



THE IDES OF MARCH

The Wise Owl Poetry Readings

EDITED BY RACHNA SINGH



The Wise Owl

Literary & Art E-Magazine

The Ides of March



Poetry Readings

Edited By Rachna Singh



The Wise Owl

Literary & Art E-Magazine



The Wise Owl

Literary & Art E-Magazine



Our Poets



Abin Chakraborty



Kala Ramesh



Amita Paul



William Doreski



Srinivas S



Daun M Wright



Rupa Anand



Joseph Farina



Kenneth Maswabi

The Wise Owl Ides of March Poetry Readings
Google Meet companion collection
Edited by Rachna Singh

Design Layout & Cover Art by Rachna Singh

Published March 2023



The Wise Owl Ides of March Poetry Readings
Saturday 18 March 2023
Hosted by Rachna Singh

Preface

The Wise Owl Ides of March Poetry Reading session was hosted by Rachna Singh, Principal Editor of The Wise Owl, an international literary & art e-magazine on 18th March to celebrate poetry with a difference. The Google Meet Virtual event had an impressive line-up of poets from across the globe.

Our Poets:

- 1. Abin Chakraborty**
- 2. Amita Paul**
- 3. Daun W. Wright**
- 4. Joseph Farina**
- 5. Kala Ramesh**
- 6. Kenneth Maswabi**
- 7. Rupa Anand**
- 8. Srinivas S**
- 9. William Doreski**

Here is the link to the Google Meet Event:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wHPyKvloNyo>

The Wise Owl Imprint

The Wise Owl Ides of March Poetry Readings is published under the aegis of The Wise Owl Imprint. The Wise Owl is an international, online, literary & art e-magazine that promotes literature and art. The magazine features interviews of creative and artistic wizards from across the globe . It also offers a free platform for poets, writers and artists to display their work before a global audience. Podcasts of poetry, stories and interviews, and short films are also featured on this creative platform. Other books from The Wise Owl Imprint:

1. The Repertoire: The Wise Owl Poetry Yearbook 2022
2. The Wise Owl Haiku Renditions: (January 2023)
3. The Collectibles: Eclectic Tales of 2023 (March 2023)



The Wise Owl Ides of March Poetry Readings
Saturday 18 March 2023
Hosted by Rachna Singh



Sripts
By Abin Chakraborty



Scripts

By Abin Chakraborty

“How many ages hence
Shall this our lofty scene be acted over
In states unborn and accents yet unknown!”

The blood drips still.
Spilling from the Senate
And its alabaster steps
To theatres and cars
And forests and huts
And dark little alleys and unforeseen knives
All in the name of banners flown high
That hide all the corpses now lost.

But histories of Cinna the poet who was killed
Wrongly for a namesake instead
Or such others in prisons or tracks
Stabbed or burnt or shot point blank
Drown in the waves of Tiber or Beas
All without dirge or dates.

Waiting at night for the approaching Ides
I courier my words to their unlettered graves
And bide for the scripts of tragedy or farce
Which we are doomed to repeat.





The Ides of March
By Amita Paul



The Ides of March

By Amita Paul

“The Chief High Priest of Ancient Rome
Good old pontifex maximus
Called Julius Caesar when at home
By Will Shakespeare was made famous.

Because of Will we came to know
Of something called the Ides of March
Fate chose that day for Jules to go
Fat as he was and full of starch.

Blood burst from Jules in plenteous streams
Or so Marcus Antonius said
When he was stabbed mid piteous screams
Turning the Roman Forum red.

Backstabbed by those he thought his friends
“ Et tu, Brute..? “ poor Caesar cried
Emperors often meet such ends
Assassinated, Caesar died.

Brutus at first convinced the crowds
That Caesar needed to be killed
Covering envy in noble shrouds
Being a politician skilled.

But Mark Anthony turned the tide
Of public opinion so fast
That soon enough old Brutus died
His dream of glory did not last.

Now we at school and college too
Must learn both their speeches by heart
And do what we are asked to do
Recite, declaim, or play our part.

And that duty we all fulfil
Though long speeches our throats do parch
And we are writing poems still
Under the title, 'Ides of March'

Well Friends, write on, let your pens fly,
But this too should be known to all
Shakespeare got "Ides" on the sly
From cleric Nicholas Udall.

Udall teaching Latin to boys
At Eton College used Terence
A Latin Poet for the joys
Of learning classics for reference.

Translating Terence Udall used
The famous phrase "The Ides of March"
But Will Shakespeare may be excused
For his poetical demarche.

For Caesar's story was the thread
Connecting Terence and Udall
And Shakespeare brought it to a head
Perpetuating "Ides" for all.

Now Spring has sprung and March has come
Green leaves adorn the birch and larch

And though it wasn't fun for some
You need not dread "The Ides of March".

So if your collar is too tight
Or painful being full of starch
Unbutton it to set things right
And do not fear "The Ides of March".





Dark is the Night
By Daun M. Wright



Dark is the Night

By Daun M. Wright

In the night, things familiar become things feared
The sun shines its rays, exposes things in the
day but loses its brightness as dusk falls
Dusk deepens as the hours grow later, moon and
stars make their entry, they're bright and you see,
but not with the clarity of day
And evil lurks in the dimly lit areas, where
predators hide, the ones who rape, steal and kill.

At night, bodies sleep but there are some who
roam like nomads, the ones who sleep evades,
Some function best at night, or in the dark. It's
almost like a sinister secret, while the rest of the
world sleeps
One wonders, what can be achieved in the
night?

Ladies of the night ply their wares
Hotel, factory and hospital workers on the
graveyard shift
Cops, raid compounds and hunt criminals,
Strippers wrap themselves around poles to entice
eyes that cannot sleep, but are looking for
something to titillate their minds.
Images stay frozen in the memories of those who
watch.

Night innocently created as the opposite to day,
become an Avenue, a Road, a Street a Crescent,
and a setting where bad things happen.

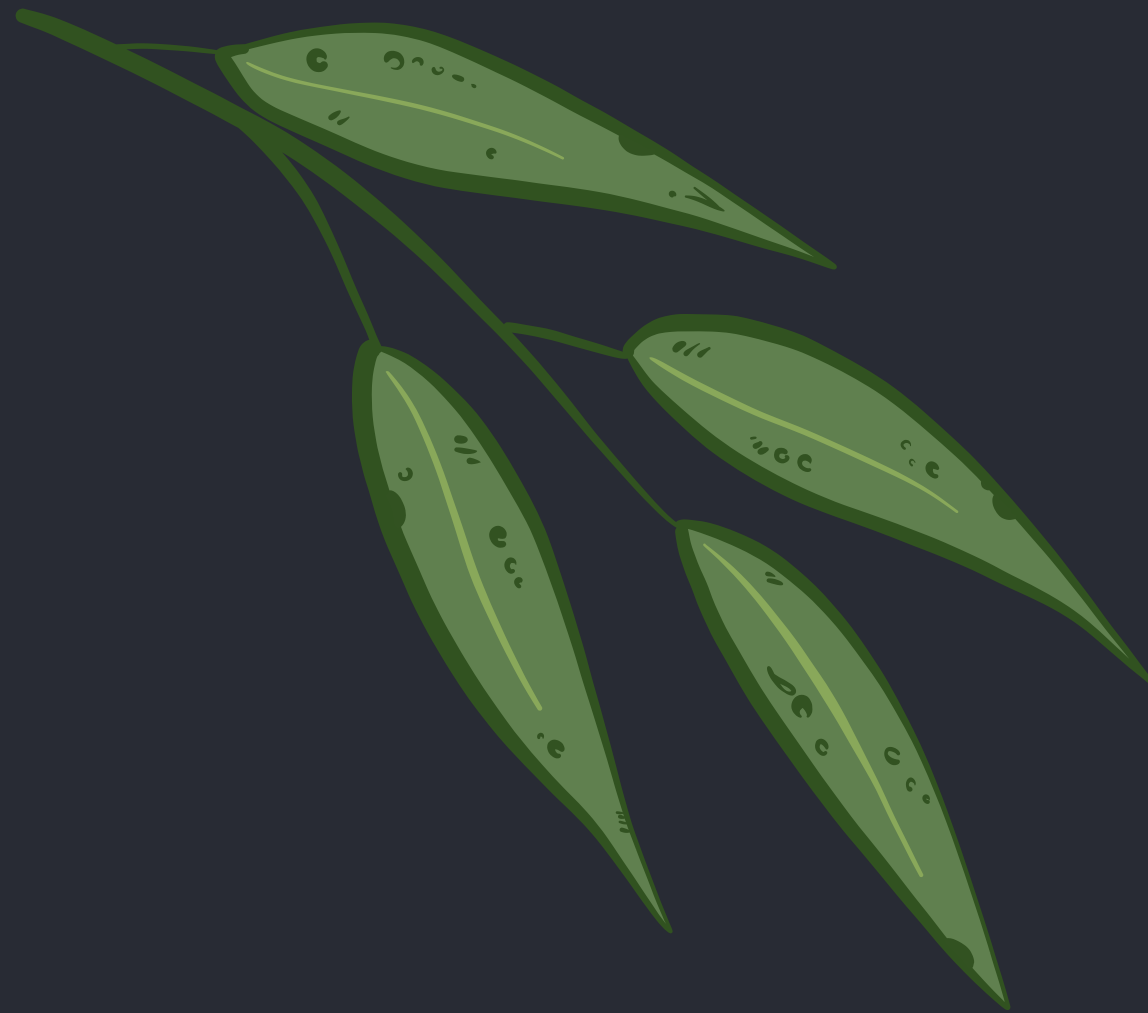
What is it about the night that makes the stars
seem to pierce the clouds?

Yet seem so distant but hold such promise, that
you wish!!

The moon shines in all her splendor over an
ocean but those who wield knives, take lives and
those who point pistols take aim as you bristle.

The night hold secrets only the day can reveal
Still the day cannot capture the sinister stillness
and the darkness that shrouds night-time.
It makes you afraid.





In Flux

By Joseph Farina

If April is the cruellest month
March is the most vacillating
It's lamb entry and lion ending
Is never confirmed and often reversed
The struggle of winter and spring
Hades determined to hold Persephone
A daily struggle between snow and sun
Of clouds and light and rain
Even time leaps forward in anticipation
The protestations of snow and windshear
Meld with our winter weary voices
Our eyes to the calendar counting down
Ignored by the laughing gods of the seasons





The Two Sides of the Spectrum
By Kala Ramesh



The two Sides of the Spectrum

By Kala Ramesh

And then, you have haiku – not taking more space than just 9 words- the most condensed poem in the world, being just strong on imagery. It's for such reasons that haiku is called 'The Wordless poem'

The power behind this little wordless poem is that it stops you in your track – it makes you pause, think and see the world in a different way!

spring rain
halfway through my meal
a scoop of loneliness

falling leaves
if only sorrow could be
contained in a palm

my fear
the darkness
between stars

scrambling for words
a birdsong in flight
deep in me

autumn dusk
without any fuss the end
of a yellow leaf

Tanka:

a lingering breath
through the reed flute
shapes his raga . . .
on night's inverted stage
the stars keep beat

learning to swim
'm told you'll know it for life
once you learn . . .
was it a different me then
in my mother's womb

wishing
I were looped
to a string . . .
one red kite fluttering
across the twilight sky

an evening
of tangled thoughts . . .
through branches
even this rugged moon
looks tattered at the edges

Haibun:

Cool Chennai
an uncut rock
under the banyan
the memory

One day in December, a frail man, almost eighty years of age — JK as he's affectionately called— sits with his eyes closed under the famed banyan tree in his residence. There's pin-drop silence as people wait for the master to speak ... birds returning to their nests go in and out of song. Forty-five minutes later he looks up smilingly and says, "the birds have said everything I wanted to say today."

breathless across the river the moon where I began

From beyond the horizon beyond and the forest I know.





Aye they are come but they are not gone
By Kenneth Maswabi



Aye they are come but they are not gone

By Kenneth Maswabi

Looking for fulfilment

Some people conspire against others.

Plotting, setting traps, and igniting infernos.

This is a human habit from the ancient to the present.

It is easy to dismiss their rumbling whisperings.

It is easy to say “Well, the Ides of March are come”

But the dark forces leading the hand of wickedness does not rest.

Regardless of the colourful rays of hope,

Or the gigantic technological knowhow.

Oftentimes the wicked get their way.

Tearing the hard surface of reason and common sense.

Opening gushing wounds on the thick skull of pride and ignorance.

The Ides of March is not a story in the ancient world.

It is a warning to all those who are careless with spiritual information or knowledge.

Regardless of the source, spiritual information is not governed by time and space.

It does not obey the laws of physics.

It can rip apart the curtain of uncertainty and allow the sacred light to shine.

Ask Julius Caesar, he will tell you all about it.

And hopefully it won't be too late for you.

Don't wait for the Seers of this world to say to you,

“Aye, they are come, but they are not gone”





This (S)ide of March
By Rupa Anand



This (S)ide of March

By Rupa Anand

the soothsayer said
“Beware the Ides of March”
Julius Caesar was
killed on a full moon night
never to rise again

i say:
March has come
to the forest
to my garden
where we pick
salad leaves

the past year
fades with winter as
slanted sunlight falls
on peach geraniums

the sun doesn't know he shines

the cat rubs
his back in brown mud
with pink Kachnar
blossoms swirling above

tongues of sansevieria
chat with the olive cacti,
prickly and much taller
than I can hope to be

the scarlet petunia
and purple-yellow
pansies clown a bit
and yes, there's
the deep burnished
gold of the marigolds.

most poignant of all
that familiar cheep
of the sunbird dangling
or angling from
an asparagus fern

the bulbul pair
darts between palms
and the tailor bird
looks for sisal
to weave his house

slumbering hornbills
glide through barks
of russet and emerald

the white eye
dips in and out
of the birdbath

a magpie robin
whistles loud
and the tree-pies
dare to be raucous

afternoon sees
thin slivers of cloud
drift overhead and
the evening wind
changes its path

in the fading light
I wait for the Koel
to stir its song
while the resident
kingfisher dives
up to the blue

yes, the moon
has a shimmer
and a shine
like a glacier
in the Himalayas.

she doesn't know her power

it's twilight and
I watch her rise
through wispy cloud

narrow bands
of moonlight
grow wider as
they reach me
casting silver
shadows to fall

i rise again

it's the Ides of March,
of course





Ides of March
By Srinivas S



Ides of March

By Srinivas S

Through the grapevine
The wind blows in different voices,
Giving the Fifteenth March Full Moon
A virtue or vice of their own choice.
Some call it inauspicious,
Remembering Shakespeare's Caesar,
Their fatal stabs, his final wounds and words.
Others make it auspicious,
If only to rebel against the tide
Of inveterate literary trends.
Others still, who are seldom moved
To take a stand, treat it as a full moon
No fuller, nor more spotted, than others.
To this scribe, the Ides of March remains
A reminder of life as a tragicomedy;
And shines memory's light on the life
Of a man who, despite his best, gave
Caesar's tragedy the colours of a comedy.
Some ten years later, he found death
In the dregs of just one more drink,
Leaving a young wife and daughter
To face the following Ides of March.





Ides of March
By William Doreski



Ides of March

By William Doreski

The wooded dark expects me
to believe, but up too early
I feel the stars excite themselves
with fissionable grandeur, the moon
heal like a scab. No regrets
if I stepped into the silence

of thawing appetites and dissolved.
When I wink out and the cold
exhumes my ashes the birds
will return from the weepy South,
and foxes will hunt with renewed
confidence, and beaver ponds

will overflow with snowmelt.
Skyscrapers will stand more erect
and potholes will seal themselves
in streets crossed by thousands
of eager pedestrians daily.
Museums proud of the paintings

of Degas, Homer, Chardin, Van Gogh
will open their tall bronze doors,
and research libraries will place
much too much faith in computers.
This will happen without my consent.
But today, in the early dark,

I'll drive to Boston and express
with the whisper of my passage
a sense of distance three fourths
of a lifetime has learned to master.
Animals and early risers
along the way will sense me

and wonder what I have to say
that causes the dawn to shudder
like a window shade lifted
in a madhouse, casting hard light
on faces we'd rather not face,
especially alone with them.



Biographies



Biographies

Abin Chakraborty teaches English literature in Chandernagore College, West Bengal, India. He has been writing for several years and his poems have been published in Indian and International publications such as Café Dissensus, Rupkatha Journal, Muse India, Pine Cone Review, among others. He is also the author of the scholarly monograph, *Popular Culture*, published by Orient Blackswan (2019). His scholarly articles have also been published in journals and anthologies from India and abroad. His collection of poems *Unlettered Longings* was published recently. He is the editor of *Postcolonial Interventions*, an interdisciplinary online journal and one of the co-editors of *Plato's Caves*, an online platform that hosts an array of poetry, fiction and non-fiction.

Amita Sarjit Ahluwalia is one of the various pen names used by Punjab-born, Patna-based, retired Indian bureaucrat Amita Paul, who has, of late begun to be recognised on various digital platforms for her original writings in different genres, in English, Urdu, Hindi and Punjabi. Her writings are imaginative, humane, socially relevant, ecologically sensitive and public-spirited, with occasional flashes of humour ranging from sharp satire to gentle ribbing of her indulgent readers.

Rupa Anand is a spiritual seeker and a published writer of experiences. Writing since 2008, her poems are an expression of images, thoughts, ideas, emotions and events that somehow get etched upon her mind and psyche. She

Biographies

“There is magic in Nature. I hope my poems will connect readers with the beauty and calm of the natural world.” Rupa has a BA (Hons) in English Literature from Lady Shri Ram College, University of Delhi. A cancer survivor, she lives in New Delhi with her husband, daughter and beloved cats.

Srinivas S is a phonologist by training and in thought, and teaches English at the Rishi Valley School, India. He has let accents, cricket and poetry partake equally of his mind; and spends his free time marshalling his thoughts on these subjects, often while taking long walks. His writings have found a home in places such as ESPNcricinfo, Amethyst Review, Borderless Journal, Narrow Road Journal and The Hong Kong Review as well as in a number of haiku journals.

William Doreski lives in Peterborough, New Hampshire. He has taught at several colleges and universities. His most recent book of poetry is *Mist in Their Eyes* (2021). His essays, poetry, fiction, and reviews have appeared in various journals.

Daun M. Wright, aka The Permissible Poet, Podcaster & Freelance Creative Writer. Daun pens poetry that speaks to the heart of our being, while allowing each reader to reflect on their life's journey. She lives in London, Ontario Canada.

Biographies

Kala Ramesh, a Pushcart Prize nominated poet, is the Founder and Director of Triveni Haikai India, and Founder and Managing Editor of haikuKATHA Journal. Author of 'haiku!' for children (Katha Books 2010); 'Beyond the Horizon Beyond' (Vishwakarma Publications) shortlisted for the Rabindranath Tagore Literary Prize in 2019. Her collection of poetry, 'The Forest I Know' (HarperCollins) was launched at Jaipur Literature Festival, March 2022. She has been experimenting with a fusion of Japanese poetry and dohas (couplets with 24 sound units) of 15th Century saint poet, Kabir. The end-result is beautiful Tanka dohas.

Kenneth Maswabi is a General Practitioner and Clinical Research Physician. He studied Medicine at Melbourne University, Australia and has been practicing Medicine for 17 years now. He joined Clinical Research in 2012 and worked on multiple Paediatric HIV/AIDS Cure Research Studies. His interest with Poetry started as a teenager but he didn't study poetry at School. His poetry is totally inspired by Silence or Stillness of mind, body and soul. Just recently published a Poetry book Titled: Love, Consciousness and Humanity: The Shadowless Dreamer...The Illuminated Path of Silence. This is a collection of spirit poems that are inspired by Silence. Multiple International Poetry Awards from various online Poetry platforms including the Order of Shakespear medal from Motivational Strips, Golden Badge award from Motivational Strips etc.





Ides of March Poetry Readings

The Wise Owl Ides of March Poetry Readings is a collection of verse of 9 select poets from across the globe. It articulates the poets' interpretation of the theme of Ides of March. The poetry of all poets is thought-provoking, well-crafted and reveals a different layer of meaning. This Chapbook volume also celebrates poetry and its ability to encompass the past as well as the present, history as well as mythology, ancient lore as well as modern trends. A collection that must find place in your bedside stack of favourite books.



The Wise Owl Imprint

Design Layout & Cover Art
Rachna Singh