

INLAND EMPIRE

CALIFORNIA

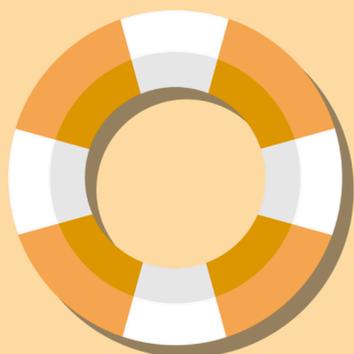
WRITERS

CLUB



FRESH

INK



2025
July

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EDITOR'S NOTE

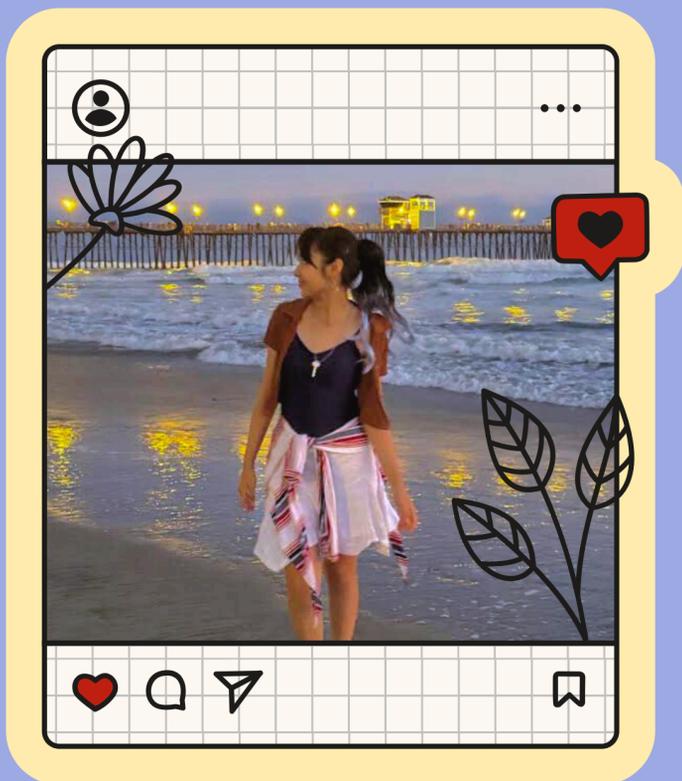
This issue was edited using

Canva

Anything Under the Sun

Hello reader,

As many of you may know, July is my last issue as Fresh Ink editor. Much like the randomly gloomy weather we had mid-summer, I decided to splash complementary colors on the pages (there are only 18 this month). Perhaps the members are too busy enjoying the sunshine to sit down and submit? I included the kind of clipart teachers would decorate their classrooms with in elementary school—simple and colorful.



@abigail_handojo

Reflecting on the 11 issues I've been able to create, I certainly have my favorites (cough cough February and October). But despite all the hours spent staring at my computer screen, painstakingly inching a graphic slightly to the right, "no, maybe left. Oops, I deleted it. Okay, never mind right still looks better," it was your emails that kept me motivated.

Thank you for bearing with me when I made mistakes and for acknowledging the effort I put in every month. Besides getting intimately acquainted with the workings of [Canva.com](https://www.canva.com), I was also able to make meaningful connections with CWC members beyond my branch.

When I began in August, I had a vision for Fresh Ink to be an eye-catching read from top to bottom, from ocean floor to high tide. The key was always balance. Now it's time I wish the future editors good luck as I pass on my faith, trust, and eraser dust!

Abigail Elina Handojo



Saturday, July 26, 2025 at 10:00 am
 Ovitt Family Community Library
 215 East C St, Ontario, CA 91764



Photo Courtesy of Pixabay.com



As has been our tradition now for many years, our Inland Empire Branch of the California Writers Club will be hosting an open Prose Mic. You do not need to be a member to participate but you do need to get on the roster by emailing your title(s) and expected reading time to Sam Nichols at the email address provided below. Readings should be limited to 10 minutes or less. Readings will be scheduled in the order the reservation requests are received or as deemed appropriate by the organizer.

- There will be a wireless microphone mounted on an adjustable microphone stand to facilitate the poetry readings.
- This will be a mixed audience at a family oriented library with minors in attendance so no gratuitous sex or violence.
- While this is typically a reading of prose, such as fiction and memoir, you are more than welcome to share poetry or other genres of writing, including songwriting, which we would love to hear performed.

We will be meeting in the main room on the 1st floor.
 Email Sam Nichols at: iecaliforniawritersclub@gmail.com
 to reserve a spot.

JULY 2025 PROSE OPEN MIC
WHAT'S COMING UP

JUNE 2025

MEETING REVIEW

“Writer Things I’ve Learned” by Victoria Waddle

Saturday, June 28, 2025, at 10:10 a.m.

Review by Ben Alirez



The guest speaker for June’s branch meeting was Victoria Waddle, workshop leader and former managing editor of the Inlandia Institute based in Riverside, California. A Pushcart Prize-nominated writer, her works have been included in *Best Short Stories from The Saturday Evening Post* Great American Fiction Contest. Her books include a collection of feminist short fiction, *Acts of Contrition*, and a chapbook on grief, *The Mortality of Dogs and Humans*. Victoria is also a former high school teacher and librarian.

Her latest book launched just weeks prior, *Keep Sweet*, a young adult novel about a patriarchal cult. During her visit, she shared some valuable insight into each piece’s inspiration, and literary insights we might glean from other short stories and novels.

Using a PowerPoint presentation, Victoria identified Freytag’s pyramid as an invaluable story structure tool where exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution are a tried-and-true model to follow.

A favorite short story of hers is George Saunders’ *The Falls*. Not just because it is well written, but also from a POV standpoint. In terms of well-crafted novels, *Moby Dick* remains a classic. As story tellers, we must all remember to escalate the action, to keep getting our characters in trouble. Victoria cited *Small Things Like These* by Claire Keegan as another personal favorite.

Victoria subscribes to Substack, an online platform that serves writers and creators by allowing them to engage with their readers. Subscription options are free or paid, with the paid version offering more content. However, it’s the Q&A’s that are especially insightful, allowing the audience to better understand what went into the development of the literary pieces.

It’s also important that we, as writers, can deal with rejection.

While discussing press publications, Victoria talked about “She Writes Press,” a hybrid publisher as one avenue, but also cautioned that the printing expenses are paid up front by an author and can be considerable.

Details of Victoria’s book launch in May were shared. Sponsored by the Inlandia Institute, it was held at the Sam and Alfreda Maloof Foundation for Arts & Crafts in neighboring Rancho Cucamonga. With handcrafted art and stunning gardens in the background, the Maloof Historic Home offered a memorable experience.

Lastly, Victoria announced that the Inlandia Institute is taking submissions for poetry, memoirs, and fiction prose with cash prizes offered for the winners. In particular, stories that center around the Inland Empire are always welcome.

Afterward, a small group met for lunch at Upland’s Eden Garden Fusion Grill.



benefits of IECWC

MEMBERSHIP

- ALL AGES are welcome!
- Entrance into monthly meetings
 - (in-person or remotely through Zoom)
- Access to monthly speakers on topics related to the craft
- Exposure & practice by submitting to our monthly literary newsletter, FRESH INK
- Network with other club members
 - (various levels of expertise, mentors)
- Participation in Critique Groups
 - (in-person or remotely through Zoom)
- Your OWN PAGE on our Club website at no additional cost
 - Highlight your bio, photo, website, social media, and published books
- Opportunities to serve on the board or on committees of our branch
- Camaraderie among other writers at all levels, all genres, and all ages!
- Partake, volunteer, and/or help plan our Spring and Fall Conferences which are provided at little (or sometimes no) cost to our members
- Annual opportunity to showcase your work at Open Mic events.
- Annual opportunity, each January, to attend/appear on our Panel of Authors
 - Members who were published the year before
 - Learn/share advice on the publication process, ask/answer questions, and buy/sell your books on site
- Annual opportunity to submit, read, and assist with judging the competitive Statewide CWC Literary Review, with readership of about 2,000 members and their readers and associates
- Simultaneous Co-Membership into California Writers Club
 - Our state-level parent organization at www.calwriters.org, with additional volunteer opportunities

- Read/advertise in the Tri-Annual CWC Bulletin available online, free of charge
 - Access to news from the other CWC Branches throughout California, gaining perspective about other serious, mostly published, writers, editors, Web designers, graphics experts, etc.
- Potential for your writing to be chosen to be displayed in the Southern California Writers Showcase at www.socalwritersshowcase.com
- A wonderful addition to your curriculum vitae or resume!
- Access to the monthly IECWC Blind Review Team
- Utilize our FACEBOOK PAGE to get your works word out to the public interested in writing

JOIN or RENEW at:

<https://iecwc.com/membership-meetings/>

Active
\$65

Supporting
\$65

Student
\$15
ages 8-22

Renewal of Membership
\$45

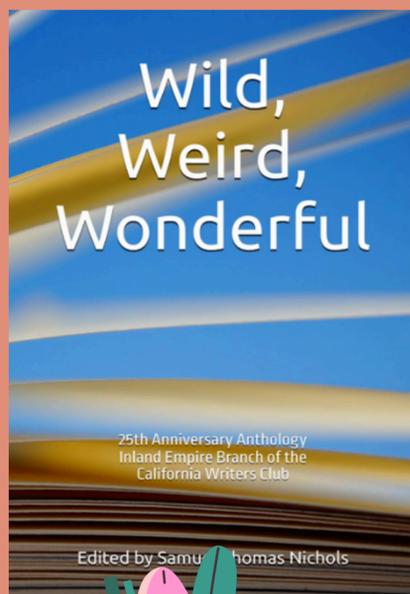
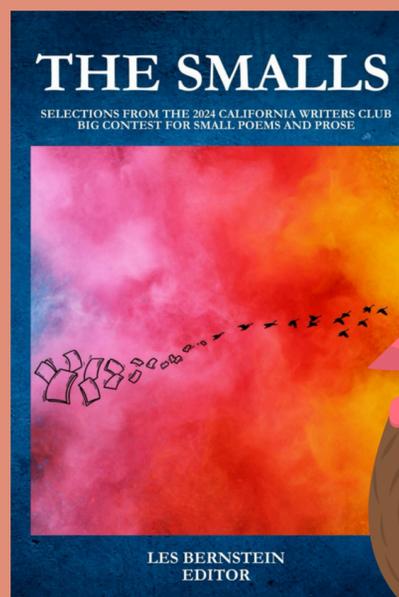
Renewal deadline September 30.
On October 1, CWC shall drop all delinquent members from the rolls. If dropped, you must pay the new \$65 member enrollment fees.

C
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THE SMALLS

The Smalls includes selections from the California Writers Club 2024 "Big Contest for Small Poems and Prose." This is a vibrant collection of unique voices chosen from the contest entries.

<https://a.co/d/45iqsdm>



Wild, Weird, Wonderful: 25th Anniversary Anthology Inland Empire Branch of the California Writers Club

<https://a.co/d/0SVxuPt>

This collection includes short stories, poetry, memoir, nonfiction, memoir, original drawings and photographs, and one novelette entitled *Murder in Huckleberry Heights*.

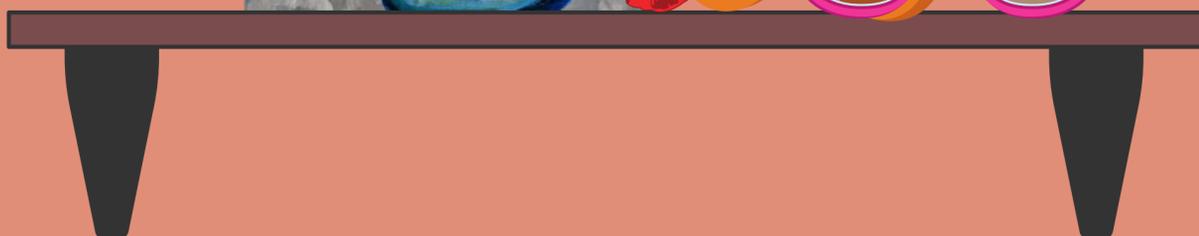
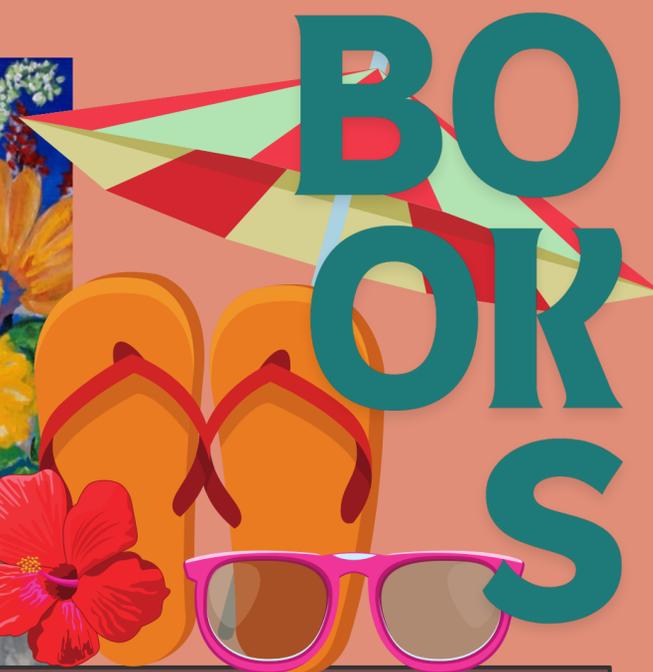
This anthology contains the varietal work of eighteen members of the Inland Empire Branch with several genres being represented.



Vision & Verse: A Fusion of Art, Photography, Prose and Poetry

The multi-talented artists and writers featured within these pages have come together to create a dialogue between their respective mediums. This collection showcases the beauty of visual art married with the magic of the written word.

<https://a.co/d/2zu0Afx>



CWC Berkeley

Submission Support Group

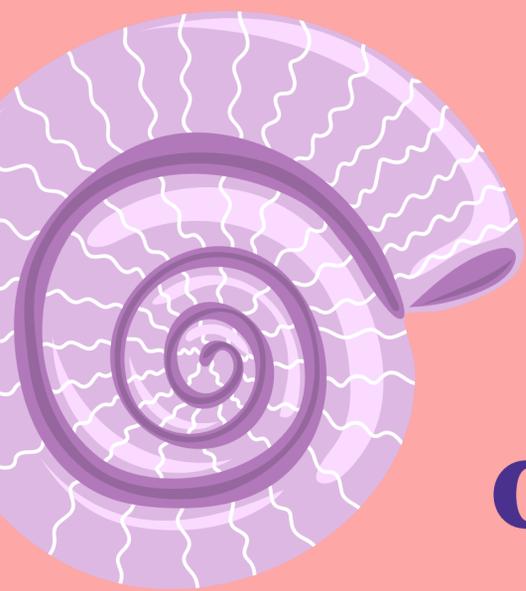


In the Submission Support Group, we'll share our knowledge and experience gained by wading through the seas of "Thanks, but no thanks," and equip you with the tools you need to succeed.

The group will be genre-agnostic: writers of fiction, nonfiction (creative or otherwise), and poetry will all be supported, of any length, for any kind of market (journals, anthologies, websites, publishers, etc). The aim is to be helpful for both seasoned submitters and those who have never submitted before.

Meet fourth Sunday of every month 1-2 pm
Zoom moderated by Chase Anderson
Questions? Contact contact@chasej.xyz

Register to attend the Zoom event:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZIkceChrD8jHdNGdDmjx-tlICnF7Y8EPaDa>



CWC Marin

Call for Submissions

The California Writers Club Marin is accepting short-short story submissions! Winners will receive certificates of excellence and will appear on our website and the statewide website. External expert judges will be announced soon.

California Writers Club of Marin presents

LEFT BEHIND

A Flash Fiction Contest



Submissions open June 1, 2025
Deadline September 1, 2025 midnight
Word Count: 500-1,000 words

Theme: Left Behind

Prompt: Craft a gripping 500-1000 word short-short story that explores leaving something-or-someone behind or being left behind. *Capture a powerful moment in a brief burst of storytelling. Show us what's left behind—and what lingers on.*

Flash fiction features short-short stories with high impact.

To enter & view guidelines: <https://cwcmarin.com/contest/>

HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR WORK TO SOCALWRITERSSHOWCASE.COM

- You must be a member in good standing
 - AKA submitted application & paid your dues
- Maximum length of submissions: 500 words
 - You can add 1 link to your website
- Software: Microsoft Word (.docx) file attachment
- No indents, columns, tables or bullet points
- Subject line must read: SUBMISSION FOR SOCAL SHOWCASE
- In Body of email: list (1) your name, (2) your branch name, and (3) title of work
 - Also in the Body, include this permission: "I am submitting this for use on the CWC South website and confirm that I am a member of a Southern branch of the California Writers Club. I further confirm that it is my original work and all rights to its use belong to me. CWC South may use this on its website, archive it for future use on its website or choose to not use it, however the rights I grant are non-exclusive and I retain the right to sell it, allow its publication elsewhere including simultaneously, and all other rights to its use. CWC South is not paying me for its use. CWC South may not sell it or authorize its use outside of the CWC South website without"
- Send email & attachment to the current branch President, Judy Kohnen.
 - She will verify membership and will forward it on to be published.



Visit www.socalwritersshowcase.com to familiarize yourself with the categories of content.

- Short fiction: "flash fiction" – stories with beginning, middle, end
- Memoir: short memoir pieces or vignettes about our past
- A Writer's Life: ideas, humor, tips to keep your writing going
- Craft: "how-to" articles related to writing or marketing your work

Most work is accepted by the Editor if it is of appropriate quality. The site is updated monthly, but there may be a backlog in a category. Once your work appears on the site, it stays on the site for 6 months. After that, your name and the title of your work will appear on the Archive List page by month. You retain the copyright for your submission. Our website copyright notice: Articles or stories appearing on this website submitted by members are copyrighted with all rights reserved by their respective authors. Note that some contests/publishers will consider posting on a website to mean that the piece has been previously published and perhaps ineligible for a contest or future publication, so keep that in mind.

Deadlines

Submissions are due the **15th** of every month

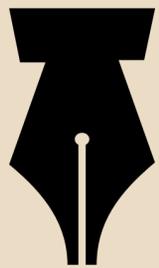
*Will need to be updated by the new editor



Content Limits

Submissions with the following will not be considered:

- Excessive or gratuitous violence (violence for violence sake)
- Excessive or gratuitous profanity
- Excessive or gratuitous sexual situations or pornography
- Political or religious agendas that are meant to persuade or denounce



FRESH INK *guidelines*



Form

- Prose word count <1,200
- No line count on poetry

Send as an attachment
Google or Word document
Times New Roman
12pt font



Photos

Accompanying images are optional

We can only publish digital images that **do not violate copyright**

You are encouraged to submit photos you have taken



Email

*Will need to be updated by the new editor

Check your email periodically for suggestions from the editor

Poetry Musings

SAMUEL THOMAS NICHOLS

High Tide

Just seven months after I became a Boy Scout, *The Rolling Stones* released a compilation album in March 1966 whose subtitle was *High Tide and Green Grass*. The main title was *Big Hits*, but I never heard anybody refer to it that way. It was *High Tide and Green Grass* when I bought mine in a local record store and it was also referred to that way on the radio. It was like Jackson Browne's January 1972 eponymous album that everyone called *Saturate Before Using* because of the cover design. A high tide signifies that the water is at its highest point but it also means a culminating point or climax and that is what the album's subtitle was referring to, a culmination of hit songs. But, are song lyrics poetry?

In 2016, Bob Dylan's high tide was acknowledged when he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature *for having created new poetic expressions within the great American song tradition*. I believe this action firmly entrenched song writing within the literary canon. Jim Morrison, the front man for *The Doors*, was a poet, whose poetry was translated into song by Robby Krieger. The number of poems that have been set to music must easily number in the many thousands, if not tens of thousands. Some of my favorites are the works of Franz Schubert (1797-1828) who created over six-hundred lieder (art songs) including *Erlkönig*, D 238 (The Erl-king) from the German Poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832). Here are the final three stanzas of eight translated from the German:

"My father, my father, and dost thou not see,
How the Erl-King his daughters has brought here for me?"

"My darling, my darling, I see it aright,
'Tis the aged grey willows deceiving thy sight."

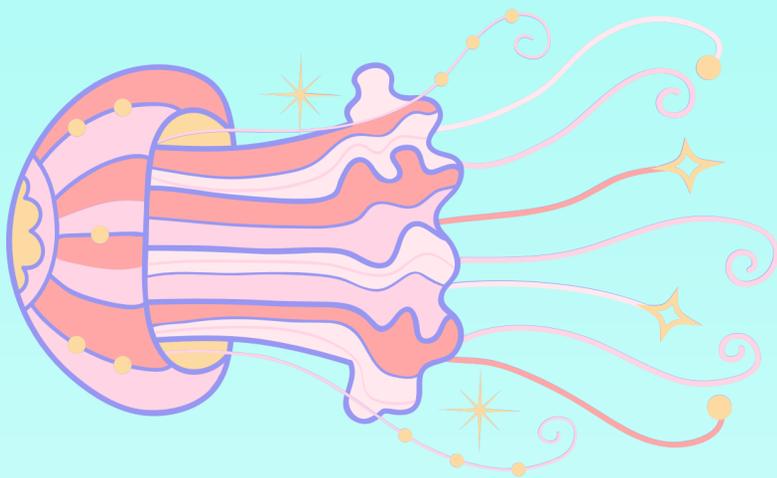
"I love thee, I'm charm'd by thy beauty, dear boy!
And if thou'rt unwilling, then force I'll employ."

"My father, my father, he seizes me fast,
Full sorely the Erl-King has hurt me at last."

The father now gallops, with terror half wild,
He grasps in his arms the poor shuddering child;
He reaches his courtyard with toil and with dread,--
The child in his arms finds he motionless, dead.

Franz Schubert set some twenty of Goethe's poems to music, which is what a lieder, or art song, is - a poem set to music. I have the Schubert album *Schwanengesang (Swan Song)*, which was a collection of 14 lieder published posthumously featuring the poetry of Heinrich Heine, Ludwig Rellstab, and Johann Gabriel Seidl. The album contains four additional lieder including my favorite, *Erkönig*.

William Blake was another poet who had many of his poems set to music. Perhaps the most well-known of these is the poem from his preface to his high tide, *Milton: A Poem in Two Books* that was set to music by Sir Hubert Perry in 1916 and is known today as the anthem *Jerusalem*.

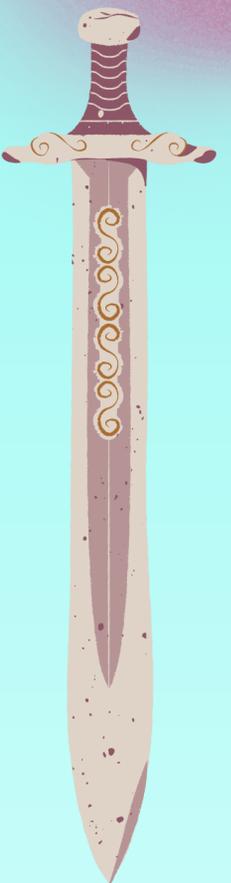


And did those feet in ancient time,
Walk upon Englands mountains green:
And was the holy Lamb of God,
On Englands pleasant pastures seen!

And did the Countenance Divine,
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?
And was Jerusalem builded here,
Among these dark Satanic Mills?

Bring me my Bow of burning gold:
Bring me my Arrows of desire:
Bring me my Spear: O clouds unfold:
Bring me my Chariot of fire!

I will not cease from Mental Fight,
Nor shall my Sword sleep in my hand:
Till we have built Jerusalem,
In Englands green & pleasant Land.



The list of poems that have become popular songs includes many well-known poets including: Robert Burns, Lord Byron, Emily Dickinson, AE Houseman, William Shakespeare, William Butler Yeats, and many more. So poems can become songs and song lyrics can stand in as poems as evidenced by the many books published with song lyrics sans music. I had a volume entitled *The Poetry of Rock* by Richard Goldstein that was published January 1, 1969, which presented lyrics as poetry by such artists as Chuck Berry, Roger Miller, Lennon-McCartney, Paul Simon, Leonard Cohen, Grace Slick, The Doors, and others. This book was highly criticized by many who insisted song lyrics are not poems, such as Pete Astor in his 2010 essay, *The poetry of rock: song lyrics are not poems but the words still matter; another look at Richard Goldstein's collection of rock lyrics*.

It makes me wonder if those who insist song lyrics are not poetry that when a poem is set to music - is it still a poem? When I consider the differences between poems and song lyrics, I cannot find any in subject or theme, meter, rhymes or not rhymes, similes or metaphors, or even structure. Some would accuse me of blasphemy to say there aren't differences in structure but how does the Stanza-Stanza-Stanza poetic form differ from Verse-Verse-Verse song form as in the ballads *Barbara Allen* or *Sir Patrick Spens*? I've also seen poems written as Verse-Refrain-Verse-Refrain and some poems with bridges and outros.

In our modern era, both the *Illiad* and the *Odyssey*, as attributed to Homer, are considered epic poems, yet I have read that in ancient Greece they were accompanied by a lyre and sung through when performed. Hmm. I am reminded of a performance by Elton John, who was handed a grocery list and immediately proved his thesis that anything can be set to music and sung. It has been said that Jack Kerouac's *Mexico City Blues* was his high tide, but it comprises 242 *Choruses*, not stanzas. Where is the line drawn between a poem and a song lyric but in the beholder's prejudice?

Sting, in his 2007 high tide book *Lyrics*, writes in the preface: *...seeing perhaps for the first time how successfully the lyrics stand on their own, and inviting the question as to whether song lyrics are in fact poetry or something else entirely. And while I've never seriously described myself as a poet, the book in your hands, devoid as it is of any musical notation, looks suspiciously like a book of poems.* Consider the first two stanzas of *Wrapped Around Your Finger* from the book (page 88):

You consider me the young apprentice
Caught between the Scylla and Charybdis
Hypnotized by you if I should linger
Staring at the ring around your finger

I have only come here seeking knowledge
Things they would not teach me of in college
I can see the destiny you sold
Turn into a shining band of gold



Looks like poetry to me. Taken together, these two stanzas comprised the first verse of the song form. I have on my bookshelves the collected lyrics of Sting, Bob Dylan, Johnny Cash, The Doors, Irving Berlin, Oscar Hammerstein, Frank Loesser, Cole Porter, and Johnny Mercer and yes, they look suspiciously like books of poetry and represent some impressive high tides, and to make this sentence even longer, listening to the likes of Dylan Thomas and Sarah Kay performing poetry is music to my ears.



High Tide and Green Grass

- or -

A Big Hits Found Poem Full of Song Titles

Soon after my **19th Nervous Breakdown**
I experienced some **Good Times, Bad Times**
And promised you I would **Not Fade Away**
Or **Play With Fire** when **Time is on My Side**

It's **The Last Time** and **It's All Over Now**
Cause you didn't **Tell Me You're Coming Back**
And now **I Can't Get No Satisfaction**
So **Get Off of My Cloud** you **Heart of Stone**

Riptide Withdrawals

by Abigail Handojo



I've yet to escape this cycle
The floor slips from beneath me
I am a sandcastle on the shoreline
A paper boat crushed by your tsunami

Wishing for storm clouds in Summer
The sunshine is patronizing
Beaming cheek-to-cheek
Grinning as I sink

The lowest of lows
After the highest of highs
Looping "so sick" until I laugh
Playing "twilight zone" until I cry

Dragged in by my ankles at high tide
Low levels got nothing on me
I only lose to you when
I'm feeling lonely

Wax and wane
Fish nets cast and drawn
The inclination comes in waves
There's a certain rhythm to heartbreak

Your number descends the Mariana Trench
Buried by sand, time, and new texts
Just for me to be the shovel
That unearths us again

Like some foolish spade
Digging its own five-foot grave
If I keep messing with the wound—
It'll never heal, this torture's tailor-made

Somedays I feel like drowning in oceans,
Others, I feel like walking on them
Across the North Pacific,
And back to you again.

Choking on a Chinese Chicken Salad Minus the Chicken

“Succulent Pig”

**Succulent Pig is an active member of the IECWC who prefers to remain anonymous*



Chewing on shreds of iceberg lettuce
Dressing scorches down my epiglottis
(It burns!)

Chives stick to the ceramic bowl
Persian cucumber sliced, not whole

Zesty Italian dressing and Japanese sesame oil make up the sauce
Homemade, impossible to find at Chinese restaurants

Why do we call it “Chinese Chicken Salad”
When there’s nothing Chinese about it?

And it’s not even poultry-related,
Guess the chicken crossed the road this time and actually made it

Salad dressing recipe: 3 tbl Richin Sweet Chili sauce, 3 tbl Wishbone Italian salad dressing, $\frac{3}{4}$ tbl Kimlan Soy sauce, 1 tsp mushroom powder, 3 tsp sugar, $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp white pepper, 1 tbl Kadoya pure sesame oil

STAY TUNED FOR FUTURE FRESH INK ISSUES!

Abigail as your editor signing off!

