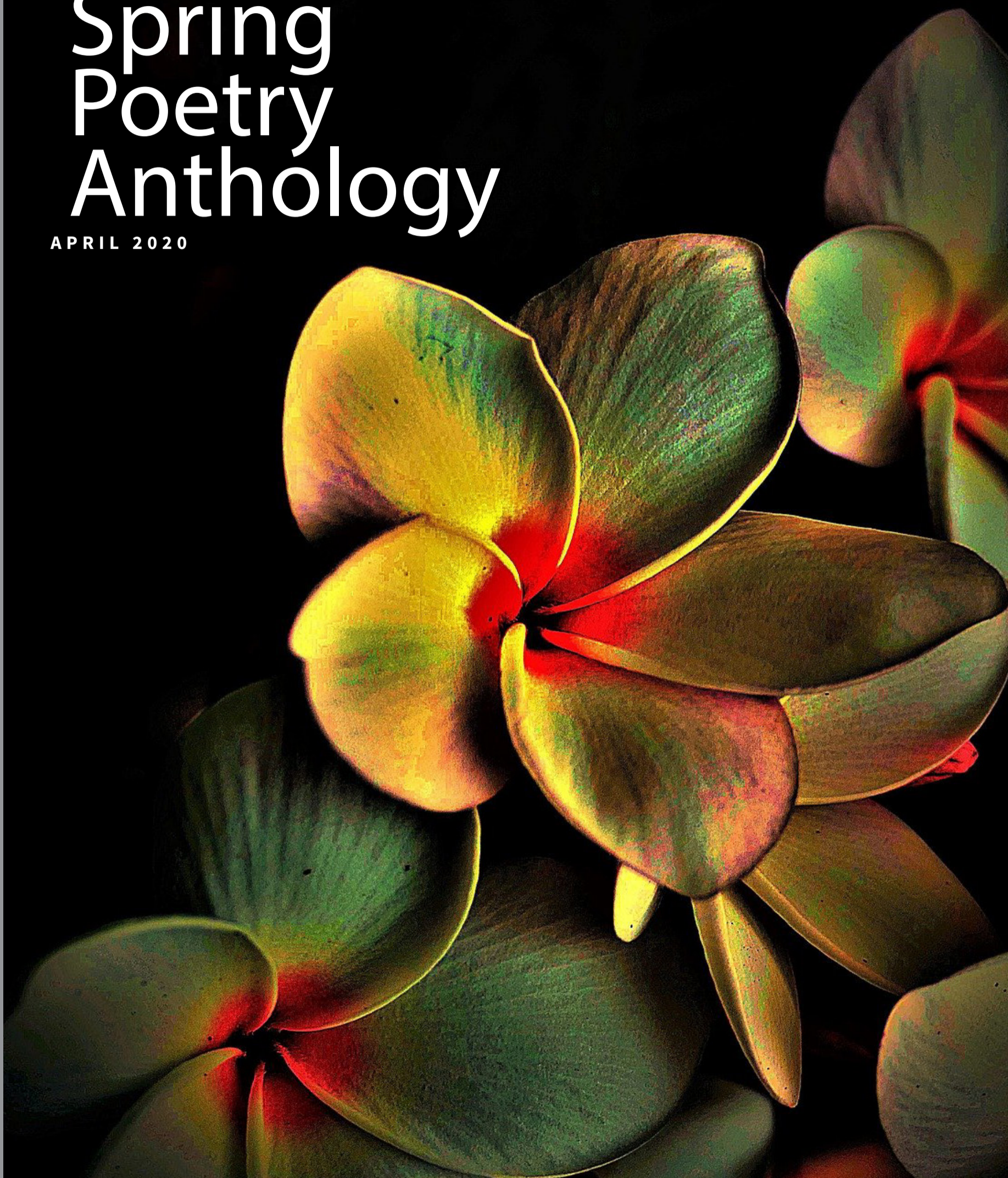


CALS WRITING CIRCLE

Spring Poetry Anthology

APRIL 2020



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In certain ways writing is a form of
prayer.

— DENISE LEVERTOV

CALS WRITING CIRCLE

Editors

—JESSICA HALSEY

—PAULETTE MEHTA

—DEB MOORE

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—ANNA M. WALTHALL

CALS WRITING CIRCLE

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CALS WRITING CIRCLE

Introduction

Every April, writers and creatives across the map celebrate *National Poetry Month*. For thirty days, we honor the great poets of our past by spotlighting new and promising works and encouraging everyone (and anyone) to connect with their inner poet. This year, the CALS Writing Circle hosted a month-long challenge. For every day in the month of April, a new prompt in the form of a single word was given to our writers--words like wake, spark, thaw, clear.

When we sat down to plan the challenge, we set a few goals. We agreed that if April came to an end and we had at least fifteen poems, we would consider the contest a success. The days ticked by, but our inboxes never came up empty; every morning there were new poems to be read. Now here we are with a completed anthology of over fifty poems, all written by local writers!

We wish we could celebrate their hard work in person. We wish we could hear each poet read their work over hot coffee. For now, however, we offer this digital collection and a virtual round of applause.

With that, we hope these poems bring you joy. They certainly have for us.

Cheers,
Bekah Smith & Deb Moore
Central Arkansas Library System

CALS WRITING CIRCLE

Central Arkansas Library Writing Circle

CALS Writing Circle offers encouragement, critiques, workshops, and classes to central Arkansas writers. We welcome writers of all genres and any level of experience. The Writing Circle meets on the third Saturday of each month at the Main Library at 100 Rock Street in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Email dmoore@cals.org for more information.

— ANNA M. WALTHALL

Coffin Man

Try to ignore him if you can,
But everyone hears coughin' man!
His window is adjacent to four neighbors,
And is wide open for his pulmonary labors.
He routinely begins at the break of dawn,
Long before I'm ready to yawn.
I open one eye and peer at my phone,
Then pull up my covers and moan and groan.
His smoker's cough preludes his death,
So long and deep, he can't catch his breath!
"Ahem!" He croaks with a croup!
"Hack! Ahem! A Whoop!"
Yes, try to ignore him if you can,
But everyone hears coffin man!

— ANNA M. WALTHALL

A Note Worth Sharing: Reality Check

In an instant, things can change.
Wires in your brain can rearrange.
Young or old, it matters not;
Neither does income, potential, or life lot.
Your brain controls what is what, and what is where.
And who is who and about what you care.
We all better live like there is no tomorrow.
Bring people joy; avoid all sorrow.
Dance under the moon, in the rain and in the sun.
Do what you should and then have some fun.
Let all of your hurts go – feel them flow down streams.
Don't just live – realize your dreams!
Create a plan and then work towards it daily.
And don't get downtrodden; embrace life gaily!
Laugh and sing and turn flips if you are able.
Refuse to be defined by your past or a label.
You get to decide if you're successful or a wreck.
This is the time for a reality check!

— ANNA M. WALTHALL

Stretch Bird

Stretch bird!
Then gaze around;
Perched high above the ground.
Spread wings, twist tail, then lift a leg.
Yoga?

— JAN HAMLETT

The Peace of Vintage Faith

I hear the creaking
of the hinges
on the door
as it closes.

But I smile.

I know another ---
somewhere else ---
has a key
unlocking it.

So I wait.

The shutting of a door
once stirred panic,
but tonight
I feel no fear.

Only hope.

— JAN HAMLETT

Etsy Search

Search: “carefree day” . . .
I used to find them.
They were made of play-homes
laid out with sticks,
mud-cookies so delightful
your auntie almost ate one,
and clever clover jewelry
cherished for its flair.
They were trimmed with poufy cloud-shapes
shifting with the breeze
into ever new designs.
These charming days (in great supply)
were finished off so neatly
with wishing on a star
and one last bit of sparkle,
fireflies in a jar ---
twinkling, blinking, winking ---
as you dreamed away the night . . .
Search results:
“Carefree day no longer in stock.
Suggest crafting one for yourself.
Check Pinterest.”

— JAN HAMLETT

Good Morning Moon

Good morning, moon . . .
nice to see you there.

Coffee in hand . . .
steps quite slow . . .
the day ahead . . .
thoughts in flow . . .

Stop!
Look!

What a surprise
in blue morning skies:
a lingering glimpse
of yesterday . . .

soon to be gone.

“You let it go, too,
and begin anew”
(a whisper from
the pale, fading orb).

Good morning, moon . . .
nice to see you there.

— RACHEL LUEBKE

Easter Weekend, Reaching

I went on a drive through the city,
through the country.
Spring flowers climbed everywhere,
not discriminating.
Primrose took over the highway,
and swaths of yellow flowers
stormed bright, open fields
with rain-logged roots, drowning,
their washed-out faces reaching for air and sun.

You are there alone.

I went on a drive through the country,
through the city.
The sun, warm and magnificent, comforting—
but the flowers, drowning, drowning, drowning.
You are there alone,
behind the cold brick building
in the city, drowning.
Right across the road.

— LUIS UZCATEGUI

Fresh

Serendipitous purple flowers,
Among golden buttercups,
Weave about the mellow clovers
In tomorrow's hot hyssops.

The wind that blows my airs to me
Carries something new this spring:
A faint caress has fallen free
From the greeny eversing—

The newly leaves of hickory
And oak abounded canopy,
Stricken by the sun they glee,
Form a veily verdant Sea,

And piney scents of cedar glade,
Darkened through late winter waves,
Carry their caress arrayed
Out of shadows, gorge and caves—

The mighty rivers rush anew,
Unbeholden and unbound,
To give life its auspicious queue
And spring forth its freshly found.

— LUIS UZCATEGUI

Run

Day and go. Run the Sun
Summing a day ago like an
Abacus.

And the moon it goes, too,
Running away afar—
A neatly placed reminder:
Redemption is at hand.

Toward the sun, running away ago
To nearly a reminder that—
Again and again—
The sum of these reminders
Is merely a mirage
(like the moon, it goes,
Running away afar).

— LUIS UZCATEGUI

Change

Arattled, a shaking, the distant trees undulating
Earth moves free—
A fault. A spring. A fall.

Water, too, falls—
Bubbly orbs suspended briefly,
And then returned to an explosive display of
Disorder and disarray.

And yet, life seems so unfazed,
Disobeying the orders of thermodynamics
Which call toward entropic, deterministic chaos.
Chemistry, instead, offers an organized intermission
Between brief life and its quick transition.

And the cycle perpetuates:

Within you lie the remnants of stars
Fueled by a sun that gnars and chars,
Fed by an Earth, for better or worse,
And fated to whiteness the infinite curse:

All eras must end, and anew begin—
Some say it's eternal, but to the contrary,
All change is just temporary.

— MARY HALEY PERRY

Iniquity

“Sins of the father,”
But a mother’s sins are equally potent
Sins remembered
Sins forgotten
Horrors of the haunting hours –
Children cursed.

— MARY HALEY PERRY

Perjury

“Do you believe this is a fair and equitable settlement?”
The ad litem for my five-year old asked.
“Yes.”

“Do you believe this is a fair and equitable settlement?”
The insurance company’s attorney asked.
“Yes.”

“Do you believe this is a fair and equitable settlement?”
The judge asked.
“Yes.”
But he’ll never again reach the monkey bars with two hands –
There is nothing fair or equitable about that.

— MARY HALEY PERRY

Contemplation

At 38, I contemplate, all the firsts behind me –
first date, first love, first job, first child.

At 38, I contemplate and insulate.

At 48, I contemplate, spontaneous combustion –
stop, drop, roll, STOP, DROP, ROLL!

At 48, I contemplate and calculate.

At 58, I contemplate, self-fulfillment –

plastic, opioids, medical marijuana, retirement, hobbies.

At 58, I contemplate and pray, “Oh, God, let someone
Formulate, hypoallergenic plastic.”

At 68, I contemplate, how young my ancient Grandpa left.

At 68, I contemplate and celebrate

Infinite love and laughter.

At 68, I contemplate and celebrate and

Anticipate.

next...

— MARY HALEY PERRY

Pay Dirt

Facing off
They sit atop her bed,
His mouth open for the surgeon,
A reluctant patient
Anxious for the recovery room.
Fingers, floss, and facial tissue – O.R. tools,
She pushes
He flinches
She pulls
He howls
And scurries to the bathroom
To assess the progress in the mirror.
Climbing on the cabinet,
Operating alone now
He pushes
He flinches
He pulls
He howls, “I GOT IT! LOOK! I GOT IT!
Pay dirt –
Money in the morning.

— MICAH A. MATTSON

Forgiveness

It's an idea, just an idea.
The idea of forgiveness.
The idea that mistakes can be forgiven,
that broken relationships can mend.
But not for me.
My mistakes are too big,
too many broken relationships to mend.
Too many hurt.
Friends, family, shocked and betrayed.
I apologize but their hurt is still there,
a wall between us.
I think distance will help bring forgiveness,
but it only brings resentment.
Some forgive but the memory is still strong.
Those who don't, despise me,
"I got what I deserved."
But they can never know what I got,
They can never feel it.
So to me it's just an idea,
the fleeting idea of forgiveness.

— MICAH A. MATTSON

Change

Everything is change,
these poems are change,
every day is change.
Our position is constantly changing.
But many changes,
only take place,
if you let them.
Simple poems can change you,
but only if you stop,
and let it happen.

— MICAH A. MATTSON

Runaway Train

When I hesitate, I-
Oh dear,
I lost my train of thought.
This happens surprisingly often,
It happens every time I-
Do something or other...
It's rather hard to explain because it happens when-

— MICAH A. MATTSON

Clear

Few things are clear to me,
things that are clear to me seem to be
confusing to others around.
So I just don't make a sound.
But when I do inform,
it always starts a storm.
So I keep myself quiet,
for fear of causing a riot.
They don't want to know what I see.
Telling them seems to guarantee,
that they ignore what I say,
and once again turn away.

— MICAH A. MATTSON

Lift

I could use a lift,
I've been set adrift.
By whom I'm not sure,
but I hope that you're,
willing to lend a hand,
and I hope you understand.
I'm not asking for much.
I only ask to get in touch
with the sane part of my mind,
So would you be so kind?
As to help me shift?
Cause I could really use a lift.

— MICAH A. MATTSON

Expired License

As I start my poem I find that I cannot stray from fact,
and what a boring poem that creates.
Then I remember with dismay,
my poetic license has expired.
I hurry to the DFA (Department of Foolishness and Absurdity),
but of course I don't have the right documents.
After returning home, gathering the documents, and driving back, I
finally have it.
My poetic license returned.
Now I may go about spinning my half-truths and weaving with my
words.
I may continue to confound my readers with my ponderings on
everythings and nothings.
That is how readers like their poems,
deep and confusing,
filled with riddles and mysteries.
For a poem without poetic license is a boring one.

— MICAH A. MATTSON

Fresh

I need something fresh,
no more repetitive, bland, boring days.
I need something different.
I need something new,
a reason to get up.
Anything to look forward to.
I can't take any more of the same.
Some hate change,
I feed off it.
So I need something fresh.

— MICAH A. MATTSON

Running

Everyone is running.
Some run from what they see,
I run from what I don't want to see.
Some run from what they hear,
I run from what I don't want to hear.
Some run from what they feel,
I run from what I don't want to feel.
The things people run from the hardest,
Are the things they know that they can't run from.
I run hardest from the things that I know have already caught me.

— MICAH A. MATTSON

Sun

If we saw it shine for just a moment,

Our path lit by a solitary ray.

Would we praise it as if it were God sent?

Or expect thousands of rays every day?

— SHIRLEY STICHT SCHUETTE

Untitled

I wake each morning
and I wonder, what's the point?
The answer? WONDER, of course.

— TOM HUTCHISON

Bright

Curtains fail
to restrain the dawn
and morning sneaks
through windows
flooding amber light upon
unruly quilts
rumpled during the night's
foregone rest

In the golden glow
motes float
in the peaceful air
and we devote
that moment to watch
them eddy and spin
passing through and within
beams of sunlight
bright as the expectant day

— TOM HUTCHISON

Breeze

Rows of plants
stretch out
to a dispiriting distance

the sun reigns
in a cloudless sky

dry dirt shifts
beneath tired feet

a wooden handle
chafes aching hands

required to work
as long as there is light

the heat compounds fatigue

a rhythm emerges
from around the crop
two steps
then chop – chop – chop

nothing can appease
the angry sun
and a breeze feels
like God's mercy

— TOM HUTCHISON

Change

The clink of spare change
metallic symbols of empathy
a physical manifestation
of humanity
a visible sign
of our capacity
for kindness
takes on
profound meaning
to someone in need
beyond stray nickels
and quarters
and dimes
combined to buy
a cup of coffee
or something to eat
they are symbols
that someone cares
willing to take the time
to treat another person
like they matter

— TOM HUTCHISON

Breath

On the craggy rocks
 of the northern volcanoes
where the barbarians
hunt outsiders for food
there's a plant that grows
 among the obsidian shards
where frost collects
 but no rain ever falls
the Phoenix Breath
 its claret florets
hide among the knife-edge stone
 tiny blossom clusters
evading the ruthless wind
 each petal like a blood drop
from a pin prick
 you must collect its roots
to make the elixir
that protects you from death
Go now
 that is your quest

— TOM HUTCHISON

Adapt

Your absence brought me pain
like the throb
of a severed limb
lost in the war
and the more
I confront the strain
the more I felt the loss
the ache reminds me
you're gone and
I'm drawn
to phantom desire
that hangs on
as though it's still a part of me
while it left me handicapped
I adapt
I trapped the sorrow
and wrapped it away
to allay the sting
so I can move through the day
and live

— TOM HUTCHISON

Clear

The evening merits a toast
cups of Baiju
clear as purpose
and strong like coastal winds
from the Yellow Sea
as we sit on a balcony
among the skyscrapers
wrapped in humidity
and reveling in the polychrome aura
from buildings capped
with neon and phosphorescent light
luminous
radiant
wonderous
an incandescent glow
reflecting off glimmering facades
until the cups are refilled
and the host offers another toast
to honor the success of the day
Ganbei

— TOM HUTCHISON

Less

Less
Less is less
and less is more
and more is less
than ever before
distress the less
'cause it's not more
possess excess
for what it's for
finesse distress
before it roars
bless a yes
and you'll get more
less is a mess
left on the floor
obsess and stress
but don't ignore
express the blessed
and do the chore
'cause less is less
and less is more

— TOM HUTCHISON

Chime

The chime from Daddy's clock
once allowed me
to take stock
of the hours
until the dawn
the time drawn
against the background
of night
until the light
brought on
leave to get out of bed
Westminster quarters

time is a human design
to mark the progress
of the future into the past
sometimes slow
sometimes fast
until at last
it stops

— TOM HUTCHISON

Grasp

The essence of that night
lingers in memory
like an object
that I can feel and see
soft, smooth and cool to the touch
reminding me
it mattered so much
such passionate words
and cries
the unsaid goodbyes
and phases of grief
that now feel like lies
because emotions fade
and the memories devolve
so I grasp the object
and hold it with resolve
before the pain is lost
and feelings dissolve
until nothing remains
even the essence of that night

— TOM HUTCHISON

Fresh

Hottest
 Summer
days
 fresh
 fruit
 robin
 redbreast
 velvet
skin
 lenient
 flesh
 gilded
golden
 glorious
sun
 steeped
 sweet
 and
succulent

— TOM HUTCHISON

First

The immediacy of lips
close enough
to feel the warmth of skin
and then the spin of abandon
as restraint is undone
in the air of shared breath
a moment so

precarious

perilous

adventurous

when the space between
control and desire
melts away
in the heat of a first kiss

— TOM HUTCHISON

New

Wobbly
Shaking
Trembling
Quivering under unsteady weight
First steps
taken without rhythm or gait
standing,
stretching
acclimating to strength
an instinctive drive
to arise
and feel what it means
to be alive
and find the power
to take a step
into a new world

— TOM HUTCHISON

Hope

I hope the sheets
feel cold like
 winter-still nights
 when the air bites
and immaculate skies
reveal the frigid light
 of far-away stars
 so you might stay
in the heat
 of my arms
 and nestle to my chest
until you close your eyes
 and rest
knowing I'll keep you
 warm

— TOM HUTCHISON

Hesitate

Don't hesitate
when the world skips a beat
in that discrete instant
in that moment
before it accretes
and falters
replete with doubt
and fear
until it alters
your resolve
and you retreat
to the safety
that revolves
around the way things have always been

— TOM HUTCHISON

Lift

A controlled explosion
to lift us
from the confines of Earth
from all we know
from God's familiar designs
to drift among
the stars
unrestrained by gravity
loosed from the laws
that have governed
the way we interact
with the world
so we can
explore
and grow
and evolve
and know things
with certainty
that we have never imagined

— TOM HUTCHISON

Idea

Ideas aren't bestowed by generous Gods
Given to the worthy and the clever
Do not believe that they stack the odds
To prefer another's creative endeavor
Vision is not a gift conferred by chance
Nor the return of some random events
It is not the outcome of circumstance
Or the result of careless accidents
An idea is born from the essence of you
Your experience makes it unique and true
Combine diverse concepts in different ways
Add a surprise with a modern detail
Remove a trait that has become too stale
Invent, transform, update and then rephrase

— TOM HUTCHISON

Open

Walking against the tidal air
blowing from the Hudson
pushing toward the glowing zeal
of Times Square
it's bustle and haste
left behind
for places more real
among the slowing streets
where people live
going about their days
in shared spaces
spared from the tussle
and crush of thrumming crowds
I pass a garden on 48th
where twines and vines
climb the wrought iron fence
and blooms open
to the sultry dusk

— TOM HUTCHISON

Note

Holding a G flat
the soprano note
alone at the beginning
of the movement
a tone to emote
the oneness of being
to devote
the character to loneliness
as her voice
floats above
the soaring melody
that suddenly turns
from its lofty height
ebbing
falling
fading
into silence
that echoes the emotion
of unrequited love

— TOM HUTCHISON

Reach

Stretch your arms
to the expanse
of empty skies
exemplary in its indifference
to the messy unrest
that so defines
our existence
on this cold planet

reach to the heaven
to touch the stars
and hold their promise
of beginnings
and the steel of will
that never gives up
on creating order
out of the chaos

— TOM HUTCHISON

Ray

Uncle Ray died
 sometime after the war
a training mishap
 they told us
 — a helicopter crash
nothing less
 and nothing more
perhaps that's all it was
 but that seems too pointless
 therefore, I choose to ignore
 the official account
and imagine him
 on a mission
 secret and dangerous
 hunting Nazi's in South America
or chasing Soviet spies
 in East Berlin
and so, a legend is born

— TOM HUTCHISON

Remember

The Quarantine Trilogy

There once was a man who couldn't remember
If it was Saturday, June or the 5th of December
He asked with dismay
What is the day?
Because every day seems like October

There was a man who couldn't recall
If he showered today, this week or at all
He knew he was sunk
When he smelled his own funk
And decided he'd shave in the Fall

A man sits alone in his room
With Webex and FaceTime and Zoom
He's talking all day
With nothing to say
And he couldn't be bothered to groom

— TOM HUTCHISON

Run

Run

Run away from
Run to
Run around
Run through

Run up
Run down
Run the streets
Run the town

Run a circle
Run a square
Run a line
Run a pair

Run into
Run where
Run out of
Run there

Run tonight
Run today
Run to leave
Run to stay

— TOM HUTCHISON

Soft

Awakened from a hammocked dream
by a whisper
a murmur
a blur of a sound
so quiet you convince yourself
that you didn't hear a thing
but storms loom
where the sky meets the sea
mushrooming
blooming
consuming the bluest sky
charcoal clouds
immense and menacing
but soft thunder tumbles
through tropical air
subtle
muted
almost not there
worn away by the roar of waves
and wind that never abates

— TOM HUTCHISON

Renewal

Me got t'ree pieces o' silver
for Old Scratch
him done come yah
from the bottom land
and him-a say to gi you
da renewal
if me put dem inna palm
of his hand
him comin' to da balmyard
singin' a hoodoo hymn
him comin' 'round 'bout midnight
fi on doin' sin
him comin' with resurrection
but you soul done belong-a him

— TOM HUTCHISON

Run 2

A one-word text

RUN

They found me
even in the city
where the world comes to live
and forgive colonization
because the shops
offer rare luxuries
and no one sees
London's hidden underbelly
I'll walk
until I cross Westminster Bridge
and then run along the Thames
in the brilliant lights
of the Eye
keeping to shadows because
they'll cover Embankment station
but if I can get to Blackfriars
and conspire to hide
I just might get away

— TOM HUTCHISON

Seed

Seasoned acorns fall
shaken by shifting north winds
Thunder on tin roofs

Twirling from maples
weighted, veined shockingly strong
Single angel wing

Dandelion fluff
blown into an empty sky
Weightless Summer clouds

Watermelon pips
embraced in the sweet red flesh
Sustain next Summer

Golden mustard fields
wave in the gentle breezes
Seeds like the kingdom

— TOM HUTCHISON

Thaw

Left on the counter
to thaw
brick hard
ice cream
so cold
it stings bare fingers
a layer
of frost forms
on the package
lingering until
the ambient warmth
tempers the callous chill
until the ice
melts away
and the softened
sweet
sanctuary
of vanilla
yields to the spoon
and bowl

— TOM HUTCHISON

Wake

Events rush passed
faster than perception
can amass context
before we can ask
what is next
and we are left
with a vast sense
of being perplexed
and it lasts until
another incident
shakes us from
any comfort
as it races into the future
leaving us to cope
within its wake

— TOM HUTCHISON

Spark

The dark
 spreads over me
 in the blackout
when there is nothing to see
 until I build a fire
click spark
 click spark, click spark
 click spark, click spark, click spark
 and then the blaze catches
 and room fills
with the aroma of pine
and oak and hickory
 the dried wood
 that has been waiting for me
 to turn it
into warmth
 and light

CONTRIBUTORS

Jan Hamlett

Jan Hamlett is a retired English teacher who lives and writes in Little Rock, Arkansas. Her poetry has appeared in *Grit*, *Calliope*, and the online journal *Plum Tree Tavern*. Jan's stories and essays have been published in *Women Alive*, *The Wittenburg Door*, and *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Thanks Dad*, as well as online in *Sonic Boom* and *Bewildering Stories*. She can also be found on YouTube presenting two of her stories for the radio show *Tales from the South*: "Turnabout" and "Since I Saw Him Standing There." She is pleased and honored to be included in this anthology.

Tom Hutchison

I write constantly. For a business audience, I try to make the complex clear. For my friends, I try to be funny and engaging or at least brief. For myself, I write poetry. While my commitment to it ebbs and returns throughout my life, it is a constant. I write poetry in my head even when I'm writing nothing at all. Hal, my wife of more than 25 years, has come to accept it. My daughter Sarah shrugs it off, but the words keep coming, waiting for the chance to be written down.

Rachel Armes Luebke

Rachel Armes (Luebke) began writing for pleasure at age 8, creating song lyrics with a friend during summer play dates. She has been writing poetry for 19 years, and it continues to be her main creative outlet, along with singing and gardening. In 2013, she graduated Summa Cum Laude with a technical writing degree from UALR, and in March 2017 she began working as a grant writer with the UAMS Institute for Digital Health & Innovation after working briefly for Arkansas' child welfare system. She lives in Little Rock with her four-year-old daughter, Isabelle, and their beloved cat, Joanie.

Micah A. Mattson

Hello! My name is Micah Mattson. I am 16, home schooled, and I'm completely new to writing poems. I am really happy to be included in the anthology in spite of my poor rhyming skills. I got started with this contest as a writing assignment, and found it to be a great way to get emotions out. I write from whatever emotion I'm feeling at the time, though I find that I write best when I'm in pain. I've had a crazy school year, and gone through some really hard things, but it has inspired some of my best poems.

Mary Haley Perry

Mary Haley Perry's love of poetry bloomed as her sisters "sang" the poems they were memorizing in school. With a love of writing and literature, she began her professional career as a high school English teacher and over the next four decades worked in a variety of public education positions in Louisiana, Texas, and Arkansas. Mary writes about her life, and *Pay Dirt* memorializes the loss of her son's first tooth.

Retiring from the Arkansas Department of Education in 2017, Mary and her husband of 43 years reside in Jacksonville, Arkansas.

Shirley Sticht Schuette

Wonder the noun means surprise at the unexpected. Wonder the verb means to ask questions. That wondering describes me. I might take a watch apart because I wondered how it worked. Others got weary of my questions because I wondered what was really happening. I kept going up the trail because I wondered what was around the next turn. I had trouble finishing my thesis because I wondered about just one more point. So being an archivist who researches history to prepare documents for patrons of CALS Butler Center for Arkansas Studies is just about the perfect job for me.

Luis Uzcategui

Luis Uzcategui is a poet by day and a bartender by night. When not playing classical guitar, he can be found experimenting with an array of other instruments, or partaking in one of his many hobbies like kayaking, hiking, and foraging. A scholarly poet, he holds degrees in Art, Psychology, and Chemistry. He draws inspiration from his scholarly passions and tries to tie them in with Nature and the beauty of this weird world. His poetry is meant to be both read aloud and contemplated silently, like an audible whooshy wind that leaves a slight chill.

Anna M. Walthall

My signature, AWOL, stands for A World of Love (and Laughter). I smile every time I sign my name because it reminds me that this is what I am striving to help create for us all. I am a poet, writer and artist, which bring a lot of happiness into my life. Often times, I laugh when penning a silly poem, even more so when I consider how others may potentially chuckle with me when they read it. A good day for me is when I can entertain people or give them something to think about through my own ponderings.