# The trail of ants

On my way I am… To serve to survival.

Empty handed… empty minded, Walking the path that closes my eye.

A mission I have… To serve my survival.

No questions… nor thoughts, Just instincts moving my feet.

My objectives are simple, To serve for survival.

Without motive or ambition, My objective is my purpose.

To survive, I have no other choice, but to serve. A reality better kept as an illusion.

As my survival never mattered, As much as my own servitude.

***Adam Tarawneh*** *is an American Arab. Born and raised in USA, he travelled to Jordan in 1999, the country of his origins. He majored in English Literature for his bachelors degree, and after he graduated, he moved to work in the Gulf as an English teacher for several years, until he was able to pursue his dreams and continue my academic career.*

# The Pangolin Review – Issue 12

**It Was Just a Hand**

It was just a hand

with an organ player’s fingers

gripping mine, the way I’d squeezed yours,

at the edge of the passenger seat where I squirmed behind traitorous transparent windows

willing to allow scowls at stoplights

from drivers who deemed it immoral or sinful or ridiculous or dirty or sick.

It was just a hand that’d doled out three dollars for my double-chocolate-chip shake as chilly as my

coursing corpuscles while I coveted the invisibility of the Cheshire Cat and sat sipping opposite

cappuccino-coloured calf eyes guarded by a walnut-shaped nose and plump, spittle-splattered lips that

grinned under dim lights at Medici just as I’d smiled at you quaffing your diet cola at Denny’s when I

wanted the world to witness me with a girl like you. It was just a hand that guided me where my parents dreaded I’d be led, though they would’ve been

fine if they’d found out that you’d let me fondle you under a gibbous moon.

They wouldn’t need to know I was daydreaming of someone else.



*Criss-crossing North America on copywriting and copy editing assignments,* ***Adrian Slonaker*** *is fond of opals, folk revival records, fire noodles, The Alfred Hitchcock Hour, non-alcoholic blue drinks and cuckoo clocks. Adrian’s work has been published in WINK: Writers in the Know, Ariel Chart, Introspective Collective and others.*

**The Pangolin Review – Issue 12**

# Soul Less

These rains will drive me into a hole and cloistered,

I will think how they never abate in summers, even as plums ripen they wash, these hills in fiestas

of evenings, I want to snatch others’ dreams and make them mine

as these rains clutch into wishes- my wishes of love or a dream; take these rains away please

as I scratch rainbows that keep me smitten with faraway lands.

Bereft of these rains

these arching hills of timelessness their granites bursting at seams their gurgling rivers washing me into death wish as the crow perched stands in legerdemain of thoughts.

I have it now, these pictures in captivity; but the rains must abate to give these

hills a respite from this battling with thunder as the mane of lightening burdens our bodies Soul less, flat footed, tongue tied.

***Ananya Guha*** *is from India.*

# The Pangolin Review – Issue 12

**Stormy Waters**

It’s been years & years, my love, Since we tread these stormy waters On a stranded lifeboat

Like a fisherman with a death wish,

Like a reckless drunk driver on snowy lanes. Tire rolls as your love trolls, on me,

There’s a permanent laceration

With a picturesque scar on my chest,

You have so many sides, uniquely devastating Like the patterns of a new snowflake.

The two icebergs in your eyes did not

Even sweat when you looked in my fire eyes. You said we can never be friends

Who keep no secrets from each other But darling, how do you stay in love

With an acquaintance of a mysterious aura, With a stranger you don’t find comfort in? You drink my red wine on a Sunday at a beach I feel like it’s my blood you are having,

Not literally, but does that even make a difference? I am calling myself a damsel, and

You a dark knight who leaves me

In these stormy waters every single time.



***Barenya Tripathy*** *is more of a literature fanatic than she is a poet or a writer. She is an English Honours student at Delhi University, and currently is in her second year. Beaches and forests are her most loyal sources of inspiration. She believes that she is a time traveller who came from the time when Shakespeare roamed the streets.*

# The Pangolin Review – Issue 12

**Hair**

I pull a hair out of my mouthful of fajita salad. I know this

may sound gross, but I don’t think so. Your hairs are everywhere.

One recently caught in the tight seam between the halves

of my laptop. Bathrooms no longer scare me. Theo plucks black

masses hanging like shrunken heads from the shower wall and hands them over. He has no admonitions. Earthworms, spiders, centipedes pass through his fingers. He harbors no fear, no hatred of them. What

the hair snagged in my beard or sewn into the lining of shirt,

evinces is the presence of a partner, who is a part of, and partakes in, my body, my blood, my hair.

***Cameron Morse*** *was diagnosed with a glioblastoma in 2014. With a 14.6 month life expectancy, he entered the Creative Writing Program at the University of Missouri—Kansas City and, in 2018, graduated with an M.F.A. His poems have been published in numerous magazines. His first poetry collection, Fall Risk, won Glass Lyre Press’s 2018 Best Book Award. His three subsequent collections are Father Me Again (Spartan Press, 2018), Coming Home with Cancer (Blue Lyra Press, 2019), and Terminal Destination (Spartan Press, 2019). He lives with his pregnant wife Lili and son Theodore in Blue Springs, Missouri, where he serves as poetry editor for Harbor Review.*

# The Pangolin Review – Issue 12

**Electrical Storm**

You are my midnight bleak, you are my electrical storm. Outside this window,

you are my vast expanse.

You are my electrical storm, when the sky breaks.

You are my vast expanse, a cosmos lost in tumult.

When the sky breaks, you widen the wound. A cosmos lost in tumult is a violent cleansing.

You widen the wound.

My diminishment

is a violent cleansing. A ripening.

My diminishment, outside this window. A ripening.

You are my midnight bleak.

***Carolyn Adams****’ poetry and art have appeared in Beatnik Cowboy, Willawaw Journal, Glass Mountain, San Pedro River Review, and Common Ground Review, among others. She has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize, as well as for Best of the Net, and was a finalist for 2013 Poet Laureate of the city of Houston, TX. She is currently a staff editor for Mojave River Review. Having relocated from Houston, she now lives in Beaverton, OR.*

# The Pangolin Review – Issue 12

**Incognito**

“All set, Julian,” the uniformed TSA officer moves me on to the conveyor belts

to empty my pockets into a kitty litter tray, having scanned my boarding pass

like a bomb-sniffing dog.

“OK, Deborah,” her toneless permission for my wife to follow me,

lugging her rolling carry-on after me like a ball and chain.

In real life we go by Charles and Abby, though our passports and driver’s licenses list us by first name-last name.

Do I feel like a secret agent penetrating enemy lines?

Or do I feel like a prisoner?



***Charles Rammelkamp*** *is Prose Editor for BrickHouse Books in Baltimore and Reviews Editor for The Adirondack Review. A chapbook of poems, Jack Tar’s Lady Parts, is available from Main Street Rag Publishing. Another poetry chapbook, Me and Sal Paradise, was recently published by FutureCycle Press. An e-chapbook has also recently been published online Time Is on My Side. Another chapbook, Mortal Coil, is forthcoming from Clare Songbirds Publishing.*

# The Pangolin Review – Issue 12

**Pearl of the Adriatic**

After crossing the stone bridge On foot through busy Pile Gate, I entered Old Town Dubrovnik, An ancient city in Croatia where I stood mesmerized by walls

Of stone heretofore a fortress.

Vivid orange tile shielded roofs Of all structures, created contrast With the cerulean Adriatic Sea, Encircling the cape with an inlet Separating this safeguarded city From the mainland. What once Served as a place of protection During the many wars Croatia Endured even to modern times Has metamorphosed to a venue For celebration; music of folk And classical styles, some heard From a stone terrace above town; Trails for finding stunning views;

Cinemas aglow; fabled restaurants; And boat tours along the coast.

Hiking the City of Many Stairs, I Prayed other national strongholds Would turn to places of pleasure.

***Christine Xu*** *has studied poetry privately from an award-winning poet and essayist in California’s Santa Clara Valley. With each poem written and polished, she has increased her fascination with this art. Thus far, she has achieved publication with such literary journals as The Avocet in Arizona; WestWard Quarterly in Illinois; and Lone Stars in Texas. She has also four awards from annual poetry contests sponsored by Voices of Lincoln and California Federation of Chaparral Poets, Inc., the oldest poetry organization in the Golden State.*

# The Pangolin Review – Issue 12

**Today**

Before yesterday and tomorrow became anything at all,

before past and future

became formidable and frightening, today was all.

Think of Adam and Eve suddenly there in the garden, no past, no understanding of tomorrow and future,

how could they have expected disaster, never having known history?

Alas, doomed couple.

We, however, live with early recognition of

the ever-present weight of today!

The trick is

understanding what is interpreted as time.

It twists us up, we have to decipher the tangle even as it impedes us, even as we forget and spend

too much of ourselves in old dust,

or dream excessively about fantasies-to-be,

today lingers without us, we lose it.

And it was all we had.

***Cleo Griffith*** *was Chair of the Editorial Board of Song of the San Joaquin for its first twelve years and remains on the Board in its 16th year. She is a member of the Modesto branch of the National League of American Pen Women. Widely published, she lives in Salida, CA with her husband Tom.*

# The Pangolin Review – Issue 12

**the history of green**

the green leaves of the common kind the green colour

coloured as dark green the green colour of leaves become green under glass

less green under glass the green parts of plants the green parts

which are not green

do take place in green organs green leaves and shoots only

the green parts that green leaves in the green

that green leaves only by the green

the green leaves take from a green

the green rind

by the green organs and green colour the green

into green in the green by the green

and in the green that the green green surfaces green cells green parts

into large green leaves green parts of plants green organs

is the history of botany

*As one half of conceptual art duo Saint Flashlight (with Molly Gross),* ***Drew Pisarra*** *finds playful ways to get poetry into public places such as film-themed haiku on a movie marquee and a series of lost-dog style flyers that drive to a phone bank of verse. These unconventional installations have been part of the O, Miami Poetry Festival; Free Verse: Charleston Poetry Festival: and Poets House in NYC. His first book of poetry Infinity Standing Up, a collection of sonnets, came out in early 2019. His short story collection Publick Spanking was published eons ago by Future Tense.*

# The Pangolin Review – Issue 12

**Of Idealized and Seemingly Perfect Character**

Potential mates, competitors, likewise most bipeds, Remain well-advised to organize, delineate, weed Savvy from stupidity rather than to rely on structures Used to build woke characters or regenerate starfish.

However valued it becomes to spawn ideas regarding Human types, it’s tragic to connect elements at times When fulminating can be avoided, or when risible acts Over the course of unexpected excrescences, are scant.

Pertaining to the heart, parenting’s more than nurturing, Light is grander than illumination, also padawans deserve More hugs, fewer military obstacles, no parade moments. (communication needs to be available after bereavement.)

Literally fashioning dark jitties, bright town squares, Does nothing for hauling concepts to and fro, among Proud citizens of any nation. Our proximate war cause Continues to be maintaining industrial “normal” levels.

Eventually, if we’re fortunate, jointly, agents, issuers Identified as sources for imperators’ music, will stop Insisting that we spend long spans in the canopy, else Keelhaul ingrates, disembowel next of kin, get nasty.

Exordiums are entirely intractable. Specialized limbs, Too, make for agile foraging among jungle underbrush. Generalized spousal dissatisfaction with life, inversely, Grows personae non grata, polishes random shotguns.

So, climbing slowly, raining leaves down upon emulated Heads of state, reciting therondies, apart from every single Unanswered appeal to warmer renderings of civilization, May well, after all, enable politicos to swallow, not chew.

# A Rude Gesture to the Status Quo

When holding fast to ethical ideals, tosh invites uncanny delusions. Also, twaddle, whether swayed by: psilocybin, alternate psychedelic Prodrug compounds, makes siddity managers of insignificant stores, Of hardware emporiums, of notions depots, lap up succulence found In realpolitik, impresario’s pet theories, and gurning imaged in flicks.

Such souls shamelessly hang hand-dried flowers over the trimmings Of specialty cabinets, flap arms when sitting in cars’ passenger seats, Elsewise fill trugs with anemones, purple coneflowers, sweet freesia, Until their shame in bogarting the best blooms for school-time chums

Inundates them, thru entreaties, to employ settees for scratching posts.

Sadly, most modern kids get desiccated, want no portion of increate Beauty, nor any part of existent proficiencies for sui generis efforts; Their guts weltering, they enfilade unmeasured violence upon fillies, Frogs, ducklings. In reply, delinquents, possibly use body language, Offer halfway rude hand gestures toward adults’ status quo nonsense.

Simultaneously, those teens & twenties reject constructive accounts; Task amateur plus professional policymakers amid ringing cauldrons, Ask boilerplate witness acceptance, insist on essentially “rewriting.” When striving for commensurability, they gladly move antagonists From snug settings; jail suits nobody laden with social indebtedness.

Lawbreakers have become more commonplace than rodents. Per se, They’re readily absorbed into civilization, their odd directives, weird Vehicles notwithstanding. We remain extremely guarded addressing Discourteous drive, ability, creativity, missing civility, all manner of Showcased emotional hooks, rubrics, discipline, casual gesticulations.

# Finger Splints and Cotton Swabs

When visiting middle-aged folks, discounting their assemblages, The two raised no ghosts of weight; they redirecting scattered Thoughts, illusory buffets of calorie-free foodstuffs, comestibles Whose ingesting resulted in accidental death or dire culpability.

Alternatively, if kicking ignoble curs, they produced paperclips, Profitable changes to finger splints, cotton swabs, ace bandages. Elsewise, objects from foggy vitrines culled supply house goods Even as offerings of attractive boys, tophers, failed their goals.

Meanwhile, dedicating extra space for hovercraft balderdash Resulted in exposure to blighted blooms and incensed spouses. Would-be linguistic mentors swore to sussing out misconducts (Judges resolved their design could throttle the full competition.)

Consequently, fresh losses hindered supplying skippers’ rum. Ideas fetching lawsuits lost status, forced prickly supervisors To usher in high levels of black boxes, mildew, dark moods, Heavy handiness; people detest resilience, loathe catachresis.

# And Then Came Bob

Reticulated pythons, likewise serialized novels, seem redundant relative to canaries Flouting a style of decorated tracery whenever counterfactual evidence shows up. In beasts’ esteem, the essential quality of allure functions as an anvil that processes Enough unripened standards to make media feeds, to live fifteen minutes of infamy.

It’s not only wolfram that gets molded into tiny nuggets; wampum takes many forms.

After all, nonexistent locales, that is, homegrown “Sandy Islands” serve equally well As impact heads of state, excluding snippety royalty. Some leaders cannot see past Family constraints even when friendships stay balanced on rugged songs and letters.

The French territory of New Caledonia, for instance, that lovely whereabouts between The Chesterfield Islands and Nereus Reef, that noted “corner”of Coral Sea’s east side, Avoids international discord by campaigning on behalf of straw men, naive proposals. All the while demurring that the global status quo’s response to warfare stays imperfect. Islanders probably appreciate that any consequential needs for moms to call appliance Repair persons, help itty bitty living things; puppies, kittens, roaches, establish their Unequivocal function as primary witnesses to crimes against intended beneficiaries.

Their scion lose modest amounts in better circumstances, while, disregarding damages.

Namely, whenever lizards trumpet on suonas, mamas must redact all matter of wisdom. Employing outsiders to challenge their stated mores is stupid, expensive, unfashionable. Yet, common sense, notwithstanding, sufficiently “powerful” youngsters offer up terms, Ask partners to shower them with understanding, to transfer money to multiple accounts. We still marvel how engaging interlopers signifies failing to employ important writings, No matter how many books or individually published pieces belong to persons of old Importance. Heritage excluded, slab-sided authors forget “I’m sorry” remain twin vital Mots, dual smidgeons of imperative rhetoric too often cast away by immature agendas.

*Life is precious. Our words need to reflect this verity. Accordingly,* ***KJ Hannah Greenberg*** *tilts at social ills and personal evolutions via poetry, prose and other forms of creative expression. Her books and short works evidence these values.*

# The Pangolin Review – Issue 12

**Soaring**

To see the beauty in all Truly a wondrous thing but oh my darling, you've confused soaring - with needing wings…

***Lynn Long*** *(https://zolanymph1.blogspot.com/) is a poet, writer, aspiring novelist, daydreamer and believer in the impossible. She has been published namely in Antarctica Journal, Duane’s PoeTree, In Between Hangovers, Stanzaic Stylings, Poetry Poetics Pleasure and Whispers.*

# The Pangolin Review – Issue 12

**After Dwight William Tryon’s “Winter” (1893)**

The ancient mountains to the west transform into a calm, almost-frozen ocean just out of reach.

Dusk changes into dawn. Thin, yellow light is the same without clouds,

without garnet washes and purple smudges.

The snow in the foreground reveals colors other than dazzling white: blue from an earlier sky; browns from

half-buried bushes, from earth and stone; green scuffs; and yellow straw from fall’s grass and flowers.

The snow in the background turns into the beach at low tide

with its sheen of salt water.

Only trees, bushes, and stone walls

in the middle resist the transformation. They put up obstacles, keeping ocean

from overtaking earth.

***Marianne Szlyk*** *is a professor of English and Reading at Montgomery College. She also edits The Song Is... a blog-zine for poetry and prose inspired by music (especially jazz). Her book, On the Other Side of the Window, is now available on Amazon. Her poems have also appeared in of/with, bird’s thumb, Loch Raven Review, Solidago, One Sentence Poems, Red Bird Chapbook’s Weekly Read, Music of the Aztecs, and Resurrection of a Sunflower, an anthology of work responding to Vincent Van Gogh's art.*

# The Pangolin Review – Issue 12

**Cracker Jack Box Poem**

****

I don’t wear my pocket watch anymore it reminds me of my age, 73, soon more, outdated gadget, time hanging where

moving parts below don’t belong nor work anymore. I don’t like to think about endings.

Age is a Cracker Jack box with no face, modern speed dial, no toy inside, when it stops, no salute, just pops.

*Lesson: “What young men want to do all night takes older men all night to do.”*

***Michael Lee Johnson*** *lived ten years in Canada during the Vietnam era and is a dual citizen of the United States and Canada. Today he is a poet, freelance writer, amateur photographer, and small business owner in Itasca, Illinois. Mr. Johnson published in more than 1037 publications, his poems have appeared in 37 countries, he edits, publishes 10 different poetry sites. Michael Lee Johnson, Itasca, IL, nominated for 2 Pushcart Prize awards for poetry 2015/1 Best of the Net 2016/and 2 Best of the Net 2017.*

# The Pangolin Review – Issue 12

**Sitting by The Indian Ganges Side**

You and I, will read a poem

You might think of Andrew Marvell And I perhaps too, think Carpe diem, (Seeing the River thus

Flowing for ages

Just like our lives and us,)

So enchanted by the day's mirth Perhaps will I weave a song too, Just by your side

Spending the day long overdue.

***Moinak Dutta****, born on 5th September, 1977, has been writing poems and stories from school days. Presently engaged as a teacher of English, he has written reviews of several books. His first full-length English fiction Online@Offline had been published in 2014 by Lifi Publications. His second fiction entitled In search of la radice was published in 2017 by Xpress Publications. Also, Moinak loves to do photography apart from listening to music, watching films and travelling.*

# The Pangolin Review – Issue 12

**A New Flower**

In the foothills of the charming Entoto Mountains You sprawl as a cute commercial and cultural hub A New Flower whose anthers are in the millions You are a Flower whose nectar none can snub!

In historical, diplomatic and political terms-- You are the real deal, talk of Africa’s centre The presence of the African Union confirms Addis Ababa, I see tourists and florists enter!

***Ndaba Sibanda*** *is an author and poet. He authored Of the Saliva and the Tongue.*

# The Pangolin Review – Issue 12

**Claudius Views the Drowned Corpse of Ophelia**

Obvious as a Swedish strumpet, she didn’t commit self-murder and risk the eternal damnation

I face, if I believed in such nonsense, for killing my brother, usurping

his throne, and besmirching his bed

with his widow, night after delicious night.

The bruises necklacing her throat proof Ophelia was not a despairing flower scorned by the high-born whoreson she’d given her heart and priceless ruby.

Simple for my most trusted councilor to regretfully find the evidence

to execute the meddler-Prince.

Who knows, maybe she refused him, or worse, allowed his loins’ quickening

inside her, thus proving she was a harlot deserving a murderous exit from the earth.

In any case, he’s given me the means to be rid of him; not even his mother— who, I secretly smile, grows more tired of his deranged behavior by the day— will plead for leniency or excuse

his conduct as boyish antics.

Boyish antics? At his age, I was plotting with powerful men against his father.

I chortle at the custom-cut evidence, at perhaps his stuttering confession,

even if he didn’t place hands on her neck and squeeze, but has, in his grief, convinced himself he did.

***Robert Cooperman****’s latest collection, Draft Board Blues, was named one of ten great reads for 2017 by Westword Magazine. Forthcoming from Main Street Rag Publishing Co. is That Summer and from Liquid Light Press, Saved by the Dead. Robert’s work has appeared in the Sewanee Review namely.*

# The Pangolin Review – Issue 12

**three haiku/senryu**

unwilling

to shake the sand out of my suitcase

<><><><>

he paints her betrayal

into her portrait

<><><><>

rippled reflection

- it was here

a moment ago



***Roberta Beach Jacobson*** *(http://www.robertajacobson.com) is a humorist from Iowa, USA.*

# The Pangolin Review – Issue 12

**City Living**

Interesting. I’m no veteran, but I understand loss – of freedom, a patched roof, mandolins consoling

Italians, their turf encroached upon by the Chinese. Before this city was a flood, I was the stickball

hero laughing unhindered through embarrassing tenements, a mason jar of promises exploding in

my face. I’d inhaled this ghetto one too many times. The plague of hopelessness hurts less than machine

gun symphonies kids learn to play in their sleep. How often I’ve dreamed of corporate men lighting

fires with sticks in the everglades, their fat bellies rumbling louder than neglect. Hunger’s for real.

I have nothing left but pain. Forgive me, father, for I have grinned, amused in forgetting my fate.

I’ve since expanded past normal, soon to be a scarlet balloon bursting in space, difficult to cure.

***Robin Ray*** *is the author of Wetland and Other Stories (All Things That Matter Press, 2013), Obey the Darkness: Horror Stories, the novels Murder in Rock & Roll Heaven and Commoner the Vagabond, and one book of non-fiction, You Can’t Sleep Here: A Clown’s Guide to Surviving Homelessness. His works have appeared atDelphinium, Bangalore, Squawk Back, Outsider, Red Fez, Jerry Jazz Musician, Underwood Press, Scarlet Leaf, Neologism, Spark, Aphelion, Vita Brevis, and elsewhere.*

# The Pangolin Review – Issue 12

**Just Like That**

When you trip (see also: fall flat on face) it can take some time

to stand up, dust off, and once again see clearly. Life is dirty like that.

I have flashed enough fake smiles during the past month

to truly earn the one I’m wearing now. Life is a joke like that.

I’m not looking for a fifth ace to hide up my sleeve;

I’d rather carry just one and call it a cool hand. Life is a gamble like that.

There is a song in every silent surrender when the album stops spinning,

and there is a scream always shining from distant stars. Life is a roar like that.



***Scott Thomas Outlar*** *hosts the site 17Numa.com where links to his published poetry, fiction, essays, interviews, reviews, live events, and books can be found. His work has been nominated for the Pushcart Prize and Best of the Net. Scott was a recipient of the 2017 Setu Magazine Award for Excellence in the field of literature. His words have been translated into Afrikaans, Albanian, Dutch, Farsi, French, Italian, Kurdish, and Serbian. His radio podcast, Songs of Selah, airs weekly on 17Numa Radio.*

# The Pangolin Review – Issue 12

**When Jimmy Grew Up**

Jimmy prefers James beginning on his eighteenth birthday. Life is changing. Off to college in another month.

Have to ditch the boyish name and ways. He feels grown

by bedtime that night after rounding the curve on Willow Highway where it narrows through the woods and finding a car

that’s climbed a tree at road speed. Fuel leaks

from the tank. Two women are inside. The passenger is in fair shape. The driver is smashed up, squeezed in

maybe paralyzed. Jimmy—scratch that—James Calendar and his friend pull the injured woman from the wreck.

Her screams make it likely that being moved does further damage. It’s the right call though.

They’re forty feet away with her when the gas tank blows. The car rockets up the oak tree it’s inclined against,

lands in the forest beyond. James—was Jimmy—

visits St. Lawrence the next day. The driver is in traction.

She thanks him for reacting. Ribs and legs and arms and collarbones can all grow back how they once were.

The driver says, “I owe you.” James answers, “Any man would try to save the save-able.” He left Intensive Care no longer a boy, aware that it’s too easy to die.

The leap isn’t so hard to make. This is Jimmy all grown up.



***Todd Mercer*** *was nominated for Best of the Net by The Pangolin Review in 2018. His chapbook Life- wish Maintenance is posted at Right Hand Pointing. Recent work appears in: A New Ulster, Clementine Unbound, Mojave River Review, and Star 82 Review.*

# The Pangolin Review – Issue 12

[**Her Love**](https://hellopoetry.com/poem/600026/her-love/)

For the eyes with which I can see

For the heart without which I can never be For the love of my life as a whole

For my eyes, heart and soul Although now I can’t see her She has all my love and care She is the only cure for my pain She is the love, I can’t explain

Her love no words can ever express

And will ever remain until after my death Only for her- these lines - I dedicate

For the love determined only by fate



***Walid Abdallah*** *is an Egyptian poet and author. He is a visiting professor of English language and literature in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Germany and the USA. His poetry includes Go Ye Moon, Dream and*

*My heart still beats. He has several translated poems which won prestigious prizes in the USA like Cause, Egypt’s Grief and Strangers’ Cross, his books include Shout of Silence, Escape to the Realm of Imagination, and Man Domination and Woman Emancipation.*

# The Pangolin Review – Issue 12

**Dictionary of Love**

**I**

Love: Someone to whom you give a valentine.

Valentine: A card or thing given to a lover to elicit a smile. Smile: A friendly stretched position of two lips.

Two lips: Pretty, romantic muscles that form a mouth. Mouth: Anatomy for eating and exchanging kisses.

Kisses: Expression of love by sensual touching of two lips. Tu-lips: Multicolored flowers that bloom in Spring.

Spring: A season for kindling romance by giving kisses and flowers. Flowers: Plants with colorful petals you give to show love.

# II

Octopus: Sea creature with many arms, but one mouth. Mouth: Organ for eating and osculation.

Osculation: Omni-syllabled word for giving kisses.

Kisses: Special touching, hopefully not by an octopus, with two lips. Lips: Muscular edges of a mouth used for osculation and eating octopus.

***Wesley Sims*** *has published two chapbooks of poetry, When Night Comes, Finishing Line Press, Georgetown, Kentucky, 2013, and Taste of Change, Iris Press, Oak Ridge, TN, 2019. His work has appeared in Connecticut Review, G.W. Review, The South Carolina Review, Liquid Imagination, Pine Mountain Sand and Gravel, Breath & Shadow, Plum Tree Tavern, Nature Writing, Artemis Journal, Tanka Journal, and others.*

# The Pangolin Review – Issue 12

**The New Jeep**

The red of this pen is not

the red of the Jeep my aunt bought.

The red of her cheeks is not

the red of the sumac on the side of the road, where the red of the flashing lights

found my aunt in her Jeep off the shoulder. The red marks of her seat belt do not blaze with the red of a sunset, which does not resemble the red of this apple I am eating, so red in the back of the Jeep

(where I write, in red, of these events), but not as red as the blood of a deer, the red smear on the pavement,

the red splatter on the shattered windshield. The red in her eyes, weeping, as she cries into the red cell, to her husband,

a man with red hairs in his beard: red are his words to her,

red is the ink of my pen,

red is the new Jeep wrecked, red is the deer who went down.



***Will Reger*** *is the 2019/20 inaugural Poet Laureate for the city of Urbana, Illinois. He is a founding member of the CU (Champaign-Urbana) Poetry Group (*[*cupoetry.com*](http://cupoetry.com/)*), teaches at Illinois State University in Normal. His work appears in Zingara Poetry Review, Passager Journal, Eclectica Magazine, The Blue Nib Literary Magazine, Broadkill Review, Cagibi, and the Innesfree Poetry Journal. His first chapbook is Cruel with Eagles.*

# The Pangolin Review – Issue 12

**The canvas**

he took his shirt off unprompted

and showed me his new tattoo - his name

across the shoulderblades

printed like a football jersey. it was brand new, still raised

and scabby under plastic.

looking

at his bare flesh my fingers itched to pick.



***DS Maolalai*** *has been nominated for Best of the Web and twice for the Pushcart Prize. His poetry has been released in two collections, Love is Breaking Plates in the Garden (Encircle Press, 2016) and Sad Havoc Among the Birds (Turas Press, 2019).*

# The Pangolin Review – Issue 12

**Foxymoron**

*The fox knows many things but the hedgehog knows one big thing.—Archilochus (7th century bce)*

Look at him lying there, smug under the hedgerow, With his pig-like snout and that thing he knows.

Yeah, a big thing, a really big thing. I bet. Like what? How to bring peace to the world?

How to help all the children become Miss America? Some useful big thing that he will reveal one day making us all better off, at peace and wearing a tiara. But does he know pi to 25 places? Know 25 places to get a good massage or a real pizza? Does he know why the Tower of Pisa tilts? Where Pisa is? Does he

know a good recipe for ratatouille? I wish I knew one for hedgehogtouille. (Pigtouille, ptooey!) Tell us,

O Great One. What do you know and when did you know it?

At least 27 centuries ago, evidently. Is it that insects

taste like chicken? Heck, we know that. Tell us something we don’t know. Do you know the way to San Jose?

Who cares? GPS will tell us that. Can you box the compass? You must know about hedge funds. That would be a big thing. Or would have been.

Do you know that Bill Conti wrote the music for Rocky? Do you know Rocky Balboa? Do you know it was Balboa who discovered the Pacific, not Cortez? Have you ever looked into Chapman’s Homer? Into his re-

frigerator? Well, don’t.

***Edmund Conti*** *has no cat but continues to write bio notes anyway. His last book (and actually his first book also) was “Just So You Know” from Kelsay Books. He has had the usual 500 poems published but that was then.*

# The Pangolin Review – Issue 12

**Love Cannot Be Said**

I wear rustic-looking rings on my fingers because it makes me feel more spiritual, somehow.

Maybe it’s the intricate engravings on these

metal hoops, or the pastel-colored stones on some of them

that remind me of the rocks and markings that must exist in heaven, or whatever sublime place there is.

I often wish to exist in a place like that.

*At other times, I hear the words Being closer and closer is the desire of the body. Don’t wish for union!*

*Why would God*

*want a second God? Fall in love in such a way that it frees you from any connecting.*

*Love cannot be said.*

*(The italicized words and the title of this poem are taken from the poem “The Taste of Morning”, by Rumi, as translated by Coleman Barks.)*

***Ethar Hamid*** *is an aspiring writer and artist from Khartoum, Sudan. She writes poetry and essays, and creates illustrations and comics.*

# The Pangolin Review – Issue 12

**The Spider in the Windowsill**

It’s tempting to just squish it outright but you should first pull off a leg, then another. First an arachnid

then an arthropod then a quadruped then a biped. Does

the level of intelligence and/sophistication increase or decrease with each removed limb? How about if you

put a hat on the tiny, flailing insect,

give it a cane, make it dance on its two remaining legs as it fumbles its way to death?

What happens if you remove all the legs from one side, but leave the other intact? does it run around and around

in a circle like a cartoon character,

a teeny tiny motorcar? Now what happens when you give it a hat, a cane,

from the first exercise?

***Holly Day****’s poetry has recently appeared in Plainsongs, The Long Islander, and The Nashwaak Review. Her newest poetry collections are In This Place, She Is Her Own (Vegetarian Alcoholic Press), A Wall to Protect Your Eyes (Pski’s Porch Publishing), Folios of Dried Flowers and Pressed Birds (Cyberwit.net), Where We Went Wrong (Clare Songbirds Publishing), Into the Cracks (Golden Antelope Press), and Cross Referencing a Book of Summer (Silver Bow Publishing).*

# The Pangolin Review – Issue 12

**Tragic Kid Yearning**

Frankston generations on from war’s aftermath, English immigration lured by its bayside setting, its regular train service connecting Melbourne. End of the line. The very end. True, the posh whizz past by freeway to their holiday homes far enough away to the south, but there is no work here. Never was. Misspelt, mispunctuated signs in the shopping mall, the waft of caramelized sugar, cheap sad songs, the only excitement chemical, no pros, just cons.

When Point Nepean Road was the only way through what resembled a country town to where the pointy end of the peninsula greets Bass Strait’s choppy swell, locals referred to Melbourne as ‘the city’, as if some distant dream. I contributed generously to the lone secondary school’s toxic cauldron, sweaty feral kids bussed in from outposts that are now ghettoes of the unemployed overflow.

We are thirteen, on the run, from home, school, punishment; my mate and me. A divvy van brakes in that main street, cops, elite thugs of a thuggish town, hurry from it, we split up. My mate, who died from cancer years ago, hides by sliding under a parked FJ Holden on his back, but they spot him, trapped.

I skedaddle, break into a beach hut, sleep rough, bravado battered by a wave of loneliness, hungry enough to eat a seagull if I could catch one. In the quiet morning a young couple wearing bathers arrives. She drops her top for his pleasure. Staring through a gap from the hut’s shadows I feast on that scene, wanting to be old enough for love. Then I think, what if he catches me perving? I pinch out my acrid fag rolled from collected butts, wary, trapped as usual, wonder how I shall get away, find love.

***Ian C Smith****’s work has appeared in, Amsterdam Quarterly, Australian Poetry Journal, Critical Survey, Live Encounters, Poetry New Zealand, Southerly, & Two-Thirds North. His seventh book is wonder sadness madness joy, Ginninderra (Port Adelaide). He writes in the Gippsland Lakes area of Victoria, and on Flinders Island, Tasmania.*

# The Pangolin Review – Issue 12

**Nightscape**

Fog horns sound though air soaked in blackness. All evening long listening to hiss of trucks, cars.

Shadows brush across walls as trees trace their branches. Gathering and waving together then swaying apart.

While I sleep, stars glide through heaven making their appointed rounds in ancient sacred procession.

Dreams as smooth as rose petals spill into my mind growing wild patches in this dark garden of night.



***Joan McNerney*** *is the recipient of three scholarships. She has read her work at the National Arts Club Gramercy Park, State University of New York at Oneonta, University of Texas in Houston and The Mc Nay Art Institute in San Antonio, Texas. Her poetry has been included in over two hundred print literary magazines, journals and anthologies. The internet has provided an even wider platform for her work and she has four Best of the Net nominations. Her latest title, The Muse In Miniature, is available on Amazon.*

# The Pangolin Review – Issue 12

**The Buzz**

those bees, those busy- buzzing, small-busy-bodies, Mother Nature’s Lesbians, leaving behind the confines of the hive and the dronesplaining males,

for feminine humming, feminine business, sucking nectar from the genitals

of plants



***Julian O’Dea*** *lives in Canberra, Australia. He is a retired government scientist. He has been writing poetry for a few years and has published in a number of places, including, Creatrix (Western Australia), as well as Ygdrasil and Friday’s Poems in Canada.*

# The Pangolin Review – Issue 12

**Celestial Eye Candy**

*Go slowly, my lovely Moon, go slowly.—Khaled Hosseini*

Go outside. Look up to the full moon, stargazers. A front row seat on Earth awaits.

The opening act of a rare and eerie cosmic event is about to unfold.

Optimal viewing is guaranteed. No travel or telescope is necessary.

Your backyard and the naked eye works.

Watch as a celestial curtain rises for an extravaganza. The Earth, moon and sun align.

The full moon gets the Earth’s shadow.

We earthlings get a total lunar eclipse, a supermoon and a blood moon.

Behold this special moon!

The lunar eclipse coincides with January’s Wolf Moon, the first full moon of the year, and a supermoon.

The Earth comes between the sun and a super moon, completely covering the moon with its shadow.

It’s also a supermoon. The moon is full and closest to Earth in orbit.

Spy on this biggest, brightest supermoon high in the sky, as the moon’s brilliance slowly fades and turns into a reddish hue.

Astronomers call this rare and glorious celestial sight a “Super Blood Wolf Moon.”

Marvel as the Earth’s shadow swallows the blood moon. Keep a close watch on the heavens.

You won’t want to miss Mother Nature’s celestial eye candy treat.

Gaze up at the night skies and watch the show’s grand finale.

When the brilliant moon slowly slips away, the stars come out to play.

And the planets dance across the night sky ballroom.



***Katacha Díaz*** *is a Peruvian American writer. Wanderlust and love of travel have taken her all over the world to gather material for her stories. Her prose and poetry has been published internationally in literary journals, print and online magazines, and anthologies. Her most recent credits are: Sleet, The Galway Review, Voice of Eve, Muddy River Poetry Review, The Pangolin Review, Harvests of New Millennium, Poppy Road Review. She lives and writes up in her perch in a quaint little historic town at the mouth of the Columbia River in the Pacific Northwest, USA.*

# The Pangolin Review – Issue 12

**Ideas Relegated**

News finally came down. More had occurred than I had thought.

Earth’s mis-alignment punished some unfortunates for positions occupied since ancient times, but growing less hospitable whether direct or indirect in the sun's rays.

Others banish to lesser regions all unable to escape centrifugal weight as lower rungs of human hierarchy, not to raise up, nor fortify, nor care.

The waters rise, of course, torrents flow from melt on high, threatening flood once more, destructive ideas too relegated, but in much argument.

***Keith Moul*** *has written poems and taken photos for more than 50 years, his work appearing in magazines widely. His chapbook, The Journal, was recently accepted by Duck Lake Chaps for issuance in early 2020. This is his ninth chap or book published.*

# The Pangolin Review – Issue 12

**A Poem of Love and Hatred**

The canvas was white sans a drop of ink, The night etched patterns on it,

The blackness dropped a bob on it, It became a painting to be envied.

Chiaroscuro of light and dark Caught uncertainty by its forelock, Grief and pain came to its rescue,

Coagulating the blood that drenched its bosom.

Brethren of a community Shouted shenanigans, Marched forward Smearing their faces With fearful colours

On blood-curdling symmetry, Though the serpentine streamers

Hanging from parapets The colourful bandanas

Covering their foreheads Disseminated messages

Of universal brotherhood Or,

Terror and Violence!



***Ketaki Datta*** *is an Associate Professor of English, Bidhannagar College, Kolkata. She is a novelist, short story writer, critic and a translator. Her novels A Bird Alone and One Year for Mourning have won has won rave reviews. Her poems have been published in several anthologies. She was elected Professional Woman of the Year in 2005 by American Biographical Society, North Carolina.*

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