

LITERATURE | INTERVIEW

INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE



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PANACHE

A PRODUCT OF
AADHYA PUBLISHING HOUSE

GUEST OF THE MONTH

MS. PAVITHRA SRINIVASAN
FOUNDER [FOCUS STUDY HUB]
ACQUISITION EDITOR
AADHYA PUBLISHING HOUSE

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CHIEF EDITOR:
AKANKSHA SHRIVASTAVA
AADHYA PUBLISHING HOUSE

Preface

"Panache" is not just a name. It is a basic value of our "Aadhya Publishing House" as we believe talent should never die. Rather it should always stand out like the feathered plume on a helmet to attract the world and that is what Panache means. We, as the Publisher, believe in encouraging new talent in the field of literature. We want each and every poet to get the opportunity to express themselves and get the proper acknowledge that they deserve. They should be known by the world for their views and we hope very soon we shall be able to achieve this.

Panache is a monthly international magazine in the English Language, that is released on digital platforms for literature lovers.

However, our work does not end here. I, Akanksha Shrivastava, Publisher and Chief Editor of Aadhya Publishing house, am trying to put a smile on the faces of poor children by providing them with food on behalf of our publishing house. By taking this small initiative, it is our wish to fulfill this basic need of food so that we help the children to survive in a better way.



AADHYA PUBLISHING HOUSE

PRESENTS

PANACHE International Magazine

December 2024

**Publisher &
Chief Editor**

Akanksha Shrivastava
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Panache is a monthly magazine which is published by **AADHYA PUBLISHING HOUSE**. In this magazine we encourage new poets and writers by publishing their writings. Every month we offer a competition in which poets and writers can take part by registering themselves. The registered participants send their writings along with their name , photograph and phone number. The magazine will be launched on our facebook page on 1st day of every month. After the launch of magazine every registered writer will get the pdf of the magazine. Out of all the registered participants we ask every writer for their top 5 choices. And then we promote our writers on our social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Youtube, Twitter . This “**Panache**” will definitely be the attraction of literature and also the rise of every poet...



Akanksha Shrivastava
Publisher & Chief Editor

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Introduction

Pavithra Srinivasan is a passionate writer and a tutor in Sydney, Australia. She started her own tutoring business in 2019 and has worked with more than 100 students. She is also a successful author of the novel 'The Wings of Victory'. In this interview, she will be talking about her experience moving to Australia and how teaching played an important role in her life. Her story is going to offer a unique look of how culture shapes writing and teaching.



Pavithra Srinivasan

Ms. Pavithra Srinivasan
Founder [Focus Study Hub]
Aquisition Editor
[Aadhya Publishing House]

**CELEBRATING THE EXCELLENCE AND HARDWORK
WITH HONORABLE **Ms. PAVITHRA SRINIVASAN**
(ACQUISITION EDITOR, AADHYA PUBLISHING HOUSE)**

1) What initially inspired you to start teaching and writing?

When I first moved to Australia as a student, life was really challenging. I had a restriction of working 20 hours per week, which made it tough to cover high living expenses. I could not get a full-time job due to visa restrictions and everyday felt like a struggle to make ends meet. Despite all that, I refused to lose my confidence. In 2019, I started tutoring in Sydney just to kickstart my part time work. My work was appreciated and I felt happy when I was able to help the students. Eventually, I became more confident, and I pursued teaching.

2) What was the first experience like when you moved to Australia?

When I first arrived in Australia, everything was new to me. I was living in a homestay since I was under 18, so I was staying with an Aussie family. Thankfully, they were incredibly kind and welcoming which made the transition easier. I also attended a university that was well-maintained and professional. But, it felt like a completely different environment to what I was used to.

3) Did your transition to Australian culture affect your writing and teaching?

I did not completely change to Australian culture. However, I was and I am still adapting to the Aussie way of working. It is a new experience every day. While I teach students, I also have to learn a lot. Like how it is said that necessity is the mother of all inventions, the need to train my students properly, paved a way for my own self-learning.

4) What was the biggest challenge you faced as a newcomer to Australia?

My main focus at the time was to get a part time job to help cover my expenses, but I did not want to miss out on my studies. It was a balancing act, trying to make sure I could support myself financially while still staying committed to my education.

5) Did you integrate your experience of living abroad into your writing?

Yes, I did integrate my experience of living abroad. I have written a novel which comprises the harsh experiences of immigrants while it also gives hope that every tunnel has light at the end. The name of my novel is Wings of Victory, and it is available on Amazon. It is a clear guide which will train your mind to stay calm under severe situations.

6) Were there any surprising cultural differences that affected your work?

There were no cultural differences as such. However, it was hard to understand the expectations and satisfy them. We had to learn everything on our own and the assumptions have to be accurate. Like India, there will be no one to guide you in each and every step. I used to feel left out. But, still I survived.

7) What was the moment you truly felt at home in Australia?

I truly felt at home when my students' parents treated me like their own family member. I really can't express my gratitude for their love and support. They supported me to a great extent and without their help, I would have not survived the hardships of my student life.

8) How do you balance your personal writing projects with your teaching responsibilities?

I use my morning hours to write. This is the only time I get to brainstorm as well as learn. In the evenings, I teach and that is how my routine is right now. At times, I also take time during the night to brainstorm. My students also give me a lot of input and ideas. My students are also like my peers. Infact, my first novel was drafted by Niyati Patel, who is one among my most hard-working and talented students who also helped me realize my potential.

9) In your view, what is the ultimate value of teaching writing to others?

I always feel that writing is a very powerful tool that has the strength to change society. So, one should never feel shy to express their thoughts. So, when I teach writing, I feel elated because I am teaching my people the art of self-expression which is very important in today's world.

10) What advice would you give to writers who are new to incorporating writing in their teaching?

Here, I need to talk about the importance of taking the first step. It is never too late to start what you want to do. Whenever you get criticized for your mistakes, just think that it is a wonderful chance for you to learn and dive into it. It is not easy, but it is worth it. I was initially supported by my clients to teach writing despite me saying that I am not a good grammar editor. But still the trust that my clients gave me encouraged me to keep writing. Even after publishing my first novel, I faced a few negative criticisms but all those just made my novel better. Now, I am happy to see the slow but steady growth of my book and feel immensely joyful when my reader writes to me.



Book review

CONTEST

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National Championship



NATIONAL KARATE CHAMPIONSHIP 2024

KERALA (KOLLAM) STUDENT **CHRISTY** WON GOLD MEDAL



Students from Kollam district, Kerala, representing the Japan Shotokan Karate Organization - India (JSKOI), participated in the prestigious 'KIO 1st Federation Cup Premier League & Youth League Karate Championship 2024' held at Talkatora Indoor Stadium, Delhi. Under the expert guidance of their trainer, Mr. Renshi John Master, ten students displayed stellar performances, bringing pride to their schools and state. The competition took place from November 19 to November 23, 2024.



Gold Medal Winner:

The highlight of the event was Christy Sam, a 6th standard student from Basелиos Marthoma Mathews-II Central School, Sooranad, Kollam. Christy clinched the Gold Medal in the Sub-Junior (11 Years, Female Kata) category, showcasing remarkable skill and determination. Her achievement stands as a testament to her hard work and dedication, bringing glory not only to her school but also to the entire Kollam district.



The students' achievements, especially Christy Sam's Gold Medal victory, highlight their dedication, talent, and the exceptional training by Mr. Renshi John Master. Their success has brought pride to Kollam district and their schools.

OTHER HEROES OF THE CHAMPIONSHIP

BIG APPLAUDS
AADHYA PUBLISHING HOUSE
IS VERY PROUD OF YOU KIDS

Participants and Achievements:

Sub-Junior (6 Years Kata):

Chris Mathew Sam - Baselios Marthoma Mathews-II Central School, Sooranad

Adithya S Pillai - Travancore Devaswom Board Central School, Chakkuvalli

Sub-Junior (7 Years Male Kata & Kumite):

Mohammad Tippu Sultan - Shanti Niketan Higher Secondary School, Patharam

Sub-Junior (8 Years Male Kata & Kumite):

Adish S.V. - Basalel English Medium School, Sooranad

Sub-Junior (10 Years Male Kata & Kumite):

Ashiq S. - Basalel English Medium School, Sooranad

Rizwan Rafeek - Basalel English Medium School, Sooranad

Sub-Junior (11 Years Male Kata & Kumite):

Mohammed Nayif - Baselios Marthoma Mathews-II Central School, Sooranad

Cadet Male Kata & Kumite:

Ahammed Safwan H. - Baselios Marthoma Mathews-II Central School, Sooranad

Sub-Junior (9 Years Female Kata & Kumite):

Hanana Fathima - Shanti Niketan Central School, Patharam

Sub-Junior (11 Years Female Kata & Kumite):

Christy Sam - Baselios Marthoma Mathews-II Central School, Sooranad

Medal Winners:

Gold Medalist:

Christy Sam (Kata)

Bronze Medalists:

Chris Mathew Sam (Kata)

Adithya S Pillai (Kata)

Mohammad Tippu Sultan (Kata)

Adish S.V. (Kumite)

Ashiq S. (Kata)

Rizwan Rafeek (Kumite)

Ahammed Safwan H. (Kata)

Muhammad Naiyf (Kata)

Total Medals Won:

Gold : 1

Bronze : 8



Representing Schools:

1. Baselios Marthoma Mathews-II Central School, Sooranad

2. Basalel English Medium School, Sooranad

3. Travancore Devaswom Board Central School, Chakkuvalli

4. Shanti Niketan Central School, Patharam

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Note :- We always demand the original write-ups from our writers. If any article, short story or poem is found to be a copy of any other article, short story or poem respectively, then the writer would only be responsible for it.

1. Zainab Is My Future Wife

I pray for you every day,
To be happy, healthy, and okay.
I ask God to guide and protect you,
And fill your life with love and joy too.

I respect you for who you are,
A kind and beautiful person, near and far.
I admire your strength and your heart,
And I'm grateful we'll never be apart.

I love you more with each passing day,
For your smile, your laugh, and your loving way.
You're my best friend, my partner, and my guide,
Forever and always, I'll be by your side.

You deserve all the happiness in the world,
And I promise to give it to you, my love, my girl.
I'll support your dreams, your hopes, and your fears,
And I'll be your rock, through all the joys and tears.

I love you, Zainab, with all my heart,
You're the missing piece that sets me apart.
I'm grateful for you, and I promise to be true,
Forever and always, my love, my wife, my Zainab, I love you.



Mr. Ahmad Boto
Student
Mubi North
Nigeria

2. Twilight



Dr. Alka Kumar
Writer
Bhopal
Madhya Pradesh

With Pounding heart and clammy toes,
Fearful, yet excited I entered the house
Expecting the unexpected, hoping against hope
To meet the little Laughter in a corner remote;
Young Brightness spreading some twinkling light
around
An adolescent Joy rolling happily on the ground,
A mild whiff of Fragrance, ready to take me in its arms;
And Music of chattering sounds showing off its
charms.
My heart stopped beating seeing the blankness of the
eyes
That stared through me into the depths of past skies.
Hope? No! Hopelessness, was dancing and making
merry
In the house of Sadness, where everything went awry.
In the darkest corner of Sufferings, did Laughter lay sobbing,
Brightness kicked and pounded, by relentless attacks of scathing.
Joy was murdered by Greed in the twilight of the yore,
Fragrance hid in the cupboard, as curses stank and tore.
If sweetest songs are sung in pain, I heard them all in one,
There were inmates in the house, alive factually none.
Beaten and bruised, cursed and pushed mercilessly to abandon
Hopes shattered, wealth stolen, left to die by Children.
In the twilight of their lives, sobbing sulking mothers
With aching knees and failing sight, the unlucky fathers
Walked down the broken path, to a home painted Blue
An old age home with the caption, 'we really care for you'.
Finding my breath and holding tears, I met them one by one
To call their own, they had each other, from the family none!
Amazed I was at their sanguineness, emotions failing bit by bit!
Pain in their smile and blankness of eyes, shattered all my grit.
Faced with harsh reality, they knew they lay abandoned

But, O Irony!
They insisted, one day, someone will hold their hand.
Singing, dancing, joking around with pain as partner only
Aware of the imminent death in the gloom of lonely.
Their love, their care, career and life, they gave it all to children
Limited resources, personal sufferings – these were terms so foreign.
Whatever they had, spent them all with glittering eyes and smile
But whatever was left, was snatched away by children imbecile.
I listened to them and sang with them and wiped their tears too!
Fed them with my own hands and hugged them tightly too.
But, was that enough? Did I suck out their sorrows buried deep?
Every night, invariably, even before they sleep
They will bless their children to remain healthy and gay;
And pray to God to send an angel and take their soul away.
A life so cursed, bereft of joys, emotions lying dead
Better to leave the physical body, and to other plane transcend.

By Alka Kumar

3. Thought of a Small Child



**Mr. Anmol
Shrivastava
Student
Vaishali
Bihar**

A small child thinks:
Why am I so small?
I want to grow big,
As tall as the wall.

A small child thinks:
Why do I run so slow,
Between the poles?
How will I ever
Achieve my goals?

A small child thinks:
Why does my elder sister or brother
Tease me so many times?
If I were the elder,
I wouldn't take revenge—
Instead, I'd reply with rhymes.

A small child thinks:
Why am I scared of ghosts?
When I grow to my brother's age,
I'll meet the ghost,
Fight him with courage,
And make a poster
Showing me beating the ghost!
Then I'll upload it as my own post.

A small child dreams:
I want a Dreamland,
Where I'll be the king,
Leading the land
With my thoughts and experience.
I'll build a school in my Dreamland,

Where everyone's a student,
And I'll be the teacher.

I dream of a world like my Dreamland,
A small child's thoughts...

4. My real self

Every time I think about trusting someone, they always seem to break the already shattered pieces of my trust again and again.

I may not show it, but deep down, I can see who is using me and who is genuinely choosing me.



**Ms. Ayushi
Khawade
Student
Bhopal
Madhya Pradesh**

5. Boundless Love

A love like this has no bounds,
With a peaceful mind towards thee,
An honest heart that beats only love,
A thoughtful mind which dreams of the future ahead,
And eyes that carry thee with care.

A person who understands you like no one else,
A joyful soul eager to have your back,
A shoulder to weep and laugh on,
A love you can easily rely on—
A love which has no bounds.

Oh, this joyful soul,
Who carried me in her womb with care,
Corrected me with her kind gestures,
This joyful love that nurtured and covered me—
This love which truly has no bounds.



**Mr. Ashimole
Chisom**

6. Beyond The Veil Of Winter!



**Ms. Esha Fatima
(MindScribe)
Student, Writer,
Social Worker
Sargodha
Pakistan**

Morning crept in softly, wrapped in a silvery mist that blurred the edges of the world. As she walked slowly through the university grounds, the air was crisp and quiet, her breath forming faint clouds in the cold. Only a few students passed by, each wrapped in their own thoughts, giving the morning a peaceful, almost dreamlike calm. But within her, there was a weight—a sense of being alone in the crowd, as though she were moving through a world that couldn't quite see her.

As the day brightened and the fog lifted, she wandered along familiar paths, her hands tucked into her pockets to keep warm. The sky was clearer now but still held the sharp bite of winter. As she watched groups of friends laughing together, she felt as though she were standing behind an invisible wall, a quiet observer in a life that belonged to someone else. The laughter, the shared moments—they all felt just beyond her reach, like watching a scene from a different world.

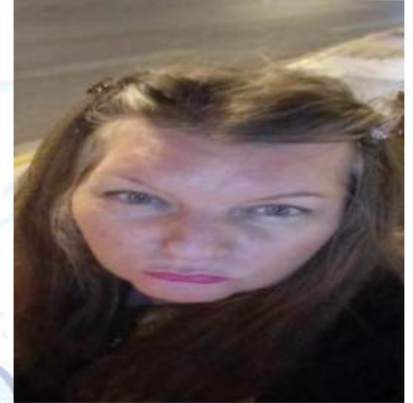
When evening began to fall, the light faded, casting long shadows across the empty benches and bare trees. The campus grew quieter, and a deeper chill settled in as the fog returned, cloaking everything in a soft, ghostly gray. She found herself back at a familiar bench, now a silent silhouette against the growing darkness. In the stillness, her thoughts deepened, wandering to memories and dreams she rarely let herself explore.

She found herself back on the same bench, beneath the same tree. Sitting alone in the fading light, she felt a strange comfort in the quietness of winter. It was as though the cold and fog understood her solitude, allowing her to be exactly as she was—no pretenses, no masks. Here, in the heavy silence, she found a moment of peace in the depths of her own heart, a small warmth in the cold night. Winter, she realized, held a beauty all its own—a time to pause, to feel, and to let the quiet speak.

7. War

The first word
Babies say before they walk—
In Palestine.

Shame on humanity,
How can you be happy
When on the other side
They are sacrificing babies—
Thousands of babies?
Pray for the souls of the innocent.



**Ms. EVA
Petropoulou Lianou
International poet
Activist
Greece**

8. Affection

When a baby cries
And utters "Mother,"
All cries seem the same.
How can one identify their own blood?

Oh sure....

Affection has no boundaries
Mother's love is unique
Mother's sacrifices are remarkable
Her love most valuable. ...



Ms. Gargi Saha
Teacher
Varanasi
Uttar Pradesh

9. Perseverance

Perseverance is the quality of continuing with something, even though it is difficult.

Perseverance demands continued, patient effort.

Perseverance requires persistent determination.

Perseverance never gives up while battling against the odds.

Perseverance expects wholehearted effort to see something through, even if it is hard.

Perseverance means abiding by something strictly.

Perseverance encourages you to move forward and face challenges.

Perseverance makes you a successful inventor.

Perseverance helps you progress when things get tough.



**Mr. Girish Chandra
Upadhyay
Advocate Allahabad
High Court,
Allhabad
Prayag Raj
Uttar Pradesh**

10. A Prayer in Darkness



In this world of uncertainty,
In this darkness, stark and impenetrable,
I stand here, alone, helpless,
Searching for a path to my destination,
Unknown to its potholes, depths, and obstacles,
With surroundings shrouded in mystery.

A single misstep, careless and abrupt,
May lead me down into the abyss.
In my despair, in complete hopelessness,
Who else should I call but You?

Give me Your guiding hand,
I pray You send me a ray,
Like a beacon in the darkness,
To pierce my utter gloom,
To illuminate the night of uncertainty.

Your gentle touch to lead me up,
Through the shadows to a place of bliss,
Show me the beauty of life.
Again I pray, in my humble way,
For Your kind embrace;

For Your guiding presence,
Which provides solace, peace, and refuge.
May I find comfort in Your eternal embrace.

**Mr. Harvendra
Singh
Lecturer
Lakhimpur Kheri
Uttar Pradesh**

11. Unscrupulous Pauper



**Mr. Huzaifa Sani
Ilyas
Poet
Kano
Nigeria**

The rainy season has been so wet,
That my visitor hasn't arrived yet.
Every month comes the poor,
Knocking repeatedly on my door.

He would gaze around to see,
The veranda and the vastness of my property.
For he hoped to receive the next month's store,
That's why he came to my door.

But my neighborhood could tell,
What he has done so well.
Now he has no courage or grace,
To show up after his disgrace.

Seducing someone's daughter in a secluded nook,
A crook at night, my home he mistook.
Regrettably, he was a fool,
And my alms to him became null.

One day, he was caught,
Trying to flee without a second thought.
He sought their favor with trembling cries,
As his shame unraveled before their eyes.

Such a tale was heartbreaking to hear,
And when I heard it, I shed tears.
For the man was aged and frail,
With wives and children dependent, a tragic tale.

Now he can no longer come,
To seek sustenance at my home.
Pity I can no longer bestow,
Grief engulfs me each time I recall so.

12. The Leader

She ran after him,
Holding the child astride,
Groping through the crowd,
She finally reached his side.

He was spotless and immaculate,
With a pinned-up rose, dressed in white.
He looked askance,
Saw her puzzled and frail,
Clutched in her arms was the curly-haired babe.

He fumbled with the rose,
Threw it on the child.
The rose landed on the floor,
Across the sea of life.

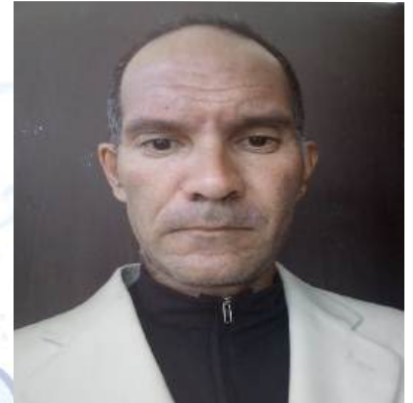
Just one fleeting glance
He could afford for the child.
Though legitimately his,
The child was denied the right.

He had climbed the ladders of success,
But she was on the last rung.
He had embraced position,
But she was just someone.



**Dr. Jailaxmi
R Vinayak
Research guide,
Teacher
Bhopal
Madhya Pradesh**

13. Among Thorns



**Ambassador Dr.
Jose Luis Lopez
Writer
San Juan
Puerto Rico**

Hard, hard was the blow
You dealt me when I discovered
How false your love truly was.
There were no ifs or buts;
You vilely shattered
Every piece of my being.

What else do I have to lose?
It's not enough that you left—
After breaking my soul,
You decided to go.
Why must there always be someone
To steal my love away?

Every thorn, piercing me,
Has bled a thousand times,
Has cried a thousand regrets.
And what difference does it make?
It no longer matters—
The pain is unbearable,
But still, I want to know why.

Among thorns, every drop of life
Fought incessantly,
Waiting for a light,
A glimmer of hope,
A sign to give me strength,
To understand why you left me.

I don't know whether to continue
Or to simply let go.
My soul is weary of waiting,
And your silence offers no solace.
In the end, nothing matters anymore.
Let life take its course—
Until something changes on this journey.

14. My Thoughts



Ms. Kalpana Gour
Web Designer
Bhopal
Madhya Pradesh

Thoughts so random, they come and go,
Sometimes they sparkle, sometimes they sow.
Positivity shines, a beacon so bright,
Negativity lurks, casting shadows of night.

A battle begins; my heart beats fast,
Hoping positivity will outlast.
Random thoughts, a swirling sea,
Two sides of life, in harmony.

Positive thoughts, they give me strength,
Negative ones, offer solutions at length.
In every shadow, a glimmer may lie,
It's all in the way I perceive and try.

Thoughts so random, they pave the way,
Guiding me clear or leading astray.
Yet positivity, with steady might,
Overpowers darkness, ignites the light.

Random they are, a mystery to keep,
Sometimes they wake, sometimes they sleep.
In this chaos, a lesson I find:
Thoughts are the mirrors of my mind.

15. You Left Us



**Mr. Leonard Maero
W
Author, poet,
teacher, Editor
Kitale
Kenya**

We heard that you were here several years ago.
We heard that you left Mama at such an innocent age.
We heard that you were afraid to take responsibility.
We heard that you were keen to protect your respect.

Neighbors treated us with suspicion.
Whenever we played with other children,
They whispered that we were mannerless,
That we had no father to teach us morals.

When my sister fell ill, Mama tried to reach you.
When we heard the ringtone, we waited to talk to you.
But you didn't respond to any of her messages.
You didn't bother, as if we were a burden to you.

Are you so busy, to spare a second for us?
Are you ashamed of us, of fathering all of us?
We heard that you want to be a big man.
We heard that you hand out goodies like a charitable man.

When my brother passed away, you were missing.
You said you didn't have time to mourn.
Someone confessed you were just a sperm donor,
Someone who never cared how we lived day to day.

Don't you have any affection in your heart for us?
Maybe we are a mistake you wish to forget.
Don't you ever think about how we survive?
Maybe you have a stone heart that will never soften.

16. In The Blink Of An Eye!

Children playing ball in the park,
Laughing with excitement.
The ball rolls onto the road.
A little boy, oblivious to everything,
Runs after his ball.
In the blink of an eye, a speeding car knocks him over,
His precious life snuffed out!

A beautiful couple, newly married,
So ecstatically happy,
Dreaming of a wonderful life waiting to unfold.
The boss walks in, looking concerned.
In the blink of an eye, the new groom is handed his
retrenchment letter!

The nearby bakery with delectable pastries,
So often visited by many.
This shop has been on the corner for 100 years.
In the blink of an eye, a fire is spotted.
Within minutes, there is a towering inferno.

Who knows what a day may bring?
Who can guarantee your lot in life?
We're here today, then gone tomorrow.
Live happily, laugh without inhibitions, love relentlessly,
For no one knows what can happen in the blink of an eye!

And just like that, in the blink of an eye,
It's time to wish you all a Merry Christmas
& a very Happy New Year 2025!



**Ms. Lucy Victoria
David
Writer, Motivational
Speaker
Durban
South Africa**

17. The Fatal Mistake



**Mr. Major Sir
Adesoga Jubril
Asiwaju
Writer
Ogun
Nigeria**

Victoria stared at the phone screen, her heart becoming a tangled web of guilt and defiance. The message was short but potent: “After feeding me with lies for years, I never knew you were a killer. Why did you kill my father?”

Her son’s words echoed in her mind. He had asked a question she didn’t want him to ask. Victoria’s chest tightened. Guilt clung to her like a shadow, and her mind replayed memories of what had transpired.

“You know I can’t do without you. I miss you. Can’t wait to see you again,” she remembered. The words she overheard the night before still echoed in her ears. Victoria zipped the portmanteau with trembling hands. She remembered it was part of the items demanded for her marriage rites. She wanted to leave but gave it a second thought.

She brought the scene to life. Charles, her husband of six years, the man she had trusted with her life, was speaking about another woman. She glanced around the bedroom, seeing the photographs on the wall as betrayals that could not reveal the true identity of her husband. She felt like everything was mocking her. She remembered her childhood friend’s statement, who had warned her not to marry Charles: “Handsome men are womanizers; women can never have peace of mind if they marry them,” she soliloquized, recalling her friend’s warning.

When Charles finished his work for the day, he took his phone to reply to messages. His eyes widened at the sight of the ‘crying emojis’ sent by his wife. “What!” he exclaimed. “I can’t do this anymore. I can’t share my husband with someone else,” he read. Charles stood, his face pale with confusion. “What is she talking about?” he soliloquized. He rushed home to find out what had transpired.

When Charles walked in, he gazed at his wife, who was slicing fruit in the kitchen. “Hey! My love. I got your message. What is it all about?” he asked. Victoria didn’t

respond, remaining silent while Charles moved closer to ask again. “Do not move closer to me,” she said. The thought of another woman sharing Charles’ affection consumed her.

“Who is she?” she hissed. Charles was confused. “What are you insinuating?” he asked.

“The woman you’ve been speaking with on the phone,” she shouted. Charles moved cautiously toward her. “There is no one,” he said. “Don’t lie to me,” she screamed. In a moment of blind rage, the knife in her hands slashed forward.

The kitchen was dark and silent as Charles staggered, clutching his side where the knife had pierced. His eyes filled with pain and disbelief. “Vic, Victoria... that call was from my... my mother. I call her ‘big baby.’ She’s visiting today. I wanted to surprise you,” he gasped. Charles collapsed to the ground, and Victoria screamed for help, her hands trembling as she tried to stop the bleeding. After losing much blood, Charles lay on the floor, lifeless.

Victoria was arrested and jailed. After some years, she was granted amnesty. She came out of prison to get her son from her friend, who had been taking care of him while telling the boy that Victoria had gone on a business trip. Her friend was happy to see her and appreciated her efforts. “I am very sorry for coming at the eleventh hour, my dear son,” she said.

Victoria’s mind returned to the present. She sighed and typed a reply: “I am sorry. I can explain.” As the message sent, her reflection in the dark screen stared back at her. She regretted her actions. “No amount of regret could undo what had already been done,” she assumed the reflection spoke to her. “Death! Where are you?” she screamed.

By Major Sir Adesoga Jubril Asiwaju

18. War Torn Children's Day



**Mr. Mohammad
Sadiq Ganaie
Development Officer
Sopore
Jammu and
Kashmir**

Why are you here, lying sad and forlorn?
So pitiful, ragged, eyes filled with scorn.
Where are your siblings, whom you held so dear?
They don't seem around or anywhere near.
Your red cheeks have turned so pale,
Your rosy lips also look very frail.
Your cherubic face full of dismay,
You don't seem ready for the special day.

The world has dedicated this day to you and me,
It will be celebrated everywhere joyfully.
Look, I have packed up all the things—
Sweets to distribute, gifts for friends.
Didn't your parents give you the same?
Does each gift have your friends' name?

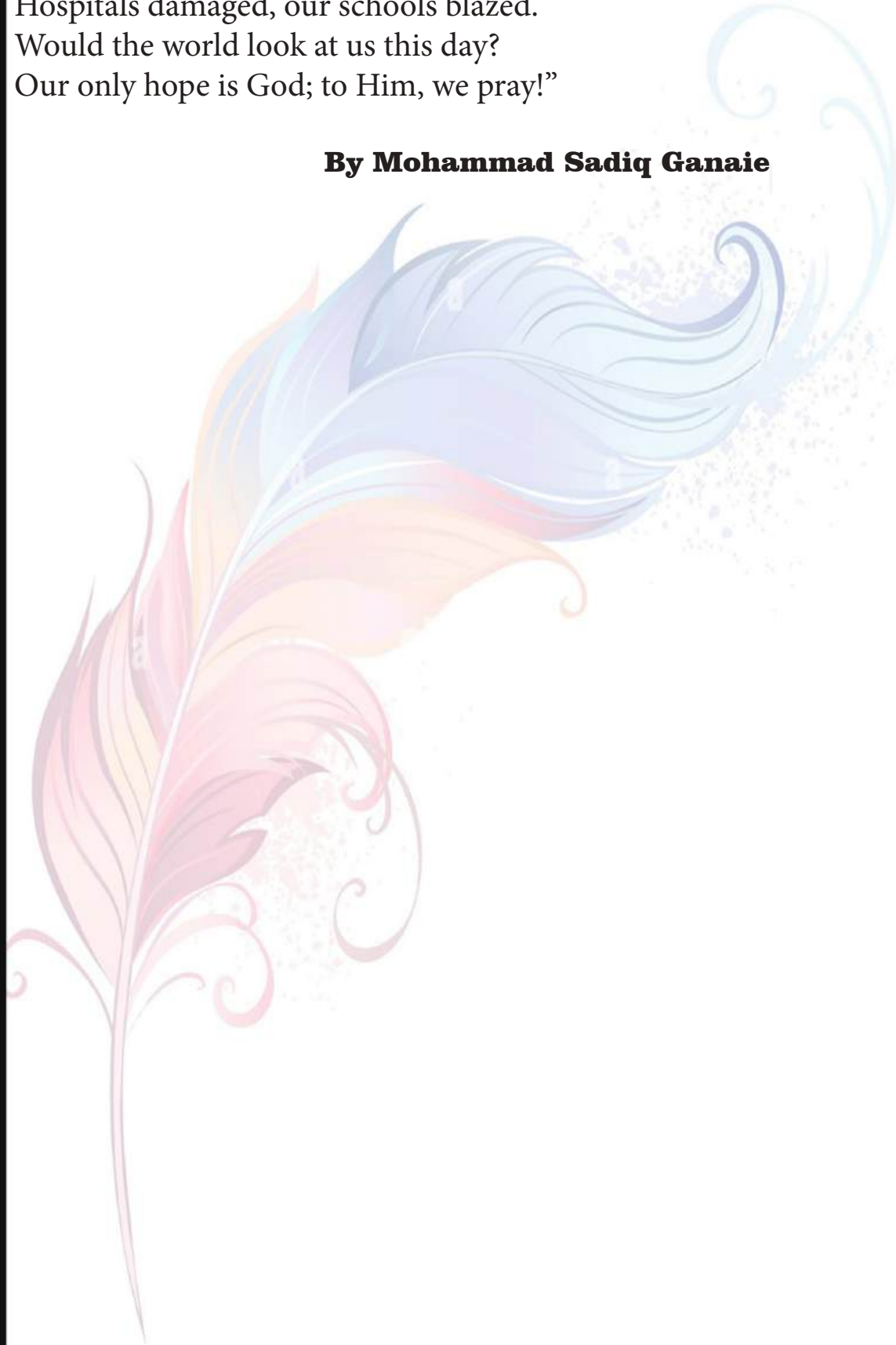
Response:

"I woke up amidst some noise and uproar,
Crying and wailing amidst blood and gore.
Heaps of rubble, as far as I could see,
My parents and siblings nowhere to be.
Shocked at such a dreadful sunrise,
At first, I thought it was a Children's Day surprise.
Soon I realized it was a stark reality—
A war had begun with force and cruelty."

"I had gone to sleep with the pleasant thought
Of today's festivities and the gifts I bought,
The merriment of friends and teacher's applause,
With no idea of being caught in Ares' jaws and claws.
Now I am here, pitiful, hungry, and cold,
But not alone—many like me, I am told.

Lost their parents, and their homes razed,
Hospitals damaged, our schools blazed.
Would the world look at us this day?
Our only hope is God; to Him, we pray!"

By Mohammad Sadiq Ganaie



19. Smile

A beautiful smile doesn't start from the lips;
It flourishes and nurtures in the heart.
A pure moment brings it to life,
Then it creates dancing stars in the eyes.

The universe seems to stop working,
When dimples appear on the cheeks.
Finally,
The lips are adorned with a smile,
And time stands still.
Everything becomes motionless...

I dedicate this poem to my beautiful daughter, Umm-
e-Hanni.



Ms. Nafja Fatima
Teacher
Faisalabad
Pakistan

20. The Estranged Groom



**Mr. Nhamo
Muchagumisa
Teacher
Mutare
Zimbabwe**

Ruvimbo's mother had been furious with her to the point of threatening suicide. She blamed Ruvimbo for being worse than insensitive. "You should have remembered that I walked barefoot on paths littered with broken glass. Why are you adding burning sulfur to the torture under my tormented feet?" her mother had scolded.

Ruvimbo had declined a job offer that would pay her just under a thousand US dollars. "I don't like the personnel manager," she had said "stupidly" to her mother.

"I will throw you out of my house!" her mother had shouted, pointing directly into her daughter's unblinking eyes.

"You won't do that," Ruvimbo had shouted back, walking the few steps from the sitting room to her bedroom.

"Okay, you will live in it alone, or maybe with my ghost because tomorrow morning you'll wake up to find me dead on this sofa," her mother had threatened.

Her mother's threat was enough to make the rest of Ruvimbo's afternoon unbearable. She lay on her back, staring at the white ceiling as though it stood between her and the Lord who answered prayers. But she knew that as long as her prayer was to prevent her mother from committing suicide due to her refusal to take up the lucrative job, she was tempting the Lord's faithfulness.

Things would have been easier if her father had not committed suicide. As Ruvimbo tried to pray, she couldn't escape the image of her sister, Nelie, and her new manager behind the locked door of their bedroom in Sakubva. Nelie had now changed out of her wedding gown and into her bedclothes. Her husband was in his light blue boxer shorts. Ruvimbo imagined him pulling Nelie close to his chest, and Nelie trembling, as if the stone floor had turned to jelly.

Next, Ruvimbo saw the commotion when the groom thrust his hand under Nelie's nightgown, dragging it upward. There was a loud scream, and Nelie bolted out of the room, shouting "rape." Ruvimbo's bedroom door flew open, and her mother entered.

"Why are you screaming?" her mother had asked.

"I had fallen asleep, and the odious manager started doing things to me," Nelie lied to her mother.

"It is the work of the devil," her mother said. "You will be fine."

Ruvimbo had won. Her mother wasn't going to commit suicide. But Ruvimbo was still going to remain jobless unless she took the job offer that came two years after she graduated with a Bachelor of Commerce degree.

Ruvimbo had only five days before she would assume the post of Accountant in an organization where her estranged brother-in-law held a top management position. His marriage to her sister had been annulled after she behaved bizarrely on their wedding night, running away from the matrimonial bedroom and shouting "rape." Nelie had subsequently reunited with her former boyfriend, whom she had once treated the same way.

Ruvimbo tried not to think about the difficult situation she would face if she took the job, having to report directly to the man who knew the shame of being her sister's sibling. But refusing the job would be inhumane to the adult woman who mattered most in her life. Her lie about her manager doing inappropriate things only added to her mother's stress. She had to take the job, be an honest subordinate to Tawana, and gain experience to eventually look for another decent job.

Days passed without her mother asking if she stood firm about staying unemployed while waiting for the uncertainty of finding a husband to change her fortunes. The tension between mother and daughter escalated, even without

words between them.

Her mother could still commit suicide before Ruvimbo took the job. But the day finally arrived when Ruvimbo realized the sun's color wouldn't change just because her circumstances left her with no choice.

Gradually, she found herself absorbed in the meticulous routine of compiling records after analyzing figures, testing the relevance of what had kept her in university for eight semesters. She hardly spoke with Tawana, aside from receiving orders.

She began to crave more attention from him, longing to tell him that he was not a bad person and that she had nearly let go of an opportunity because she thought she would embarrass him. But Tawana didn't seem interested. She even wondered what would come next after such a confession.

The day came when Tawana's voice nearly knocked Ruvimbo's breath out of her. Four months after joining Wonderland Industrial Spares, he called her "Nelie," and she was sure it wasn't a mistake. She stood, one eye on the keyhole of her office door and the other on him as he walked slowly toward her.

"If you can't be Nelie, how else will I reunite with your sister?" Tawana said, patting her shoulder.

He walked back to his office and didn't speak to her for days. Ruvimbo realized that there was suddenly a void in her life. Was Tawana a potential candidate to fill that space? But she reminded herself that Tawana hadn't said anything more after that brief pat.

Slowly, Ruvimbo began to understand that waiting for Tawana to make a move was a waste of time. There would be no next move, and she had misinterpreted a mockery for a sign of emotional attraction. She felt invalidated and realized that her initial decision not to take the job had not been misguided.

Ruvimbo needed emotional deliverance, and it wasn't long before a new workmate, Selina, caught her attention. Selina had stories of betrayal and an unwavering thirst for autonomy. That was something Ruvimbo craved.

One Saturday, Selina invited Ruvimbo to join her at a resort just outside Mutare to meet her man friend and prospective husband. Ruvimbo's excitement was indescribable. They drove 12 kilometers south of the city.

Minutes after arriving, a young man joined them. Ruvimbo had every reason to slap him for playing with her emotions.

"My brother, I've brought her," Selina said, as the trio sat on ornamental chairs. "Treat her well for me."

The man pulled Ruvimbo gently to her feet, and without a word in reply to Selina, she found her chest resting on his. Their hearts connected as he held her. Tawana then said, "I will be yours and you will be mine, and the world is you and I."

"Let it be as you wish," Ruvimbo said, quietly.

When they finally let go of each other, they noticed that Selina had left.

By Nhamo Muchagumisa

21. Mother's Love

The light of my dark world,
When I look into your eyes,
I feel my heart light up.
Through the highs and lows,
You give me a reason to keep going.
You ignite my spark
With endless love and affection.

Never have I seen a woman like this.
Her words of advice stay in my heart,
To remember while we are far apart.
One in a million,
A brave woman, yet a devoted wife.

I pray you live long enough, Mother,
To reap the fruits you've strived for.



**Ms. Opeyemi
Olawunmi**

22. My Nebo Guy!



Phillips Ayo
Writer/Content
Enthusiast
Lagos
Nigeria

To Be a Man
Isn't a fair race.
For a jolly loop,
Can't we remain boys?
A lad in a hoodie sweater?
Timbuktu is hot.

Today isn't fairytale weather.
As we, the earth's fish heads, withered,
Can we take solace in fridges?
No light... our strength, our willpower,
Through the thick pains of T-Pain pills,
A turn-by-turn misery cacophony.

I cast my straight gaze,
My Nebo's man is standing,
Like a pregnant woman,
Akin to her labor's rigors.
His breath is heavy-laden,
His thoughts adrift,
Oh... heaven's gate!
My Nebo soliloquizing.

In Me as in Him
What to eat, heathen?
Among the plains... the grazing lands,
Timbuktu is hot!
We... who left homes early,
Now confined... constricted,
Within walls of head-wackiness,
Making grains... cereals... flour mixtures,
Of our earthly daily bread,
Rather not exclusive yet exterminating.

Oh Nebos of My Hood
We feel our misery in the air.
I mean to greet, but ears are deaf.
I mean to call, but minds are away.
I mean living, but souls are dead.
Timbuktu is hot.
Spirits are dead, yet fewer funerals.
Dust to dust, dawn to dawn.
Feet trudge around,
Looking for a little manna.

I return, concerned,
For my Nebo.
He stares onward into emptiness.
I do the same... heads heavy.
Yet my Nebo's lips are moving,
As if he's into house-packing logistics.
Not of tangibles but downturn calamities,
Of his recent farming mishaps
That split fortunes and family.
Old blurbs now jagged blessings.
Once upon a time,
We were better tales.
Timbuktu is hot,
And so, we know not the ending.

If He Stands
He walks on,
Suddenly stopping midway, twisting his neck.
Heaven's cloudy, my Nebo is moody.
He looks frail... bony veins showing.
He removes his outer clothes, and I see it.
Then, he laughs loudly into the skies.
On my side, worried and frightened,
I rush closer... a wall an hindrance.

Such Melancholy Steeze
Oozes on.
Timbuktu is hot... Nebo's hurting hard.
If the plans in a man's palms
Are fluffy beyond hopelessness,
Flecked with helplessness,
And flustered by belting fortunes,
Your neighbor in your hood
Could be a losing guy.
Nay, Timbuktu's hot.

By Phillips Ayo

23. Life

Life is a bright and beautiful lie,
Often wasted striving to reach the sky.

God has created life, both great and small,
The great Creator perfects it all.

Every baby born, pure and new,
Every charming smile, a heavenly view.

Children are the flowers of life's garden,
Cherish them; they're never a burden.

When a child grows and finds their way,
Life's fragility still holds sway.

Why worry and rush through the strife?
The beauty lies in every breath of life.

How great is God, the Almighty King,
Who created this world and everything.

So don't overthink; cheer up, dear man,
For one day, blood will cease in every vein's span.



**Ms. Raja Noor-ul-
Iman
Writer
Hajira
Pakistan**

24. For Ever In My Heart



**Mr. Saleem Raza
Jakhar (Amar
Shaw)
Teacher, Writer
Sindh
Pakistan**

When sorrow's dark and lonely veil I tread,
My heart lies heavy, my soul feels dead,
For thou, dear mother, art no more,
And in thy place, naught but tears I pour.

Thy gentle spirit, heavenward hath fled,
Leaving me to mourn, with heart and head,
The love thou showed, a beacon bright,
That guided me through life's plodding night.

Thy tender care, a shelter from life's storm,
A refuge where I found my peaceful form,
A haven where my heart could safely rest,
And in thy love, my soul was blessed.

Farewell, dear mother, may thy rest be deep,
May thy sweet memory, my heart forever keep,
And though thou art no more, thy love remains,
A precious gem that time nor grief can stain.

In memories of thee, I'll oft recall,
The joys we shared, the laughter, and the fall,
The whispered words, the tender touch,
The love that flowed, like a gentle clutch.

Thy legacy lives on, a flame that burns,
A love that time, nor death, nor grief can turn,
To quench or dim, for in my heart,
Thou shalt forever be, a work of art.

25. Era of Hate

An era of hate, where shadows grow tall,
Where voices, once soft, now fiercely brawl.
Words like weapons, sharpened by pride,
Echo through streets where love once tried.

Walls of division rise brick by brick,
Fueled by fear, driven by tricks.
Eyes cast downward, hands clenched tight,
Friendship forgotten, lost to spite.

Scroll and swipe, anger feeds,
In endless loops of viral seeds.
Echoes ring with venomous sound,
In chambers where bias abounds.

The fires burn, deep and wide,
Hope recedes with the ebbing tide.
Yet somewhere faint, a whisper calls—
Through fractured glass and crumbled walls.

Remember the warmth, the old embrace,
The kindness that no hate can erase.
For eras fade, as all things do,
And love, once planted, can break through.

So though hate rages, cold and stark,
Hold to the embers, find the spark.
For an era's dusk will yield to dawn,
And the light of love will rise upon.



**Mr. Shashi Dhar
Kumar
Software
Professional
Gautam Buddha
Nagar
Uttar Pradesh**

26. An Address to My Daughter



**Mr. Shraddhanand
Srivastava
Lecturer
Jaunpur
Uttar Pradesh**

Cherished I the image of a Goddess
Prior to your anticipated birth,
Few days later, perceiving She Herself
incarnated , I immersed in a deep mirth;
Smiling face, jerking tiny hand and feet
conversed the celestial beings
with all your divinity
while lying in a cradle as a sacred retreat ;
As a little grown toddling babe
with an angelic smile leaped into my lap
for a dance in glee
ever urging to chant mantra
consequently spilling the divinity in me;
Later as a child with all your agility,
frisking to and fro like a fragile fawn,
in a lush green of country home lawn,
evoked a sense of soothing futurity;
Having swum across the child hood,
now galloped in to teenage,
sometimes get elated with emotion,
sometimes grow outrage;
The momentous moment sets a tone
for a life yet to come,
with the sound resolution, moral maxims
keeps moving on,
never deviate from them
that may lead you to atone;
In attaining the goal,
might there be the numerous impediments ,
to overcome, you'll have to be
more physical and mental competent;
Nutrition of vitamin and protein
are for you to feed,
yet to the religion and ethics
resort for your psychic need.



27. Diwali Or Parali !

It is a misty November evening,
The temperatures have considerably dropped!

Visibility is low,
Vehicles move very, very slow.
The morning sun has not once shone,
And now, the moon too wavers, all alone.

Face masks have returned once more,
Trains stand still, waiting for clearance to explore.

Someone says it's smoke,
Another says it's fog—
A combination of both,
Yes, it happens to be smog!

Coughing loudly in a corner of the room,
Grandma complains,
“The culprit is Diwali!”
Hastily, a little one (you see.. he loves fireworks) interrupts defiantly,
“No, it's Parali!”

Both statements are correct,
The two are co-culprits!

P.S.: Parali, or stubble burning in the north, is a significant issue. It adds to air pollution, as does the burning of crackers during Diwali.



Mrs. Sindhu Rana
writer, poet,
voice - over artist,
former convent
school teacher,
script writer for
documentaries
Jalandhar
Punjab

28. 'Tis The Damn Season



Mr. Tha Ono
Teacher
Gasparillo
Trinidad & Tobago

Winter's heart breathes silence, softly woven...

'Tis the damn season, a time of joy, where peace is supposed to be believed...

Families gather, warmth ignites, in the flicker of love's flame...

Beneath the laughter, our Mother Earth weeps in pain...

Her rivers once sang, flowing crystal clear and bright...

Now choked with sorrow, dimmed beneath a heavy plight...

The seasons shift, yet the spirits of seasons past linger where they ought not to be...

Temperatures rise, then fall flat again, a cruel, distorted mockery...

Twenty twenty-four gave us lessons hard and stark...

She gifted us trials, igniting hope's small spark...

From the ashes of the past year, we rise, we hold the light...

In the shadows of our deeds, the future's noose grows tight...

Fields that bloomed with vibrant life now fade beneath our greed...

Forests once whispered stories lost, where once the wild things fed...

Our Mother, vast and tender, cradles to her bosom all we hold dear...

Her tears fall silent, drowned by our relentless cheer...

Entering twenty twenty-five, with promises anew...

Our blank canvas can now be painted with strokes of green and blue...

May the winds of change blow strong, let compassion be our guide...

May every heart, and every soul, stop and listen to our Earth's deep cries...

'Tis the damn season, where we must confront the cost...

Of all the unity we seek, if all our hopes are lost...

Can we mend the broken bond, restore what we have torn?

Or is our world dying, screaming, how and when does it end?
In the cradle of our choices, can there be a rebirth of a new world?

Gather close, dear family, around the hearth tonight...
Let's honor every heartbeat, embrace Mother Earth's fading light...
Joy to the world and peace on Earth are fleeting, like the seasons' gentle
dance...
Together we can take a stand, and give our Earth her penultimate chance...

Through winter's chill and summer's blaze, may we find our way...
Cherishing every moment, to let love hold sway...
'Tis the damn season, as the cycles come and go...
Let's be the transformation we wish to see, allowing our compassion to grow...

With every sunrise, let us vow, to heal what's been undone...
Tread with care, to sow with love, beneath the golden sun...
Our Mother Earth is crying, but we can ease her pain...
In this season of our hearts, let kindness reign again...

May twenty twenty-five bring us new life...
One free of sin and one to raise Mother Earth's win...
Come what may, life's seasons together can bring joy's sway...
Blessed twenty twenty-five, life, dear reader...

By Tha Ono

29. Corruption



**Mr. Timothy
Jeppson
Student
Uganda**

I am still a fool,
But I am corrupt.
What about you,
Who is seventy-five years old?
Who are you?

I am a cause of
Corruption.

Really! Did you mean
You are corrupting people?

Look, the sweat I produce
Really passes through my forehead,
Just because of stress—
Developing pressure on how
To end you.

I pass by the street,
Looking for a job,
But I can't find one,
Just because of you.
When I get a chance to apply
For a position,
I find you there.

I am sent to bring
My senior six academic papers.
After bringing them, I'm sent back
To bring a bachelor's degree.
I feel so tired and give up,
Yet,
If you see the job

I have applied for,
It's mopping a rich man's house.

What?

But how can we end this?
I laughed and said,
We can demonstrate about it.
How? Look,
The religious leaders, civil leaders,
Local leaders, and parents are all corrupt.
To whom shall we go?
I asked myself and had no answer.

But now I have a solution:
Let us strive and fight corruption.

By Timothy Jeppson

30. The Tale of Sneaky Sam the Sandwich Thief!



**Ms. Vaishnavi
Shrivastava
Student
Vaishali
Bihar**

There once was a guy named Sneaky Sam,
Who loved a good snack—a big ham slam!
He'd tiptoe to the fridge, like a fox on the prowl,
And leave just the wrapper—oh, what gall!

His family would search with utter despair,
“Where's the last slice? It was just there!”
But Sam, with crumbs on his face, would declare,
"Must be the work of that sneaky bear!"

He blamed squirrels, birds, and even ghosts,
And claimed he was innocent more than most.
But one day, his mom left a spicy surprise—
A sandwich so hot it brought tears to his eyes!

Now Sam thinks twice before he gobbles alone,
For who knows what tricks Mom might have sewn?
So beware, all you sneaky snack snatchers out there—
Moms and fridges are wise, and they're always aware!

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