wait
The animal grows quiet

Tom tom come in from the field
come home from the grass

Tom tom come from the far pasture
to the place where you are known

“Chik chik” in Chuj
the horse hears.
Chik chik in a language of Mexico
the mule listens

Chik chik the donkey turns its head
toward the familiar voice

A sound for tethering a sound for calming
A sound for calling a sound for coming home

In Chuj a language of Guatemala and Mexico
peace can have a sound

Not silence but a gentle calling
not the absence of movement
but movement toward home

Tom tom, the restless animal quiets
Chik chik, the wandering animal returns

Tom tom, peace beside the tether
Chik chik, peace across the pasture

What sound calls a child from waking into sleep?
What sound calls a frightened heart from fear into quiet?
What sound calls a lover from distance into nearness?

A voice saying softly
Tom tom.
Chik chik
Be still
Come home

Eliza Segiet



Eliza Segiet graduated with a Master's Degree in Philosophy at Jagiellonian University.

Received *Global Literature Guardian Award* – from Motivational Strips, World Nations Writers Union and Union Hispanomundial De Escritores (UHE) 2018.

Nominated for the Pushcart Prize 2019, 2021.

Laureate *Naji Naaman Literary Prize 2020*,

International Award Paragon of Hope (2020),

World Award 2020 *Cesar Vallejo* for Literary Excellence. Laureate of the Special Jury *Sahitto International Award* 2021, World Award *Premiul Fănuş Neagu* 2021.

Finalist *Golden Aster Book* World Literary Prize 2020, *Mili Dueli* 2022, Voci nel deserto 2022.

At the international Festival of Poetry CAMPIONATO MONDIALE DI POESIA (2021/2022) she won the title of vice-champion of the world.

Award BHARAT RATNA RABINDRANATH TAGORE INTERNATIONAL AWARD (2022).

Award - *World Poets Association* (2023).

Laureate Between words and infinity *"International Literary Award (2023).*

Traces of the Past

It was tradition that
the ritual of sacrifice
remain forever alive.
For these customs to endure,
there had to be slaughter.
And prisoners of war were held sacred.

They held it true
that the gods of the Maya
required no less of war.

In return for their favor,
the human pact with them
demanded the feeding
– with human offerings.

Even to this very day
archaeologists
unearth echoes of the past
– broken human remains.

A civilization long departed
still stirs the mind,
endures;
– the tale of bygone years
will remain forever.

Translated by Dorota Stępińska

Valley of the Dead

When
the strength comes from the heart,
the strings of memory of the absent
start to play louder and louder –
that means
that to the Valley of the Dead
returns the testimony
of life of those who used to be right next to us.

Now the gravestones
commemorate the place
where even its slain weeds
did come to oblivion,
but a new rhythm of the
previously dead Jewish cemetery
can now be heard from a distance.

The coexistence of the two worlds
– visible and invisible
we owe to Man.

Translated by Dorota Stępińska

The Blood of Life

When you taste malachite – colored meadows –
the river continuously flowing,
you will know
– the land of happiness
is not just imagination.

Just touch the gates of Nature
to understand
that the world is not the same everywhere,
and its beauty lies in Nature.
At your fingertips
is a melting pot of diversity.

The smells of fields attract insects,
while wetlands
invite the red beaked birds
to spend time where
poets love to be.

Having escaped from our life
we cherish the moment.
There is no more illusion
– we are part of magic.

In a valley of flowing silence
it's calm
– the blood of life.

Translated by Dorota Stępińska

Khalice Jade



Khalice Jade, born Saliha Ragad, is an International Peace Ambassador, author, and engaged philosopher. Awarded the Excellence Prize for Peace in France at age 11 and recognized by the newspaper La Voix du Nord, she has published over thirty personal works and contributed to fifteen international anthologies, eight of which she directed. Passionate about cultural diversity and human understanding, she uses poetry and prose to inspire, encourage reflection, and promote peace, celebrating the richness of human experience and sharing a universal message of openness, harmony, and compassion.

The Gardens of The Sun

Beneath the sun’s fire, flowers awaken bright,
Dew glides softly, touching stones with care;
Birds’ songs mingle with whispered prayer,
And life flourishes where the wind gives light.
Shadows dance on paths of carved stone,
Time suspends its breath upon high peaks;
Man listens humbly to voices of old,
And finds in nature a genuine tone.
Thus I walk, confidante of these lands,
Guardian of murmurs and the old gods’ hands,
And my heart joins the world’s secret hue.
In warm clarity and scents of bloom,
I feel life, its power, and its plume,
And the instant’s glow makes the soul renew.

The Echo of Temples

Temples rise silently toward the skies,
Their stones bear shadows of ancient rites;
Murals whisper to attentive eyes,
And time suspends its wings in reverent ties.
Stars watch secret ceremonies unfold,
The wind carries scents of golden offerings;
Priests walk in the decor's light, embracing
The silent laws that humans once were told.
Thus I gaze, confidante and serene,
At the breath of stones, the human scene,
And ancient history unfolds within me.
Through corridors and halls of the past,
I discover voices of men and gods,
And temple light shines, steadfast and vast.

The Order of The Stars

Beneath Yucatán skies, the stars dance bright,
Mayas count time in stone and sacred fire;
Pyramids rise, witnesses to heaven's choir,
And life is written in breath and trance of night.
Calendars whisper to the sages at dusk,
The jaguar glides through shadowed temples;
Gods watch and give simple signs to examples,
And man learns the rhythm of hope's husk.
Thus the ancient world speaks through me,
Confidante of gods and their decree,
And Maya history lights the present hour.
In the glow of sacred constellations high,
I feel the time, memory, and sky,
And heaven's breath guides thoughts that never die.

William S. Peters Sr.



Bill's writing career spans a period of well over 50 years. Being first Published in 1972, Bill has since went on to Author in excess of 50+ additional Volumes of Poetry, Short Stories, etc., expressing his thoughts on matters of the Heart, Spirit, Consciousness and Humanity. His primary focus is that of Love, Peace and Understanding!

Bill says . . .

I have always likened Life to that of a Garden. So, for me, Life is simply about the Seeds we Sow and Nourish. All things we "Think and Do", will "Be" Cause and eventually manifest itself to being an "Effect" within our own personal "Existences" and "Experiences" . . . whether it be Fruit, Flowers, Weeds or Barren Landscapes! Bill highly regards the Fruits of his Labor and wishes that everyone would thus go on to plant "Lovely" Seeds on "Good Ground" in their own Gardens of Life!

to connect with Bill, he is all things Inner Child

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Maya

A civilization lost
The connection fractured
Knowledge scattered
As we still attempt to understand

We apparently are the ones
In the 'Dark Ages'
Struggling to comprehend
The bright light
That shone upon them
Still yet we fail

The Alchemist

He spoke in a tongue
That could only be deciphered
By the ancient mystics

He was borne from the very womb
Of first light ...
Yes he was pure darkness,
An undiscovered mystery
Whose soul whispered secret incantations
That inebriated the 'hearers' and the 'seers'

His footsteps were holy and divine
For his sole was one with the soil of life

The 'winds of chance' swirled about him
Conjuring unknown possibilities
Into the 'known'
While making manifest new tomorrows
From the cauldron called 'yesterday' .... yes
He was an Alchemist

Dreams were his playthings
That he idly fondled in his imagination,
Kissed with his 'cosmic consciousness '
And thus sown, cast asunder into the gardens
That yielded a fruit ...
Sometimes tart, sometimes sweet ...

He was an enigma
Of his own makings,
A walking, breathing metaphorical conundrum
That skewed in parallels
Betwixt the maleable fabric of reality
And the abysmal void of delusion ...
He was a 'made man'

When he spoke,
His most profound utterings
Were spoken in a silence
That drowned the sounds
Of the 'always in motion'
Foundations of reason

He oft times plunged himself
Into the oceans of experientialness
And allowed his ship of 'being-ness'
To rudderlessly drift upon the currents
Of the absence of time

His sight was keen,
His acumen sharp,
His touch was penetrating,
And his compassion deep,
Without rescue or restraint

His skies were a myriad
Of blues, and greys, and whites and more blues,
And his Sun shone
At all times
Even if it was only
In his own mind

He harbored no regrets
For his life
Was kaleidoscopic in nature
And the colors of his spirits
Had no room for such things
As gloom and despair
For his air was light
He was light,
Life was light,
For he was
The Alchemist.

A Silent Soliloquy

Slipping through the creases
From my youth
To adulthood
Into the land of the aged
Watching, observing, analyzing
And concluding
That 'Time' has no prejudice
Unlike our choices
In how we exact the course
Of living

Are we efficiently on guard
In our negligent and habitual recklessness
As we take this sacred journey
For granted?

Most times we live
Under the umbrella
In the shade
Of the 'Tree of Life'
Trying to escape
The heat of the bright lights
Of awareness and accountability

We pander to things
Such as crowds for approval,
And propaganda for our assuasions
That our minds and spirits
Are not troubled
By the directions we choose to walk,
Or our lack of movement at all

In lieu of taking up the mantle
Of reason,

We pray to unknown Gods
We ignore when we falsely perceive
That the seas of our journey
Are calm and without challenge

We lower our sails
While still hoping for a wind
To carry us to
A prized destination
Where all of our troubles,
Real and imagined
Will take flight
Into the land where
The fruit of absolution and forgetfulness
Abide

Woe is the soul of me
That pines for an unearned forgiveness
That i may escape my 'self'
As I persecute 'circumstances' and fate
As the reason for my suffering

Yes I do still smile,
And I still do enjoy a good laugh
Here and there,
Especially when I take time to
Acknowledge my ascribed incompetence ...
But the 'woe is me, woe is i' syndrome
Still fits nicely with my lack of fortitude
And questionable character
.....
It is not necessarily a moral issue,
No I will NOT claim it,
For denial gives me something
To fight for

As i sit here in my abandoned solitude,
I conclude that
There is no verifiable depth
To the abiding loneliness one experiences,
And 'Tears and Laughter'
Are but fraught ideologies we utilize
To soothe the mounting angst
That threatens to destroy us
From our very core,
So my grief has no worthwhile voice
But whispers anyway
In but another Silent Soliloquy

October 2026 Featured Poets

~ * ~

Sajid Hussain

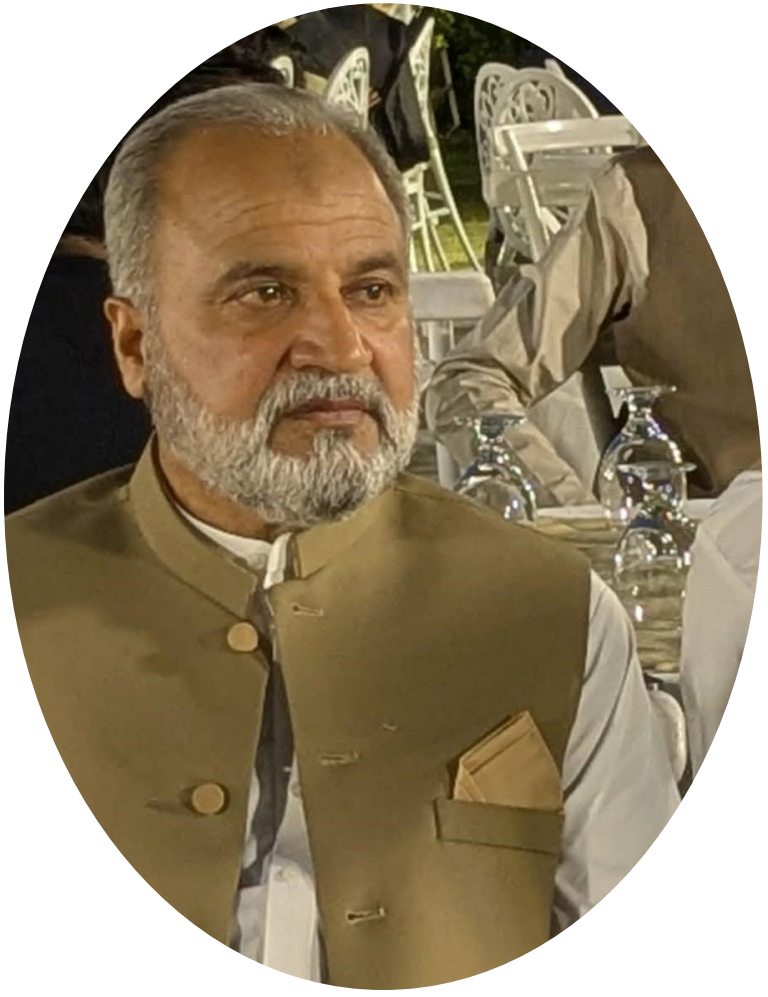
Mohammed Al Gaddafi Masoud

Marlon Salem Gruezo

Rayees Ahmad Kumar


I
Fly
because
I Can
. . . said the Dreamer to the world.
www.iamjustbill.com

Sajid Hussain



Dr. Sajid Hussain, born on 1 February 1969 in Morgah, Rawalpindi, Pakistan, is an internationally recognized Pakistani poet, educator, master trainer, literary promoter, and homeopathic doctor. He is widely known for his contributions to contemporary English literature, peace advocacy, cultural dialogue, and educational development.

Professionally, he serves as a Senior Chemistry Teacher under the Federal Directorate of Education, Islamabad. He is also a Master Trainer of "Low Cost and No Cost Science Material," contributing significantly to science education and innovative teaching methodologies. In addition, he has served as Principal of Jinnah Public School, Rawalpindi, and practices as a homeopathic doctor.

Dr. Hussain is the President of CIESART Headquarters Pakistan (International Chamber of Writers and Artists, Spain) and is affiliated with several international literary organizations, including the World Nation Writers' Union, Kazakhstan. Through his literary and cultural engagements, he has promoted intercultural understanding, peace, human rights, environmental awareness, and humanitarian values.

A prolific poet, Dr. Hussain has written more than 1,500 poems. His literary works have appeared in over 600 international anthologies, magazines, journals, newspapers, and literary websites across the world. His poetry has been translated into several major languages and has reached readers across Asia, Europe, Africa, North America, and Latin America.

Disappearing into the Cosmic Fog

Scattered frosty storms and eternal hidden sufferings,
Slowly through oceans of sacred stillness,
Crossing the snowstorms toward distant warmth,
Through harsh histories refuse to surrender,
Winds guide wandering spirit homeward softly,
Returning toward heaven's forgotten sunrise,
The invisible presence of spiritual enlightenment ,
Seeks its eternal Creator continually,
Crossing endless deserts without faltering,
Through mysterious pathways sensibly,
Beyond storm darkened mountain for peace destiny,
Coffins crowded the hollow chambers of repose ,
Cary the corpse of their own desires,
And whispere secrets to lonely nights,
The haunting travelers upon existence's pathway,
Disappear into immeasurable cosmic fog.

Beyond the Mapless Roads

(Vision)

Chaos and order coexist within my soul,
Countless lanterns flicker through the caverns of journey,
Haunting harmonies inhabit the inner realm,
Carnival of existence stages collision within my being,
A luminous sapphire rests within a chamber of shadows,
Despite waves of change a solitary spark in darkness,
With spiritual worth guards a glorious gem,
The forfeiture of an irreplaceable inner treasure,
That paints joy and pain like wind changing directions,
A thousand destinies within its hands,
Bloom the seasons of roses and thorns ,
Upon the mapless roads of destiny at horizons alone,
Whisper for secrets to reveal their endings,
The solitary seeker strolling strange on silent streets,
Like a leaf upon unmarked pathways which roams alone,
Dust-covered trails vanish beneath a distant sky,
Onward certainty remains behind for fate of my light,
Slowly my vision sails to cross distant seas.

Beyond the Broken Horizon

The chalice of existence overflows with deep vintages,
Touches my lips for ceremonies of dust,
Measured gaze with borrowed standards,
Splits dimensions of my own mirror of being ,
Fractured inner cosmos on field of perception,
Wanders among arguments and elaborate maps,
Through deserted landscapes like distant bells sounding,
Excavates Self from the Dust for interior pilgrimage,
I shall return when every frontier yields its name,
Stirred among ancient ruins my sleeping consciousness,
Will echo through collapsed halls of extinguished ages,
Adrift where unrealized lives lay scattered,
The wreckage of abandoned dreams and ideals,
On the stage of long awaited emergence,
At threshold of all seeking on broken horizon,
Will fashion a new world within myself.

Mohammed Al Gaddafi Masoud



Mohammed Al Gaddafi Masoud born in 1978 in Gharyan, Libya, holds a theater diploma from Tripoli's Jamal Al-Din Al-Miladi Institute (2000) and is the author of several collections, including lyrical poetry (*We Woke Up to Joy*, 2006) and journalistic dialogues (*My Dialogues with Them*, 2008). Widely published across the Arab world, his work has been translated into numerous languages—English, Chinese, Spanish, Polish, French, Italian, and Albanian—and appeared in international print and online journals from Spain to Argentina. In 2024, he was selected as one of 72 global poets for an Italian-language anthology curated by Angela Costa, reflecting his broadening transnational literary presence.

Translation Dr . Salwa Goda

On the House's Hip

We write on the house's hip:
We are here.
We chew on the street's loneliness
'til the alley turns
into a moon on the soul's shoulder.
The wind's wound...
you tell it like a secret.
Lightning drinks its glass,
and we drink down the question.
Sparrows soften the bitter cold.
What's the point of staying...?
The olive tree left it to the windows
to tell what's left
of the shouting inside us,
tossing it in the grinder.

Translation Dr. Salwa Goda

Leave the Crook

Put down that shepherd's crook,
you with the polished air.
Stop your circling,
your blind stumbles
out of the dream.
That stick you wave
at a flock of children,
making a holy vow
that only blooms
when your tragedy peaks.
You weave your cloak from a people's faith,
stitching sunbeams to pretty lies.
When you're lost in ecstasy,
the desert shows you its face
and I make it into dreams,
so you can offer a rose
to the era that never saw you born.
Nothing promises you anything.
You're past the end.
No fantasy holds you up,
no color hides you.
You don't need a hiding cap,
you need a helmet.
Your reflection has changed,
and being different has made you
a slippery, mercury question.
Oh, child of the Boundless.

Translation Dr . Salwa Goda

Naked with Certainty

One nap-time,
she pulled back the curtains of her glare,
let her sadness go naked.
Layla doesn't give mirrors a chance
to catch what's alike and not alike.
She became one with the clear rain,
curled into laughter on the skyline,
she knew the wolf's kiss was danger.
First to arrive, a knight
carrying baskets of myths,
wiping away alone-ness.
Oh, the running away of names from their names,
and the end of questions where they start.
I whispered in autumn's ear,
"Hide from the seasons' calm."
Rain stitches the earth a shirt
for those naked with certainty.

Translation Dr. Salwa Goda

Marlon

Salem

Grue20



Marlon Salem Gruezo is a Filipino-Spanish peace and culture advocate, and arts & letters protagonist, and a member of some notable international non-government organizations whose core missions are peace, culture , arts and education promotions. He won the 2025 Literary Asia Grand Prix Prize for Poetry and his poems were widely published in various platforms.

The Quiet Road to Healing and Peace

I looked in the mirror and saw a storm,
A face tired of fighting, a heart worn and torn.
I whispered, “I’m sorry,” though my voice cracked,
For all the times I left myself back.
That was the start—just me, and a crack of light.

I held my shame like a stone in my chest,
But slowly, I learned to give it rest.
I forgave the me who didn’t know better,
Who broke things trying to hold them together.
And in that soft breath, I felt something shift.

Some days I still stumble, still ache, still cry,
But I don’t curse the tears—I let them dry.
I talk to myself like I would a friend,
With kindness that doesn’t need to pretend.
That’s how the healing grows, quiet and real.

Then something strange began to unfold—
My peace reached others, gentle and bold.
A smile, a hug, a word not said in haste—
My calm became someone else’s safe place.
And I saw: love spreads like light through cracks.

Now I walk, not perfect, not whole,
But softer, steadier, with a mended soul.
And maybe, just maybe, this path I tread
Will help someone rise from where they bled.
Because healing and peace, they ripple, they teach.

Where I Begin Again

I'm learning to forgive the parts of me
that stumbled, broke, or lost their way.
I hold them now with quieter hands,
as if they were small birds returning home.

I'm trying to accept the flaws I feared—
the cracks, the doubts, the unfinished pieces.
They are not failures but fingerprints,
proof that I have lived and kept going.

Some days the healing comes slowly,
like sunlight crawling across a tired room.
But even the smallest warmth reminds me
that I am allowed to start again.

And in this soft returning to myself,
I feel something gentle finally rise—
a peace that doesn't shout or demand,
just whispers, "You are enough, as you are."

Love Begins Healing

Healing begins in the quiet places of the heart,
Where love returns like sunlight after long rain.
I learn to hold my own wounds softly, without fear,
And let compassion loosen the knots of hidden pain.

I forgive myself for the days I could not rise,
For the moments I broke under the weight of sorrow.
Love teaches me to breathe again, slowly, tenderly,
Promising that healing grows stronger with each tomorrow.

I forgive those who could not love me as I hoped,
Those whose own hurt spilled into my open hands.
Their hearts were storms they never learned to calm,
And my healing becomes the shelter they never had.

As I mend, I become a quiet light for others,
A reminder that compassion is a path we walk together.
My forgiveness becomes a bridge across their silence,
And love becomes the beginning of all our healing.

Rayees Ahmad Kumar



Rayees Ahmad Kumar. Writer is an author, poet, short story writer, book reviewer and an academician based in Qazigund Kashmir India. His columns, articles and poems get featured in prominent local and national dailies. He regularly attends poetic symposiums and seminars and has earned multiple awards and appreciation certificates.

Poem... Mother

I was once a king,
with a crown of gold
resting upon my head.

There was no worry,
nor any sorrow
that troubled me.

No storm in the world
could ever harm me.

Even a sky filled with clouds and raging winds
would bring
tidings of spring
for me.

I was never afraid
of seasonal floods,
nor could
the changing colors of autumn
steal away my happiness.

I always felt
as though I rested beneath
the shade of a Chinar tree,
where I would ease my fatigue,
find comfort,
and live in peace and serenity.

All of this
was possible,
yes, possible only because
my mother was alive.

The endless shade
of her mercy and blessings
was cast upon me.

Her prayers
were always with me.

That great soul of the universe,
who always asked about my well-being,
was there.

The one who eased my pain,
my sorrows, my worries, and hardships—
my mother was alive.

But now, as she has answered
the call of death,
departed from this mortal world,
and journeyed toward her eternal abode,
I truly have become an orphan.

I have been deprived forever
of my mother's loving and compassionate gaze.

Now it has become difficult
to understand
what love truly is.

When I leave home
or return,
whom shall I bid farewell to?
Whose blessings shall I seek?

When I leave in the morning
and return home late at night,
who will wait for me now?

Those blessed hands of affection,
which rose in prayer for me
morning and evening,
those divine mercies
that poured upon me
like rain from heaven,
perhaps have now ceased forever.

In the darkness of the night,
lying on my bed,
even at midnight,
I keep thinking:

If only
my mother could come back to life,
sit beside me,
look at me with loving eyes,
and ask about my well-being.

If only she would place
her caring hand
upon my head.

How fortunate I would be,
how truly wealthy I would become.

But now nothing is in my power.
I can do nothing.
I cannot bring my mother back.

Except for sending rewards of prayers
and supplications for forgiveness,
I can send nothing else
to my beloved mother.

Oh my mother!

May your grave be filled with light,
may your resting place remain forever
a home of peace and tranquility.

May Paradise be your destiny.
May Allah forgive you,
grant you the vision of the Prophet ﷺ,
and bless you with his intercession.
Ameen, Summa Ameen.

Galwanpora

She left her home
To quench her thirst for knowledge,
To drink the nectar of wisdom,
And to meet her fellow blooming buds.

But alas,
Her chastity was shattered,
Her life ended mercilessly.

The beasts wearing human faces
Once again revealed
An inhuman and barbaric act.

Even in the hands of a neighbour,
An Eve's daughter
Finds neither safety nor security.

Then tell me,
Where would she venture,
Seeking refuge and protection?

Are we heading toward a disaster,
A disaster never witnessed,
Never felt before?

A safe heaven for a daughter
May exist only in Heaven itself,
For nowhere on the face of this planet
Does she find complete safety.

Chinar

Platinus Oriantalis, thy Botanical name
State tree, having cool shade and royal touch
Leaves are alternatively borne
Maple-like, 5-7 lobed on the stem.
Greyish bark, long stalk,
monoecious unisextual flowers.
Historically significant of Kashmir's landscape
Adored by Mughal Emperors
Akbar, Jahangir and Aurangzeb.
Char-Chinar in the midst of Dal lake
Jahangir erected on the lovely island.
The magnificent tree, sacred to Hindus too
'Bhawani' means a goddess
Found in famous mosques and shrines also.
It's changing colours, from deep green
In Spring-Summer to blazing red in Autumn
Honoured by Autumn more than others.
The rustling sound of golden leaves
Adds to the beauty of surroundings.
Greyish bark equipped with medicinal properties
Used for dysentery and diarrhoea treatment
Fresh leaves too for conjunctivitis.
The fallen-off and dry leaves
For charcoal making
Used for warmth in winters.
Poets, litteratuers and writers
Composed odes and essays for it.
It's enchanting beauty and morphology
During Autumn in valley, attracts
People from all corners of globe.
It's diminishing number, if left
Unchecked, may cause it's extinction.

Remembering

our fallen soldiers of verse



Janet Perkins Caldwell

February 14, 1959 ~ September 20, 2016

Alan W. Jankowski

16 March 1961 ~ 10 March 2017

Shareef Abdur Rasheed

30 May 1945 ~ 11 February 2025

The Butterfly Effect



"IS" in effect

Inner Child Press

News

Published Books

by

Poetry Posse Members

We are so excited to share and announce a few of the current books, as well as the new and upcoming books of some of our Poetry Posse authors.

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Jackie Davis Allen

Gail Weston Shazor

hülya n. yılmaz

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Elizabeth E. Castillo

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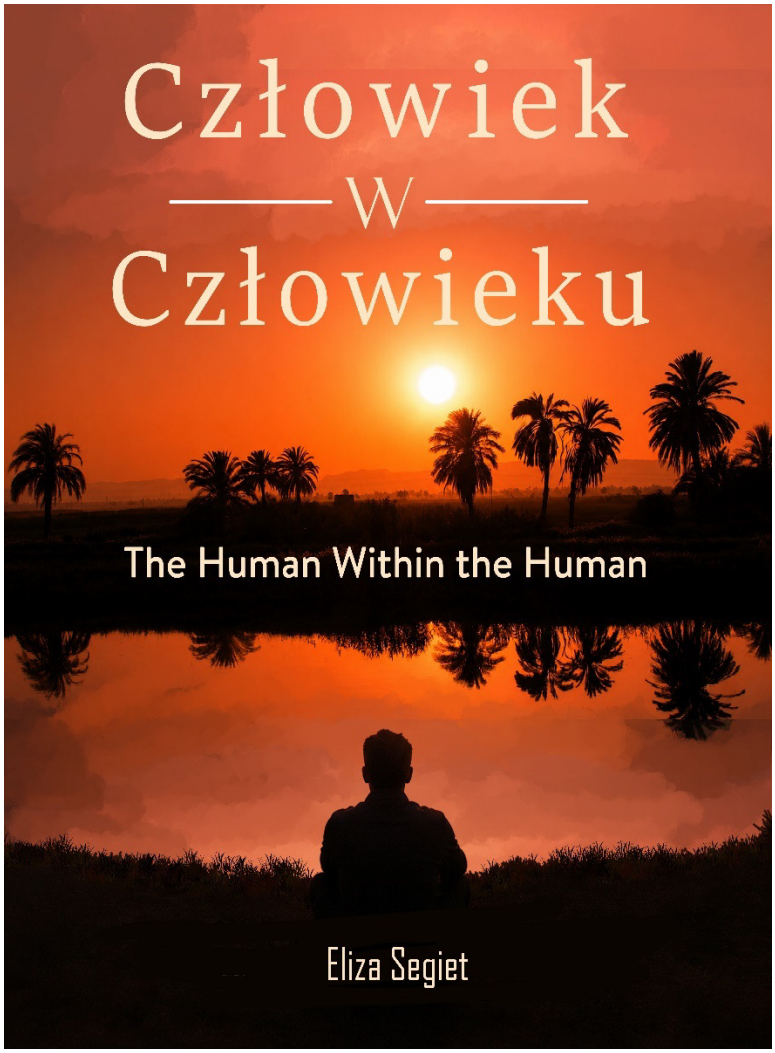
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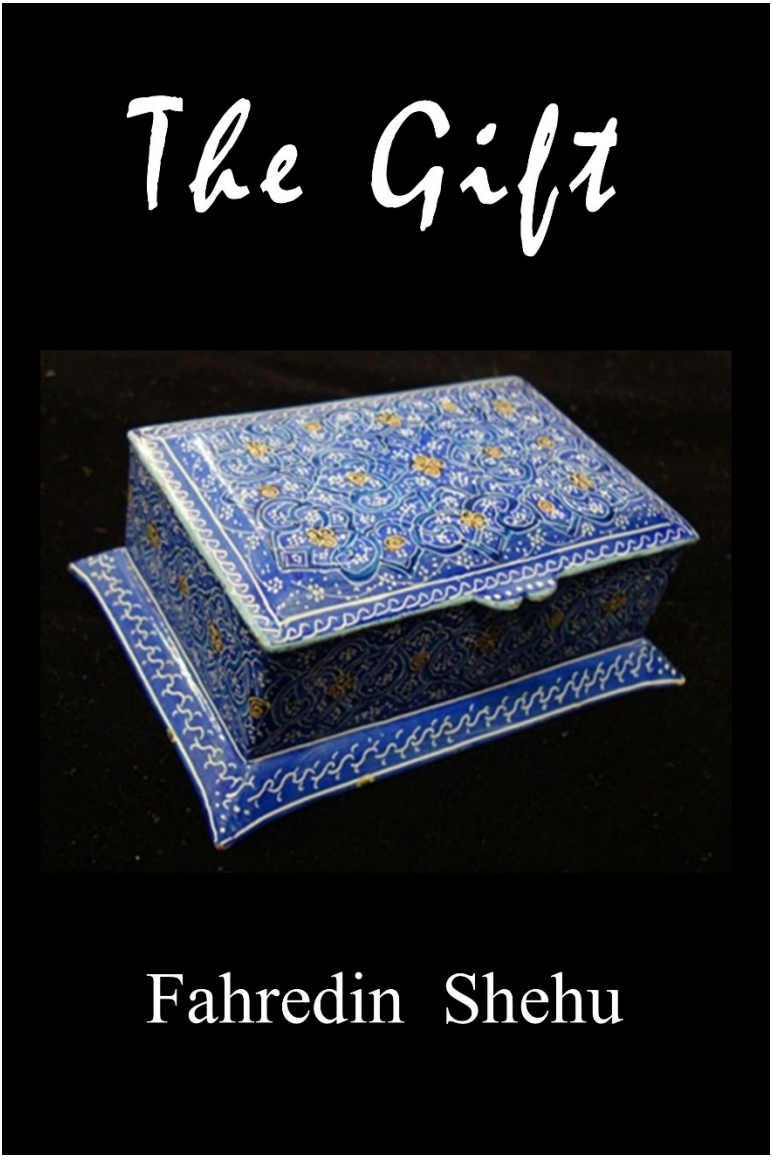
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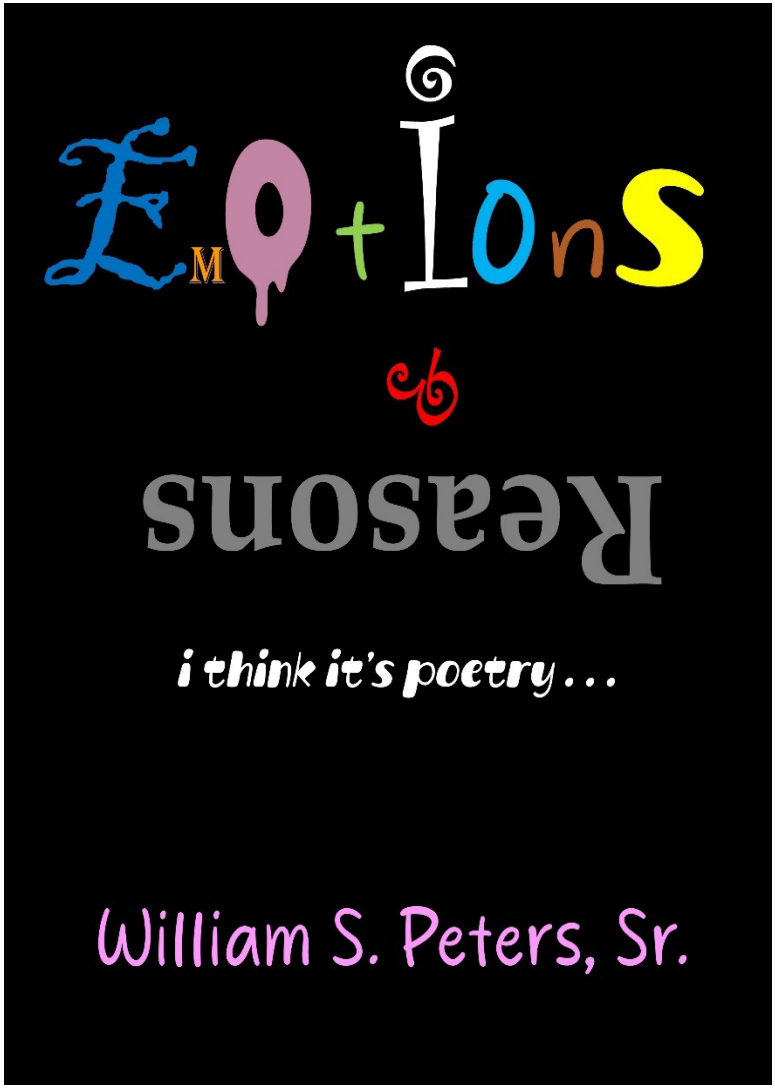
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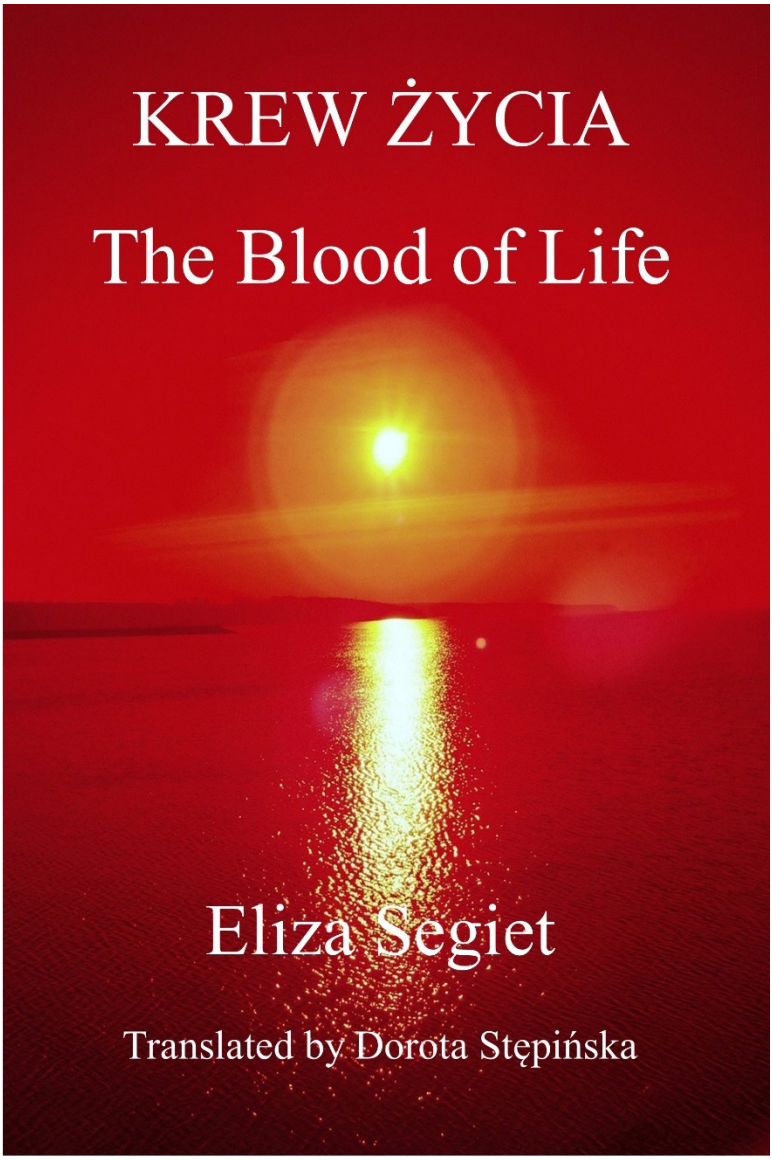
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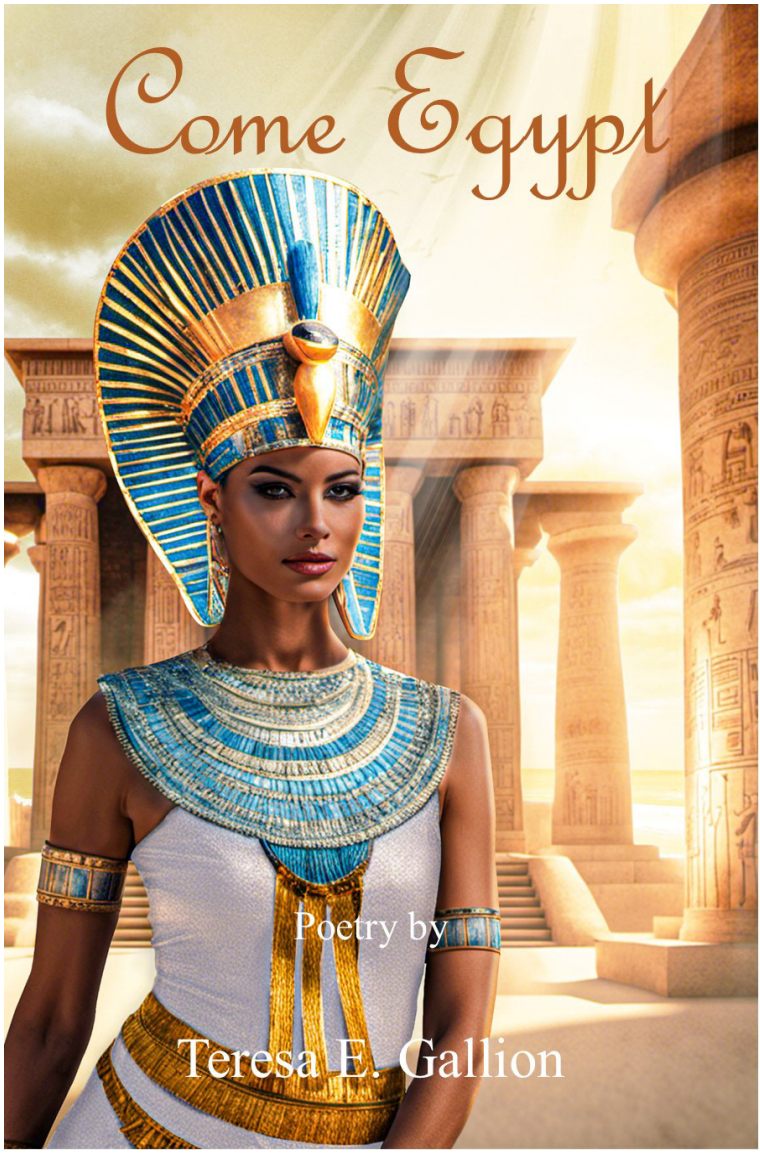
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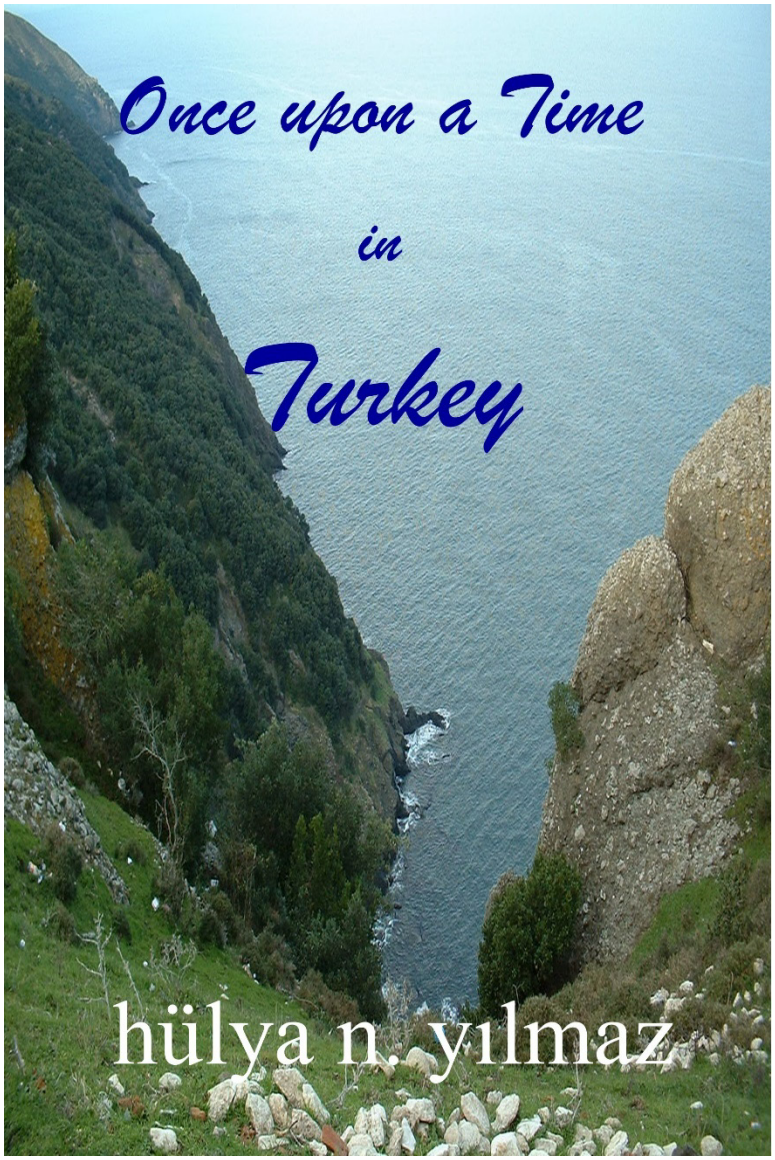
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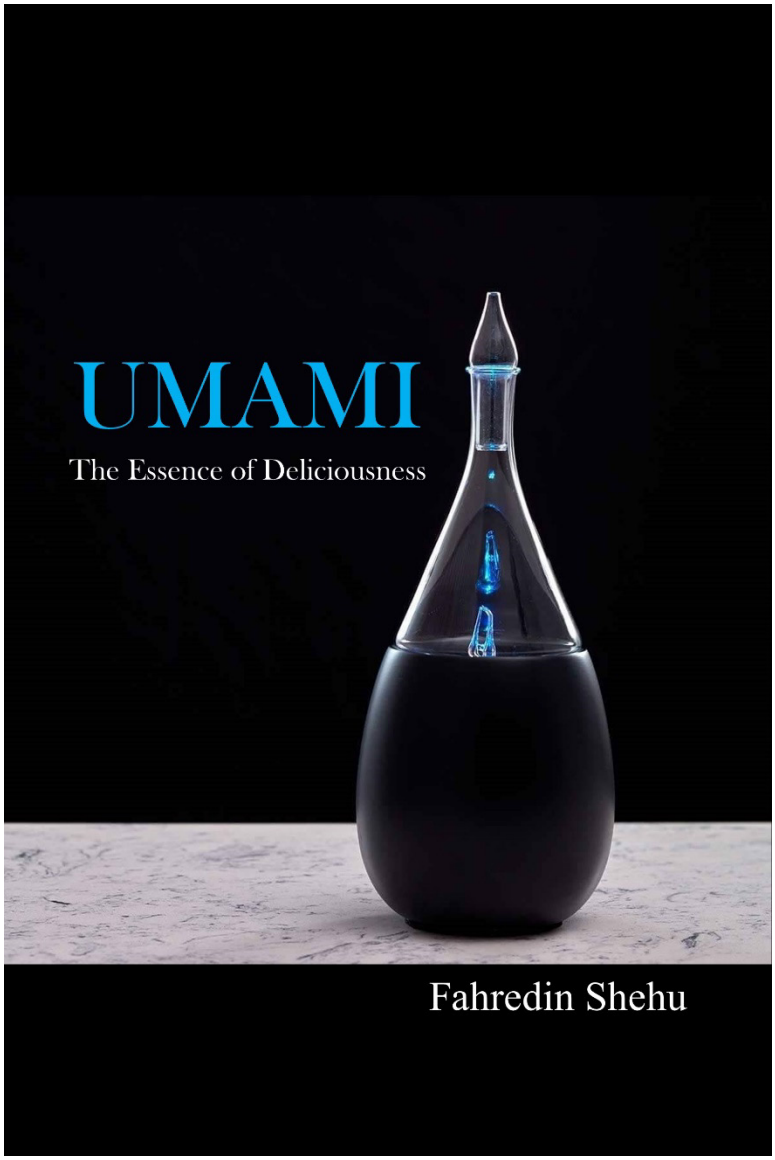
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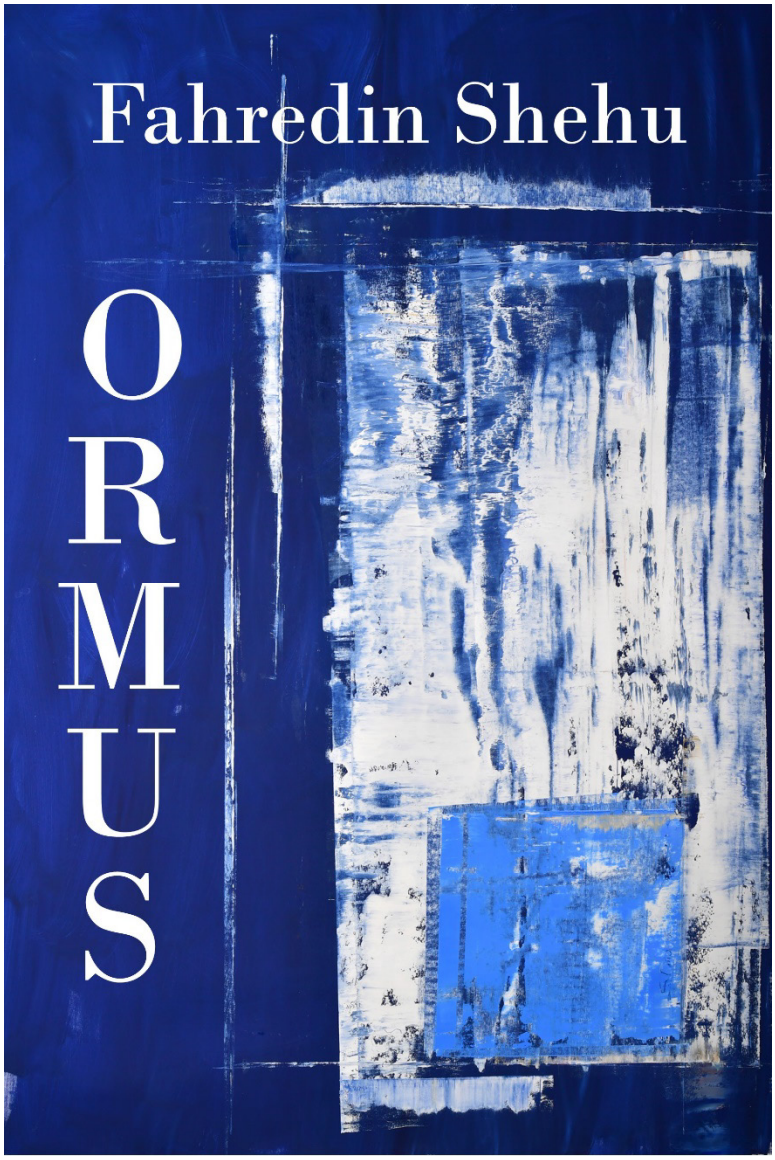
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Ahead of My Time

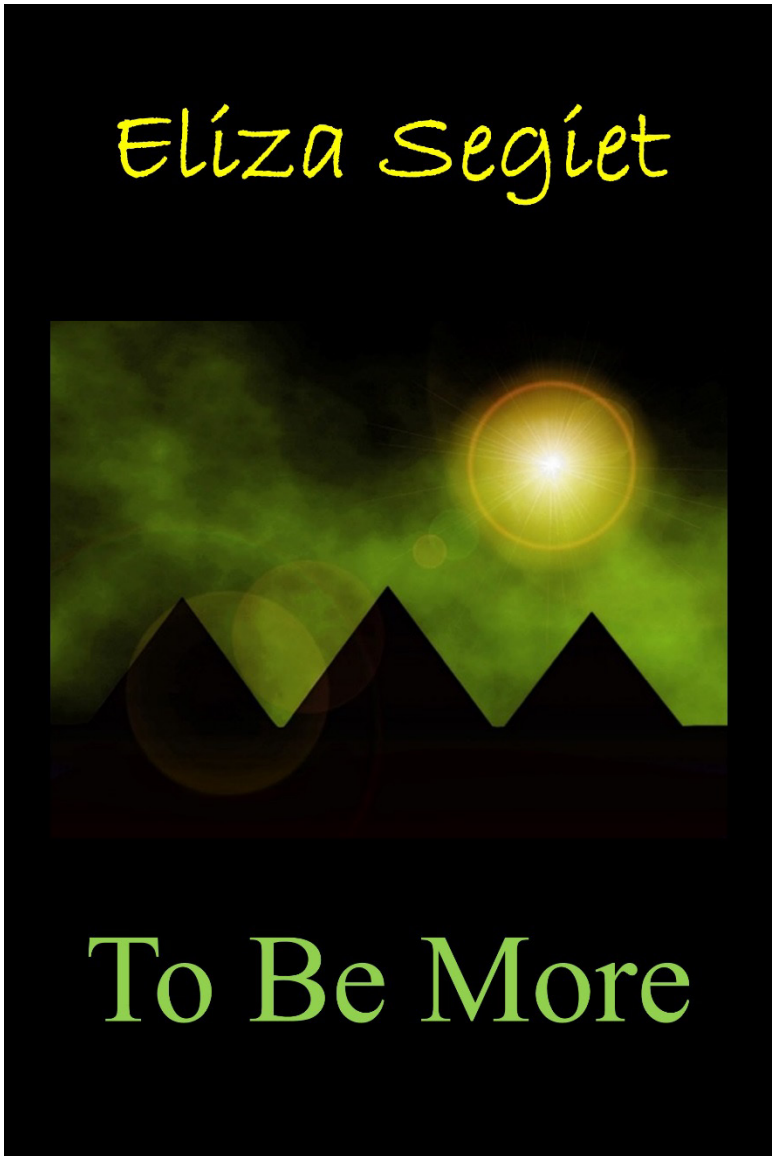
. . . from the Streets to the Stages



Albert *'Infinite'* Carrasco

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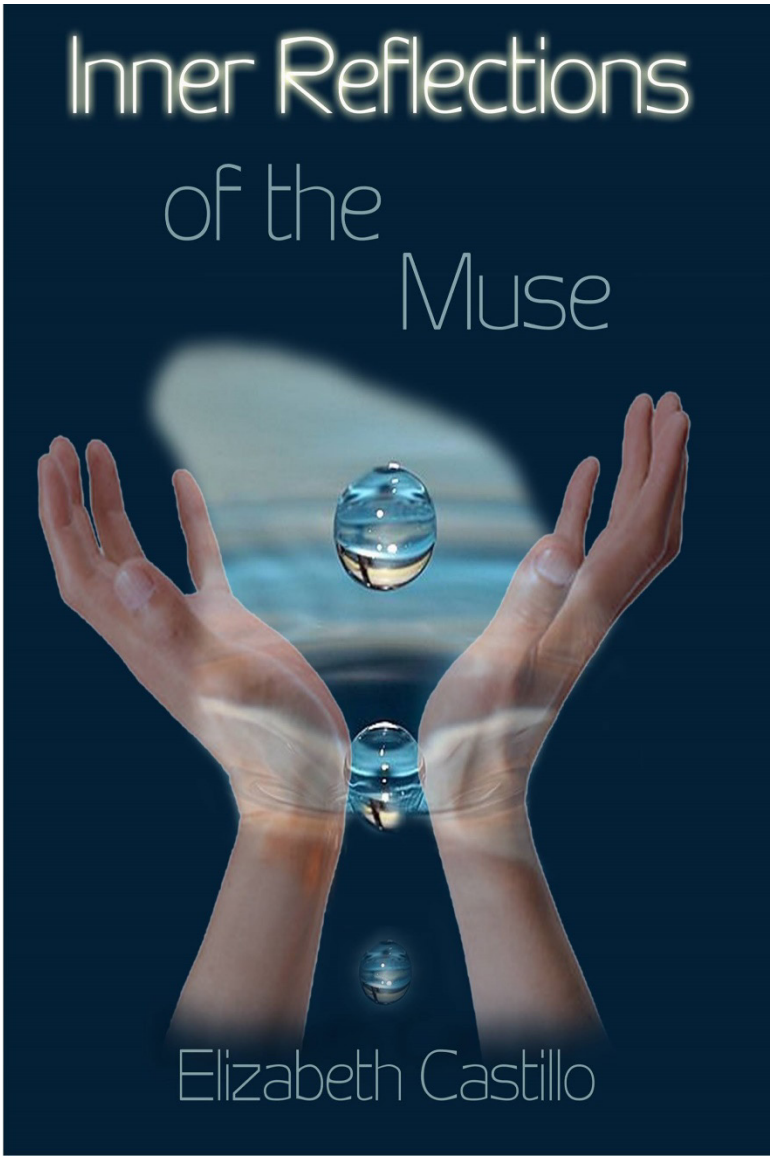
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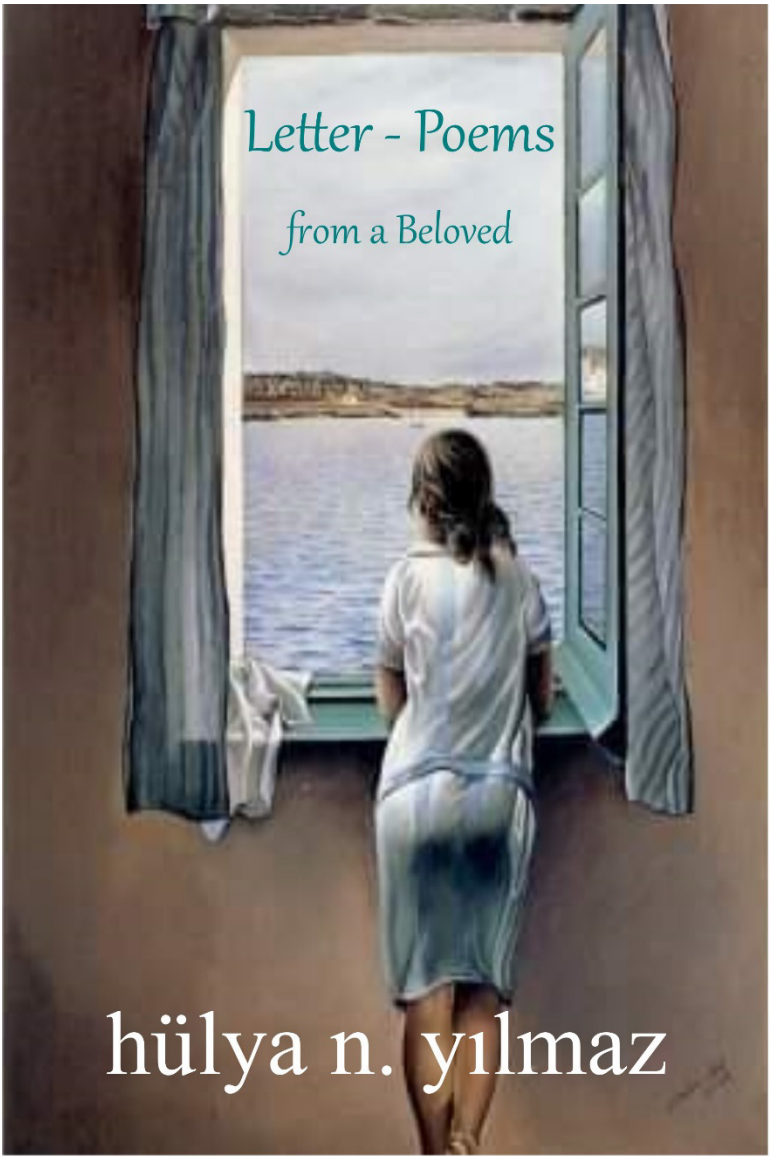
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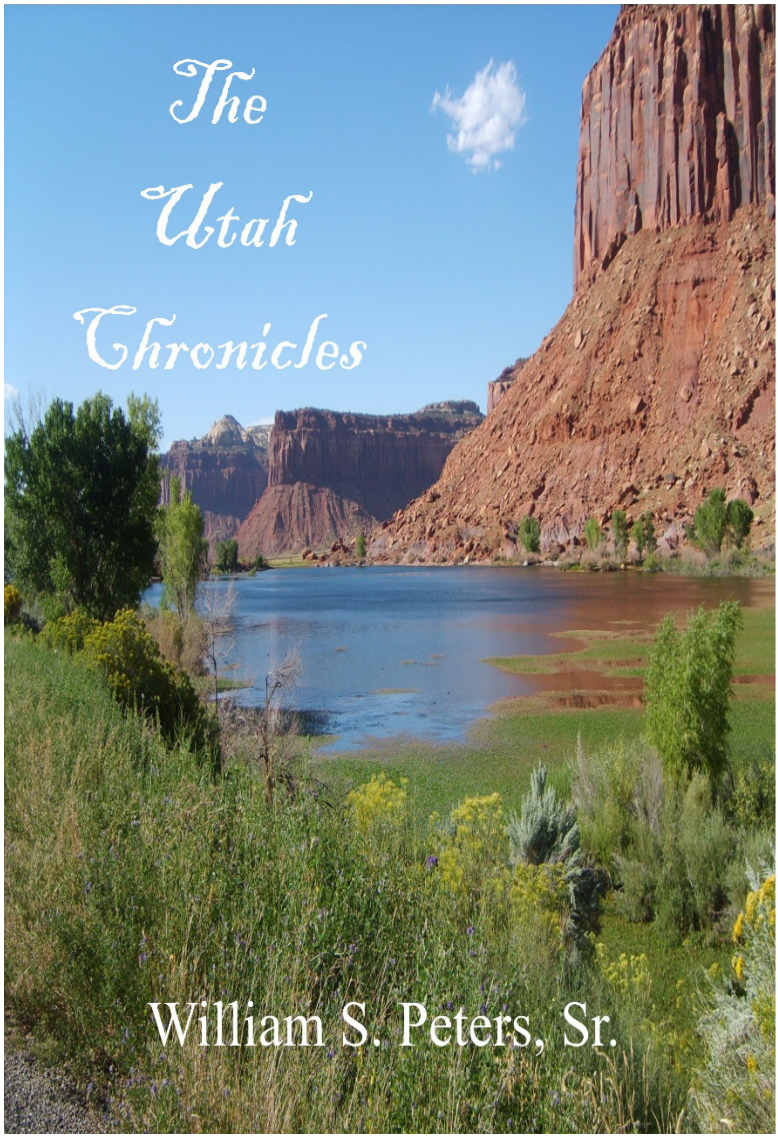
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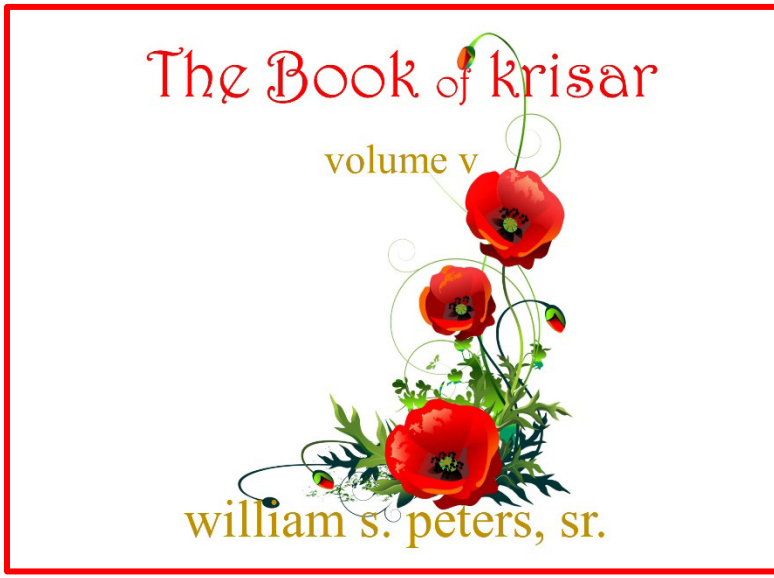
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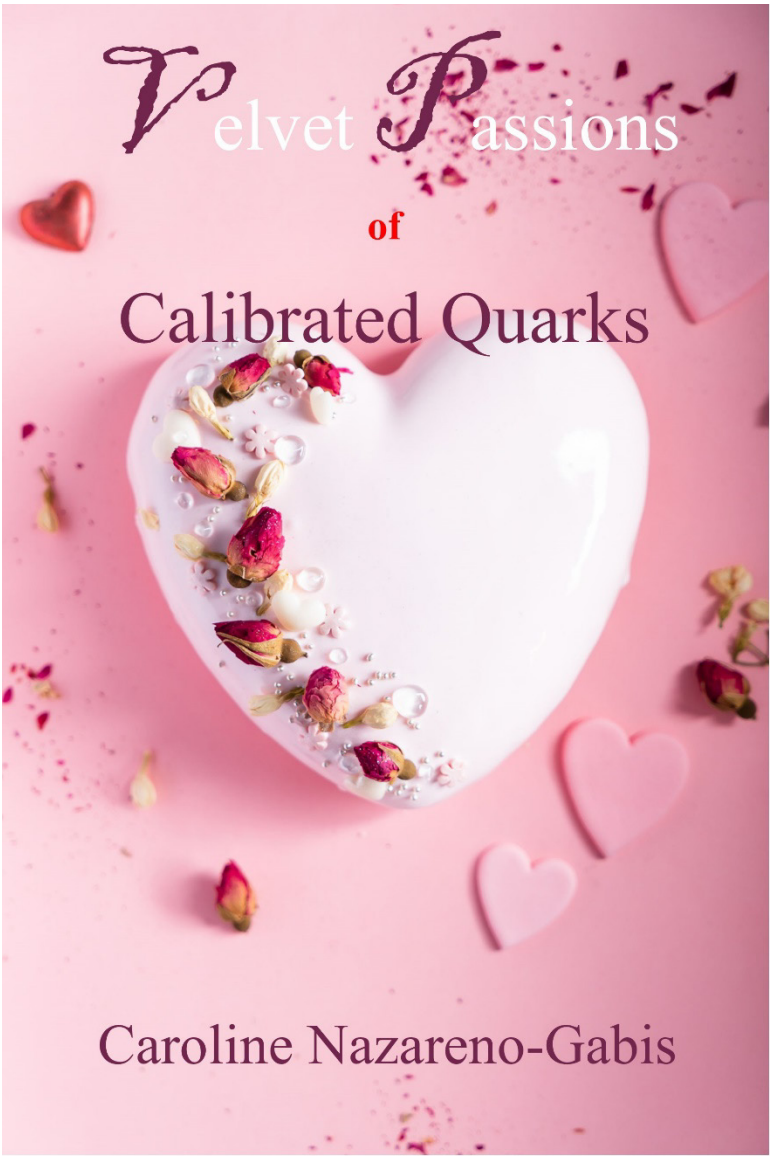
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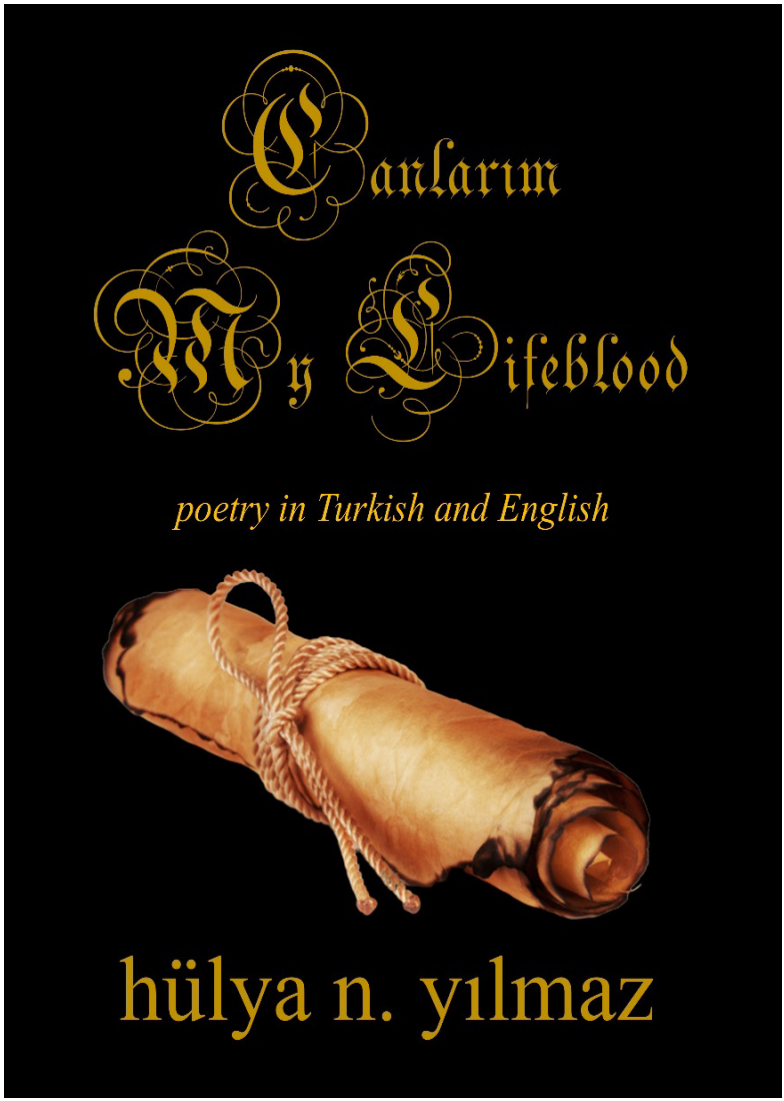
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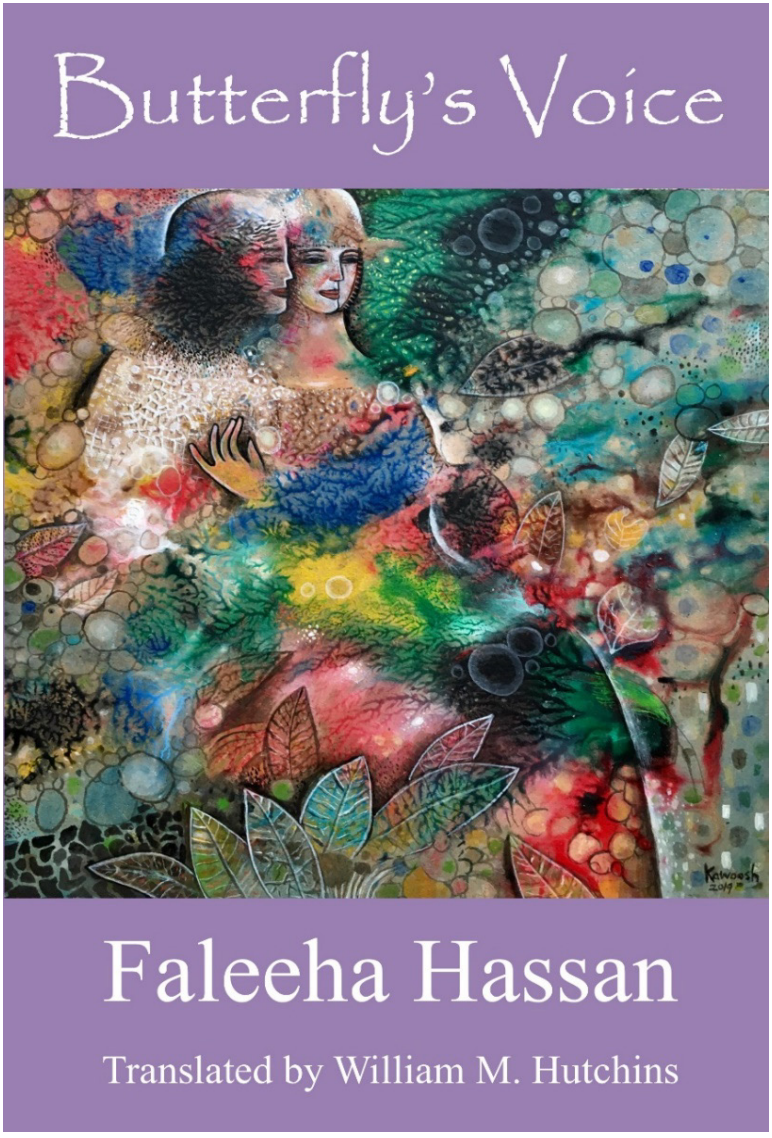
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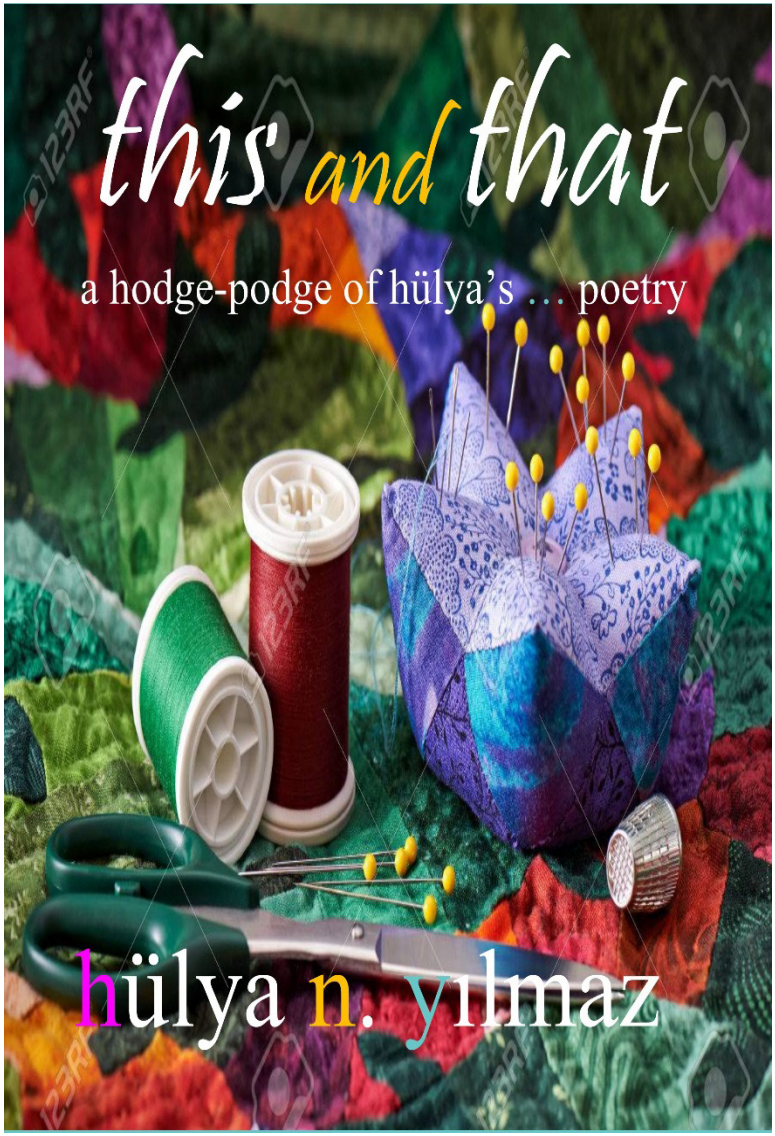
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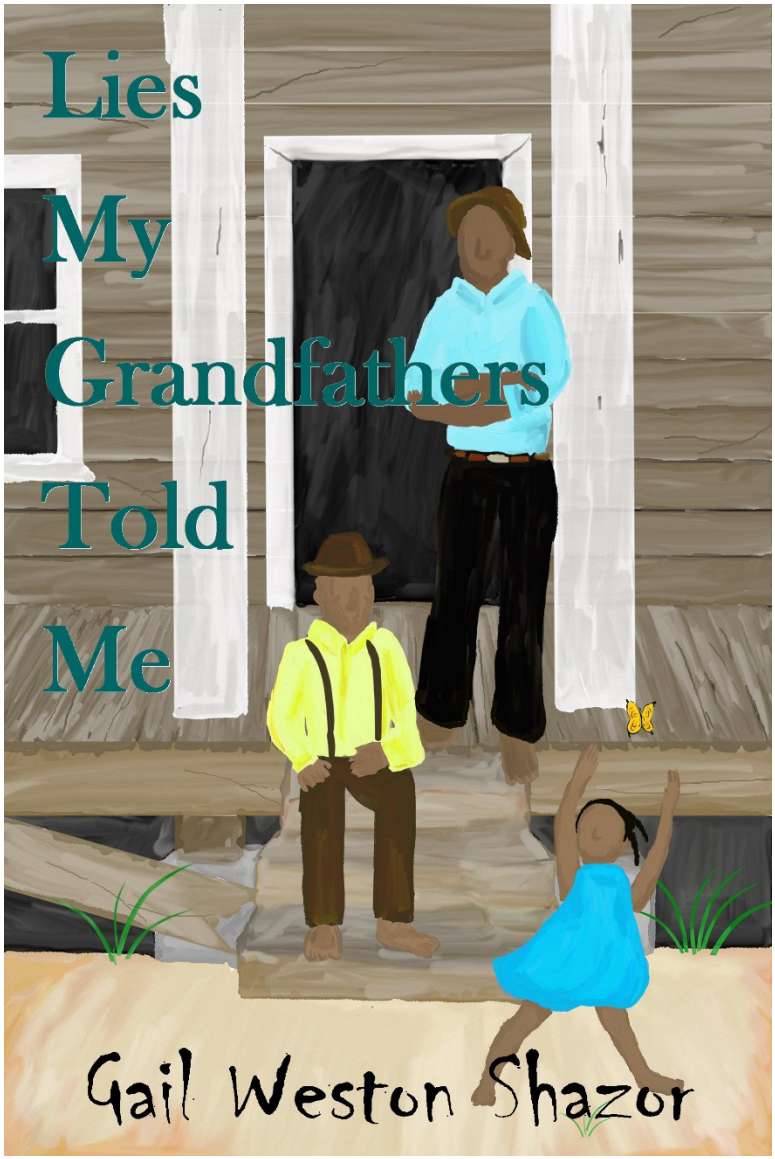
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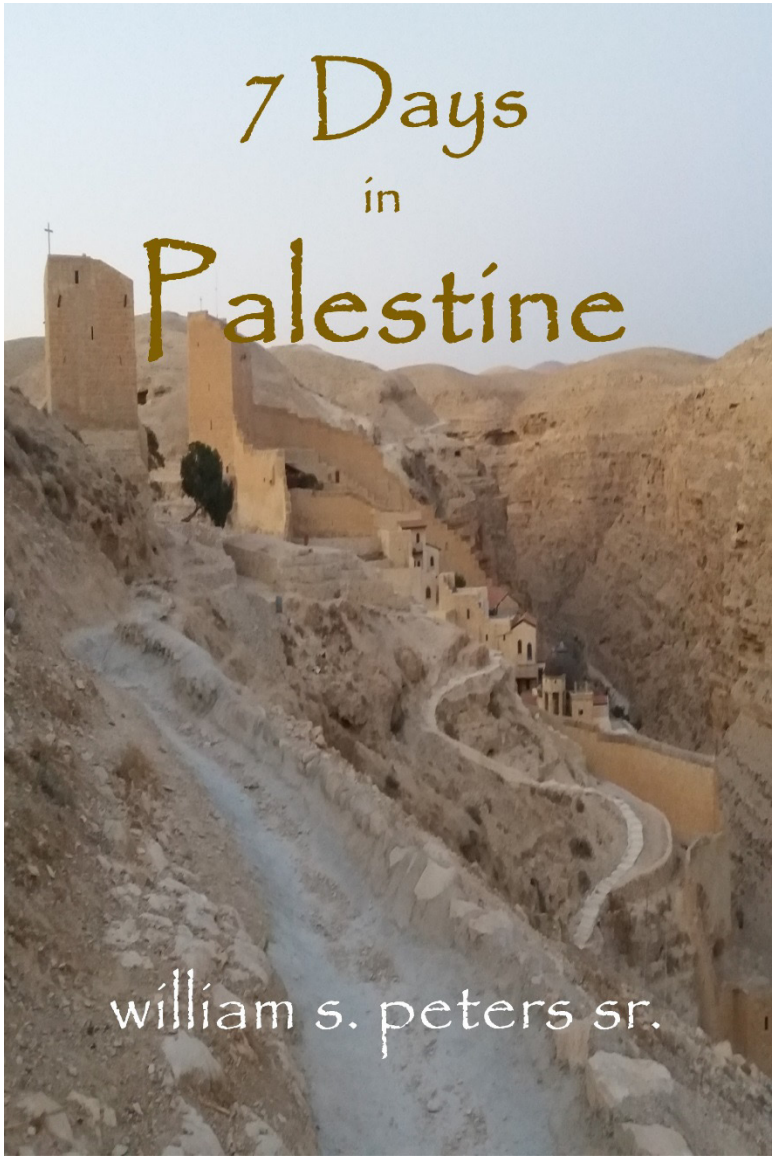
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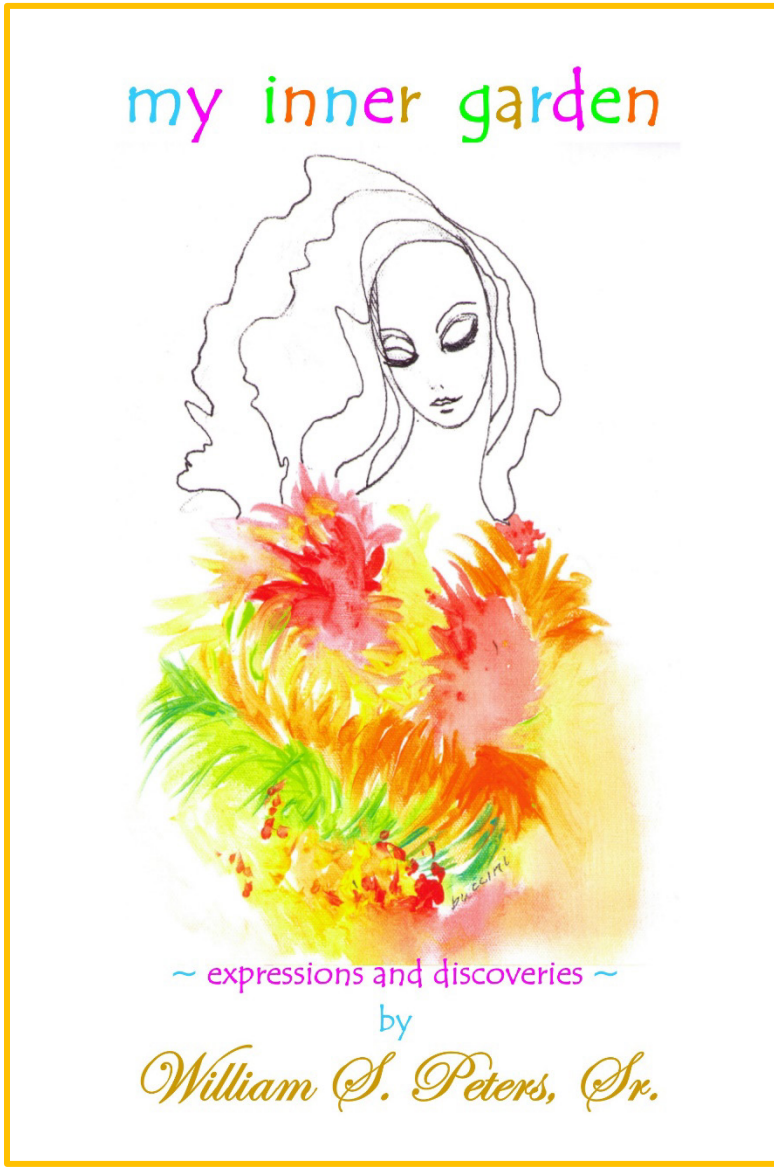
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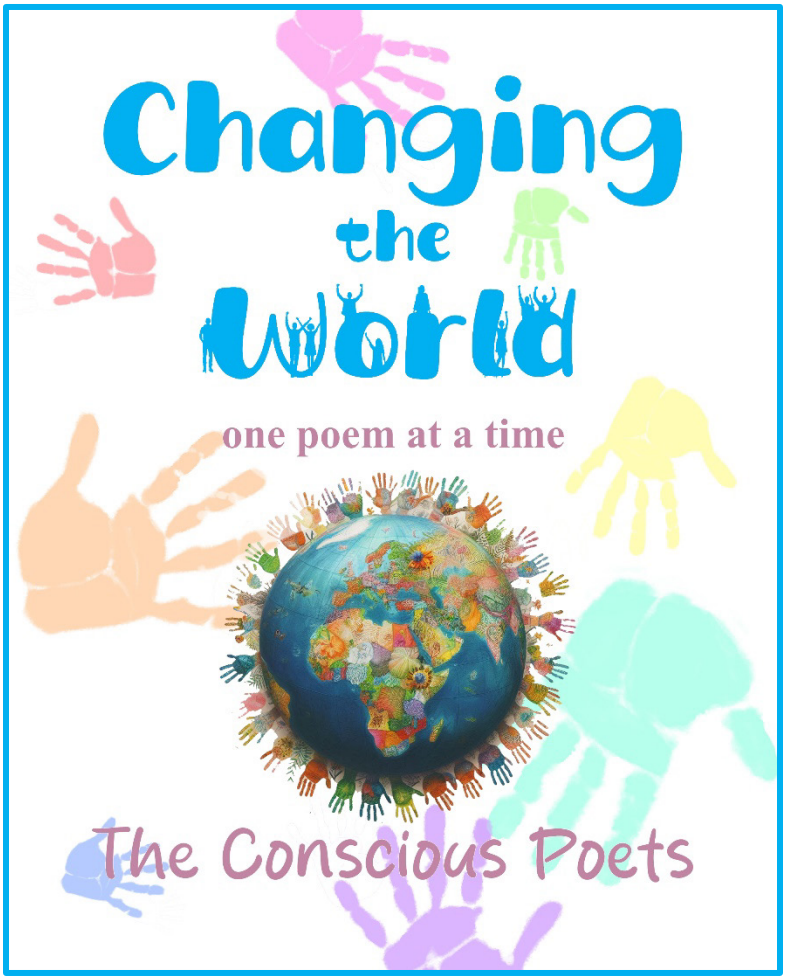


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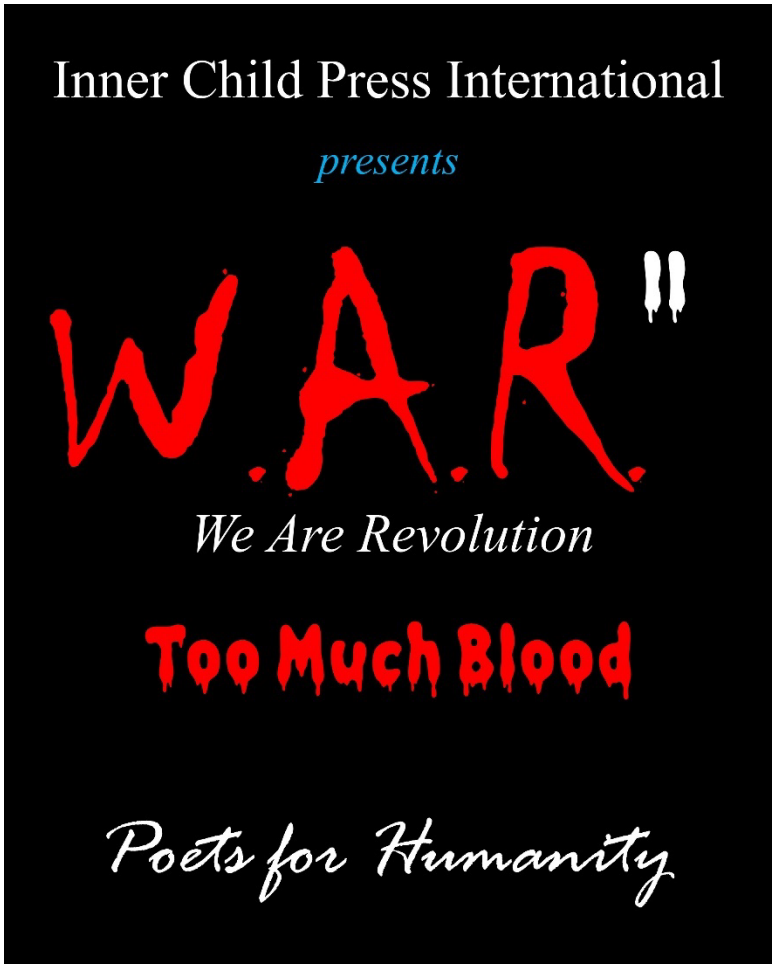
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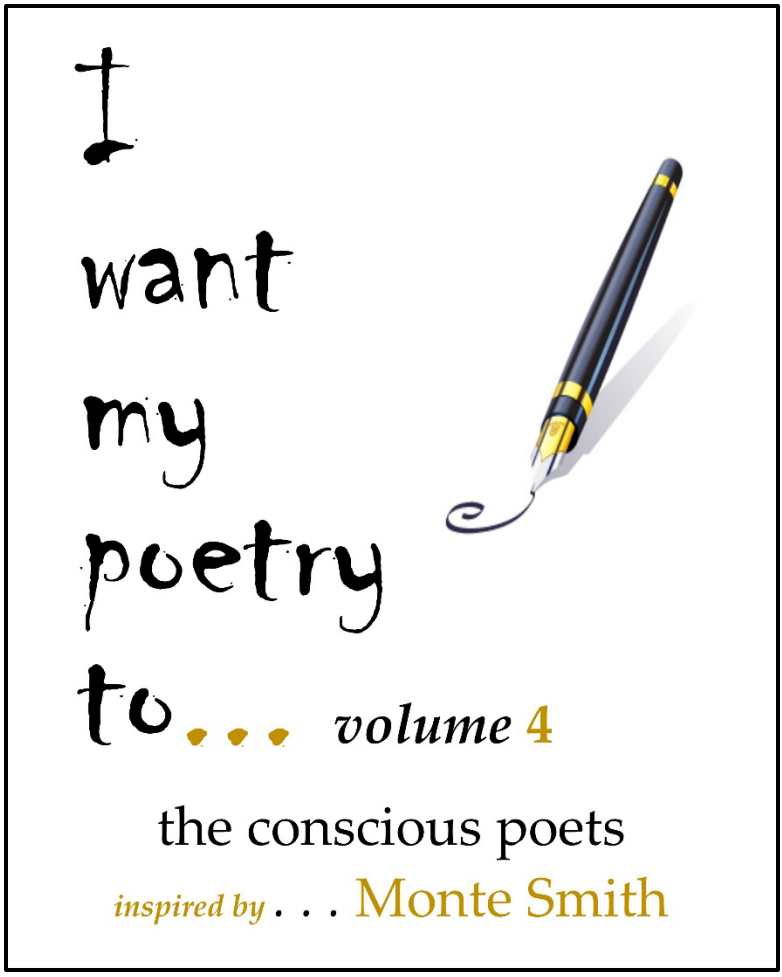
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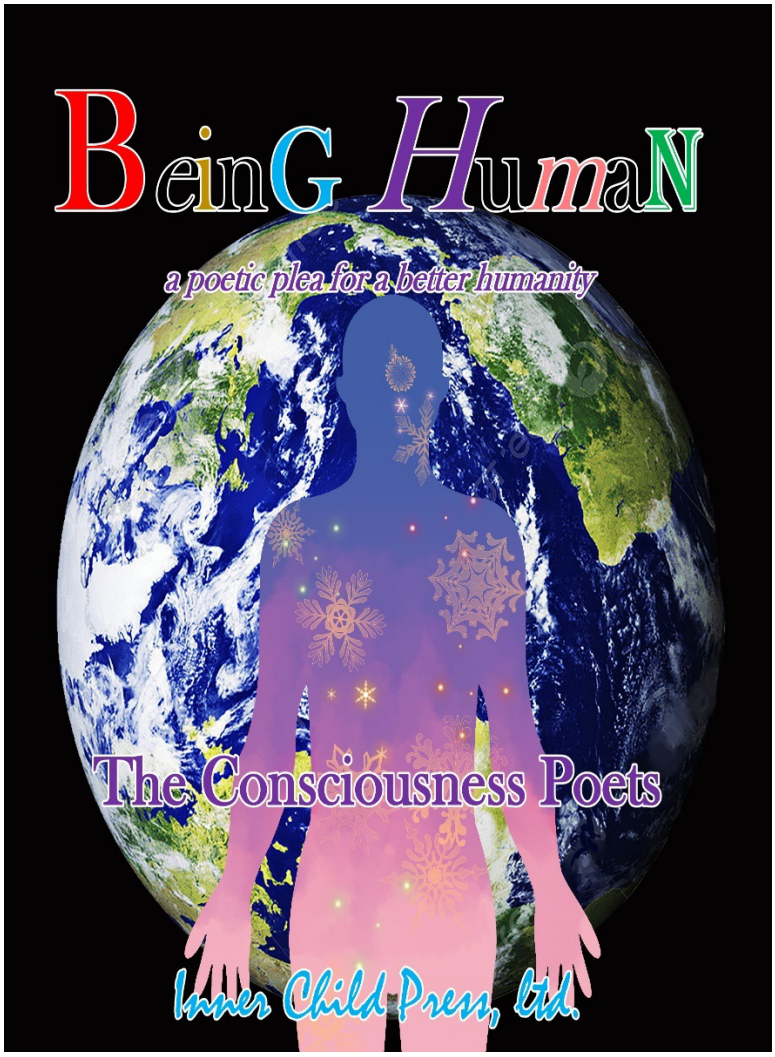
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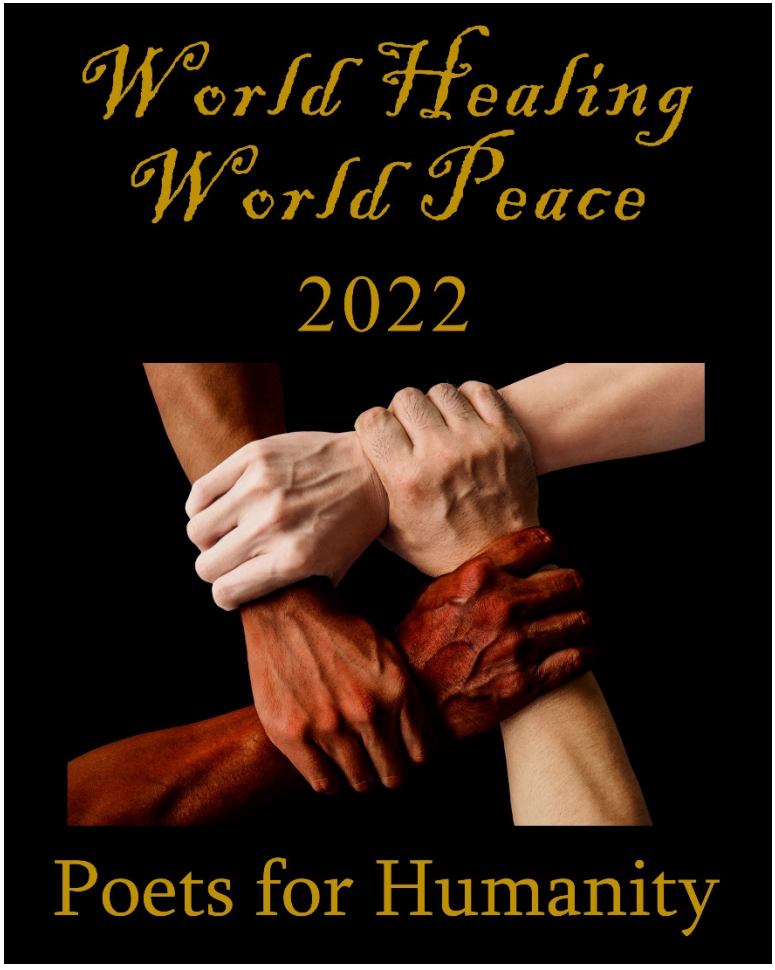
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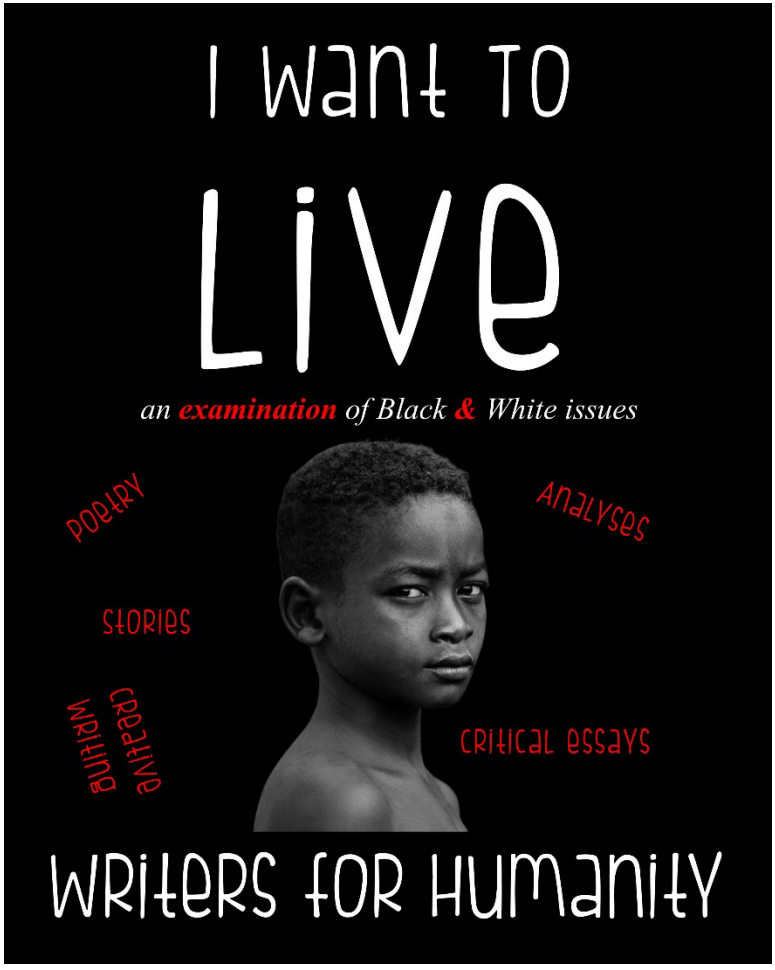
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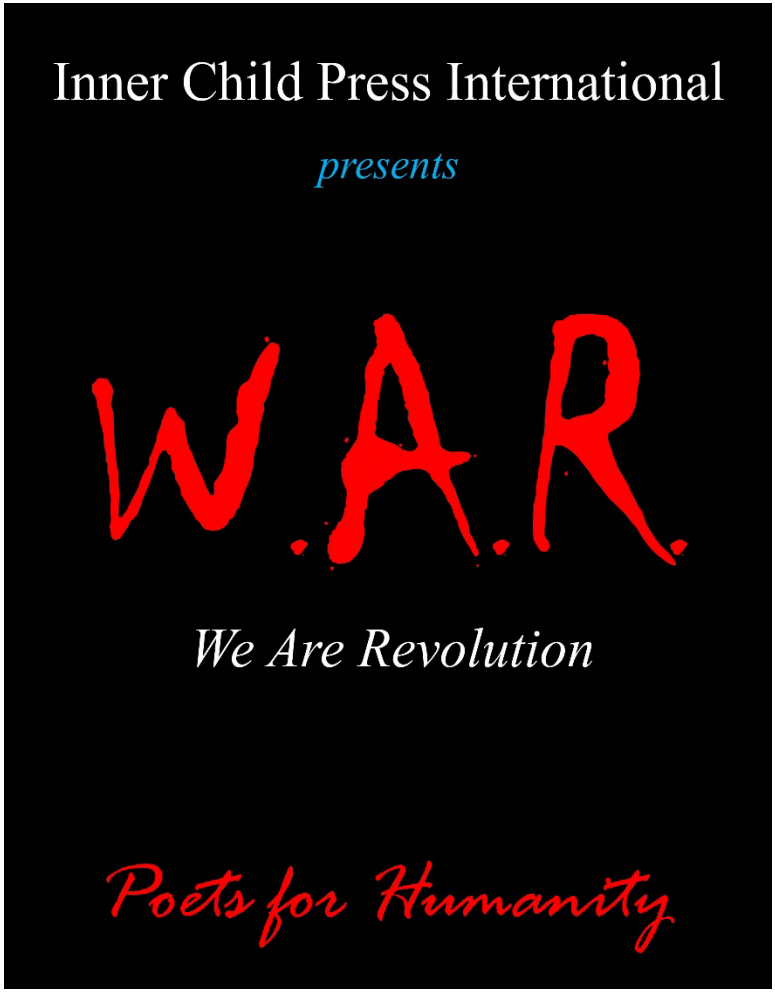
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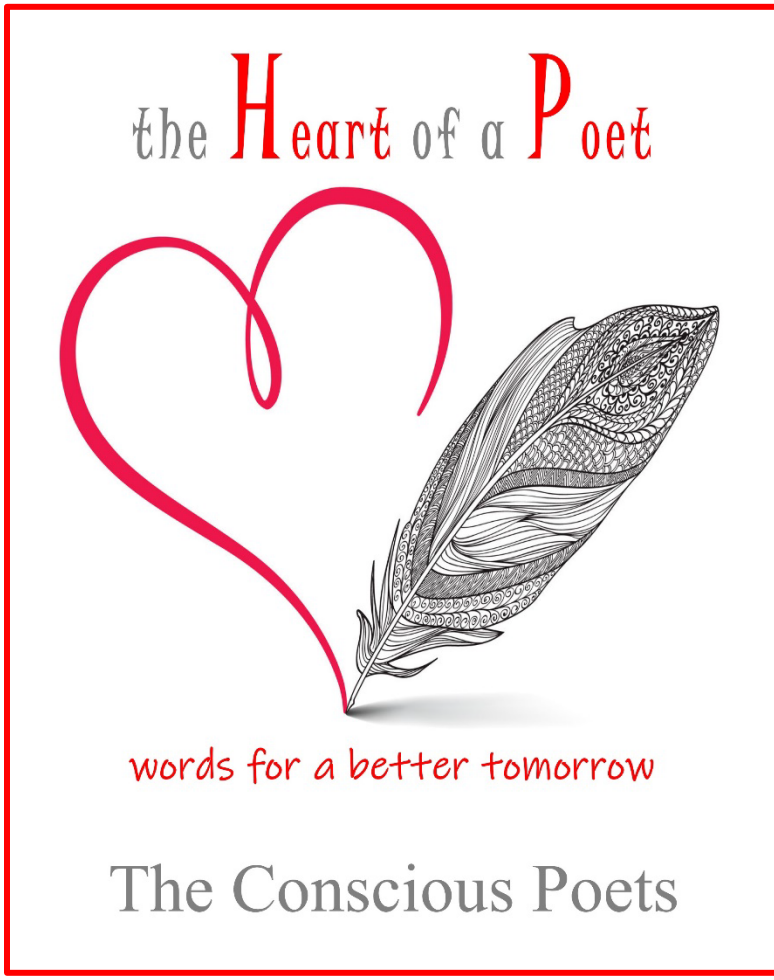
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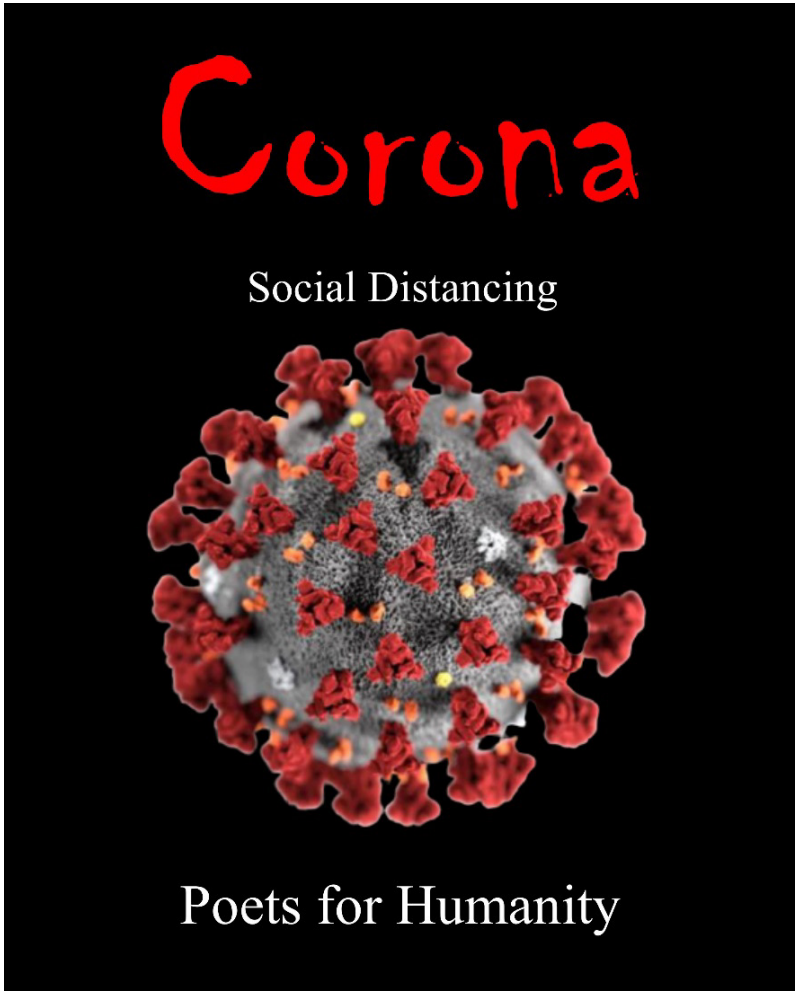
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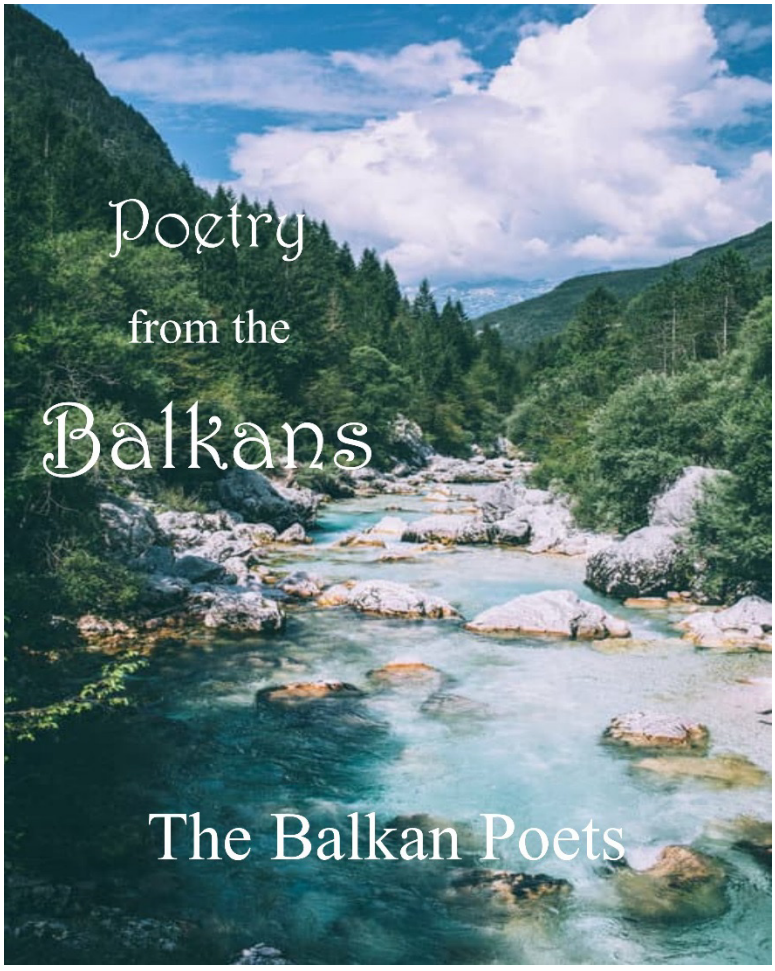
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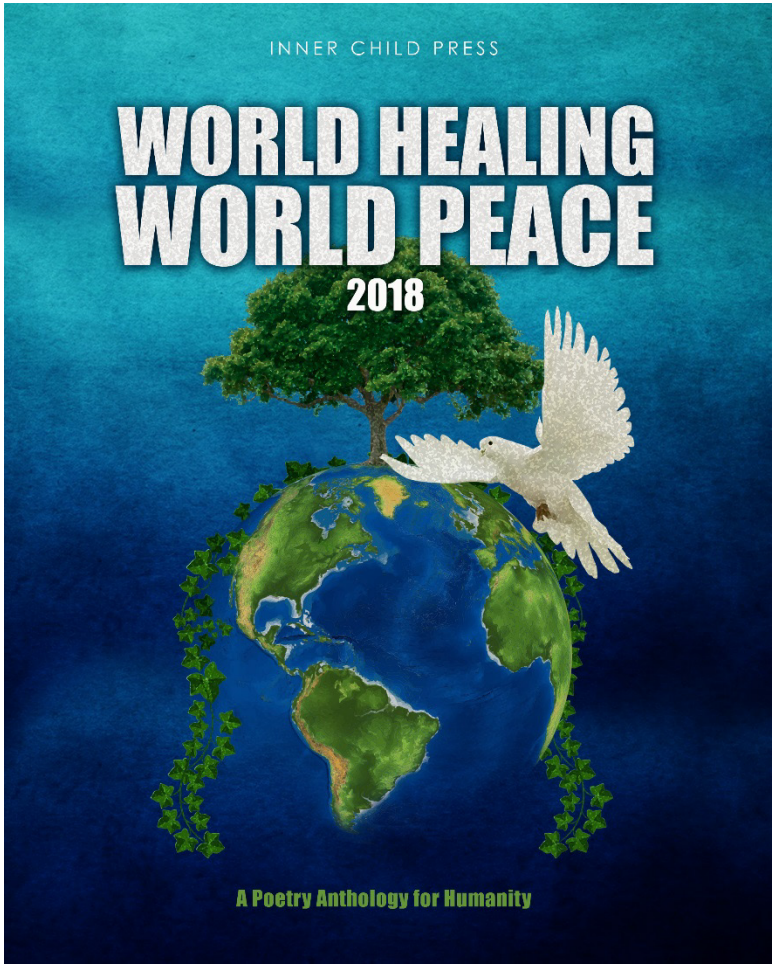
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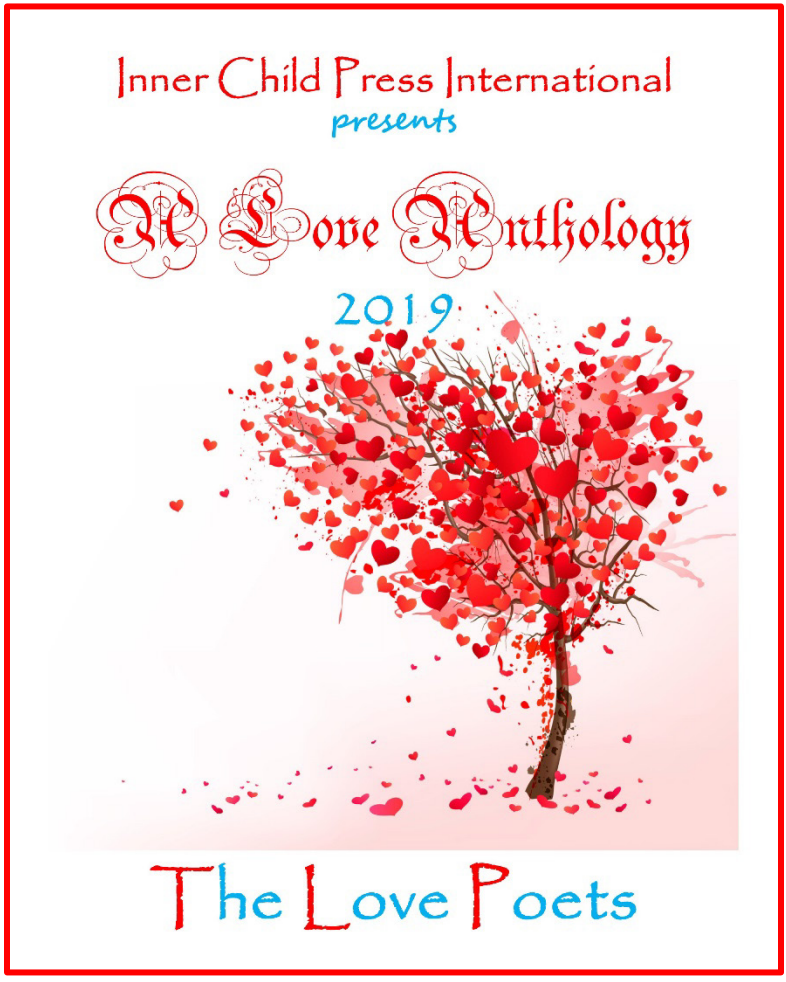
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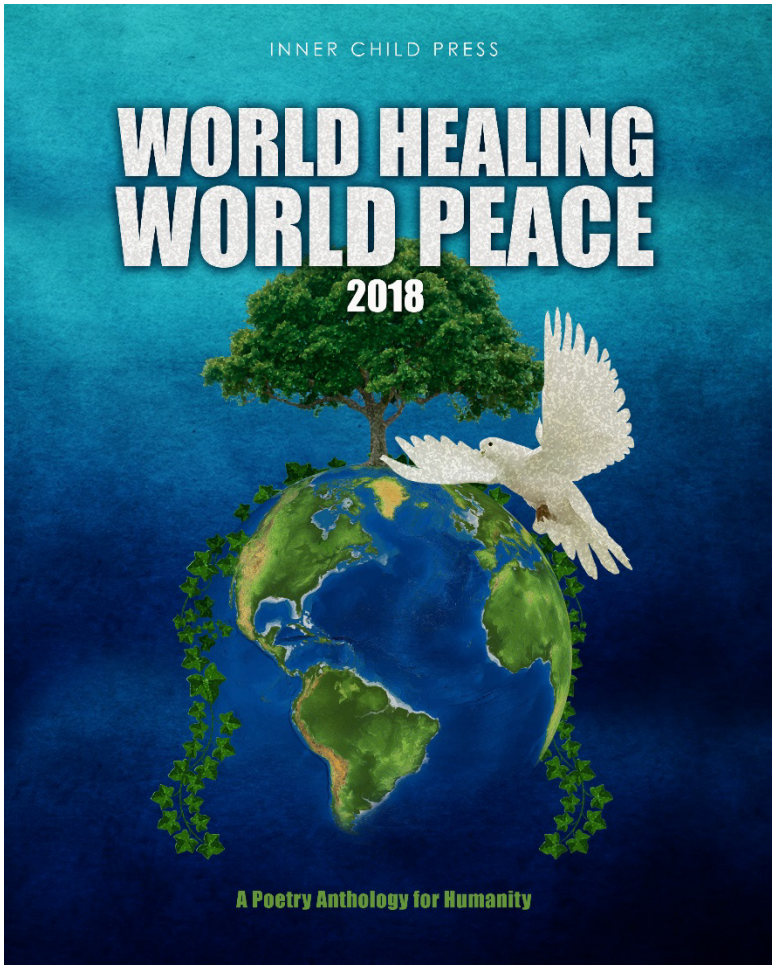
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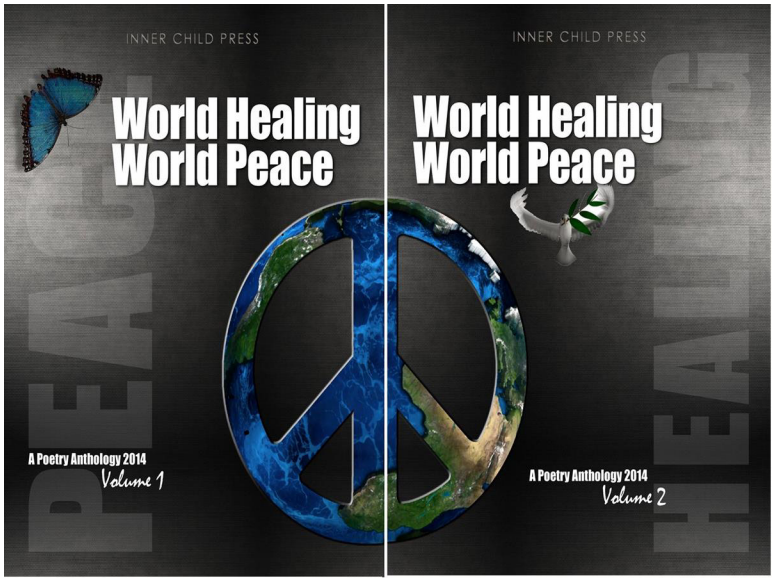
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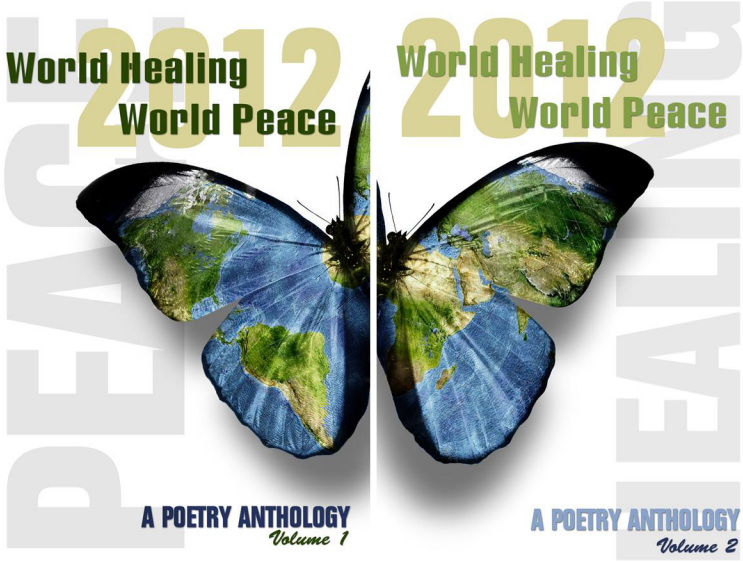
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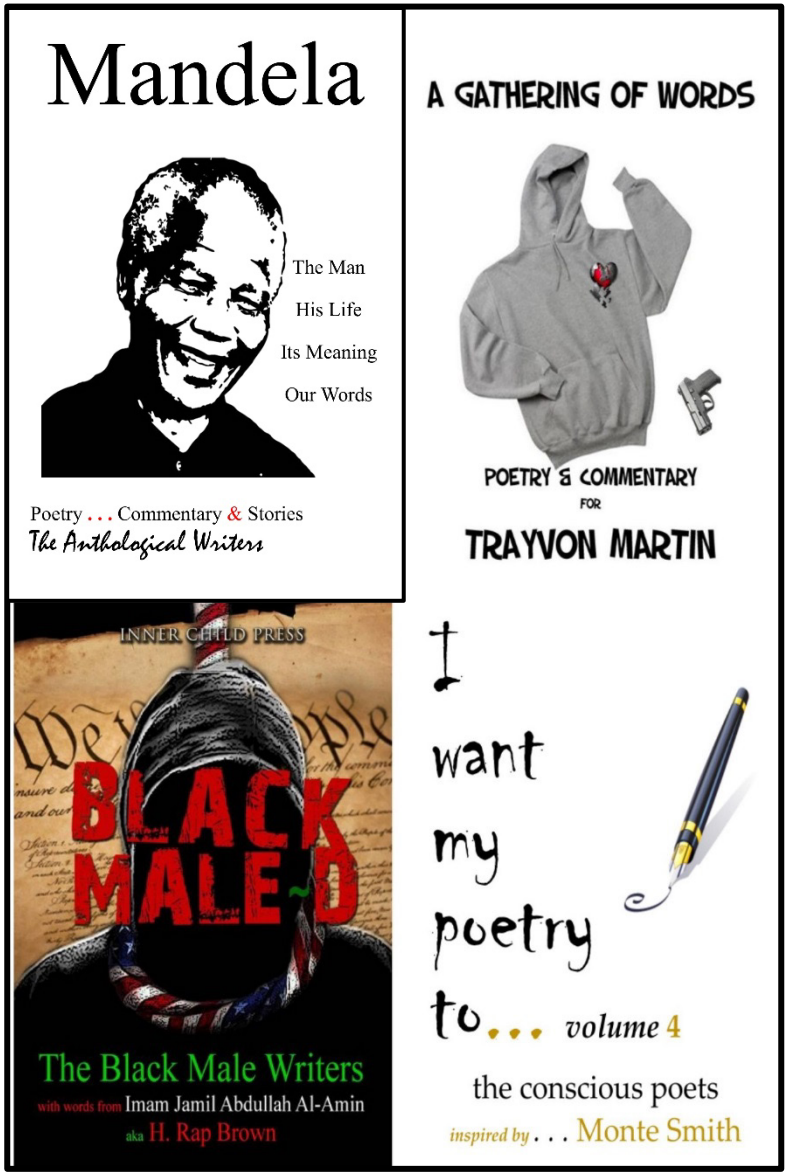
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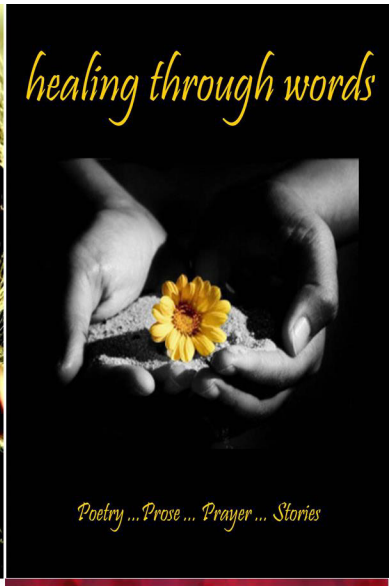
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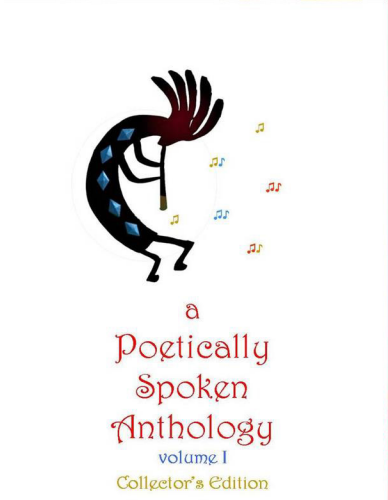


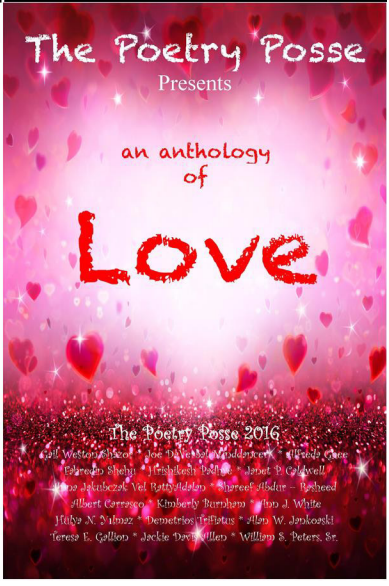
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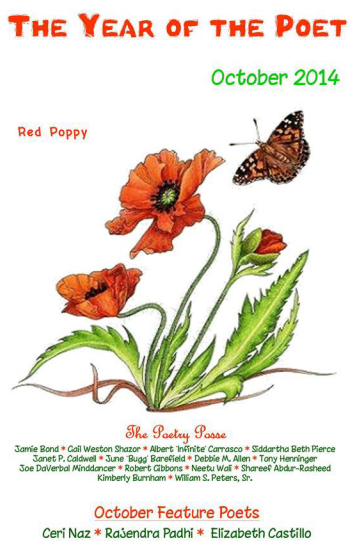


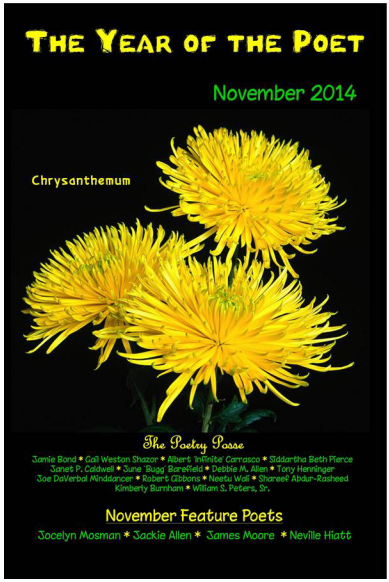


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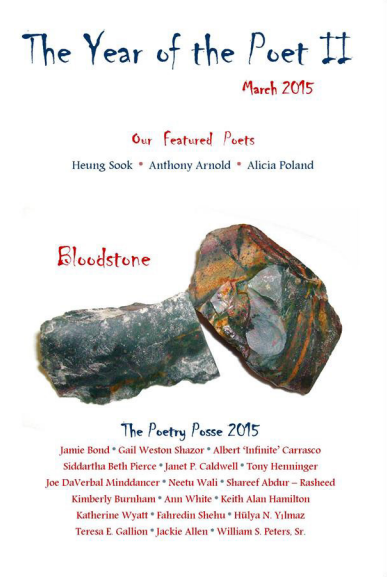


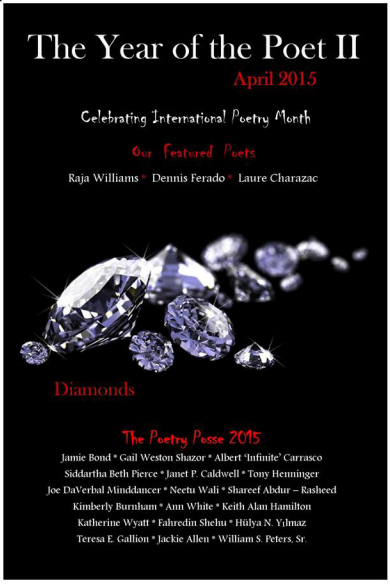
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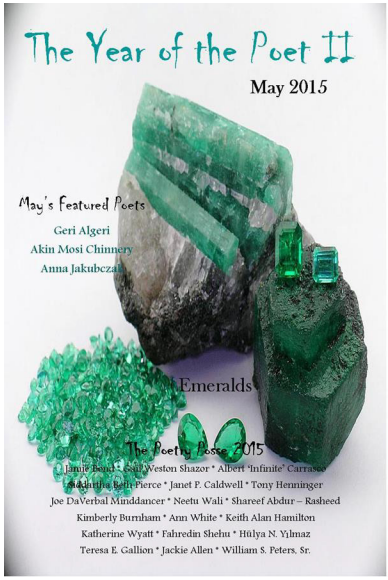


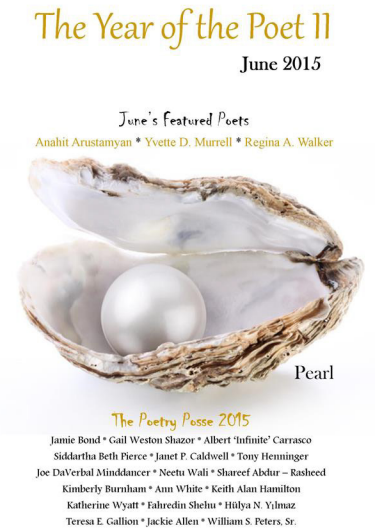


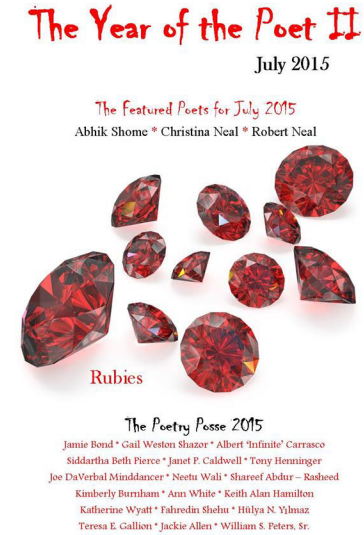


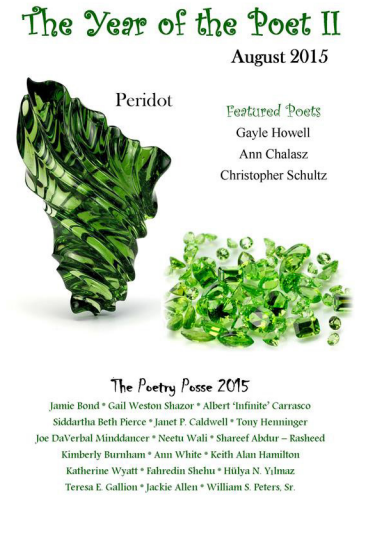
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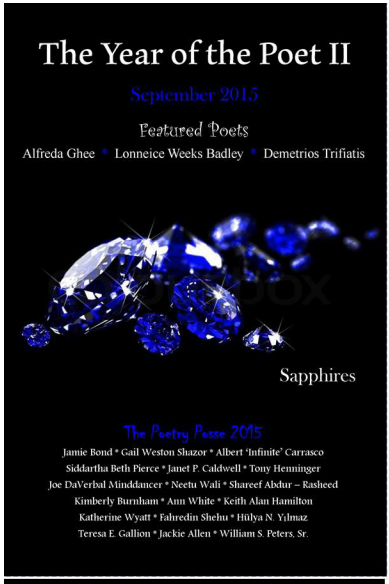




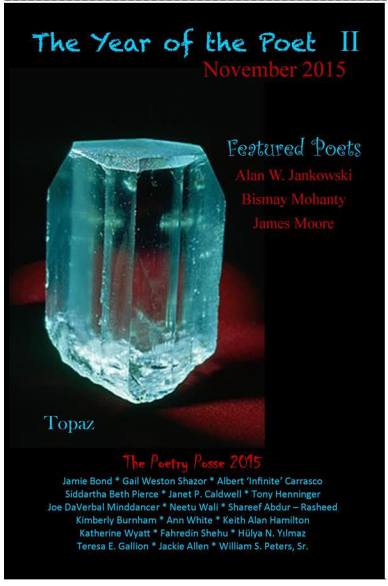


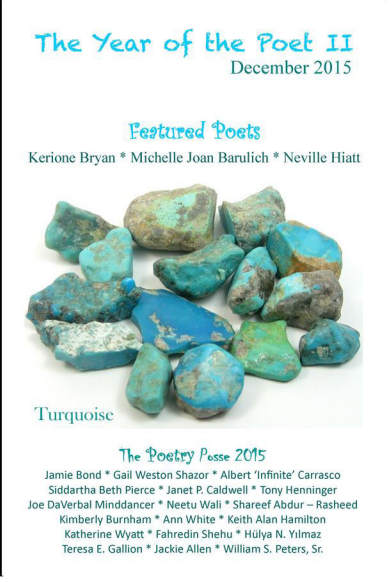
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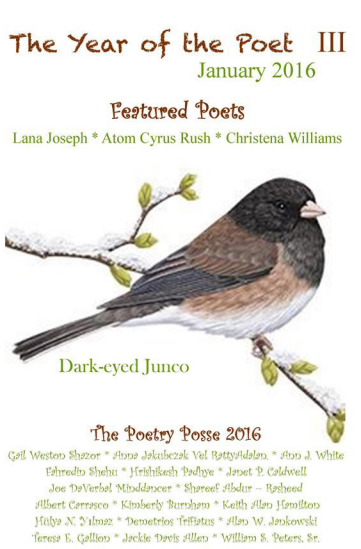


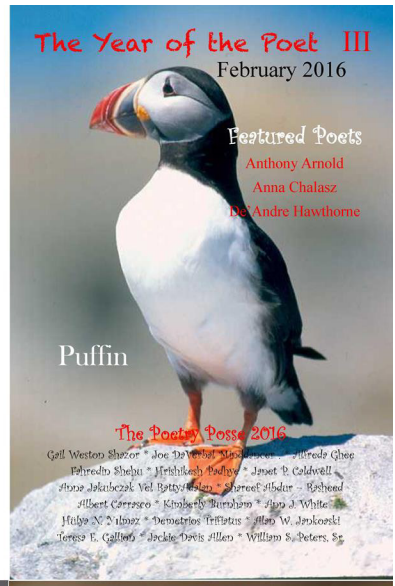


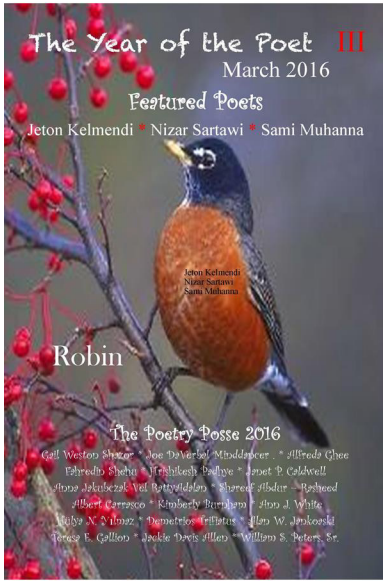


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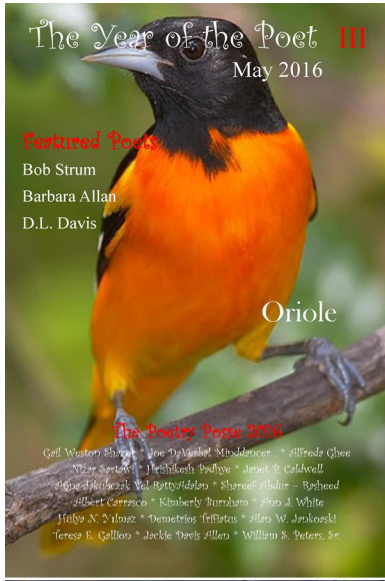


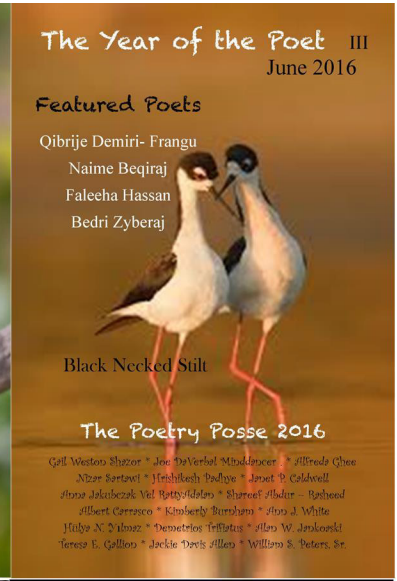




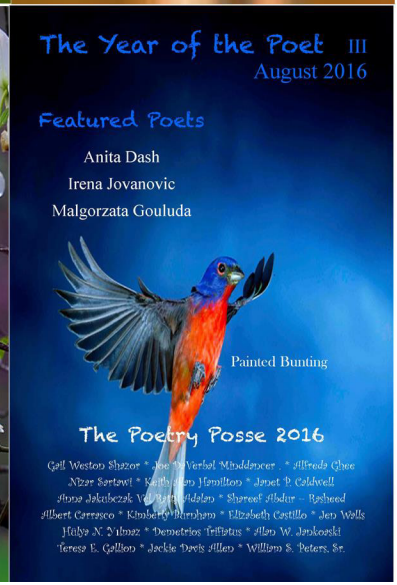
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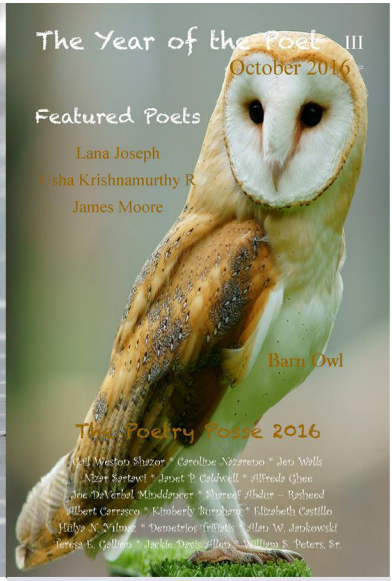


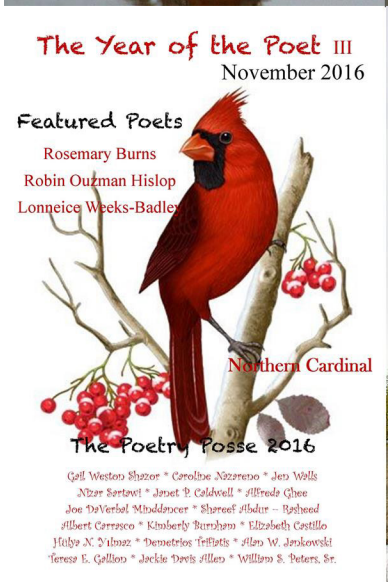


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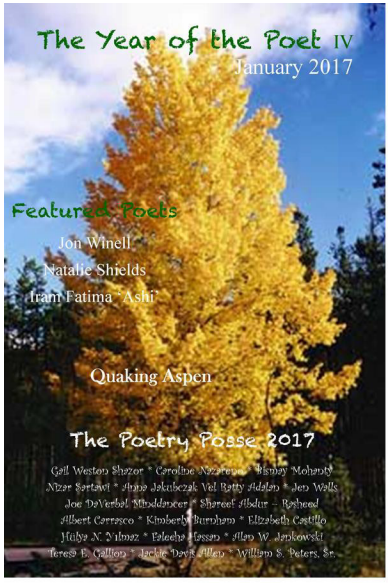


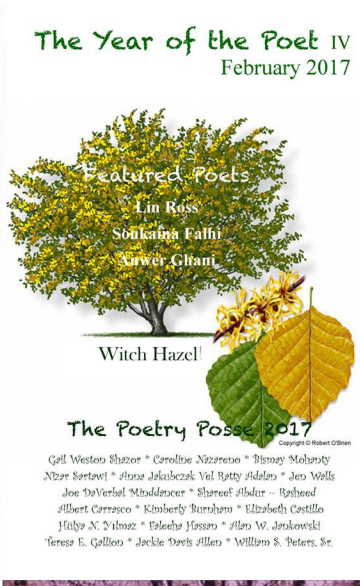


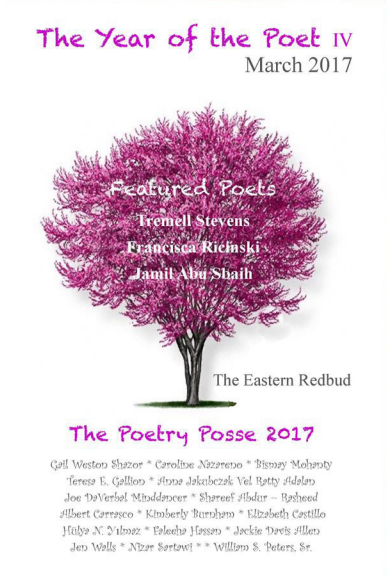


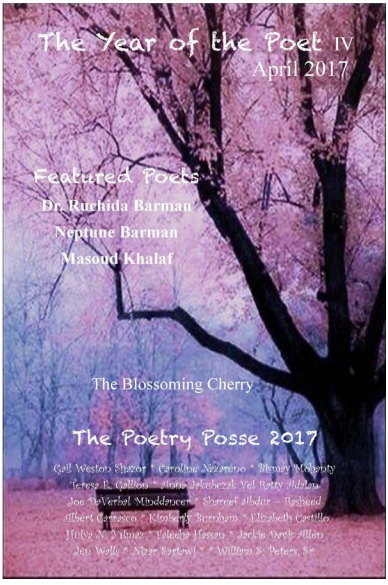
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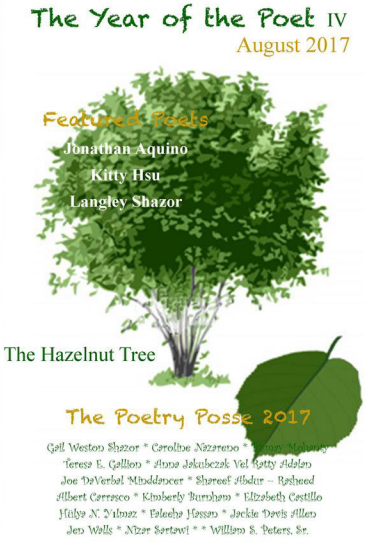
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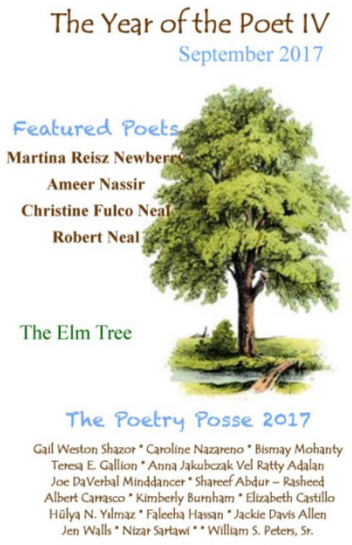


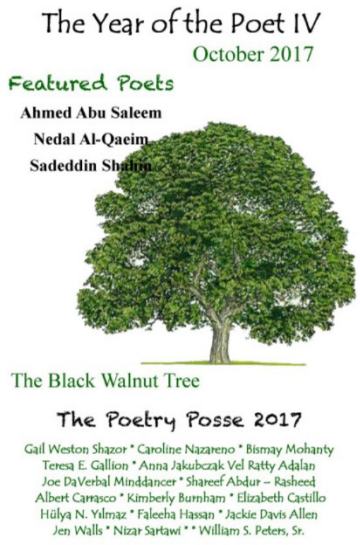


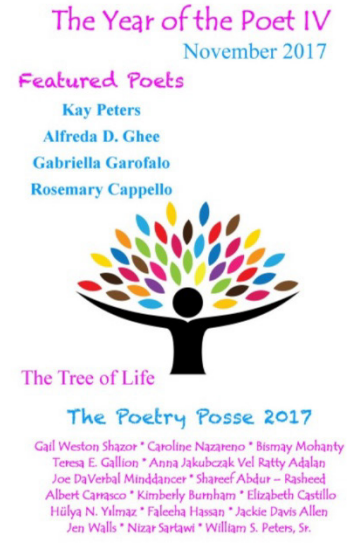


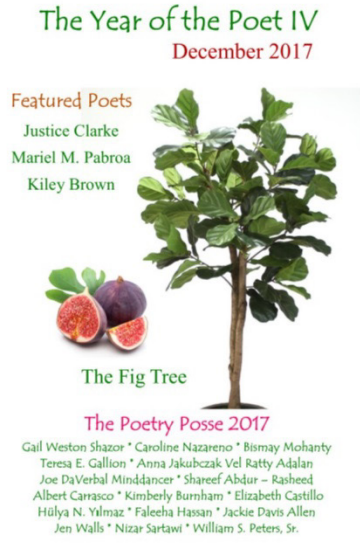
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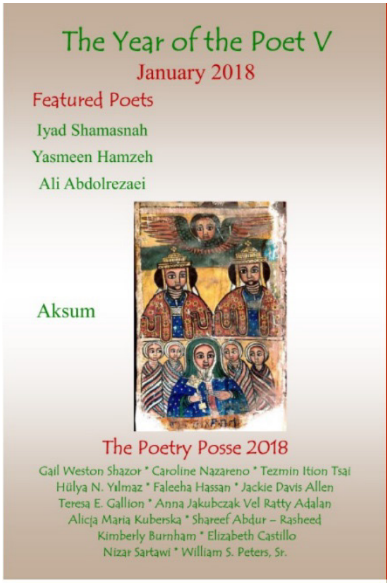


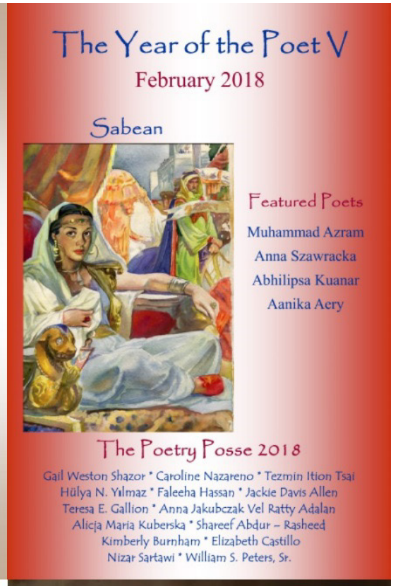




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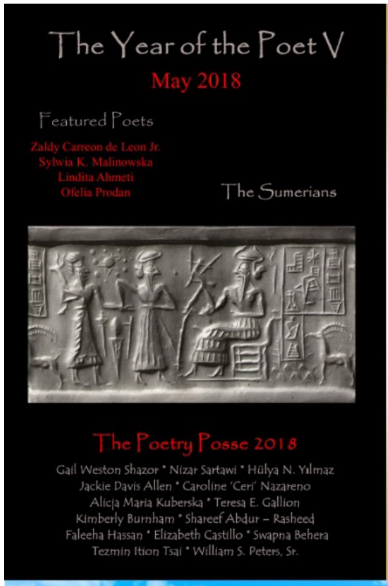


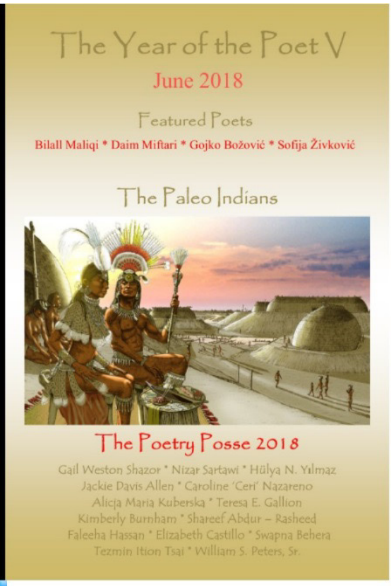




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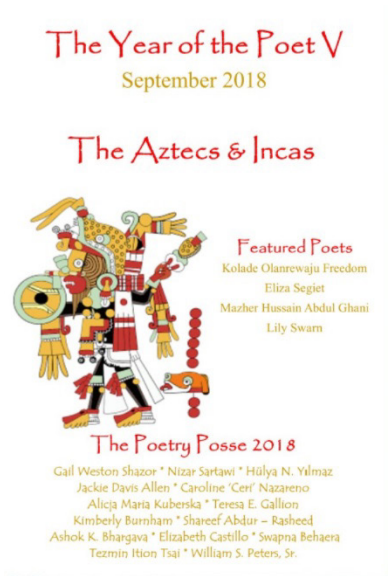


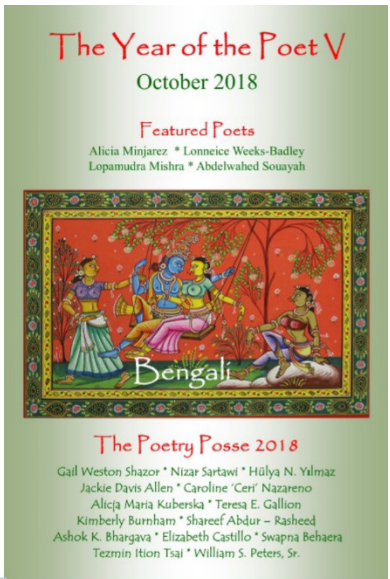




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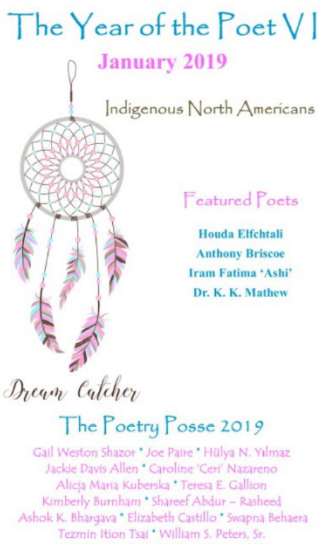




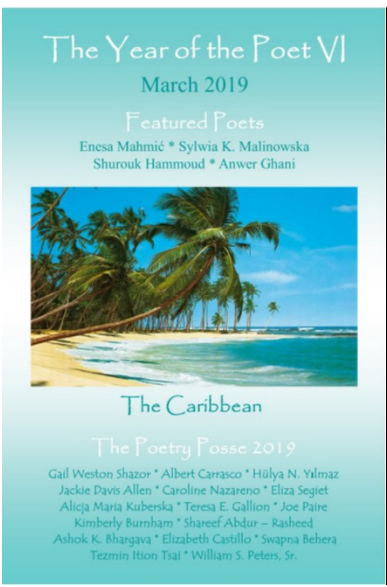


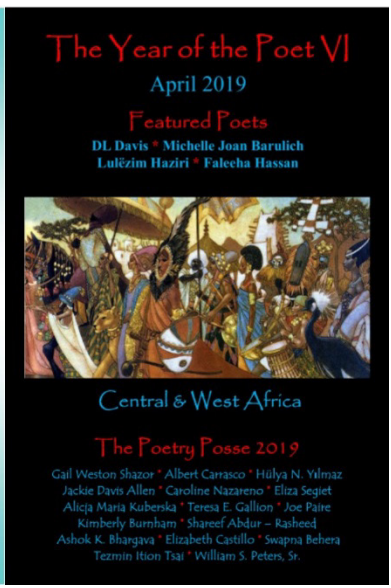
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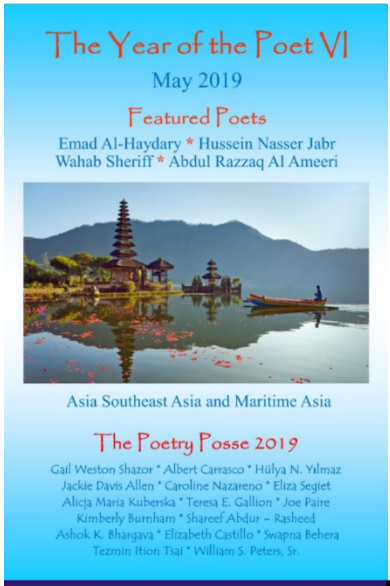






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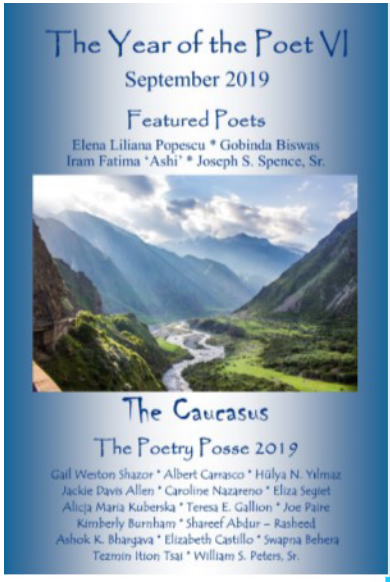


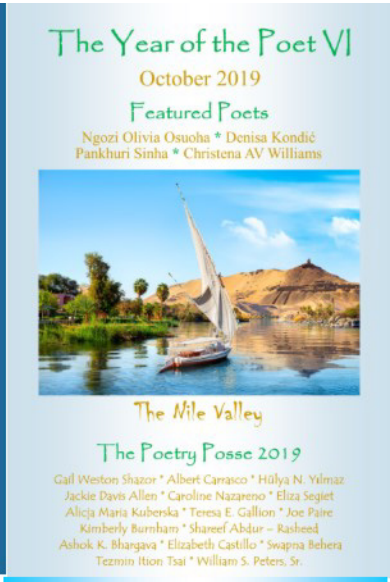


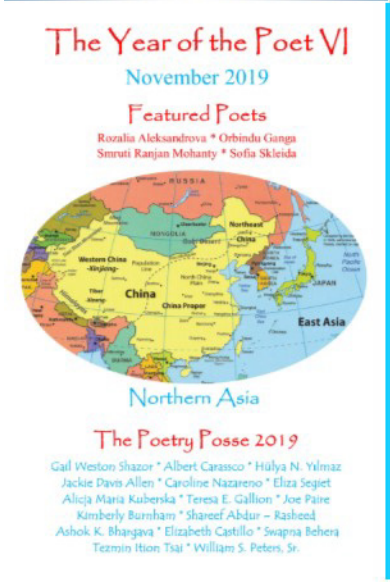


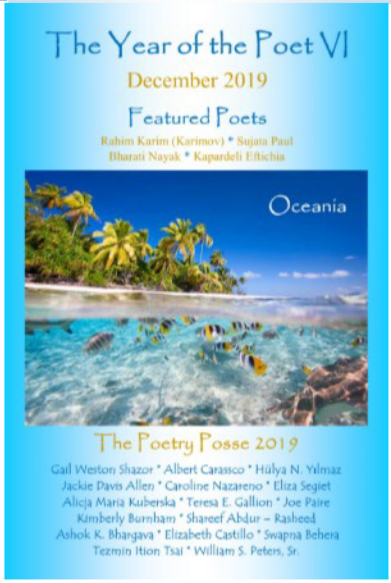
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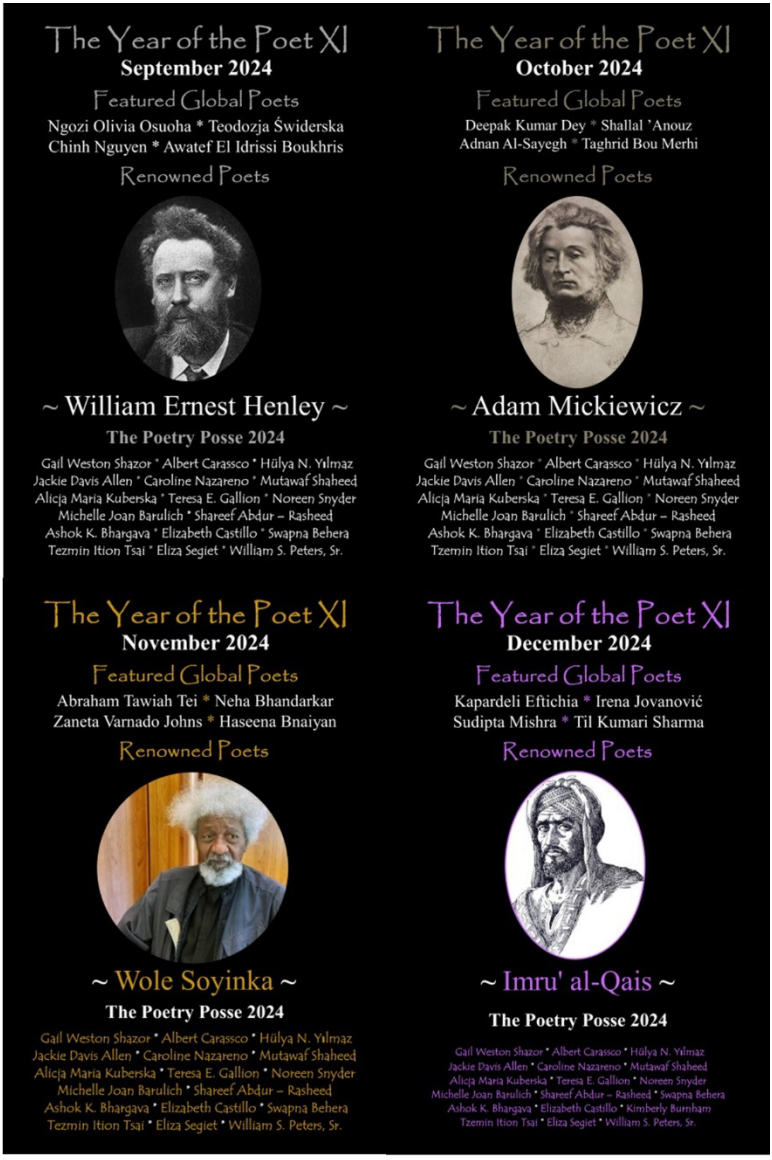
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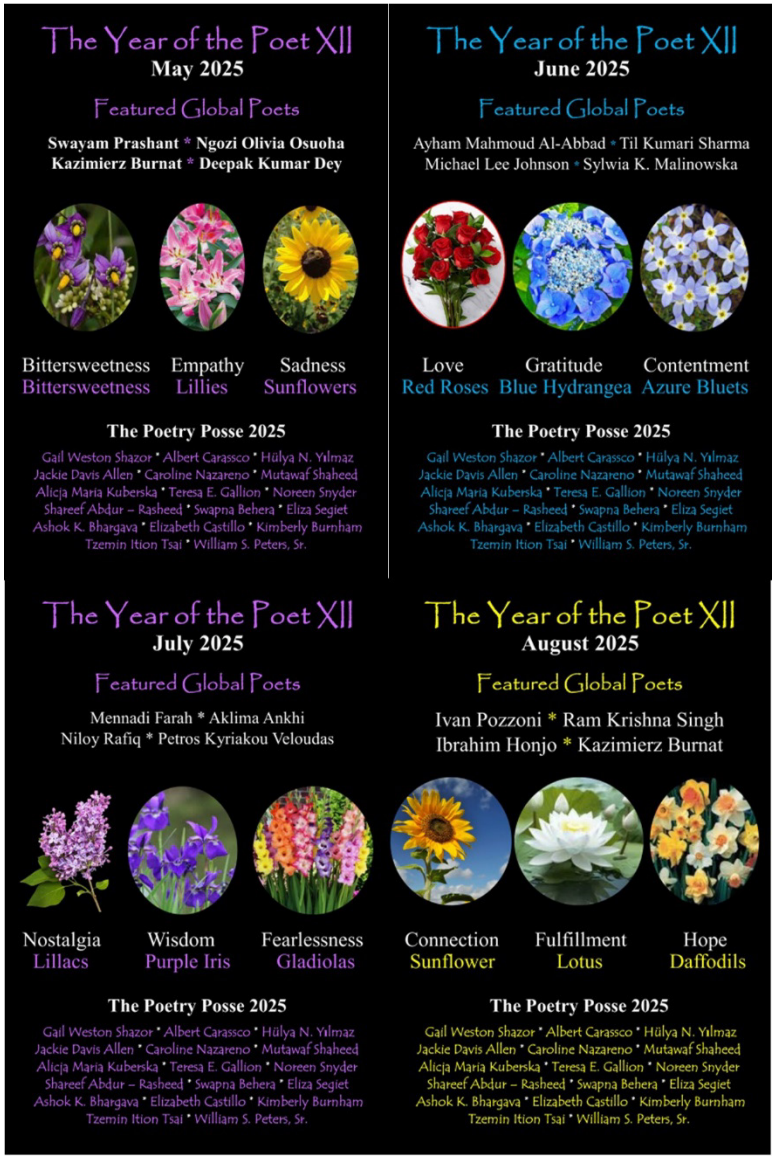
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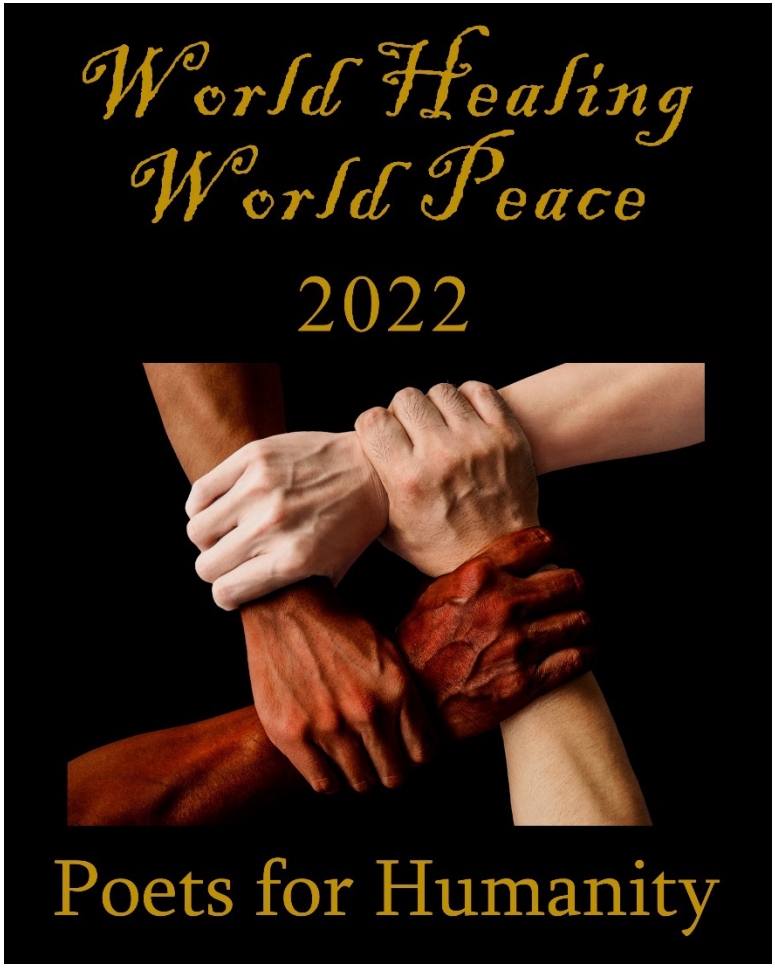
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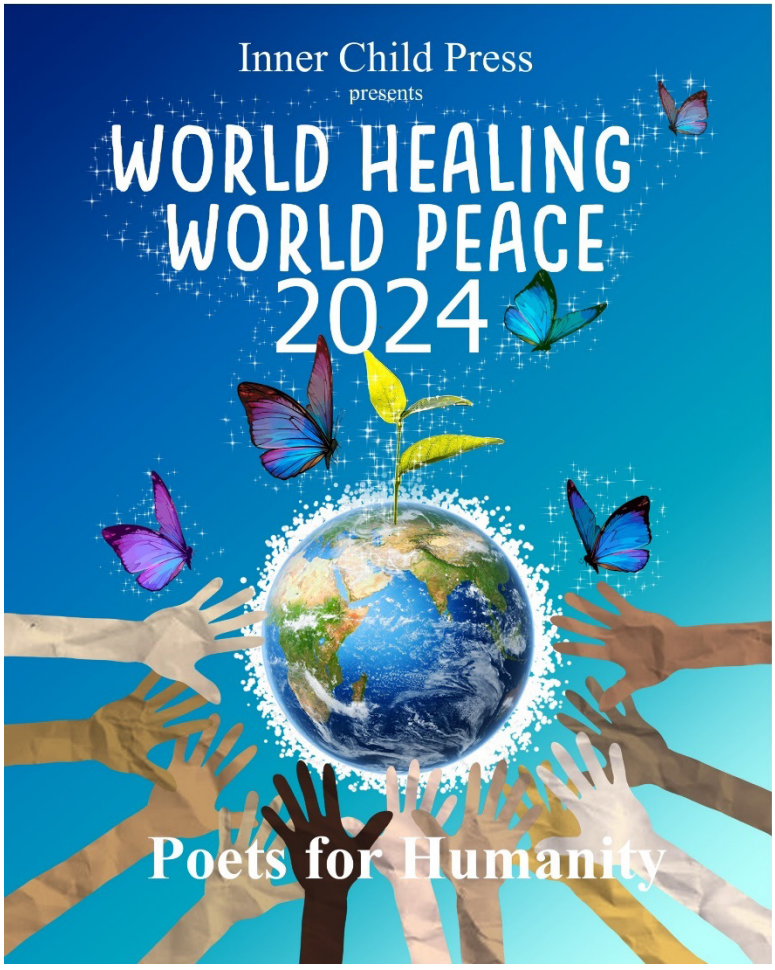
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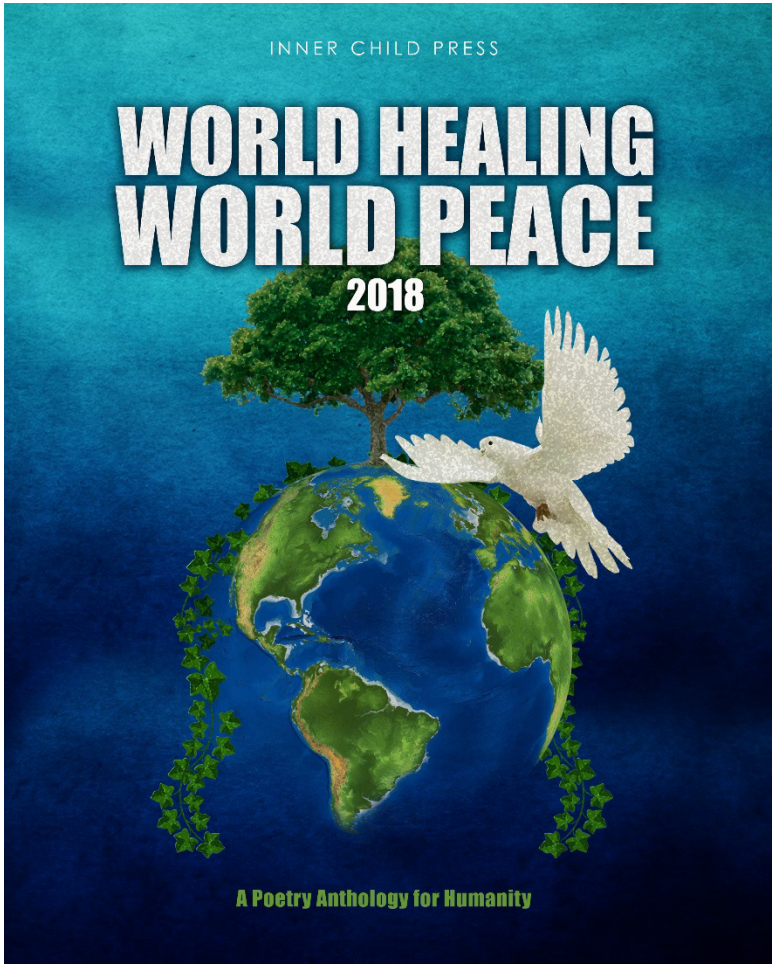
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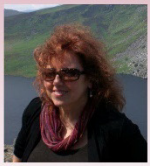
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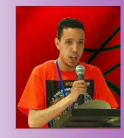
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