

# **Poets Speak Back to Hunger: An e-Collection of Poems from Around the World**



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# Foreword

Poetry Speaks Back to Hunger! Yes -- and the poems in this first-of-its-kind collection prove it.

The powerful poems you are about to read are a sample of what's posted on the *Poetry X Hunger* website ([www.PoetryXHunger.com](http://www.PoetryXHunger.com)). By showcasing them, we hope to make it easy for you to find and use a hunger poem. We especially hope that members of anti-hunger organizations, lawmakers, policy gurus, and community members - that any and all who are fighting hunger - will use this collection in classrooms, community meetings, religious services, newsletter and the like to Speak Back to Hunger.

The collection also includes links to the recordings of many of the poets reading their poem. You'll also discover poems by young and adult poets that focus on a wide array of hunger issues including food waste, hunger's history, famine and malnutrition. Poems in Spanish and in the Cheyenne language are included.

Hunger continues to ravage families and communities in the U.S. and overseas. Its face can be as horrific as famine, as demoralizing as persistent household food insecurity, or as heart-wrenching as childhood or adult malnourishment.

Let's be clear -- poetry will never end hunger and it will never replace the critical need for investments in programs that help us understand the causes of hunger, or that help address hunger through food assistance or research. All of these ongoing sources of hope are critical to the anti-hunger cause.

What poetry **can** do, however, is touch our hearts. And so, we hope that the poems in this book will move you to...

**\*\*\* Speak Back to Hunger! \*\*\***

### **Note from a Reviewer**

*...some of the[se] poems try to capture the experience of hunger - not simplistically, but in its dimensionality: that hungry people find ways to preserve their humanity, that hunger can result from a change in life circumstance, that loneliness may accompany hunger.*

*Many of the poems speak to the urgent need to recognize and acknowledge a problem that is too often invisible, overlooked, or rationalized away - including by blaming the victim.*

*Many of these poems underscore the importance of collective action, which may be unlocked through sharing, caring, creativity and mobilization.*

*We are offered a glimpse into different experiences of hunger and our relationship to it and we are directly challenged to consider what the existence of hunger -- especially amidst plenty -- says about who we are. And we are challenged to consider the political and social repercussions of hunger.*

-- Cheryl Morden, Global Food Security Specialist

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Please contact [PoetryXHunger@gmail.com](mailto:PoetryXHunger@gmail.com) if you are interested in using one or more of the poems, recordings or cover artwork.

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## Dedication Page

The co-editors dedicate this collection to all those around the world who **Speak Back to Hunger** in their work, by their donations, through their advocacy and...with their poetry!



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# Hunger

Patience Gumbo, Zimbabwe

It rumbles  
Like the sound before a thunderstorm  
An inner ache, like that of a  
woman in travail follows after  
I toss and turn and hope  
Tonight will be better  
My mind wandering every second  
of every minute of  
every day  
When it shall be full to the brim  
and running over  
Then will I appreciate scarcity in  
times of abundance  
Or treasure abundance in a spell of scarcity  
Still it remains a dream  
Worth waiting for  
As I beg for the crumbs off the masters table  
Daily we scramble with the township canine,  
The stronger always win in battle  
I would be wise  
And decide to forget how life on the other side was like.



Hunger  
You define me not  
Yes we lay side by side, shadow to shadow  
Still you define me not  
There is still an ounce of sanity in me  
Yet a little milk, a little meat  
A little scent of fresh pie  
Baked to perfection  
Would go a long way  
Taste buds running wild as the rich flavours form a  
union

But fate has favoured the poor with lack  
As the rich are endowed with more riches

The true taste of my own saliva has become so sweet  
While few months' debris from chewed green leaves, are  
safely tucked away between my teeth.

And stare deep within those lifeless eyes  
What guts you have  
Your desires to wipe all humanity;  
as you stand akimbo with your twin kindred corruption  
and disease  
Adamant to infest all in its path  
Til none whimpers, sighs or groans

Still we found you here  
And remain here you shall  
Oh when shall your scorpion's sting lose its edge  
Hunger my foe  
Never my mate  
Never again welcome but fade away into thin air  
Into the dust 6 feet under  
beneath the shadows where none can see your hand.  
Go and return not  
We don't want you here

To hear the poet presenting this poem click [HERE](#)



# Hunger Pains

Aaron R, USA

In a world where we are concerned about the economy and marketing numbers

How can we have people starving and dealing with hunger?

We're too far developed as a nation to be facing this situation

So we have a plan and 2030 is our destination

I'm not talking about decreasing, I'm talking about elimination

So nobody is starving or walking around hungry in any nations

Speaking of nations, it's strange to me

That in this land of plenty opportunity, there's still people on the streets without food to eat.



We spend millions of dollars for entertainment but that's another topic.

There's people who are out here starving, we need to do something to stop it.

We spend money on wars, but we need to be at war with not feeding the poor, this is a situation that we can no longer ignore.

I mean, there's family's walking around with their stomach's growling and sore

We as the people owe it to each other to do so much more

So let's depend on each other and help one another

To stop world hunger the world is going to need each other

So my challenge to you and my challenge to me

Do something small or large or independently  
Together Everyone Achieves More If we can unite as a team -  
world hunger can be no more  
That sounds like a plan that's worth it to me  
So let's embark on our journey and do little day by day until  
2030  
And stop the hunger pains that stain our society

(This poem won the 2018 World Food Day Poetry  
Competition.)

To see the poet presenting this poem, click [HERE](#)



## **World Food Day Oct 16, 2020...**

A. G. Kawamura, USA

We hunger for things  
For freedom, respect...for peace  
Too often for food

Waking up hungry  
Surviving not living means  
Going to sleep hungry

Hungry children cry  
Deafening is the clamor  
We choose not to hear

Current tragedy  
Capacity but no will  
We could end hunger

Wake up and listen  
Find the will and paths open  
We will end hunger



# Shutter

Teri Cross Davis, USA

(For Kevin Carter, Winner of the 1994 Pulitzer Prize for Feature  
Photography in The New York Times)

And if you could go back, you would  
You would pick the child up, gingerly like a newborn  
cradling her large head, thin-skinned body, jutting bones,  
And no mother you, but you would have hushed her

Won't you pick her up, gingerly, like a newborn  
Shoo away the vulture, whose crime is hers too, hunger  
And you're no mother, but you would have hushed her because  
What distance is a lens, a camera's shutter, snap that captures

Shooing away the vulture, (whose crime was hers too, hunger)  
Framing a moment that will pass, like breath, like life  
Because what distance is a lens, a camera's shutter, snap that captures  
Arid, ravaged Sudan, torn in two, like you as you crouch closer

Framing a moment that will pass, like breath, like life  
And if you could go back, you would  
into arid ravaged Sudan, torn in two, just like you, crouch closer  
cradle her, large head, thin-skinned, body only jutting bones

(This poem won Third Place in the 2018 World Food Day Poetry  
Competition).



## The Wait

Abha Das Sarma, India

As I write  
Someone, somewhere  
Waits -  
I imagine "*What it is*"; to say  
Hungry and stay, that way  
And if -  
She could be, my friend  
At lunch  
A table well laid -  
When asked  
"*Are you a vegetarian*", I remark  
Hunger has no caste -  
It eats, itself, and lasts  
Longer than  
You and I, ever thought.

To hear the poet presenting this poem, click [HERE](#)





# The Fruits of Famine

Henry Crawford, USA

On those nights we traced  
the shapes of fruit until the dark  
became our eyes.

On those nights we left our fields  
unhearing the crack of broken roots,  
the silence of dying ground.

On those nights, twilight filled the deserts  
of our crossing with the vermillion breath  
of watermelon.

On those nights, the stars seeded the skies  
above the camp. Jackfruit guards  
stood still as celery stalks.

On those nights we dreamed like you  
of strawberry days on porcelain plates.

On those nights I made an apple out of sand  
and watched it blow away.

(This poem won the 2019 World Food Day Poetry  
Prize).

To hear the poet presenting this poem, click [HERE](#)



# Aid and Development

Allison Rose, USA

All across the land indigenous people despair,  
They have limited fresh produce to eat or share.

They have rice and empty calories galore,  
But micronutrients are what they need more.

Who do we trust to help them be free  
From the suppressive hunger they want to flee?

They have the knowledge and the will,  
But no empowerment to teach their skill.

What holds them back from prosperity?  
Corrupt politicians, unstable food chains, you, me?

Who is to blame for the hunger epidemic  
One which is exacerbated by the current pandemic?  
Is it the aid organizations that keep people dependent?  
Or the historical colonizers of which some are descendent?

Is it the political institutions that cannot seem to stabilize?  
Or the countries that fund corruption under their aid disguise?  
The indigenous people will fight back and rise up and  
publicize

The injustices they face daily, which make us empathize  
To their experiences, ones we cannot normalize.  
The hunger and instability which will terrorize,  
Until the world powers finally decide to decolonize.

What we need now is to give back the power  
To the indigenous folks with all the brainpowers.



The knowledge that is in their hearts and souls,  
Will help their communities to reach their nutrition goals.

To hear the poet presenting this poem, click [HERE](#)



# The Hunger Dialect

Kim B. Miller, USA

We sip on tea flavored with righteousness indignation  
Add a touch of honey dripping in our own gluttony  
While we slowly speak the dialect of hunger  
We claim to be ambitious on solutions  
But truth says we have never met  
We spread lies evenly  
As if, evenness eliminates detection  
Hungry people see a world of excess who view  
starvation as avoidable  
Victim shaming is our specialty  
This dialect of deception is clearly recognizable  
The language we lie with is so bitter, even when dripping off  
of sweet religious lips  
We can't feed everybody  
Here comes the lie  
We embrace the acceptance that doing nothing is equal to  
trying  
Yet we continuously knit together new excuses with old lies  
We shame hungry people on full stomachs and then we  
rewrite the narrative  
Imagine a world that throws away enough food to feed the  
hungry complaining about loss  
While the population who has food insecurity is waiting to be  
found  
Empty stomachs are not looking for empty words  
We need long term, right now, sustainable actions  
Let's plant fruits and vegetables and let freedom be the  
gardener  
Allow people to pick fresh food from their community  
greenery  
Have community barbeques and well placed public pantries  
Donate to trusted restaurants so they can offer free meals to  
those in need  
Create central areas for restaurants to bring food instead of



throwing it away  
Let's reinvent how we distribute food  
Make it easier to ask without asking  
And no more pretty phrases for ugly things  
Starvation is not "food insecurity"  
Is death "breathing insecurity"  
Our appetite for synonyms seems high  
Hunger has many levels  
And a need to make hunger definable to all is needed  
Let's make sure we are not using it to avoid saying words that  
sting  
Starvation is a "life insecurity"  
Action is the cure  
But we're too busy slicing up excuses  
While hungry people look at an empty plate full of indecision  
We don't even offer them a cup of hope

To hear the poet presenting this poem, click [HERE](#)



## Pitch In

Sylvia Dianne Beverly (Ladi Di), USA

People are hungry, yet people continue to  
waste food.

Her meals were from partially eaten  
sandwiches thrown in public trash  
cans.

She watched a child throw away a sandwich  
one bite out of it.

Getting a sandwich from a can immediately  
would be her evening meal.

People are hungry, yet people continue to  
waste food.

An apple, a pear, a peach, some cherries  
Some grapes to help provide nutrition  
To help curb appetite  
Praying to God above, never to give up  
Ferocious fight.

People are hungry, yet people continue to  
waste food.

A project for many years, helping my Mother  
Make sandwiches in our kitchen  
with Family and Friends

Taking sandwiches to organizations, like  
S.O.M.E, So Others Might Eat brings on  
cheers, chants yea food is here.

People are hungry, yet people continue to  
waste food.

Standing on Main Avenue in freezing cold  
And snow, holding sign stating HELP ME  
FEED MY CHILDREN, IF ONLY FOR ONE  
NIGHT!!!



People are hungry, yet people continue to  
waste food.

All across the world people die from hunger  
and malnutrition to ignore this plight would  
be a ridiculous selfish shame.

People are hungry, yet people continue to  
waste food.

What can you do, what can I do, what can others do, to end  
this international plague?

The answer is blowing in the wind, doing  
Something consistent, we can all PITCH IN.

People are hungry, yet people continue to  
waste food.

To see the poet presenting this poem, click [HERE](#)



*TSEHSOHPETANENĚSTOVE TSEXHOTOVANATO: hetsĕtseahē*

## **Living Through Difficult Times: an analogy of today**

By Dr. Richard Littlebear, The Cheyenne Nation

inspired by a Cheyenne story and written in Cheyenne, with English Translation

*Mo'aenevāhanehe.*

*Mo'seetonetāhenehe.*

It was wintertime. It was very cold.

*Hesta'se*

*mohma'xēhovĕsetsevanōhe.*

Snow was piled everywhere.



*Kahmaxĕštse tseohkĕho'šeme moma'seohťsehane.*

Camp firewood was being used up.

*He'nostonĕšemāhenevōse moxēheomĕse haepe'eenāhenehe.*

No one could go after firewood because the snow was too deep.

*He'nōhestonĕšĕ nāho'ōťsevahetsevōse.*

They could not even visit each other.

*Hestamevohe mohno'ease ma'seohťsehanetse*

Their food was dwindling.

*Menōhtse naa honovohko mo'asemāhestāhenovohe.*

Berries and dried meat were being depleted.

*He'nostonĕšĕeve'tomo'hevōhtse.*

It was difficult to go to another teepee to get some food.

*Heseeohťōťse, hetanevano'ĕťtse, šĕštoto'e*

*mo'asema'seohťsehanĕvotse.*

Medicinal herbs, man sage, cedar and other healing plants were vanishing also.



*He'nostoněševestáhmovöse tsehaomohatähetsese.*  
It was difficult to heal those who were sick.

*Otaxa'mohxae'he'kěto'omoohevo heveenotsevoitse*  
The only thing people could do was to stay in their teepees.

*Kásovaahēo naa hetaneo'o tseešēhae'ehahese mohtaohke  
heemóhnēhevohe, hovahnehe he'no'ke me'ovovöse; otaxa  
mo'keeváhōeho'óhtsevo.*  
Young boys and older men went hunting, they could not find  
any animals; they came back empty-handed.

*"Nahko'e, neseemāhehaeanamane, nataosēhenētsevoomo'e  
hotovao'o naa hevavaotsevāhnohe," heške moxēhetōhevo.*  
"Mother, we are all so hungry. I'm going to look for buffalo or  
deer," he told his mother.

*Mo'exovee'ēsanehe. "O'haetanoo'e" heške  
moxēhetāhevohe. Māhtōhta hohtāhe naesohtōhe aenamēhe  
mohnēstoāenamāhahe.*  
He dressed warmly. "Be very careful," his mother said. He  
was only 16 years old.

*Neše'ešēeva mo'eohtse. Moxēho'oxeohtanehe tohtoo'e.  
Na'ohkeva'neastomenestovoo'e Esevone moxhešētanohe.*  
He wandered for two days. He decided to stay out one more  
night. He thought he could hear the rumbling of buffalo  
somewhere.

*Tsehtšēepēhevevoo'óhtse na'ěstse hotova'e  
moso'hovenēhehoveoēohtse. Mohma'xoeveohtse.  
Nēseehaestohe esevone moso'hovenēhehoveoēohevohe.*  
Once he was settled and warm, he prayed to Ma'heo'o,  
asking for guidance for himself and food for his people. Then,  
finished, he looked around. There a distance from him, a  
buffalo suddenly stood up and shook the snow off. Soon,  
there were many buffalo standing up, shaking off the snow,  
and beginning to graze as only buffalo knew how.

*Mohva'neahto'heenahvohe.*  
They had just been buried in the deep snow.

*Nehe hetaneka'ěškone mostavaheněhetóhevohe  
hevo'ěstanemo.*

That young boy went to tell his people what he had seen and where.

*Tse'ešeevama'se anehnenevöse naa*

tse'ešeevamähna'so'enöhevóhtse mo'oosevehohevohe nehe  
hetaneka'ěškone. Hotovao'ohme'ovóhtse.

When the meat was butchered and all were fed, a name was ceremoniously given to the young boy: The one who finds the buffalo.



## **From the Balcony**

Forestine C. Bynum, USA

Overlooking my balcony, I often saw  
A gathering of women and children  
Mothers with babies tucked tightly in their arms  
They were quiet, rather orderly  
Not causing a disturbance, walkers passed by politely  
Busying themselves as not to see, scurrying to  
Catch the bus or get to their cars

I saw women taking turns scavenging  
Through a dumpster nearby  
I hadn't noticed before, for food  
The only sound heard was a tiny cry asking  
Mommy, when will we get food  
And a voice saying, Feed My People, Feed My People  
And a mother's soft voice replying  
Tomorrow, tomorrow my child, I hope  
To mor row, to mor row

To hear the poet presenting this poem, click [HERE](#)



## Cold Chicken

Fin Hall, Scotland

It's raining, and windy  
no shelter from the cold  
I'm ailing, though young still,  
I am really feeling old  
Christmas is coming,  
I still can't find a home  
No money, no shelter  
Wandering the streets alone  
My shoe won't stop leaking  
my toes are turning green  
My stomach is so empty  
I wish that I was clean  
Searching through the rubbish  
For something nice to eat  
A leftover chicken leg  
A succulent, seasonal treat  
Nourishing, but still hungry  
What else is there to do?  
I approach a stranger and say  
"A merry Xmas to you."



To hear the poet presenting  
this poem, click [HERE](#)



## Dinner for One

Kelly van Nelson, Australia

I remember the angst of scavenging for nourishment;  
the excitement when sustenance  
was found in a tin of spam  
selected from the self-service menu  
in a kitchen cupboard slammed with a bang,  
breaking up an otherwise stony silence  
while preparing dinner for one



No distraction from acrid smell of poverty,  
an airborne virus infecting my nostrils  
attempting to satisfy growling malnutrition need  
because every child needs a daily feed,  
no point in letting the situation breed contempt  
as who gives a shit about trying to represent  
the groundhog day of the twisted event  
that although lonely was still a highlight when imminent;  
my desolate dinner for one.

My parched lips washed it down  
with unfiltered tap water  
consumed while perched on a rickety chair,  
wobbling as if laughing at my misfortune sitting there.  
A chipped orphan plate scorning hungry eyes  
always lowered, scarred from my mother's glares filled with  
despise,  
familiarity in that crockery that saw behind the scenes  
mockery  
towards child welfare that forgot to be there  
to witness my dinner for one.

The pièce de résistance dished up on scratched pine surface  
barren of pretty tablecloth,

not ever needed since I'd never dare spill a drop.

Even if I did I'd use my tongue as a mop  
to make the most of my dinner for one.

Indigestion took hostage of my stomach  
when I too quickly crammed tasteless morsels into my young  
mouth

that hung open, forgetting to close with the chew,  
table manners were never something taught by you,  
fingers my utensils, there was no silver spoon  
to shovel in my meal because mother would be home soon.  
Needed time to wash up, no excuse for her to raise hand  
to beat me black and blue for being so bad.

It was cold in the bosom of the kitchen without the oven on.  
Why waste energy serving up dinner for one?

To see the poet presenting this poem, click [HERE](#)



## **Towards Lecanvey**

Ger Duffy, Ireland

**(In Memory of the Famine Walk 31/3/1849)**

*National Famine monument at Murrisk/Lecanvey, County Mayo, Ireland. The sculpture pays homage to the victims of the Irish Famine (An Gorta Mór) and especially to Irish people who emigrated to the United States to escape death, with no guarantee of arriving alive.*



Stop a moment by the idle wall, look right to the red rusting boathouse, tall trees whispering, sheep bleating. Look left, follow the waves, their blue green sheen domed by the sky, bend dip with the coast road. Long fingered land lingers, to reappear as humpbacked hills dotting Clew Bay, clouds scud across Croagh Patrick, colour changing as you watch. Four hundred walked to Delphi Lodge in search of food. They lie among potato drills, roofless abbey walls, standing stones, yellow furze. The rise of land dominates, insists that you walk on it, admire it and know your place in the scheme of things.

To hear the poet presenting this poem, click [HERE](#)



## American Madonna

Ann Bracken, USA

Hunger wears a face full of hope  
like the girl on the magazine cover  
cradling a loaf of white bread  
as if it's a miracle. Tonight, she will  
sleep with food in her tummy.

Hunger's face is innocent  
like the little boy buying a corndog  
at the corner store or his neighbor  
who's grateful for two plump strawberries  
tucked in the family's food box.

Hunger tells the same story  
sweeping across time and place  
from Oklahoma's Dust Bowl  
to Mississippi's Delta towns—  
Loss and desperation landing sucker-punches  
on families across America.

Hunger's face is weary  
like the fictional Rose O'Sharon  
heavy with grief after birthing  
her stillborn child. Her pain ripples  
through the air, palpable and raw  
like the fresh scar on her heart.

She seeks refuge from the rain  
in an old barn, a boy offers  
her a musty blanket. She spies  
an old man huddled in the corner  
gripped by hunger like a fist in his belly.





Rose offers him the only gift she has  
lying down next to him, baring her breast,  
and sharing her milk.

To hear the poet presenting this poem, click [HERE](#)



## Enough

Josephine LoRe, Canada

Would words be enough, I would sate your hunger  
I would build for you a well everfilled with water clean  
I would work alongside as you till the field  
Watch hope emerge green from brown earth

Would words be enough, I would end your misery  
Watch each child of yours grow strong and true  
Teach you to read and to write and to sing  
So that your voice be forgotten nevermore

Would words be enough, I would help you bear your burden  
Bring healing to your wounds, end strife  
See beyond lines on a map, beyond colour  
And you would know you are my sister, my brother

If words were enough

To hear the poet presenting this poem, click [HERE](#)



## The Harvest

Andrés Abella, USA

Truth will be the seed  
the brethren of the earth  
encounter  
droplets of a liquid sun  
filling up all wells  
the way that dreams  
fill up a melody of illusion  
The earth has remained  
dry and crumbling  
who would have imagined  
that iron showers  
could never bloom  
a green of feasts  
but rather bleed  
an old despair?  
Rich nations  
let barrels of food  
go to waste  
like depth charges  
exploding  
in poor people's faces.  
Hunger is no longer tragic  
just unbearably absurd  
Come, climb the stairs  
look up to the spheres  
and find a comet  
that even the blind can see  
then stab the earth  
slit its veins with love  
and light and joy  
and let the truth  
begin anew  
We will have bread  
the field songs



will strum  
a venerable earthquake  
of memory  
and we will remember  
what sharing meant  
because we'll learn  
to share again.

To hear the poet presenting this poem, click [HERE](#)



## Remembering the Starving Armenians

Michael Minassian, USA

In my mother's kitchen  
food was weaponized  
plates piled high with pilaf  
tomatoes, chicken, and lamb.

*Remember the starving Armenians,*  
my mother said.

History sat down at the table with us;  
our lost family kept alive  
half a century later  
In Northern New Jersey,  
Long Island, and the Bronx.

During the First Genocide  
of the Twentieth Century,  
America sent ships full  
of food, nurses, and nuns  
to the Mediterranean;  
posters hung in town squares  
and full-page ads appeared  
in the New York Times:

*Remember the starving Armenians*

A million and a half dead,  
another million scattered  
around the world.

But I had to finish my dinner  
no matter how full I felt  
and if any scraps  
remained on our plates  
my mother stood



at the kitchen sink  
and licked each one clean -

our kitchen at least  
one place on earth  
we ate for the empty places  
we ate for the dead.

To hear the poet presenting this poem, click [HERE](#)



## The Flyer

J. Joy 'Sistah Joy' Matthews Alford, USA

Grocery giveaway  
Free food for the elderly  
Please bring a bag  
A neighbor handed it to her  
At the bank  
It lay on her kitchen table  
For two weeks  
Before she taped it  
Inside her bare kitchen cabinet  
Closed doors hide more than empty  
shelves  
Even more than empty stomachs

Today pride took a step  
To the back burner  
So potatoes, carrots and onions  
Simmer on her stove once again  
Pots boil freely  
As aromas rise  
Drying proud hands and tear-filled eyes  
On an apron accustomed to hosting  
family dinners for years  
She wipes away tears,  
Then picks up the phone  
Time to place a thank you call  
To a good neighbor

To see the poet  
presenting this poem, click [HERE](#)



## No Time for Poetry

Sharmila Pokharel, Nepal

the big lineup  
in front of the food tanker  
a mother  
holds a paper plate in her right hand  
drags a child with the left

the loudest crowd ever  
to get meals to their children  
there I saw myself  
fragmented into thousands of humans  
and my soul in silence  
looking for an answer

To hear the poet presenting this poem, click [HERE](#)





## Fortify Your Nutrition

Rashid Hussain, Pakistan

The elite dines recommending balanced diet.  
“Balanced Diet,” nutritionist lectures every client.  
Sure I will prefer sweet over sour,  
Fresh fruits and corn flour.  
I will be only a fool and unkind to ignore  
Stunted children in my country under 5 years, 57% is the roar.  
Help all grow healthy, advocate a diet well understood.  
Don’t waste a single bread, galloping wine, fixing your mood.  
Breakfast, lunch or dinner  
The children here have not much to eat, and  
Beyond your imagination, much much thinner.  
I will sacrifice mouthwatering pastries  
Deserts and expensive meals  
Sugary sensations  
Chocolate truffles  
And pay last of pennies  
Fortifying nutrition of stunted here.

To hear the poet presenting this poem, click [HERE](#)



## Almuerzo

Argos MacCallum, USA

in the summer heat  
halted by an insolent red stoplight  
I see a man sitting on his haunches  
on the opposite curb  
of the t-bone intersection  
compact dark and round-eyed



cradling a lunch on his knees  
as solemn spoon rises to solemn lips  
solemn as a state dinner  
the curb a timeless throne  
within an anthem of silence  
an island in the roar of the world

a feast of rice and beans no doubt  
fit for both fisherman and pharaoh  
spoon rises and dives like a bird of prey  
the cardboard bowl the living earth  
the serpent of hunger is driven away  
and won't be back again today



## A Lady Yells Up and Down Minnesota Avenue I'm Hungry!

Brenda Bunting, USA

What does hunger look like?  
I follow the steps of quiet children.  
Their footprints weren't light or dancing.  
Bare feet drag to an abyss of  
    undernourishment.  
Such big stomachs and tear-less crying,  
This is what we have seen on television.  
Staring at a world away we are deceived.  
By the perception of distance--  
Hunger does not notice day or night.  
It is the same a gray edge of pain unbroken.  
The ailing wake slow and anguished,  
To the daily promise of a starving nightmare,  
Every sense of enjoyment is dull to life.  
We work and drive and live in circles of luxury.  
The hungry world is not our fault.  
The street corner looks are drug induced.  
I can waste more money with fake charities.  
We demand the freedom of un-involvement.  
Justifying our apathy with cynicism,  
I indict myself more than I do you.  
Emancipated hands of poverty's daughters,  
Dig into earth looking for a heartbeat,  
Of sustenance of nutrition gold,  
To follow a garden line,  
To a life line of full happiness,  
With every kind of fruit and vegetable,  
The rich soil of giving could offer up.  
But the ground is tight and hard.  
What is meat but imagination abounding.  
The breath is a death stench most foul.



Babies are aware that they are dying.  
They instinctively suckle at the air.  
Wide eyes blinking, "Feed us!"  
I ignore the lady yelling. I think she looks high

To hear the poet presenting this poem, click [HERE](#)



## Used to Be

Zolisa Gumede, Zimbabwe

The growl of my anger  
Was always louder than  
the growl of my stomach  
But not today  
He looks at me in fear and wonder  
This stranger at the terminus, must be  
thinking,  
why is she so angry  
is she that hungry?  
My stomach was shaming me.



I smile in apology  
I'm just tired, I suppose  
But I'm truly just hungry, I know  
Used to be  
A working woman could eat  
Used to be  
A working woman could sustain herself  
Used to be  
A working woman never got into stupid fights with strangers  
Just for the reason they were eating and she hadn't in almost  
a whole day  
Used to be  
*Usisi osebenzayo* (a working woman)  
Would better spend her daydreams on futures of success  
instead of a good meal  
Okay 'a good meal' was too much dreaming  
"Maybe just some bread"  
All that was gone now  
What used to be had changed.

What is, is her hunger equaling to her anger.  
It's the scraping at her stomach  
Leaving a hot and acid pain in her tummy

Making her wish she didn't have a bloody stomach  
The uncontainable panicked confusion of her mind  
As her brain tries to reason out why the body is going for so  
long, unfed  
The rising rage of emotion as she tries to convince herself to  
be at peace with the lack in her stomach  
The hot anger that arises when she thinks how  
It used to be at such moments she would go buy a scone  
Oh wait, all that used to be, is gone.  
We are talking about now.

Now,  
Going home  
She remembers  
The day she spent trying to not look at others eat  
And anticipates  
The night she'll spend  
Try to find sleep  
After a supper that's  
Too ugly, too small, too unsatisfying  
To wash from memory the past day's hunger  
Tomorrow she wouldn't go to work  
How could she manage to  
So hungry  
I mean working all day without sustenance  
But not going would mean being fired  
Sitting at home to starve  
To watch children turn from thin and scrawny to just ribs and  
bone  
One works, one can't eat,  
Nor can her family, her kids,  
Used to be  
She could feed them just cause she worked  
All that's gone now



To hear the poet presenting this poem, click  
[HERE](#)

## Two-faced Hunger

Faith Nelson, USA

Stomachs dressed in cardboard  
signs gurgle *will clean anything*  
*for a living wage*. Roots dry rot  
waiting for hire. A tesla-patient  
mob rushes to click the X  
on my pop-up Ad box, making  
hectares of my willingness  
blink and sputter.  
*Self-responsibility* Sir Ma'am  
they say as if they know  
the circumstances. Yeah, like  
you've never needed anything  
you've never needed anything.  
I walk the rim of asphalt  
toward the next window.



Hunger.  
Talking  
about Hunger  
who when satisfied  
gives me enough mojo  
to fake a home address.

Not talking about Hunger  
fueling the fortunate in this realm  
so that they can go to bed  
and fly the imagination.  
Food will smack them awake  
at sunrise.

Talking about Hunger  
gasping a prayer for a pound  
of protein packaged veggie  
lentil burger mac & cheese  
I don't care Big Mac Big Mac

My body is now a religion  
without a living head. Vapor.

Not talking about Hunger  
Mahatma Gandhi shapes  
into a bullet for the caste system.  
Protest fasting's been chopped down now  
even appropriated by some now.

Hunger snaps a rubber band  
against my pale lips yet it lays  
a pregnant self-bare for the other muse  
full of inspiration, verse, fantasy, romance  
Greek cornucopias, architecture, inventions  
prisons and supermarkets full of xenophobia.  
It slings chummy arms through the elbows  
of plunderers dot death  
and political 'trepreneurs.  
This lover air kisses  
my dream. It savages  
my world into a food  
desert, driving back  
the lion who once kept  
watch, protecting me  
from pandemics  
and the platform  
shoes of the elite.  
Now the king  
and I step  
one then two  
with less  
conviction.  
Don't waste  
your heart.  
Untie  
Kindness.



The stinging will stop  
if you share  
your bread for a moment.

To hear the poet presenting this poem, click [HERE](#)



# El Pan de Cada Dia

Maritza Rivera, USA

Se dice que la poesía es como el pan,  
que alimenta el alma.

Pero a veces, como las buenas intenciones  
y las oraciones, ¡no es suficiente!

Se ha comprobado que los niños  
no aprenden cuando tienen hambre.  
Fíjese en las bajas calificaciones de los  
estudiantes en nuestras escuelas.

El desayuno debe ser la primera lección  
de cada día. Seguido por el almuerzo,  
y una merienda por la tarde antes  
de la salida.

Las sondas gastro-nasales que alimentan  
a los moribundos les obligan a seguir viviendo  
aun contra su voluntad  
pero esto no dura para siempre.

Y aunque no hay tubos de alimentación  
para los que viven, una sola comida  
puede ser la diferencia entre la vida  
y la muerte para muchos.

Sin embargo, mientras tantos mueren  
de hambre, se desechan a diario  
miles de libras de comestibles  
en países tan prósperos como este.



¡Mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa!  
Todos somos culpables por despreciar

las sobras y el pan viejo que, como la poesía, pueden  
alimentar a un pueblo.

To see the poet presenting this poem in Spanish, click [HERE](#)

## Day-old Bread

Some say poetry is like bread  
that it feeds the soul  
but oftentimes  
that's not enough!

It's been proved that children  
cannot learn on empty stomachs.  
Look at all the underperforming  
schools in our country.

Breakfast should be the first lesson  
of each day. Followed by lunch  
and an afternoon snack before dismissal.

Feeding tubes for the dying  
force people to live  
sometimes against their will  
but usually not for long.

And although there are no  
feeding tubes for the living,  
one meal can make the difference  
between life and death for so many.

Yet while people die  
of starvation each day  
thousands of pounds of food

are discarded on a daily basis  
in this affluent country of ours.

Shame on me! Shame on you!  
Shame on all of us who turn up  
our noses at leftovers and day-old  
bread that like poetry  
can feed thousands.

To see the poet presenting this poem in English, click [HERE](#)



## Property Rights

Linda Dove, USA

We watch them on the news after supper,  
the families made destitute by guns and fire,  
whole villages fleeing torture and rape.

We observe them in health centers  
as they cradle infants turned to bone,  
as adult bodies wither, sag and stumble.

George Orwell down and out got it partly right.  
He wrote, It is fatal to look hungry.  
It makes people want to kick you.\*

Kicking is fear expressed in hate and blame,  
in the sense there's not enough.  
that our bellies too could flap like theirs,  
hanker every hour for crusts.

Our greatest fear is lest we forget  
to forget that we too are mortal,  
that one day, sooner, later,  
we too wither, stumble, die.

We prefer not to know that the luxuries  
of our living—our money, homes and treasures--  
are but arbitrary gifts of grace.  
We do not own our bodies, let alone our stuff.

Accepting fully that I will die liberates me  
from the urge to kick. But the next step

is the hardest: to feel free to share my supper  
with the hungry, as though it were my last.

\*George Orwell, Down and Out  
in Paris and London, 1933



To hear the poet presenting this poem, click [HERE](#)

## Less Than 90 Minutes with Hunger

Brian Manyati, Zimbabwe

Palpitating,  
Heart and mind races up  
Pulsating play,  
Each says to the leg and arm  
Be without tiring.  
Jog like it is a final match  
As if 'you' carry a nation's flag  
Against a crude tackling  
A thuggish. An arrogant,  
And uncaring hunger

Play,  
With not only pride at stake  
Rather, knowing, with strife and sorrow  
Comes piggy backed - a breakthrough  
Today's malnutrition,  
Causes us to kick kwashiorkor out  
There being opportunity and solution  
In temporary demise,  
Never a stroll in the park...  
"Hunger-er-er  
Hunger, hunger, hunger";  
Yells of a commentary box  
And what follows:  
"Hunger aghr-ah-a-a-ah";

Yells a vociferous active crowd  
Visibly upset...shaken too!  
Hands forsakingly thrown into the air.  
And as for we pitching up,  
The hearts get heavier,  
Our minds wade off lost a bit.  
Undeniably,



We are with a porous defense  
In a tense face off.  
You should see us hold our heads  
In disbelief; disgusted utterly.  
Our mouths ajar, we stand akimbo  
We are several scores down,  
To unrelenting hunger  
Left wondering  
If we truly are the underdogs here.  
We should be having  
Somehow, an upper hand.

Than be gullible,  
Needed are uppercuts,  
At making selves food secure.

But then momentarily we stop,  
From quitting in our tracks.  
We are suddenly reminded  
We came for nothing else but to win  
Albeit we take stock of the situation  
Midway; even now when it is  
Quarter to full time  
Of giving it all away  
To undeserving hunger  
Which is out of question;  
Answer is no before you ask!  
No to hunger outclassing us  
We cannot no more be seen  
Marauding our own goal posts  
With own goals. Instead  
Our grain reserves have to fill up  
Global warming or not  
Takes slick passes  
And a spot on strike force  
This won't go to extra time.



To hear the poet presenting this poem, click [HERE](#)

# Hungry

Heyssel Mariel Molinares Sosa, Honduras

Hambre

Hambre, aquella que no hace ninguna distinción

Sin importar idioma, edad, o color

La sensación que come nuestras entrañas sin  
compasión

Para muchos, es el motivo de su dolor

El sueño más cruel, es el de aquellos que duermen para  
olvidar

Que su estómago ruge, cual león enfurecido

Y entre lágrimas les toca desahogar,

el sufrimiento de sentir un estómago destruido.



El pequeño destello de luz en un día lleno de oscuridad

es aquel dulce corazón, que comparte algo de pan;

aquel que intenta comprender esa necesidad

y el alma hambrienta intenta apaciguar.

¿En verdad creen que esto se debe tomar a la ligera?

¿Ignorar a la persona que en agonía desespera?

Alimento limpio, nutritivo y seguro,

no es una opción, es un derecho.

Que sean atendidas las personas en apuro

Y que no solo sea una promesa, sino un hecho.

Levántense, gigantes que duermen al ver la necesidad.

Que se acabe ya la falta de comprensión y crueldad.

Que sean atendidos los sollozos de este pueblo

Dios interviene para que haya un arreglo.



Así que seamos conscientes y ayudemos a todo el que podamos  
en esta tierra,

y juntos contra el hambre, ganemos esta guerra.

To see the poet presenting this poem in Spanish, click [HERE](#)

## Hungry

Hunger, the one that makes no distinction  
Regardless of language, age, or color

The feeling that eats our guts without compassion  
For many, it is the reason for their pain

The cruelest dream is that of those who sleep to forget  
That his stomach roars like an enraged lion  
And between tears they have to vent,  
the suffering of feeling a destroyed stomach.

The little flash of light on a day full of darkness  
it is that sweetheart, that shares some bread;  
the one who tries to understand that need  
and the hungry soul tries to appease.

Do you really think this should be taken lightly?  
Ignore the person in agony in despair?  
Clean, nutritious and safe food,  
It is not an option; it is a right.  
That people in distress be cared for  
And that is not just a promise, but a fact.  
Arise, giants who sleep when you see the need.  
Let the lack of understanding and cruelty come to an end.  
Let the sobs of this town be attended to

God intervenes so that there is an arrangement.  
So let's be aware and help everyone we can on this earth,  
and together against hunger, let's win this war.



# Toxic Waste

by Jordan Culmer & Imani West

His name is Steven

He is 10

His ribs poke out of his skin

His legs quiver as he walks

His back telling stories no book has the spine to carry

All because people don't want their last bites



They say one man's trash is another man's treasure,

But they forgot that one man's trash can be another man's life, his livelihood

I can hear the cries of a child saying "mama I'm hungry"

It's toxic waste

he walks into a store looking for something healthy to eat on a budget

just about \$1 to spend

but the salad he wants is \$5.00 vs the McDonald's hamburger that's \$0.99

Where in other places they throw away their \$2 ones

America is the capital of obesity,

but strutting the authority to exercise

but what about the kids who are food deprived?

starving themselves to feel like they fit in

While others throw away food for sport  
toxic waste

her name is amber

she has insecurities

she doesn't get enough to eat at home

She walks down the halls of her high-school

And the kids tease her

Because she's thin, fragile to touch

but what they failed to realize is

amber's family has no money

they judged her by the appearances

she ended up starving herself to feel accepted

Just to trim her waist  
Her family afraid that she'll waste away  
Toxic waste  
when you fix your plate the first thing you think of when you  
get full is to throw away your scraps  
But what you don't understand is that all you're doing is  
adding to the  
Toxic Waste

To see the poet presenting this poem, click [HERE](#)



## No Relief

Christopher T. George, USA

How dare you starve on our national TV?  
You stare at the camera with eyes so large  
they might be filled with stars, with oceans,  
with the treasure of Fort Knox  
—not just with plain old hunger  
we can satisfy by opening the refrigerator.

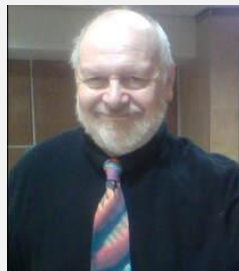
Don't flaunt your tragedy at me.  
You have hunger enough  
we could drive a Cadillac through it.  
How dare you show your ribs like that?  
This isn't the Smithsonian.

These sorts of things just don't happen  
—didn't anyone tell you?  
Crawl on back through time  
and join those other miseries:  
Dachau, Wounded Knee, the Black Death.

How dare you thrust your bloated torso out.  
You're just not svelte enough.  
Don't shove your claw of a hand toward me.  
Don't open your mouth with your disasters of teeth.  
(When did you last see your orthodontist?)  
Don't speak to me.  
We can have no converse.



To see the poet presenting this poem, click [HERE](#)



## Testimony

Brian Donnell James, USA

I was a teenage father then, with little money  
My wife and I saved our lunch so our son could eat  
And we went without a meal that day  
As night approached, we had hoped he would  
sleep until morning  
And with every twist and turn he made, my  
anxiety rose and fell  
But as toddlers do, he rose hungry  
Rubbing circles on his belly  
He was trying to be a big boy  
Trying to control the desperation,  
I saw in his eyes



I nodded to my wife  
And gathered change from everywhere, anywhere  
Between cushions and under couches  
Closets, desk and cabinet drawers  
And I was off to shop with newly found pocket change  
Enough for instant noodles, kool aid, bread, and peanut  
butter  
Even as I counted out the change, and people in line smirked  
and commented  
The cashier and I knew I didn't have enough  
My eyes swelled, and I  
Tried to control my desperation  
She smiled and said, "well that's just enough"  
Bagged my food  
And I left

Walking back to our little apartment  
I will never forget that feeling  
Emotion overcame me  
Not embarrassment or shame

Just thankfulness  
Just love  
I'd do anything  
For my boy

(This poem won the 2020 World Food Day Poetry Competition.)

To see the poet presenting this poem, click [HERE](#)



## Notes About Contributors

- **Aaron R** won the 2018 World Food Day Poetry Competition, was the 2020 Poet-in-Residence at the Capital Area Food Bank and is the author of *Poetically Correct Volume 1*. He produces, directs, and edits his own poem videos. For more visit [www.aaronRpoems.com](http://www.aaronRpoems.com)
- **Andrés Abella** (born in Valparaíso, Chile, 1970) is a journalist, activist and poet. He lives in Takoma Park, Maryland, USA. He studied English language and literature at the Pontifical Catholic University of Valparaíso, Chile, and Journalism at San Francisco State University, California, USA. He worked as a journalist and news editor for more than 15 years in print and online media.
- **J. Joy ‘Sistah Joy’ Matthews Alford** was appointed as the inaugural Poet Laureate of Prince George’s County, Maryland in 2018. Deeply involved in poetry work since 2003, Sistah Joy is known for messages of social consciousness, inspiration and empowerment. In 2002 she received the Poet Laureate Special Award from the Washington, DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities “for her outstanding contributions to the art of poetry.”
- **Sylvia Dianne Beverly, aka Ladi Di**’s poetry papers are housed at George Washington University & Gelman Library in Washington, DC. She celebrated the 40th Anniversary of “The Poet and the Poem” program, hosted by Grace Cavalieri from the Library of Congress.



- **Ann Bracken** has published two poetry collections, *No Barking in the Hallways: Poems from the Classroom* and *The Altar of Innocence*; her third collection, *Once You're Inside: Poetry Exploring Incarceration*, will be released in 2021. She serves as a contributing editor for *Little Patuxent Review*, and co-facilitates the *Wilde Readings Poetry Series*. Her poetry, essays, and interviews have appeared in anthologies and journals, including *Women Write Resistance*, *Mad in America*, *Fledgling Rag*, and *Gargoyle*. Ann's poetry has garnered two Pushcart Prize nominations and her advocacy work promotes paradigm change through the power of the arts in the areas of emotional wellness, education, and mass incarceration.  
Website: [www.annbrackenauthor.com](http://www.annbrackenauthor.com)
- **Forestine C. Bynum** is the author of *Echoes: Voices from P.G. County Poets*. She lives in Laurel, Maryland, USA.
- **Brenda Bunting** Poet Brenda Bunting, she/her/hers is the author of "Poems of Love and Violence In Between Life and Death" 1st and 2nd editions on Amazon.com. Brenda is published in numerous publications online and in print nationally and internationally. She is an insightful poetry workshop facilitator and spoken word artist with a passion for equality and racial, social, and environmental justice. Brenda is an active member of the Prince Georges County, MD poetry community. She is a life member of the Kentucky State Poetry Society and is working to complete her next books of poetry. Check out her artist page on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/pg/BDBpoet>

- **Henry Crawford** is the author of two poetry collections, *American Software* (CW Books 2017) and *the Binary Planet* (The Word Works 2020). His poems have appeared in several journals and online publications. His poem *Blackout* was selected by the Southern Humanities Reviews as a finalist in the 2018 Jake Adam York Witness Poetry Contest. His poem *Making an Auto Insurance Claim* was selected as an honorable mention in Winning Writer's 2019 Wergle Flomp Humor Poetry Contest. His multi-media work, *Gettysburg Auto Tour*, was selected as a finalist for the 2019 Deanna Tulley Multimedia Prize. He has produced several online poetry events and is currently the host of the online poetry series, *Poets vs The Pandemic*.
- **Jordan Culmer** is a junior at Northwestern High School in the Vocal and Performing Arts Program. She is a humanitarian, a voice that wants to change the world by taking a position through her poetry. She does a bit of everything from singing, to writing poetry and songs. Her interest is to be a youth advocate and be an entrepreneur. She believes "the Youth Determined our Future" and that she can make a difference.
- **Teri Cross Davis** is the author of *Haint* (Gival Press, 2016), which won the 2017 Ohioana Book Award for Poetry. She is a Cave Canem fellow and is the poetry coordinator for the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C. She lives in Maryland.
- **Linda Ankrah-Dove's** career in development in the poorest countries of Africa and Asia inspires many of her poems. Her first book, "Borrowed Glint of Jade," was recently published!

- **Ger Duffy** lives in County Waterford, Ireland. Her poetry and fiction have been published by Slow Dancer Press, The Women's Press, The Viking Press and Sheba Press. She holds a PG DIP in Creative Writing from Goldsmiths College, an MA in Screenwriting from University of Westminster, London.
- **Lingiwe Patience Gumbo**, Known as Patience Essence to her poetry fans, lives in Chitungwiza, Zimbabwe and writes motivational literature and is also a recording artist and songwriter who is inspired by her faith, love and life situations. A voice of the voiceless, Patience has published her first poems anthology titled Words of Life in December 2019.
- **Zolisa Gumede** is a Zimbabwean poet and story writer from the city of Bulawayo. She is driven by a passion for giving life to stories that speak for the lives of everyday heroes, the marginalized and all human beings, for we all need a witness to our lives. She loves a good laugh and a good story
- **Fin Hall** is from New Pitsligo, in the North East of Scotland. He has been writing since the early 70's. He hosts a Zoom Event called Like A Blot from The Blue. Fin's work mainly focuses on social issues as well as reflective personal stories.
- **Rashid Hussain** is a Manager of Operations with JSI/Pakistan working on the Integrated Health Systems Strengthening & Service Delivery (IHSS-SD) Activity. He holds a double Masters in HRM and International Relations and has worked for more than 18 years in Administration/HR/Security. Writing is one of his leisure time hobbies.

- **Brian Donnell James** is an emerging writer who has been published in Africa, Europe, and throughout the United States. He had recently published work in several poetry anthologies, magazines, and journals. Much of his work centers around racial harmony, love, and taking a stand against discrimination of all forms. <https://briandonnelljames.com/>
- **A.G. Kawamura** is a third-generation fruit and vegetable farmer and former Secretary of the California Department of Food and Agriculture (2003 to 2010).
- **Dr. Richard Littlebear**, Ed.D., is the President and Dean of Cultural Affairs at Chief Dull Knife College in Lama, Montana, USA. He offers a glimpse into Northern Cheyenne oral history and a tribal perspective on difficult topics, such as Indian Removal and the consequences of the 1887 Dawes Act. Dr. Littlebear also had a poem included in Joy Harjo's (Poet Laureate of United States) Anthology of Native American Poetry. Dr. Littlebear also writes poems first in his own Cheyenne language and translates them into English.
- **Argos MacCallum** is an actor, director, carpenter, theatre manager, and co-founder of Teatro Paraguas, a bilingual theatre company promoting Latinx plays in Santa Fe, New Mexico. He has lived the past 50 years in his homestead in the shadow of the Cerrillos Hills off the Turquoise Trail outside Santa Fe, where the coyotes party all night long.
- **Brian Manyati** is a Chartered Secretary & Administrator and Accountant cum Poet on a part time basis. He belongs to the VaChikepe\_the Poet & Publisher stable also known as HundredSailors.Poetry. Brian is a team player who works with the theme "together we achieve more."

- **Kim B Miller** is an award-winning poet. She is the First African American Poet Laureate for Prince William County, Virginia, USA. Kim performed nationally in person and internationally online. She is the author of several books. You can find more about Kim at [www.kimbmilller.com](http://www.kimbmilller.com)
- **Michael Minassian** is a Contributing Editor for Verse-Virtual, an online magazine. His chapbooks include *The Arboriculturist* (2010) and *Around the Bend* (2017). His poetry collection, *Time is Not a River*, (2020) is available on Amazon. A second poetry collection entitled *Morning Calm* and a chapbook *Jack Pays a Visit* appeared in 2020. For more information: <https://michaelminassian.com>
- **Faith P. Nelson** holds a B.A. in English from the University of Maryland and freelances as a tourism copywriter and indie publishing consultant. She programmed a literary festival and gained years of experience working behind the scenes at BET, Viacom. Bear, her tabby cat, keeps her humble by running away when she plays the guitar. *Water Therapy* is her first collection of poetry and is available at <https://www.watercoursepublishing.com>
- **Diane Wilbon Parks** is a visual artist, poet and author of two poetry collections and a Children's Book. Diane's poetry and artwork have been featured nationally and internationally. Her artwork is a bold representation of vibrant colors, textures, and shapes. Diane considers her artwork to be richly layered- a visual representation of her poetry. Her artwork has been installed as a permanent sign at the North Patuxent Refuge in Laurel, Md. Diane resides in Bowie, Md.

- **Sharmila Pokharel** is a bilingual poet from the Himalayan country Nepal. She has published two collections of poetry in her native language. She immigrated to Canada in 2010. Her third book is a bilingual poetry collection, *My Country in a Foreign Land*, co-translated by Alice Major. She is a co-author of *Somnio: The Way We See It*, a collaborative book project of three poets and an artist published in 2015.
- **Christopher T. George** was born in Liverpool, England, in 1948 and first came to the United States in 1955. He studied poetry with Sister Maura Eichner and Elliott Coleman. His poetry has been published in journals worldwide, including *Poet Lore*, the *American Poetry Journal*, *Anti-Hero Chic*, *Beyond Words*, and *Madness Muse Press*, and has a poetry site at <http://chrisgeorge.netpublish.net/>
- **Maritza Rivera** (Montgomery County, Maryland, USA) is a Puerto Rican poet and Army veteran who has been writing poetry for over 40 years. She is the creator of *Blackjack* poetry and hosts the *Mariposa Poetry retreat*. Maritza aka Mariposa is the author of *About You*, *A Mother's War*, *21: Blackjack Poems*, and the *Blackjack Poetry Playing Cards*.
- **Josephine LoRe**, a pearl in this diamond world ... Josephine LoRe's words have been read on stage and in Zoom rooms, put to music, danced, integrated into paintings, visual art, and published in literary journals and anthologies in ten countries. She has two collections, *Unity* and the *Calgary Herald Bestseller- The Cowichan Series*.  
<https://www.josephinelorepoet.com/>
- **Allison Rose** is a second-year undergraduate at the University of California, Davis, USA who is studying International Agriculture Development (IAD).

- **Abha Das Sarma** lives in Bangalore, India. An engineer and management consultant by profession, writing is what makes her happy and fulfilled.
- **Heyssel Mariel Molinares Sosa**, curso el año Duodécimo sección 2 Desarrollo Agropecuario en el Centro Tecnico Vocacional Pedro Nufio, tiene 17 años. Le gusta mucho tocar la guitarra, hablar en público y le encanta servir en su Iglesia: “Hace 6 años empecé a escribir poemas, y me encanta hacerlo ya que es una manera en la que expreso mi pensar, mis emociones, la manera en la que encuentro.

**Heyssel Mariel Molinares Sosa** is in the twelfth year Section 2 Agricultural Development at the Pedro Nufio Vocational Technical Center (El Paraiso, Honduras), she is 17 years old. She really likes playing the guitar, speaking in public and serving in her Church. Six years ago, she started writing poems. She loves doing it because it is how she expresses her thinking, her emotions, and how she finds beauty around her. According to Heyssel Mariel: “To write the poem “Hunger” I wanted to put myself in the place of people who suffer because of not having access to the necessary food. I investigated the subject and I felt pain in my heart when I saw the situation in which many people find themselves. I wanted through my poem to express what those people are feeling, and in that way, with the help of God, I began to write and became especially fond of this poem. I consider it to be an extremely important topic, which awakens empathy in each one of us, and finding solutions for these people suffering from famine is essential.”

- **Kelly Van Nelson** from Sydney, Australia is the #1 bestselling author of *Graffiti Lane* and *Punch and Judy*. Her poetry has featured in numerous international publications and she regularly discusses social issues in the media. She is the recipient of a KSP First Edition Fellowship, winner of the AusMumpreneur 'Big Idea Changing the World' Award for her literary impact as an antibullying advocate, and Roar Success winner for Best Book and Most Powerful Influencer. In the spare time, she hangs out on the open mic performing poetry. She is represented by The Newman Agency.  
[www.kellyvannelson.com](http://www.kellyvannelson.com).
- **Imani Grace West** is a Freshman at Hampton University, and a 2021 cohort member of the Freddie T. Davy Honors College. She has been writing poetry since the age of 12 and has recited in the presence of greats such as Nikki Giovanni and Sonia Sanchez. Imani's life mission is to inspire others to be free to express themselves openly through the arts.

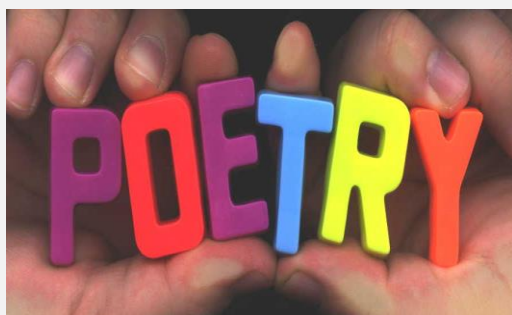


# Write A Poem About Hunger

If, after reading this collection, you are moved to write your own poem about hunger, please do! To get started, you might try using one of the following prompts --

- “I’m not hungry. Why are you?”
- Hunger is...
- How could I improve hunger today?
- If hunger had eyes, what would they look like?
- How do food deserts affect hunger?
- How does climate change impact hunger?
- Does hunger’s history affect us today?
- If hunger exists in the year 2100, what will it look like?

If you write a hunger-focused poem, please consider sending it to [PoetryXHunger@gmail.com](mailto:PoetryXHunger@gmail.com) for possible posting on the *Poetry X Hunger* website.



# **Appreciations**

The Co-Editors appreciate the early and ongoing partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations Liaison Office for North America in Washington, DC, USA. We are also grateful for important collaboration with the Capital Area Food Bank and with Split This Rock of Washington, DC. Support has been provided by the Maryland State Arts Council. We are also grateful to Brenda Bunting and Cheryl Morden for their help, and to the many other friends who have provided consistently helpful insights and encouragement, especially Drs. Susan Schram and Tatiana LeGrand.

# **Consider Making a Donation**

This collection is made available free of charge. If you would like to “buy” this collection, please do so by making a donation to the Capital Area Food Bank. To make a donation, click [HERE](#)

# **Poets Speak Back to Hunger: An e-Collection of Poems from Around the World**

