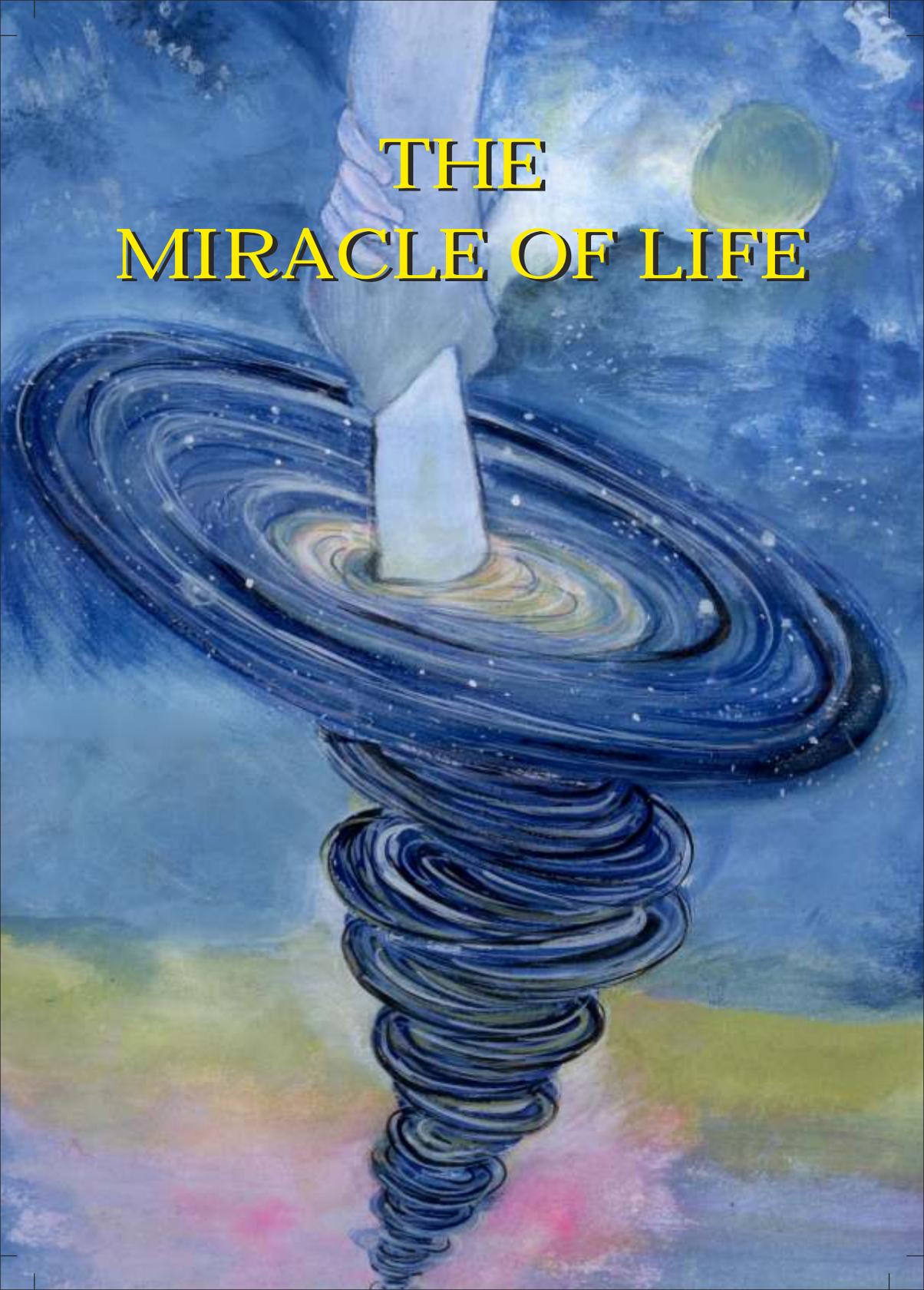
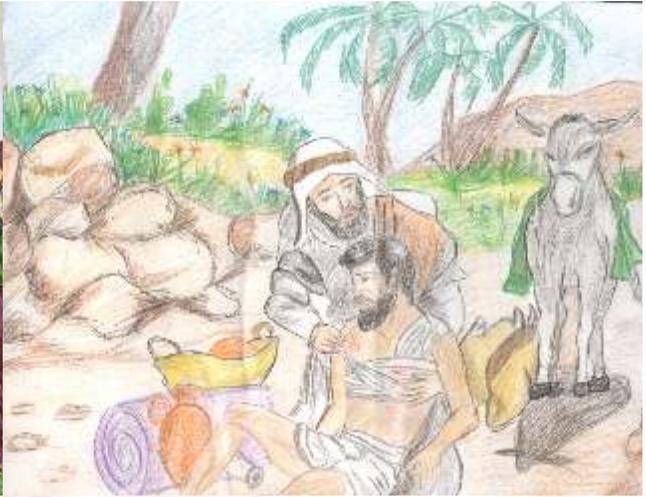


THE MIRACLE OF LIFE



Compassion

The Quality of Mercy



The Miracle of Life

The Quality of Mercy



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Dedicated to
Shanoor Sarosh Forbes
and
Divyansh Atman

INTRODUCTION

It has been nine years since Michael Rothenberg and Terri Carrion launched 100 Thousand Poets for Change (100TPC), inviting poets from across the world to join them in a movement that celebrated peace and sustainability through poetry. The plan was to organise readings around these themes on a single day, so that the collective voices for a better world could be heard clearly in our volatile and difficult times. In the first year alone, in 2011, poets organised seven hundred events globally; in Mumbai, we had a multi-lingual poetry reading at the Press Club.

Since then, 100TPC has grown to be a year-round activity encompassing various creative arts, from Music, to Mime, to Theatre, Puppetry, Photography and much more. It has become a global voice that cannot be ignored—a voice that asserts the importance of humanity and pushes back against the negative forces that go against it. 100 TPC has become a powerful force to remind the world that it cannot afford war, environmental destruction, the muzzling of free voices, or cruelty to adults, children and animals, to name just a few of the terrible things that we do, to each other, and to our planet. The events, while looking at common concerns around the world, are seen through the lens of local issues.

As the founders said on the occasion of the eighth 100 Thousand Poets for Change programme in 2018: “Local issues are still key to this massive global event as communities around the world raise their voices on issues such as homelessness, global warming, education, racism and censorship, through concerts, readings, lectures, workshops, theatre performances and other actions.”

In 2018, the founders of the movement added a new dimension: 'Read A Poem to a Child', a 100 Thousand Poets for Change literacy initiative introducing children to poetry. During the week prior to the global day, more than 2000 people signed up to share poetry with children. These sessions were held in bookstores, schoolrooms, community centres, public libraries, parks and at private homes. Certainly, every school or children's organisation that has participated in our event in Mumbai can organise such readings in their own spaces.

Co-founder Terri Carrion explains: “All you have to do is read a poem to a child in any setting that is convenient, and you can sign up on our website at <http://100tpc.org/sign-up/>”.

With Michael Rothenberg as Florida State University (FSU) Libraries Poet-in-Residence, FSU Special Collections stepped in to co-sponsor the initiative. Additionally, Special Collections serves as the home of The John MacKay Shaw Collection, which consists of the extensive Childhood in Poetry Collection and other materials Shaw used to educate his own children through poetry. 'Read A Poem To A Child' (*#ReadAPoemToAChild*) is a seamless collaboration between 100TPC and FSU Libraries.

Thanks to this collaboration, the founders have made available a free pdf collection of poems for children to support these efforts around the globe. The collection is available upon request to those who wish to make use of it. You can download your copy from the official 100tpc.org site:

https://100tpc.org/wpcontent/uploads/2019/08/READ-A-POEM_Jul20.pdf

“The mission of 100TPC,” say Michael Rothenberg and Terri Carrion, “is to help build and promote a healthy and sustainable society. There is evidence that poetry and the arts, in general, do create sustainable communities through an increase in literacy, and critical and creative thinking. Also, bringing the community together to read nurtures individuals and families, establishing bonds and lasting relationships through the special insights and observations that poetry and the arts offer. The objective of 'Read A Poem To A Child' is to set a connection point with a child as an initial step in sharing creative writing appreciation and skills, increase exposure to poetry and the arts, and to encourage thoughtful dialogue among all the community members involved. It is a way to remind ourselves of the responsibility we share in the future of all our children, and it will make us more sensitive and connected to their thoughts, fears and needs as they navigate through an ever-changing world.”

In Mumbai, Kitab Khana at Flora Fountain has been home to the 100TPC festival since 2012. With their unstinting support, we have organised three to five-day programmes at this popular bookstore every year. The children's event, which forms a highlight of the festival, is coordinated by Rati Dady Wadia, the well-known educationist, and Katie Bagli, best-selling author of innumerable children's books; together, they have been working with Mumbai schools and other children's organisations to offer a platform to creative young minds. Each year, the children are given a theme and they compose poems that they then present at Kitab Khana; some of these children have been as young as four years old. The children also enthral the audience with music presentations, theatre, art and dance; a few select videos may be found on

<https://www.facebook.com/100TPCMumbai/?ref=bookmarks>.

Our two previous books, which were conceptualised by Mrs. Wadia, have provided a glimpse of the enormous talent that these children have showcased. We are now proud to present the third book of poems, which contains the poems that schoolchildren wrote in 2017 and 2018. The underlying themes in all these poems are the concepts of peace, harmony and sustainability. We believe that the sooner adults start speaking about such concepts to children, the greater the hope that the world will be a better place tomorrow.

Over the years, many people have been with us on this journey—Amrita Somaiya and her team at Kitab Khana, who continue to so generously host our festival; Rati Dady Wadia and Katie Bagli, without whom the children's programmes could not have taken place; Shanoor Sarosh Forbes and young Divyansh Atman, to whom this volume is dedicated; all the schools, principals, teachers, parents and, of course, the hundreds of children in Mumbai who have made these events a huge success. I would especially like to thank Mr. Suneel M. Advani, Chairman Emeritus of Blue Star, for his support in 2018.

The contributions of all these people, and many more whom it would be impossible to name, has made all the difference. Thank you.

Menka Shivdasani

Curator,
100 Thousand Poets for Change Mumbai
August 2019

FOREWORD

One of the miracles of life is the gift of words— words we speak to each other, words we write, words we read. They can give us so much joy, pain, laughter, hope, despair. But one of the biggest things that words can do is to bring in change. And when these words come to us born from the innocence of children and wrapped in the beauty of poetry, we can truly feel the miracle and power of words in our lives. We, at GetLitt! (formerly known as The Writer's Bug), are so proud of the effort put in by all the children and are truly grateful to the 100TPC team for year after year giving the kids such a fabulous platform to keep the wheels of change in motion through their words. Congratulations, children and Team 100TPC!

Priya S. Rajive

GetLitt! (www.getlitt.co)

(Formerly The Writer's Bug)

FOREWORD

What children do when they are young is the foundation for much that they will do when they grow up. Giving them an opportunity to express themselves plays an important role in building up their confidence and self-development.

Expressing through Poetry connects Language to Rhythm gracefully; it is a beautiful and joyful feeling. The Guiding and Scouting Movement provides a platform to allow children's thoughts to catch flight through constant practical exposures and activities, which influence quick thinking, stimulates intelligence and thoughts of kindness to help people and nature. Therefore, it has been a pleasure for our Guides and Scouts to participate in the 100 Thousand Poets for Change, which made them put pen to paper and feel and write about ideas that inspire and move us, to come to a deeper understanding and appreciation of beauty and sensuality, which are taken away many times by technology and daily chores of life.

Poetry Matters and I would like to thank Ms. Rati Dady Wadia, who is a gem in the field of Literature, who has a 'Heart of Gold' for children and whose smile is ever so cheerful, to keep this 'Light of Poetry' burning brightly through 100 Thousand Poets for Change Programme.

Binaifer Kandawalla

Guide Captain

71st East Bombay Zoroastrian Bharat Guide Group

FOREWORD

Every year, 100 TPC Mumbai organises a literary festival for children with a theme. The theme is as unique as the festival itself. It is a festival of poems penned by children themselves. The young poets get a forum to present their creations. What a lovely way to encourage budding talent!

Once in two years, the poems are brought out in the form of a book. In 2017 the theme was 'Miracles' and in 2018 'Compassion' was the theme. Combining the two, this book has been aptly titled as 'The Miracle of Life'.

These literary creations were brought to life in 2017 and 2018 around this time in Mumbai. About 20 – 25 children participated in the recitation event. Mrs Rati Dady Wadia, a retired principal of Queen Mary High School, had created this event with great zeal and fervour. Isn't it a matter of great pride that the children have found a place in none other than the prestigious Stanford University, archived for posterity?

At a micro level, author Katie Bagli had worked with students of Grade 1 and 2 of my school, Mahapragya Public School, for about six months to kindle their curiosity and ignite their minds facilitating a seamless entry of these young ones into the event.

At a personal level, it is indeed, a moment of glory for me that a song composed by me on the theme 'Compassion' was sung by my students at the event.

I would not be wrong if I say that “doeth overfloweth my cup of happiness” because I am given to understand by Michael Rothenberg, the founder of 100 Thousand Poets for Change, that this book would be making its mark internationally in many other countries apart from India.

I am eagerly awaiting this year's event on October 6th, with 'Beauty' as its theme, while I express my gratitude for being associated with this event and will be doing so in the years to come. Miracles seldom cease for the believer, and I am a strong one at that.

JYOTHY RAMACHANDRAN

Head Principal

Mahapragya Public School

Kalbadevi, South Mumbai.

FOREWORD

Once a Queen Marian,
Always a Queen Marian.

Queen Mary School is proud of Queen Marian Mrs. Rati Dady Wadia, whose life inspires people to never give up, to continue to grow, rise and shine.

Her passion for Literature is revealed in the way 100 Thousand Poets for Change has grown and provided a platform for numerous talents. Her efforts have brought to life the inherent music, harmony, beauty and reality present in poetry that impacts eternity. She has created a love for poetry and kept it alive in young hearts. Students now have an opportunity to express themselves, to fly on the wings of poetry and be firmly rooted in strong values.

I take this opportunity to thank Mrs. Wadia for her relentless and tireless efforts and wish her all the best in her future endeavours. May God endow her with the strength to continue to rise, shine and inspire lives.

Ms. G. Mathias
Principal
Queen Mary School

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to thank all the people who have contributed to the children's events organised as part of the 100 Thousand Poets for Change poetry festivals in 2017 and 2018 in Mumbai.

We express our sincere gratitude to:

- Amrita Somaiya and her team at Kitab Khana for so graciously providing us the venue and all the other necessary support.
- Urvi Piramal, a leading industrialist, for giving her precious time and accepting our invitation to become Chief Guest for our book launch, *I Believe*. Mumbai's first mall, Crossroads Mall, was her brainchild.
- Navroz Homi Seervai, famous advocate and champion of civil rights, for being the Chief Guest for the poetry festival, *Miracles*, dedicated to his cousin Shanoor Sarosh Forbes.
- We would also like to thank all the Principals of Greenlawns, Breach Candy, Greenlawns, Worli, J.B. Petit High School for Girls and Queen Mary School. We would also like to thank Pooja Jaisingh of Fun ki Pathshaala, Priya S. Rajive of GetLitt! (formerly The Writer's Bug) and Guides and Scouts Group. Their enthusiastic support was invaluable.
- Purandokht Kekas Engineer and Ila Dalal of J.B. Petit School for their consistent dedication and deep involvement over the years;
- Anjani Kumar Sharma and Shamika Date of Queen Mary School for their painstaking follow-up;
- Swati Ghevade for printing and preparing the sets of poems and plays for distribution to the audience year after year;
- Shashikant Patil for taking the photographs and videos of the event every year, some of which are reproduced in this book;
- Indrajit Laurence Panjabi for his support and following up matters with the schools;
- Smita Rao for logistical support required for this publication;
- Last but not the least, a big thank-you to Raul and Tina Pereira and their team for so willingly taking on the onerous task of printing and binding this book. Veena Ladwa's personal involvement was greatly appreciated.

REMEMBRANCES

DIVYANSH ATMAN

1997 - 2019



*Divyansh Atman presented this poem, **Blaze**, at the 100 Thousand Poets for Change festival in 2015, and was first published in **I Believe**, featuring poems written by youngsters for the 100 Thousand Poets for Change Mumbai festival at Kitab Khana. We reproduce it here, and take a cue from the last lines of this poem as we rekindle the fire to make the spirit strong.*

He participated in the festival in 2015 when he was an SYJC student of K.C. College.

BLAZE

Two stones struck together,
By a chance as minute,
As a candle's in a storm.
There arose a bright amber,
Engulfing all the darkness there was.

With fear and awe we witnessed this wonder,
Man, animal, and all,
As it turned brighter and lighter,
Stronger and warmer,
Inviting, and warning all.

A courage shaking with fear,
He approached it, uncertain, but sure,
This new wonder of nature,
Had been born as his new companion.

Slowly he wielded and learnt,
The fire, burning bright and hot,
Using it, meant as it was,
Adding new strength to all known so far.

There came a point in time
When he made the blazing breath so hot
That it swallowed him,
And those
Who enraged it so much.

Some worship it,
Some stay away from it,
Everyone needs its warmth,
An accidental serendipity it may be,
But is not that, at all.
The fire that glows so bright and radiant,
Resides inside all of us.
Burning bright when called for,
Burning dim when not.

It is this fire,
That invokes passion, courage, and determination;
And it is also this same fire,
That invokes pride, anger, jealousy, and hatred,
When fuelled by the darkness,
That lurks around our human soul.

Nerves of steel,
A rock-strong resilience,
Burning determination,
Radiant visage,
Are all the various traits,
Carefully tested by this Master,
Who can burn those who give up,
And strengthen those who don't.

Look into the fire, my friends,
Look at its profoundness,
And rekindle the fire in you,
To make the spirit strong,
Stronger than ever before.

Divyansh Atman
K C College
SYJC

A LETTER FROM DIVYANSH TO HIS MOTHER

One day Lord Brahma was sitting on his throne looking very pensive. All the planets and stars were revolving around him.

Just then Lord Shiva came by. He asked him “Oh Great One, what is worrying you?”

Lord Brahma replied, “As the Creator, I have to send a child to earth into a woman's womb.” This child might face some problems in his formative years. Hence I need a mother who is capable enough to raise this child holistically, stand against all odds for the child, have the ability to sacrifice and love at the same time and act as a shield for the child, I have not found a woman capable of all this.”

Just then Goddess Parvati came there, searching for Lord Shiva. When she heard all this, she said, “Don't worry, there is a woman on earth capable of all this. As a mother I will send a part of my motherhood soul with this child into her. She is fully capable of all this. She will be the incarnation of my motherhood. “Brahma agreed, but who is this woman?”

Goddess Parvati answered, “Her name is Nidhi (Treasure)”, and maybe that is why my name became Divyansh.

Divyansh Atman

Divyansh, who was born on January 27, 1997, passed away on May 2, 2019, after being diagnosed with leukemia. May his soul rest in peace.

SHANOOR SAROSH FORBES

(1944 – 2017)



Shanoor Sarosh Forbes, a tetraplegic who lived on a wheelchair for 30 years, was an enthusiastic participant of the 100 Thousand Poets for Change Mumbai festival at Kitab Khana from the time it began, to the time of her passing away in 2017. The festival that year was dedicated to her, and proved to be an emotional experience for all her friends and family who were there. Shanoor's presence felt real, her smile as vivid as it had been in the five years that she had been at Kitab Khana, sharing poetry with the audience, her voice as strong as her body was fragile.

On the occasion, Rayan Hormuzd Madan, her grandson, recited a poem by Shanoor's son Reshad Forbes. Ayra Cama's poetic tribute was memorable too, and Navroz Homi Seervai, her cousin, who was Chief Guest, enthralled the audience by sharing insights into her life, from her never-say-die sporting spirit to her determination to live as best she could despite the tragedy that changed her life when she was a young woman. Shanoor's enthusiasm showed in everything that she did. She had shared a video on Miracles with Mrs. Rati Dady Wadia, coordinator of the children's programme at the 100 Thousand Poets for Change festival. This breath-taking presentation was screened at the 2017 festival, to the delight of both young and old.

Matching this theme, students of Queen Mary School sang a Hymn on Miracles, accompanied by Ayushi Gala on the violin and Amrita Panda on the guitar.

In her opening speech for the event, Rati Dady Wadia had this tribute:

“The sixth poetry festival at Kitab Khana, under the flag of the 100 Thousand Poets for Change, has the theme 'Miracles'. We are dedicating it to Shanoor Sarosh Forbes, who passed away three months ago, on July 30, 2017. She was a tetraplegic, paralysed from the neck downwards, when she fell from a horse and broke her neck 30 long years ago. Her life was a miracle. For 30 years she lived on a wheelchair, breaking all the records because tetraplegics have been known to survive a maximum of eight years.

But what spirit she had! She was the heart of the family, planning every trip, every outing—all of Shakespeare's plays she showed me. Even menus for the day were in her hands. She was a live wire, if a tetraplegic can be a 'live wire'! She voluntarily participated in all the previous five poetry festivals, reciting poems every year. She was really the rarest of the rare.”

SHANOOR—A MIRACLE

She was nothing short of a miracle,
The likes of which we will never see.
She spread light and love and joy and hope
To so many like you and me.

Faced with an affliction unimaginable
She struggled for thirty years,
But the smiles just never left her face.
Even when we were reduced to tears.

The odds were stacked against her.
How easily she could have given in.
But the strength in her heart and soul
Ensured she wouldn't just strive—but win!

Her courage was writ across her face,
We never saw what she went through.
The physical and emotional pain,
She stoically bore as only she could do.

One never could feel sorry for her.
She was capable beyond belief.
She made us look like lesser mortals
In the way she tackled her trials and grief.

Her effervescence and enthusiasm
Stood her in such good stead.
Never a whine, never a complaint,
Just an infectious smile instead.

Our little grumbles and grouses
And our lack of gratitude
Was something to be ashamed of
When we watched Shanoor's attitude.

We all admired her so
And were in total awe of her grit,
Her smile, her laughter, her chatter
Tinted with large doses of wit.

She went everywhere her wheelchair could take her,
To concerts, to movies, to plays,
Lunches and dinners, holidays and friends
Filled all her busy days.

If ever a person proved a point
It was our dear Shanoor, for sure,
She was better than the best of us
And then a whole lot more.

They say God moves in mysterious ways
To execute His vast eternal plan.
Indeed He put her through every test
Ever known to Man!

But each time she came out a winner,
Nothing could keep her down,
An absolute inspiration to all of us,
Her smiles overshadowed the occasional frown.

No tribute could do you justice, dear one,
You truly showed us the way.
Your vivacious face abides in us,
Today, tomorrow and always.

We salute an exceptional human being
Who held her family together,
We never will forget you Shan,
You will live in our hearts forever.

AYRA CAMA,

Author, *A Work of Heart (Recitable Verse)*, 2005

Presented by Rati Dady Wadia

ON THE COUNTERBALANCING OF HUMAN LOVE AND TRAGEDY

The day has ended. As light fades and night appears,
Thoughts of those close and gone return.
There is much tragedy in a human life,
But the deeper it is, the more is the proof of human sharing.
Here are the bonds of love that allow one to make it through thick and
thin,
Through good times and bad.
There is nothing as strong as familial love and the caring affections
Of a beautiful mother who has now been embraced by the light
And has been immortalised in the hearts of her beloved ones
And friends from near and far.
Such a mother as was mine can never truly die.
Her selflessness and passion for her dearest family.
Remain in our hearts and minds,
As strong as the matter that gems and the most valuable treasures are
made of,
Never to disappear despite their corporeal absence but to live on
forever.

Reshad Forbes

Son of Shanoor Sarosh Forbes

Recited by Rayan Hormuzd Madan

Shanoor Sarosh Forbes grandson

The Miracle of Life

2017



2017 : A REPORT

THE MIRACLE OF LIFE

This is our third publication of poems written by students for the 100 Thousand Poets for Change Mumbai poetry festivals of the years 2017 and 2018.

Our Chief Guest for the launch of our second book on October 29, 2017, was Urvi Piralal, who manages the Piralal Group of Industries. Her vision—touching the lives of one in five people around the world. The launch formed part of the poetry event, 'The Miracle of Life', at Kitab Khana.

Our Chief Guest for the festival was Navroz Homi Seervai—eminent Advocate of our country, son of Homi Seervai, former Advocate-General of Maharashtra. He has fought fearlessly for civil liberties.

We dedicated this festival to Shanoor Sarosh Forbes, who lived for over 30 years as a tetraplegic. This book is dedicated to her, and to Divyansh Atman, who, beset with leukemia, passed on to higher realms at the young age of 22. Having had a brilliant academic career, he was studying as an engineer in the United States before he succumbed to his illness.

Shanoor - A Miracle, a poem by Ayra Cama was presented. This was followed by a poem written by Shanoor's son, Reshad, recited by her grandson Rayan Hormuzd Madan. Then a video on Miracles was shown, which Shanoor had once sent me. Students of Queen Mary School sang a hymn on Miracles, accompanied by Ayushi Gala on the violin and Amrita Panda on the guitar. Then students of different schools recited their poems on Miracles.

Albert Einstein once said, “There are only two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle, the other is as if everything is”. How true that is! I would like all our children to belong to the second category. Children, every moment of our life is a miracle, if we believe in miracles.

I will share with you the greatest miracle in my life.

I always wanted to be a boy. I loved the things boys generally are allowed to do—mountain climbing, sailing, skiing, tobogganing, sea diving—and I hated the chores that generally are dumped on girls, such as cooking and cleaning and washing (Of course, the quotient has changed tremendously now because women are astronauts too.)

Then I got married—a Miracle—and then I was expecting a baby. What an exciting period in my life! Finally, my son was born and then my daughter.

When I heard their first cries, I said, “Thank God I am a woman”, because to nurture a baby in your womb for nine months and then to give birth to a live kicking baby is the greatest Miracle of all, The Miracle of Life.

Students of Greenlawns School (Breach Candy) performed a piece, with Miloni Shah on the keyboard and Manav Jain on the flute.

Anamika Burman's poem of Miracles was accompanied by a dance performance by Navya Sarvaiya, Dhruvi Vora, Krishna Raichura and Reyaa Virani. They were all from J. B. Petit High School for Girls. Students of Fun Ki Pathshaala performed the play *A Cappella Boy*, written, produced and directed by Katie Bagli, a brilliant author of children's books.

The morning progressed with some more recitations of poems, which are included in this book. The poem *FeminESSENCE* by Misha Shah was accompanied by a dance performance by Aashna Mahipal, Sheena Bohre, Prisha Shah, Vivan Shah and Harishka Singh.

Kyra Ferzad Variyava and Naira Anand Mehta composed a song, *Wildfire* and set it to music. Vachit Modi of Greenlawns (Breach Candy) entertained us with the drums. His item was greatly appreciated and enjoyed-a-very talented student. *Fall and Rise* was composed by Janina Shivdasani, recited by Krishna Histas Damania.

Think of all the natural wonders all Miracles and we have to gasp in awe.

- The Grand Canyon formed by the River Colorado.
- The Petrified Forest of Arizona. Millions of years ago, the forest was buried underground, deep inside the earth. These fallen trees, which had lived in the Late Triassic Epoch, about 225 million years ago, began surfacing about 60 million years ago, due to erosion. Every particle was crystallised, so though they look like trees, they are all crystals.
- The Great Barrier Reef of Australia—the largest coral reef in the world.
- Our Himalayas with The Valley of Flowers.
- On home ground—Gilbert Hill in Andheri, a Mumbai suburb, is a 200 ft monolith of black basalt rock formed when molten lava was squeezed out of the Earth's cleft during the Mesozoic Era about 66 million years ago.
- The Lonar Crater in Maharashtra. When a volcano erupts, it leaves a hollow that forms a crater; when it is filled with water it becomes a crater lake.

Let us now look at just a few of the man-made miracles/wonders.

- The Sistine Chapel and the sculptures of Michelangelo, including La Pieta.
- The Pyramids of Egypt – a perennial wonder of the world.
- The Leaning Tower of Pisa, another architectural wonder.
- Of course, our Taj Mahal and
- The Kumbhalgarh Fort in Rajasthan with its great wall second only to the Wall of China.

We are surrounded by miracles, and the fact that all of us exist is a miracle in itself!

Rati Dady Wadia
Former Principal
Queen Mary School

MY VERY OWN MIRACLE

Sitting on my bed
The clock ticking by
I waited oh so long
OH MY! OH MY!

The date was fixed
And now was the time
For my miracle was to be born
In July, some time.

They came home with gifts
And baby toys too.
It was two days after
And no one was blue.

The house was buzzing with excitement
And so was the dog.
I was thrilled as I could be
Cause the miracle was born!

Kiah Malkani
J. B. Petit High School for Girls
Std. 5

IT'S A MIRACLE I SURVIVED

I wish I saw the world
Through someone else's eyes,
Without the evil,
Without the lies,
Without the war raging on
Outside,
And hatred spreading
Far and wide.
Without the bombs
Without the shells
Without the agonising yells.
Without the spite
And without the fright.
Without the dark
So chilly and cold
While in front of our eyes
The war unfolds.
Without the death
Without the fear
Of knowing your last breath
Might be near.
Looking back now,
Without knowing how,
All I can say is
It's a miracle I survived.

Anamika Burman
J.B. Petit High School for Girls
Std. 5

INFERNO

Appearing at the crack of dawn
Golden fingers slowly rising above the horizon,
The sun, in all his shining glory,
A beacon of light that illuminates our world.

The sun, symbolic of power,
Exudes enormous amounts of energy,
Responsible for the occurrence of day and night,
A sunrise signifying a new beginning,
A sunset, an opportunity to forget your struggles.

To some, an inspiration,
To some, a representation of hope.
Towering above us all,
His might extends far beyond the boundaries of humanity,
His incandescence seemingly eternal.

And even though the mere existence
Of this red-hot inferno, and his simple complexity
Is almost magical, I wonder
Does he know the miracle he is?

Janina Shivdasani
J. B. Petit High School for Girls
Std. 8

FeminESSENCE

Pulsating, pounding, panting, pumping
Running, sprinting, leaping, jumping
Feeling, believing, burning, aching
Assessing, cognizing, analysing, reflecting.

She is a miracle
Of flesh and bones
Of dreams and stardust.
She is the Sun, the Moon and the Stars.
She is the Planets, the Lands, and the Oceans.
She is the Universe, omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent.

She is everything
And yet she is nothing.

She could raise the roof of the heavens
And shatter the depths of hell,
If only she had the nerve.

She is a best friend and the fiercest warrior.
She is the sharpest guide and the swiftest athlete.
She is a rock, through the sweat, blood and tears,
But above all, she is a woman, an invincible being,
And that, by itself, is the greatest miracle of them all.

Misha Singh

J. B. Petit High School for Girls

Std. 10

Accompanied by dance performance by Aashna Mahipal, Sheona Bohra, Prisha Shah, Viva Shah and Harshika Singh

LIFE

I always wondered what a miracle was.
Was it name, fame and glory?
Was it winning a lottery,
Seeing the Divine,
Or surviving an accident?
What was a 'miracle', after all?
I searched for the answer,
High and far.
Asked monks, sages, priests,
Beseeched the Divine,
Went to the farthest shrines,
But the answer was always just out of reach.
One day I asked a '*sadhu*'.
He looked at me, incredulous, and said,
"Have you ever wondered why we exist?
Our very existence is a miracle."
Dumbfounded, I stared.
He laughed and said—
"Your child's silent snores,
The first picture of you he draws.
His first steps toward you,
His first kick in the womb.
Waking up to your partner's face,
Returning home after a tired day.
Your mother's voice lulling you to bed,
A long-forgotten friend's sudden text.
The echo of the wind and the crashing waves,
The cry of the eagle as it swoops for prey.
The song of the mountains, the rustling leaves,
The roar of the wild, the buzzing of bees.
You are a miracle, and so is everyone,
All of life itself is a miracle, son,
Earth, our galaxy, this universe,
Eternity,
And even death's sweet release.
If you have yet not encountered a miracle,
Well, then you are not truly living.
For I, at least,
Am living a miracle with each breath I take."

Sunandinee Mehra
J.B Petit High School for Girls
Std. 10

THE PHONE CALL

She was perched at her window,
A cup of tea clenched in her shaking hands,
She watched the clouds race each other in the blue sky,
The sun brightly burning,
Struck by a memory
In the reel of thoughts that crossed her mind,
One had poignant clarity.

At the park,
Crunching leaves, warm days,
The sun lightly kissing her mother's auburn hair
The swing rising higher with each push
Uninhibited giggles and smiles.
The swing came to a halt.
She turned to her mother.
Her wince was replaced with a smile that didn't extend beyond her
lips.
An odd feeling of fear clung to her mind,
Soon to be shadowed by her mother's radiating love.

The next memory snuck in, sneakily
Her father's face shaded with lines,
Hushed conversations punctuated by silences too heavy to bear,
Trips to the hospital, staying with her grandparents,
Long nights without her parents.

She grew accustomed to her mother's soft voice,
Hugs that were tighter than usual,
Drives to the beach on rough days,
A determination nearly obsessive to never miss even the smallest of
events.
From the corner of her eye she saw
Her mother's smile never fading despite her face greyed with pain
Laughs. Even at her worst jokes
Prayers. Day and night.

The ring of the phone jarred her back to reality.
She steeled herself and shakily lifted the phone.
"Hello?"

“Ms Green?”

“Speaking.”

“Your mother is cancer-free.”

A miracle.

Mrinali Ghosh

J. B. Petit High School for Girls

Std. 8

THE MIRACLE OF NATURE



By Isha Sawant

HOPE

My big blue ship sails on the sea
Even as they surround me
Talking in worried whispers here,
But my lavish ship, it won't adhere.
It sails on, with no care or fear,
While here they say my end is near.

They talk outside my hospital room,
Speaking of my near doom.
My mommy cries a river of tears
For losing her child of but 11 years.
I want to tell her not to wail
For my ship has still not ended its sail.

At night I was kept awake,
With fear that my life was at stake.
The moment that I closed my eyes,
They thought I was saying my goodbyes.
But I shall never truly leave this place
long as my ship does sail with grace.

They needn't be concerned, with voices low,
My ship is stronger than they know
Beyond the sky, in airborne sea,
My big ship will sail on for me.
It will sail forever till kingdom come
Never will those engines stop their thrum.

But in our path I see a foe:
A large rock that earlier did not show,
Hidden by the swelling waves.
A new path, my ship tries to pave
But the rock is nearing faster now.
I watch in dread as it hits my bow.

And even as I sink with it
I hold the railings with a tight grip.
I climb up the mast, above the water,
For I can hear my mother call for her daughter.
I swim endless miles till I reach a shore
And at last, my eyes open once more.

Abha Hattangadi
J. B. Petit High School for Girls
Std. 10

THERE CAN BE MIRACLES IF YOU BELIEVE

There can be miracles if you believe,
If you love and if you feel.
The positive vibration in your heart
Will remind you every time it beats.
Never fear, miracles will always save you, my dear!

All you have to do is see.
All you have to do is breathe.
All you have to do is trust.
The miracles will take care of the rest!

Miracles have touched lives.
Miracles have given hope.
Miracles have blessed one and all.
Miracles are proof that magic exists!

Shreya Munshi
J. B. Petit High School for Girls
Std. 8

HOLD ON TIGHT TO MIRACLES

People are sometimes different;
Open and adaptable when it comes to change.
They act differently and think differently,
Unique unto themselves,
And people label it as “strange”.
Boxes, they are confined in,
Cages of scathing words and misguided opinions,
Told to change and conform to society,
To please people like trained minions.
The fire is extinguished,
The embers smoke within.
But Miracles are those who understand
You aren't what you think you are
But what you think, you are,
And if you take the outstretched hand
They'll show a life lived
Thinking out of boxes, saying
What one means and meaning what one says,
Showcasing one's identity, never conforming.
For Miracles know so many faceless
Who became what others wanted them to be
Forever searching for acceptance, validation,
Just another left with no identity.
Identities are the embers of hope
Fuelling the perseverance of the human spirit.
So easy it is to dissolve into the dark, yet the fires
Of innovation, creativity flicker, defying it.
Miracles are what they think
And they think themselves out of their cages.
These people bring us back from the brink
Of a carbon copied world
Where no one is afraid to do what they love
To defy the gnawing fear that
Someone may disapprove or (heavens above)
Find them too... original.
In today's world so many types of freedom are
Already being snatched away,

Never to be recovered,
But when creativity and speech are all but lost forever
That is when you know
The world will never be a world again.
Why we don't appreciate miracles
When they belong to us is beyond me,
But human nature is fickle
And dominated by perversity
That is how it has always been...
Hold on tight to Miracles,
And embrace the very one that is you.
Hold on to what makes you different.
Grab it with your fingers tightly clenched
And never let it slip through.
Why value conformity
When your differences make up you?
Anybody can be the same,
But those who are special who
Aren't afraid to say, "I'm different".
So let's honour our differences every single day.

Mallika Singh
J. B. Petit High School for Girls
Std. 8

WILDFIRE

When Kyra Ferzad Variyava and Naira Anand Mehta sang this song at the 100 Thousand Poets for Change festival in 2017, they introduced it thus:

“Whoever said that small things don't matter has never seen a match stick start a wildfire. Today we will be presenting an original song written and composed by us. Our song is about bullying and how it can affect our emotions. This song depicts the emotions of anger and sadness that one feels when being antagonised. Eventually the individual rises from the ashes of the incident to build a castle of hope.

“Bullies try to suppress any voice of hope, but they forget that the most powerful weapon on earth is the ability of the human soul to stand up and fight back. And that is the Miracle of Life!

This song is a shout-out to all the bullies who made us who we are. Stronger. Smarter. And Invincible like a wildfire. It's okay if you fall down and lose your spark, just make sure that when you get back up... You rise like a raging inferno.”

Wild fire

Do you remember what
You said to me?
Think you are an
Indisputable enemy.
Malicious words hit
Me like a cannonball.
You stand over the edge
Just to watch me fall.

I was caught in your
Spiral of deceit.
Like a hurricane you
Brought me to my feet.

But what you couldn't see
Each time you struck me,
Manipulations, allegations
Lie in all your declarations
Pushed me right into the fire,
Let me burn with a cold desire
But now, I am breaking through somehow...

You can fight me, strike me,
Shun me down.
You can carve my name
Into your broken crown,
But now I'm rising
Through the flames
Nothing but ashes for you to blame.

You thought you could

Put me out
I am a wildfire, baby,
There's no stopping me now.

With the stones like bullets that you threw at me
Built a castle so strong you can't defeat

And right out of that cage I flew
Now I'm standing on this stage and it's all thanks to you.
Now thought you could put me out
I am a wildfire, baby, there's no stopping me now [*Instrumental music*]

You can fight me strike me
Shun me down
You can carve my name
Into your broken crown.
But now I'm rising through the flames,
Nothing but ashes
For you to blame.
You thought you could
Put me out.
I'm a wildfire, baby,
There's no stopping me now.

Do you remember what
You said to me?
Think you're an
Indisputable enemy.
Malicious words hit
Me like a cannonball.

You stand over the edge
Just to watch me fall.

I was caught in your
Spiral of deceit.
Like a hurricane you
Brought me to my feet.
But what you couldn't see
Each time you struck me,
Manipulations, allegations, lies in all your declarations,
Pushed me right into the fire.
Let me burn with a cold desire
But now, I'm breaking through somehow.

You can fight me, strike me,
Shun me down.
You can carve my name
Into your broken crown.
But now I'm rising
Through the flames,
Nothing but ashes
For you to blame.

You thought you could
Put me out.
I'm a wildfire, baby,
There's no stopping me now.

With the stones like bullets that you threw at me
I built a castle so strong you can't defeat.
And right out of that cage I flew.
Now I'm standing on this stage and it's all thanks to you.
You thought you could put me out.
I'm a wildfire, baby, there's no stopping me now.

[Instrumental music]

You can fight me, strike me,
Shun me down.
You can carve my name.
Into your broken crown.

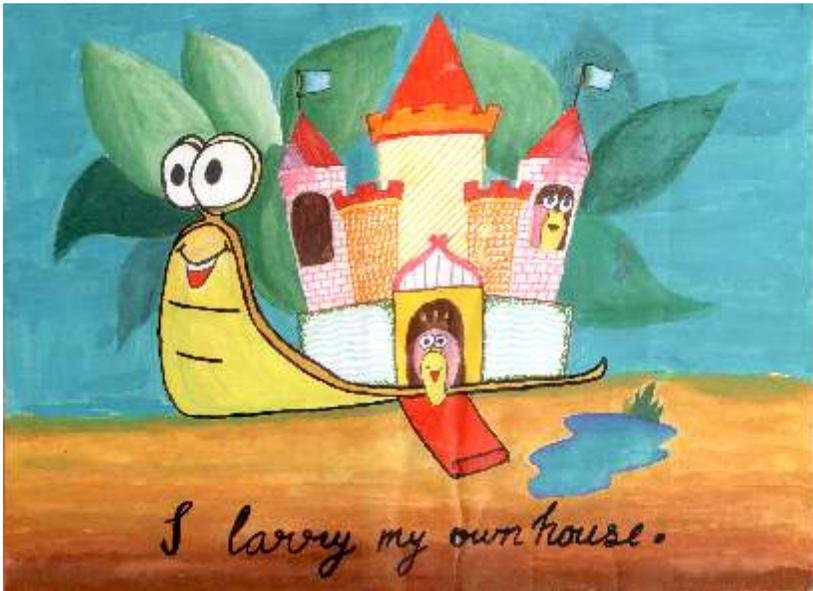
But now I'm rising
Through the flames,
Nothing but ashes
For you to blame.

You thought you could
Put me out (3)
I'm a wildfire, baby,
There's no stopping me now.

Written By
Kyra Ferzad Variyava and Naira Anand Mehta

Musical Accompaniment on cello played by
Keya Marie Noronha

THE SNAIL



By Neermita Bhattacharya

WHAT IS A MIRACLE?

'What is a miracle'? I asked Mum one day,
She looked at me and said,
'Son, we see a miracle every day!'
'Every day?', I asked her in surprise, 'cause that surely didn't sound
right.
But then she smiled and said,
'Every dawn breaks into a morning,
Every night brings the stars,
'Every bird sings a song,
Every flower blooms and dances along,
'Every desert has sand.
'Every mountain a peak,
'Every book has a story,
Every drum has a beat,
'Every man has soul,
Every mind its thoughts,
Life, as you see it each day, my Son, is a Miracle after all.

Written by:
Aimi Hodiwala Rale

Recited By: Rivan Rale,
Aditya Birla World Academy
Std 2

MIRACLES

Chapters of thousands
Of tiny miracles is life.
Enjoy and live them all.
One day, you'll look back
And realise they were big things.
We are living on a blue planet
That circles around a ball of fire,
Next to a cold moon
That moves the sea.
A miracle, isn't it?
Believe in miracles? Oh yes, I do.
Flowers bloom, birds sing.
Winter's gloom gives place to spring.
I live with such miracles
From day to day.
Never stop believing
That miracles happen.
As they do only to those
Who claim them.
Expect them and stay positive.
Count your blessings
Not your lucky stars
As every day in every way
Is a miracle that makes our lives
Worth living for many such miracles.

Advaita Varakavi
Universal School – Ghatkopar
Std. 9

IS IT MAGIC?

Is it magic of some kind?
Is it a supernatural manifestation?
It is always a blessing to mankind,
Or does it come only in time of frustration?
Is it a false hope or a true saviour?
Can it be brought about by magic spells?
Can it befall when God is sent a favour
Or can humans do these themselves?

Can it be painted in bright colours?
Can it be expressed through words?
Can it be bought by dollars?
Or is it impossible for it to be inferred?

Well, the questions are infinite
And the answers available are even more.
A miracle can befall in minutes,
But can shake your whole world to the core.

Sakshi Parekh,
Universal School, Ghatkopar
Std. 10

MY FATHER'S SUNGLASSES FLEW OFF THE CAR

My father sneezed so hard, oh my God!!
His sunglasses flew off from the car and they went far!
We thought of jumping, we thought of hopping from the running car,
But it looked very very far!
We didn't give up, we both stood up...
It was a run but it was fun.
In the middle of the busy road
We parked our car and managed to go far!
We crossed the road and found the sunglasses.
They hadn't cracked, they hadn't broken and they were all safe.
They went through the sunroof of another car which was parked
across...
It was a Miracle to have found the sunglasses without any scars!

Kaabir Jaisingh
Eager Beavers of Fun Ki Pathshaala
Shishuvan School
Std 3

THE CRICKET VICTORY

I went for a cricket match.
The umpire was a vampire.
The batsman was Batman.
The troll was set to bowl.
Batman needed eight runs in one ball.
But what a miracle!
Troll bowled a wide
And a no ball.
Now Batman needed six runs in one ball.
With a six, Batman won the match.
Oh! What a match!

Naman Shah
Little Authors of Fun Ki Pathshaala
Shishuvan School
Std. 3

ROAR, ROAR

Goodness Me!
A lioness had fallen on her knees
Into a pit six feet deep.
The forest guards racked their brains
Thinking of how the lioness to save.
They tried and tried,
But, no matter why,
The lioness just wouldn't budge.
Just then her cubs called.
The lioness was stirred in her heart.
She heaved herself out to be by her cubs.
She had managed to escape a worse fate
Because she wanted to be by her cubs.
A miracle it was!

Sahaana Thriniyambetta
Fun Ki Pathshaala
Ryan International School, Chembur
Std. 2

THE FUN RUN

My school had a running
Race on the streets.
When the man shot the
Blank I ran at full speed.
But by mistake I took the
Wrong turn that led to the long cut.
I got super tired and
Stopped at an ice-cream shop.
And I licked it happily but
My happiness didn't last long
A bee wanted my ice-cream.
I ran at triple full speed.
I overtook the leader and was in the lead.
I got the first prize, can you believe?
That was a MIRACLE indeed.

Jehan Dastoor
Young Writer's Nook
St Mary's School, ICSE
Std. 2

JESUS WALKS ON WATER



By Nishi Guruji

WHAT A MIRACLE!

It's a miracle to hear...
The woof-woofing of puppies,
Hee-heeing of babies,
Meow-meowing of kittens,
baa-baaing of sheep,
And the neigh-neighing of horses.
It's a miracle to see...
The tall mountains,
The deep seas,
The green trees,
The golden sun,
And the colourful rainbows.
It's a miracle to smell...
The *garam* pakodas,
The bright pink roses,
Even the atrocious odours—
The fragrant perfume
And the stinky socks.
It's miracle to feel...
The soft fur of my puppy,
And even the hard skeletons,
The bumpy sand dunes,
The cold ice,
And the thorny cactus.
It's a miracle to taste...
The jiggly jelly,
The scrumptious apple strudel,
The yummy pizzas,
And the chocolaty mousse.
Isn't it??

Gaurika Chhabria
Young Writer's Nook
Cathedral and John Connon School
Std 3

MY MUMMY ALWAYS TOLD ME...

My Mummy always told me
It is good to share your things.
When God becomes happy
Rewards come with wings.

Once in a game
I won Rupees Twenty,
But I shared it with my sister
And gave her smiles plenty.

Next morning, I was surprised
To find the money in my cupboard.
I thought what a miracle
God was indeed true to his word.

Aimee Mohan
Young Writer's Nook
Avalon Heights International School
Std. 2

A MIRACLE

It was a lovely sunny afternoon.
I was back from school really soon.
I wanted to enjoy a little of the sunlight
So then my brother and I hopped in the lift with all our might.

Then suddenly the lift got stuck!
We felt like we were stuck in the muck.
But thank God our watchman was near.
Otherwise we would have been frightened stiff with fear.

It was a miracle, I say, Miracle
For if our watchman was not there
To us that would be a real scare.
Oh dear!!!

Anaiya Rathi
Young Writer's Nook
Bombay Scottish School
Std. 2

NO MIRACLE IN SIGHT

Oh, the things that I read.

Oh, the things that we need
Are not present today. Don't you all see?

My books sing tales of ponds and camping days
In quiet hills through moss covered pathways
Of wet dew-soaked leaves and chirping jays
Of wild waterfalls, fragrant flowers and bright sunrays.

But, alas, this is all I see today, endless streams of cars
Plumes of dirty smokes that hides a sky of stars,
Blocks of concretes greys through my window bars.

I feel cheated and sad

Terribly upset and mad.
That's how it will be," says my dad
"No greenery to be had!"

I wish we could live a life as my books tell
Under Nature's magical spell
And not in this grey, gloomy hell.

If I could experience things which I read about
It really would be a miracle out and out
About which I have no doubt.

Tamara Khanna
Young Writer's Nook
The Somaiya School
Std. 1

REAL-WORLD MIRACLES

Anne Frank, hide away, otherwise they'll see to it to be your end today.

Pack a tuck-box, fly away, don't go out and say "HEY"!

Hatshepsut, don't let go of your cover, they'll throw you in the Nile.

If you do, pack pearls in vinegar, and a little wine.

Malala, don't go to school today, they'll shoot you in the bus on the way.

So, stay home, read, or do your homework in a nook.

Suu Kyi, don't refuse the dictator, he means what he says,

So, grab your suitcases, pack your bags, it's time to go home.

I know you won't listen, I know you won't be afraid,

That's how real-world miracles are made.

Shiraz Aga

Young Writer's Nook

Bombay International School

Std. 3

SPRING

Spring
After a freezing winter
When trees have been laid bare—

Suddenly new red leaves gradually turn green
And begin to dance in a gentle breeze.

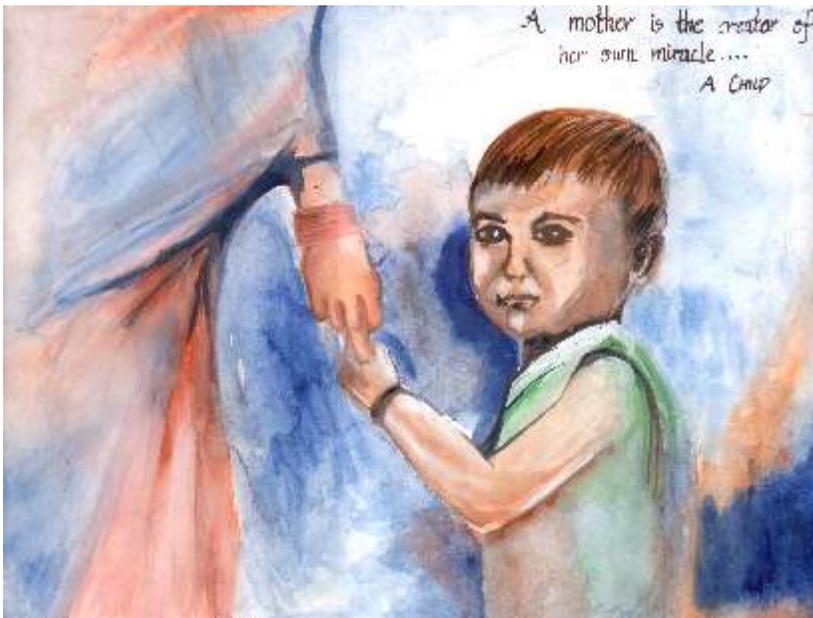
Trees begin to blossom
Sprouting flowers of different shades.

Birds begin to chirp
And bees begin to buzz

All the magic of nature around us.
Truly, spring is a miraculous season.

Jiana Shroff
Young Writer's Nook
J.B. Petit School
Std. 4

MOTHER AND CHILD



By Sanya Khan

THE GREATEST MIRACLE

Miracle is the flowers blooming.
Miracles is the rain falling.
Miracle is the pitter-patter of my little bro's feet.
Miracle is the Mt. Everest, 29,000 feet.

Miracle is the Earth forming with a big bang many a past century.
Miracle is the beautiful butterflies surrounding me.
Miracle is Japan surviving the atom bomb.
Miracle is the Taj Mahal with Mumtaz Mahal's tomb.

Miracle is camels walking in the desert.
Miracle is the astronaut leaving the Earth.
Miracle is the Himalayas which protect my country.
Miracle is my loving grandad who is past ninety.

Miracle is Kashmir, beautiful as heaven.
Miracle is the Grand Canyon spread wide odd and even.
Miracle is the baby's first words.
Miracle is the sky full of flying birds.

Miracles, Miracles, Miracles, eh, in your view?
All have perfectly logical scientific explanations, a scientist would argue.

But a scientist is also born from a mother's womb like a seed from a tree.

That is the greatest Miracle of all—wouldn't you agree?

Ronak Saha
Writer's Bug
Std 8

YOU ARE THE MIRACLE

You are the miracle with an eternal life,
With emotions and feelings that make you survive.
Faith you have is that what makes you stand strong,
No matter how hard blows the storm.
The belief makes miracles mysteriously bloom.
Even the sun resembles the moon.
The God we trust
Is the one with whom our problems rest.
Have you ever thought what makes us smile?
The sun, the star or just an evening walk for a while.
Ever imagined where we can find peace?
In Nature's arms our tensions decrease.
The miracle lives inside us all.
Where with a simple smile the ego falls.
Friends are also the wonder that mend our hearts with love,
Sent as angels to guide our path, from above.
There is magic in every touch.
May it be any, the faith shouldn't budge.
The walk in the rain washes off the dirt in your heart.
The stars in the sky light up your night, sweetheart.
There is marvel in everything around.
Just the good heart knows how the universe plays its ground.
For I am a part of this magic too,
With just a smile and sweet words, the envy among us flew.

Siddharth Ravi,
Writer's Bug
Std 6

SUDDEN GIFTS OF JOY

Miracles are things that occur,
At a time which you'd least expect:
An unexpected surprise—like a spell being cast
Oh, that joyous feeling you'll get!

They visit each and every house
Bestowing sudden gifts of joy.
With excitement and disbelief
Upon every girl and boy.

Like if your best friend moved away,
Leaving you lonely and sad,
A miracle would make sure she moved right back,
Shock paired with feeling glad!

Or if your pet fell very ill
Never to be fine,
A miracle would make him perfectly well,
Leaving you on cloud nine.

But where do miracles come from?
This answer no one knows,
Perhaps sent by angels from Heaven,
And then down to us it goes.

So, remember hope lies in this world,
To make your wishes come true!
And miracles are the delightful result,
They're here just for you.

Nayantara Piramal
Ascend International School
Std 8

FALL AND RISE

He hadn't walked in a while
They had made sure of that
When they ran him over,
Crushing not only his legs
But also his dreams.

He was broken, distraught.
He sat staring at the sea
For hours on end,
Paralyzed, unseeing.

I could only take so much
It destroyed me.
Every time I saw him try
Only to realise he couldn't—

Couldn't stand, couldn't walk,
Couldn't LIVE,
A mere shadow
Of what he used to be.

He was making progress,
Baby steps, the doctors called it.
But what is the use of baby steps
When what you need is a giant leap?
He wouldn't let me help him.
He hated the way people looked at him.
He didn't want it, the help or the pity.

And one day, he had had enough.
He surprised me,
Surprised us all.
He had always loved surprises.

He stood, body trembling,
The colossal effort evident;

His fierce determination persevered

And as he took one slow step
After the other,
Placed one shaking foot,
In front of the other.
A single tear of pure happiness
Rolled down my cheek.

Janina Shivdasani
J.B. Petit Girls School
Std. 9

Recited by Krishna Histas Damania

MIMI'S BLESSING

“I do not know for what purpose,
Does the flower grow?
What moves it skyward, from its seed,
From its humble origin?”
You did not know, yet you smiled.
You said God made it so.
Today, that would not pass for me,
An explanation not adequate, nor reasonable.
But on those balcony eves, of cheese and biscuits,
Over the rush and shush of the tide,
Your each word, a treasure to hold on to,
For a little boy, with no one else,
To ask pointless questions, and eat biscuits with.
Treasures not lost, among the tides,
Nor left on the balcony sill,
But treasured still,
For they came from you.

Jehan Vakharia
Bombay International School
Std. 12

Recited by Hormuzd Hoshang Madan

BE THE MIRACLE

Faith gives a name,
To all the answers that don't fit,
Things beyond human understanding,
So Miracles is what we call it.

In every baby's cry,
We see the miracle of life;
In every fighter or survivor,
The miracle of human strife.

And with every passing day,
We've finally come to believe,
That this tiny world holds miracles,
More than we can live to see.

But we watch our society crumble,
With criminals on the run,
Convinced, we need a miracle,
Hoping to see one.

We're so busy pleading for strength,
That we forget what can be done
If we yield the power of will,
And choose to perform one.

When we pray to God helplessly,
He whispers to all of us,
"Each of you is but a miracle,
So what's all the fuss?"

Our potential is slowly rotting,
Eaten away by complacency.
It's time we be the change,
We so desperately wish to see.

So give the world their hope,
Their redemption, their only cure,
And when you see the helpless and pained,
Be the Miracle they wish for!

Simran Raichura
Queen Mary School,
Std. 10

MIRACLES CAN HAPPEN

Miracles can happen.
I've waited so very long
For something good to happen to me,
But as time continued to move on,
I thought it would never be.

Then that miracle happened,
And it changed my entire life.
I have never been so very happy,
Because I have no more strife.

I prayed to God each and every day,
With tears rolling down my face,
Then I heard him answer,
With all of his style and grace.

He helped me through a difficult time,
And he can do the same for you,
But you must believe that he can,
And then you will be blessed too.

Dev Talreja
Greenlawns School, Worli
Std. 7

THE MIRACLE OF MY LIFE'

"Mayday, mayday",
The pilot shouted into his radio
"I was so scared. The fuel tank is leaking.
We were on such a height, we couldn't land.
We were about to crash on a big stone.
We were praying for an hour.
Down and down we went to the rock.
Watch out! Pilot!"
And suddenly, the plane changed its angle and finally came to a halt.
"I was so scared till this moment.
I was full of joy and happiness when it came to an end."

Saumya Vyas
IES Orion School
Std. 4

**GOD MANIFESTS HIMSELF
THROUGH THE MIRACLE OF NATURE**



By Rati Dady Wadia

A CAPPELLA BOY

Every child is a miracle, as this skit by **Katie Bagli**, indicates

Introducer: *A very good morning to all of you, friends. We, the students of Fun Ki Pathshaala, are about to perform the play **A Cappella Boy**, adapted from the book by the same name, by Katie Bagli. Just sit back and enjoy. But before we begin I would like to introduce the cast:*

Arnaav as Sameer Vaidya, Anuttara as Manju Vaidya, Sameer's mother, Kimaya as Dipti, Sahana and Kabeer as Dipti's mother and father respectively, Sahana as Miss Munira, the music teacher, Jehan as the school principal, Varun as Mr Anand Pai, the Chief Guest of the school concert, Kabeer as the school concert compere, Dhruv as Woof the furry brown dog, Kabeer, Jehan and Varun as the comperes of our play and last but not the least, myself, Vivaan, as the introducer as well as compere of the play.

Compere: Now just imagine you are walking through a small, remote town. You hear some birds chirping in the trees, and bees buzzing around flowers. There are lots of wild flowers of a variety of colours on the wayside. Suddenly you see a little girl Dipti who is returning from school. The girl stops in her tracks. She is surprised to see a new boy in the neighbourhood. The boy is crouching on the ground, gazing at some ants carrying a dead dragonfly. Sitting next to the boy is a furry brown dog.

Dipti (calling out to the boy): Hi, I am Dipti. Have you just shifted here? What's your name? (No answer. The boy pretends he hasn't heard. Loudly...) Hey, Mister! Can't you hear me? Are you deaf? What's your name?

Sameer: (in a garbled manner) Sameer Vaidya.

Dipti: And the dog?

Dipti (offers a candy from her snack box): Here, would you like some candy?

(The boy grabs the candy and offers Dipti something in exchange. A little frog jumps out of his hand.)

Dipti (screaming loudly): EEEEEKS!

(Sameer laughs and laughs, rolling on the ground, pointing at the terrified look on Dipti's face. Manju Vaidya, Sameer's mother, hears the commotion and comes out of her house.)

Manju: Oh, I am so glad my Sameer has found a new friend. I was afraid he would find it hard to settle in this new neighbourhood. Why don't you both come in?

Compere: The three of them enter inside Sameer's house.
(The two children sit at the table and Mrs Vaidya gets a plateful of cookies for them.)

Dipti (munching away): Manju aunty, why don't you send Sameer to my school? He can make so many friends.

Manju: It would be of no use. I'm afraid Sameer is not capable of ever learning to read and write. He is a differently abled child. You see, he had fallen off the first floor of his crèche when he was just one year old and injured his brain. That is why he finds difficulty in speaking. This makes him feel very inferior and so he avoids people.

Dipti: You mean Sameer will never be sent to school?

Manju: There are schools for special children but unfortunately the nearest one is at Rampur, which is rather far. In any case I cannot afford to send him there. As it is, I find it hard to make both ends meet after Sameer's father passed away. But, (putting her arm around Sameer) he is clever, my Sameer, he knows all about the creepy-crawlies and he has a good ear for music. He loves to sing.

(Sameer sings in a strange voice. The words are not clear but his voice sounds rich and melodious.)

Compere: Back home, Dipti tells her parents excitedly about Sameer, her new friend. They do seem to be sorry for Sameer but at the same time are not in favour of Dipti spending time with the boy.

Father: You know Dipti, Sameer is very unfortunate to have had that accident when he was so young.

Mother: Yes, we do feel sorry for him, but you don't have to spend all your time with him.

Father: Just because of Sameer don't miss out on your basketball and roller-skating classes. Your friends there will miss you. You should spend more time with them rather than Sameer.

Compere: And you can imagine how Dipti felt. She felt hurt for her friend Sameer. She walked off in a huff to her own room.

Dipti: (talking angrily to herself and stamping her feet) I will go meet Sameer every day. I will tell him about that part of the world that excludes him. I will talk to him all about school.

Compere: In spite of her parents' warnings, Dipti visits Sameer every day. Instead of Dipti teaching him things, it is she who gets to learn things from Sameer—about the creepy-crawlies in the garden and their strange ways. One day...

Dipti: Sameer, I want you to meet my friends at my roller-skating classes. It's great fun. I can even teach you to roller-skate.

Compere: Sameer looks reluctant.

Sameer: Naaa, naa.

Dipti (tries to tempt him): Look, if you come with me, I will give you this box of chocolate cupcakes. They'll be all yours, I promise.

Compere: Sameer relents and goes with Dipti. But once there he feels very shy. He refuses to meet any of Dipti's friends. He just sits in one corner with his back to them.

Vivaan (one of Dipti's friends): Hey Dipti, who is this crazy friend of yours? (laughing) Have you punished him?

Dipti: Come on Sameer, let's go. (And once they are out of earshot). You embarrassed me. Why didn't you socialise with them? I shouldn't have brought you here. I am sorry for doing so.

Compere: And soon the time comes when Dipti has to stay back in school for her annual day practice. Unknown to her, Sameer hides outside her school, listening intently while her class practices their song accompanied by the drums, flute and guitar. Woof, of course, is always at his feet. Then one day, Miss Munira, their music teacher, has some bad news...

Miss Munira: Children, I have some bad news. Very unfortunately Veer, Krish and Parth have come down with chicken pox. That means they will not be a part of our musical ensemble on the Annual Day. We will have to manage without the drums, flute and guitar which they have been playing.

(Children groan loudly.)

Compere: And back at Sameer's house...

Dipti: You know Sameer, we were hoping our class performance would be the best, but now three of the boys are down with chicken pox. What rotten luck! We will have to make do without the drums, flute and guitar. Our musical ensemble will sound awful.

(Sameer starts humming the tune of *The Little Drummer Boy*, the song that Dipti's class had been practicing): *pam, pam, pam, pam-pam-pam...* (and even produces the exact sound of the drums, flute and guitar.)

Dipti: Hey Sameer, you sound superb. But how did you know we are going to sing this song? Have you been listening slyly while we were practicing? (She pulls his ear teasingly). I've got an idea!

Compere: The next day Dipti is simply bursting to tell Miss Munira and her classmates about her novel idea for the Annual Day. They all warm to it and agree to give it a try. With just two days left for the special event they rehearse to make sure their plan would work. The others in school do suspect that the fifth-graders have something up their sleeve, but no matter how hard they try to find out what's up, they just can't succeed. The Grade Five students stubbornly keep their lips sealed.

At last the day dawns. All the Grade Five students as well as Miss Munira are jittery and keep their fingers crossed. Dipti is the most nervous of them all. Nothing should go wrong.

The hall is packed with eager parents and grandparents waiting proudly to watch their son or daughter or grandchild perform. Even Mrs Vaidya has been invited but she has no clue about what was up. (Mrs Vaidya sits in the audience.)

The Compere of the concert: Friends, we shall begin our programme today with a musical ensemble recital by the Grade Five students.

Backstage...

Miss Munira: I want Sameer Vaidya to be the first to come on stage. Sameer, where is Sameer? I don't see him.

Compere: Sameer is trying to hide behind everybody else. He is getting cold feet and refuses to budge.

Dipti: Sameer, you are the star of our show. Come on, there is nothing to worry about.

Miss Munira: Sameer darling, show the audience how well you can sing.

Dipti (talking to herself): Our show is going to turn into a fiasco. Something has to be done. Something is missing; something is not in place for Sameer. (She thinks) I know what is missing! I must hurry.

Compere: Dipti pleads to the compere to give the fifth grade some more time. And so,

Compere of the concert: Ladies and gentlemen, there is a slight change in the programme. The Musical Ensemble recital will be the second item today. The first item will be the play *The Golden Goose* by the Grade Four students.

(Dipti runs to Sameer's house).

Dipti: Woof, Woof! Where are you? Oh, there you are. Come on Woof, you too are needed for our show. (She ties her belt around Woof's neck and leads him back to school.) Hurry, hurry!

Compere: And when Sameer sees Woof backstage, he feels a surge of courage. Confidently, he steps onto the centre of the stage and Woof sits next to him. The musical ensemble begins their performance.

Miss Munira: Friends, the fifth graders will now entertain you with their musical ensemble. We have here the choir, the cello and trumpet players Aditya and Sahil respectively and Sameer Vaidya who is our special guest performer—he is here today to sing 'a cappella' which means that he will accompany the recital by producing the exact sounds of the drums, flute and guitar. Do give them a round of applause!

(Applause)

Song – *The Little Drummer Boy* (The recorded version of the song is played here and the choir sings along while Sameer lip-syncs the sounds of the drums, flute and guitar.)

At the end of the performance, the audience gives them a standing ovation. People come up to the stage, slap Sameer on the back and congratulate him.

Manju Vaidya: Sameer, I just can't believe it. Am I dreaming? My son—the star of the show?

Principal: Ma'am, I, the principal of the school, congratulate you. Your son is simply brilliant. You must be proud of him.

Compere: The Chief Guest Mr Anand Pai also walks up to Sameer and his mother.

Mr Anand Pai: Mrs Vaidya, you must be a proud mother to have such a talented son. He shows great promise in a cappella music. I happen to run a class called 'Special Budding Musicians' for young children and would like to offer free training to Sameer. My group of children will by and by get to perform far and wide, in many countries.

Manju Vaidya: But—but, Sameer is a special child. He is not normal, he can't even read or write.

Mr Anand Pai: That does not matter; he is a natural at a cappella accompaniment and has a superb ear for music. He can make the most of that, if given a chance.

Dipti: Aunty, do let Sameer join, it will make him happy and he will become famous one day.

Manju Vaidya: Will Sameer be able to cope with this new regime? He will have to go for practice regularly and follow instructions. He is not used to that at all. Besides, he can be quite stubborn sometimes.

Sameer: Brrum, brrum, pump um, pah-pah-rah! I want to do that.

Manju Vaidya: Ok, ok. This seems to be a miracle in my son's life. Mr Anand, it's very kind of you. Sameer, I am sure, will be very happy under your care.

Compere: And the day dawns when Sameer, well spruced up, is off for his first music lesson with Mr Pai, full of self-importance and confidence.

Dipti: Sameer, now that you are going to be so busy, I am going to miss you.
(Sameer offers something to her.)

Sameer: For you (in a garbled voice).

(It turns out to be a frog and once again, Dipti screams, just as she had done on the very first day she met him.)

Dipti: EEEEE! You, you...!

Compere: And so, friends, we come to the end of our story.

Compassion:
The Quality of Mercy
2018



2018 : A REPORT THE QUALITY OF MERCY

The seventh Poetry Festival under the flag of 100 Thousand Poets for Change had the theme of 'Compassion' for the children's event. The programme was held on October 7, 2018, and since Compassion was the theme, we selected Shakespeare's phrase, 'The Quality of Mercy' as the title of this Festival.

Our Chief Guest on the occasion was the well-known Heta Pandit, who started her career under the famous ethologist Dr Jane Goodall. She is India's first woman tea planter in the tea gardens of Munnar. She has written seven books on Goan Heritage.

We started with Heta presenting the song *Bhujang—The King Cobra*, which she has translated into English.

Queen Marians painted some of the human symbols of Compassion. Delna Mody, a former student of Queen Mary School, and a professional singer, rendered the beautiful Hymn *Morning Has Broken* with great aplomb. She also sang the number from *The Sound Of Music*, in which she had played the lead role when it was recreated on the Mumbai stage—'*The hills are alive with the sound of music*'.

After a few poems, which are represented in the following pages, the children of Class 1 and 2 of Mahapragya Public School sang a song on Compassion composed by their Principal.

Zia Shivji performed a Bharat Natyam dance to Ishani Chowdhary's poem '*The Beacon of Hope*'.

A Whale of a Problem—the play written, directed and produced by Katie Bagli—the famous author of children's books on Natur—was performed by students of Young Writers' Nook and Fun Ki Pathshaala.

The J.B. Petit High School Girls sang a song, *Stand by You*; the singers were Kareena Dholakia, Kritee Panjani, Ishani Chowdhury and Mallika Singh.

Then students of Queen Mary School enacted two poems—*The Cold Within* that showcases how lack of compassion can cause the death of those very individuals, and *Nine Gold Medals*, which depicted how compassion can win the day.

Preeta Kothari danced the Kathak to Anamika Burman's poem, and Sanjana Singh danced the Odissi to Janina Shivdasani's poem.

All these dances were choreographed by the talented dance teacher, Mrs. Ila Dalal of J.B.Petit High School

Vareeja Thakkar, who heals people through music therapy, sang a song on Compassion accompanied by her mandolin.

The grand finale was our song of India on Compassion '*Vaishnav Jan To*' by our Queen Marian, Dhwani Pandya.

I would like to end with a beautiful real-life story about caring and compassion. Newton Baker, who served as United States President Woodrow Wilson's Secretary of War during World War I, visited the military medical installations.

He met a helpless crippled soldier who was blinded and had lost one arm and both legs on the battlefield. He was a hopeless spectator; no one expected him to live except his nurse. It was beautiful to see the care she lavished on this mangled human body. Time passed and Newton Baker became a Trustee at John Hopkins University. A special mid-year graduation was to take place, and an exceptionally brilliant student was to receive his doctorate. Imagine the emotions when Baker saw on the stage in a wheelchair William Harrison Craig, the wounded soldier he had seen a year earlier. Here was a miracle of Compassion and caring. At his side was his nurse, now his wife, who had opened new horizons for his sightless eyes. She had given him two willing hands for the one he had lost. She put heart back into the torn body and restored to him his will to live, because she cared and had Compassion.

**Rati Dady Wadia
Former Principal
Queen Mary School**

GRINDING STORIES

XIII

BHUIJANG THE KING COBRA

It is raining, oh how much it rains!

It rains on the rivers,

It rains on the lakes.

It rains on land and in the trees.

It rains over the heads of birds, animals and bees.

Bhuijang, the King Cobra, comes down from the hills.

They say he does not come down unless he is dying.

They also say that when his wife is pregnant.

She travels from Keri To Panjim

And goes through Marcel!

And when she is on her way back

She shifts to Porvorim via Mapusa.

But did you know, O listener of stories,

That the babies in her belly remember the old route

And can go back and forth as the please?

O lots of rain, there's lots of rain.

O Rama! There is a lot of rain.

Bhuijang the King has come down the mountain.

He has come rolling down the hills.

Now the garuda sees the King

And swoops down on him like the eagle she is.

But did you know, O listener?

That her breast filled with the milk of kindness

And that she wipes Bhuijang with her wings?

She sees him slither, slide and fall.

She sees him suffer on the slopes.

She picks him up out of water

And takes him up to her nest.

She strokes him dry with her feathers.
She feeds him milk and honey.
Such is her kindness, the lady.

Translated by Heta Pandit, from *Grinding Stories: Songs from Goa*, The Heritage Network, 2018

As sung in verse by Subhadra Arjun Gawas

Retold by: Heta Pandit

Assisted by: Shubhada Chari

Resource Person: Rajendra Kerkar

Location: Ghoteli No. 2 at Keri Sakhalli, Goa

FROM THE BIRDS THAT FLY ...

From the birds that fly, to the cows that moo,
we need a lot of time, for a lot of things to do.

From the birds that fly, to the tigers that growl,
do stop pollution, it smells rather foul.

From the birds that fly, to the penguins that shiver,
don't use plastic, instead use paper.

From the birds that fly, to the turtles with shells,
just use pencils, instead of ink pens.

From the birds that fly, to the horses that neigh,
if you aren't careful, Nature will pay.

From the birds that fly, to the armadillos that roll,
save our Mother Earth, from ruby to charcoal.

From the birds that fly, to the bees that honey,
please save the beautiful world, you can't buy another with money.

From the birds that fly, to the lions that roar,
this planet is precious, from the crust to the core.

Manasvi Dadbhawala
Fun Ki Pathshaala
Shishuvan School
Std. 4

EARS THAT HEAR

Ears that hear, eyes that see,
A heart that understands;
One who sees the broken pieces
Gently holding them in your hands.
Eyes that tear up with emotion,
Ears that hear what you can't say,
A heart that beats with feeling
Helping pain to edge away.
Ears that hear the silent cries
A heart that feels the breaking
A soul who knows that kind of pain
The anguish, depth of aching.
Ears that listen patiently,
Eyes that see through tears,
An empathetic caring heart
That understands your fears.

Zaayan Bhatena

16th East Bombay Zoroastrian Bharat Scout Group

Age: 7 years

**MOTHER EARTH, MOTHER EARTH,
LET'S CARE ABOUT HER!**

Pollution, Cleanliness, Let's think about all, to save our Mother Earth.

Let's give and not only take because the rest all is Name-Sake. It won't long last and it will die fast.

Mother Earth, Mother Earth, Let's Care about her.

Let's create, Let's initiate, Let's be compassionate, let's be passionate to save our Mother Earth. Let's Care about her!

Sometimes the sea, Sometimes it's the trees, Sometimes through the breeze, Sometimes at the Shore, Sometimes at the earth's core. Let's not forget, we are all elements and one day we will merge.

Let's arrive, let's celebrate our existence on this Mother Earth, Let's bestow our compassion and let's all truly care about her!

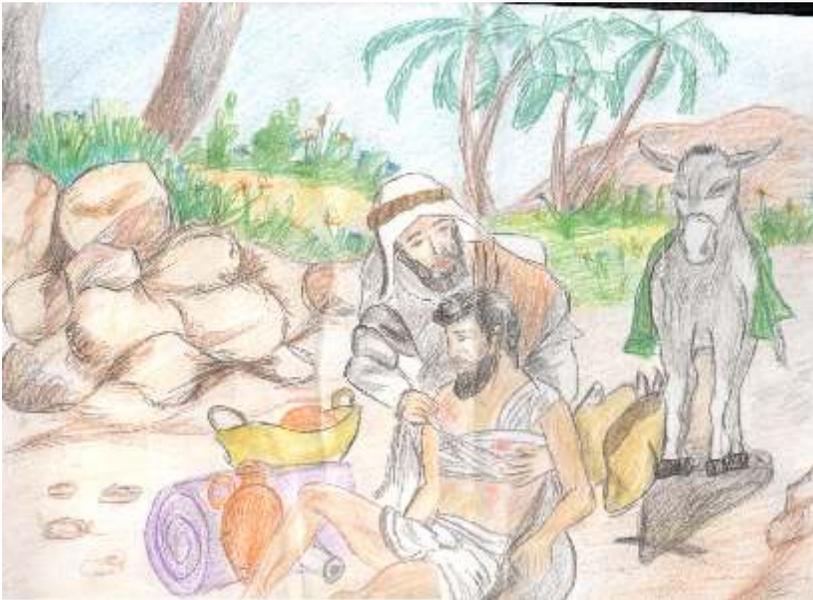
Kaabir Jaisingh
Fun Ki Pathshaala
Shishuvan School - ICSE, Matunga
Std. 4

THE BEACON OF HOPE

Look at what we've done to our world,
So miserable, gloomy, glum and cold,
As her silent tears run down her cheeks
Spilling into seas, oceans, rivers and creeks.
She watches as we shatter her to smithereens.
We destroy her with no mercy as for help she screams.
She sees that true friendship and kindness don't exist no more.
However, betrayal, false friends and selfishness exist to the core,
In avarice and materialism her children thrive.
Still in terror her girl children walk the streets alone especially at
night.
No one knows whether the garden they walk into bears roses or
thorns
As the war of greedy minds wages on with twisted swords.
BUT there is still time to change our world
To stop time from laughing at our minds so whirled.
There is still time to lend a helping hand
And pull our brothers and sisters from that dark abyss to stand,
There is still time to bring empathy and peace.
To this world of hate we must cease.
There's time to fill our hearts with compassion
And bring an end to misery and suffering through salvation.
A world that flourishes with pure and benevolent hearts,
A world in which humanity and unity are the mind's new arts.
One compassionate heart at a time
We can make our world pristine and prime,
And we the children of Mother Earth
Can stand united as one large family with great mirth.
I hope that the world I dream to live in today
Comes true in the future someday,
But will this hope always remains a dream
Or will the beacon of hope be kindled into a raging inferno?

Ishani Chowdhury
J. B. Petit High School for Girls
Std. 7

THE GOOD SAMARITAN



By Vedanshi Seth

COMPASSION

My heart breaks
Into tens of thousands of tiny little pieces
When I even imagine
An animal being killed for food.
How can I explain, it is doing us no good?

I wonder why people eat animals as dishes
From eggs to meat and chicken to fishes.

Stop the buying so you stop the killing.
How can you create life to take it?
How can you grill, fry an animal or bake it?

Oh Mamma! I am feeling so sad
How to stop something so bad?
There are so many options to eat
Is there anything we can do about it?
Being vegetarian will make you fine and fit.

Valmi Shah
Universal School, Ghatkopar
Std. 6

MY SIXTH BIRTHDAY

I have been waiting for my sixth birthday all this time,
Couldn't wait to get cake, chocolates and gifts of all kinds,
When one day to school, I saw a boy with no food and dime.
“What can I do?” it came to my little mind.
To add some joy to his life, that is what I had to find.
I asked my mom and dad
They took me to an orphanage
And there I celebrated
This sixth birthday of mine.

Vivaan Singh
The Somaiya School
Std. 1

MY HEART

I have eyes that can see
The work that can be done by me.
I have ears that enable me to hear
The voices of those who live in fear.

I have lips that I might speak
Words of encouragement to all who seek.
I have an alert mind that I might know
When people need me so.

I have hands that are able to do
Some meagre but worthy task for you.
I have empathy and sincerity to pray
For the impoverished people every day

I have this one thing, all else above
A compassionate heart, that I may love.

Daksh Jain
The Somaiya School
Std. 1

I KNOW...

I went up to her and held her hand
She was going through things
She couldn't understand.
I know what she's been through
I know what she's done,
How many times she's had to hide,
Had to run.
I know where she's come.
I know where she's gone.
I know when she's had to let go,
And when she's had to hold on.
I know where she's been,
All her made-up crimes
All her imaginary sins.
She is a hidden Jew
In Nazi Germany
And the only one who knows is me!
Could I get taken away?
Could I die?
I push all those thoughts aside
She just needs a place to stay,
A place to hide
And right now, a bit of hope and compassion
Can go a long way.

Anamika Burman
J.B Petit High School for Girls
Std 6

GOOD DEEDS

Good deeds are so precious;
They are wonderful things.
All are filled with compassion.
Oh! The happiness they bring.
They cannot be corrupted,
You cannot buy them with cash.
They are gifts, they are blessings
And they come in a flash!
Good deeds have a voice
And they whisper so clear,
Of great tragedies, deep poverty
Things wrapped in fear.
A Good Deed can be all
That it takes at times
They will help others turn
From the darkness to sunshine!
How sweet are the feelings
That come from Good Deeds
As you bless someone else
By fulfilling their needs.
Good Deeds are quite precious,
Very powerful things...
They are filled with compassion
See? The hope that they bring?

Rustom Workingboxwalla
16th East Bombay Zoroastrian Bharat Scout Group
Age: 8 years

DALAI LAMA



By Bhoomi Shah

COMPASSION IN NATURE

The heat of summer was at its peak.
A poor lioness which was very weak
Wandered about in the hot sun
Until she couldn't carry around her young son.

The more she walked
The hotter it got.
With no water in sight
She was in a pitiful plight.

As the temperature steadily rose
The desperation for water showed in her eyes,
When suddenly from somewhere came
An elephant which was helpful and tame.

This eager elephant was always ready to help
And came to the rescue at the young cub's yelp.
The elephant scooped up the cub with its trunk
And led the lioness to a lake where they drank.

The lioness and the elephant were not the best of friends
But in this situation, they decided to make amends.
After telling you all this, I would like to quiz
If this isn't compassion,
Then what is?

Hansa Kannan
The Somaiya School
Std. 9

COMPASSION?

His fingers linger on the metal
Cold against his skin,
The tugging at his heart,
The screaming in his head,
They can't stop him.
But it was never his decision
Then comes the flood of emotion,
The surrender of humanity
The slightest movement of a finger,
And then the bouquet of bullets.
Blood falls, like sand in an hourglass
Staining the asphalt.
Time stops
One's eyes widen,
One's eyes close.
Another life is lost,
Another soul just a whisper in the wind.
A daughter, a sister,
A wife, a mother,
She was so many things.
She could be so many more,
But her time on this stage has come to an end.
Another to the gun of terror fell
And all I ask you is...
Where was compassion then?

Janina Shivdasani
J. B. Petit High School for Girls
Std 9

GIRL IN THE DARK

A solitary girl, in the unforgiving dark,
Hunched, scribbling, her figure stark.
Her only company, a dim street light,
And a pariah she pets, night after night.
Tonight will be different, I make up my mind,
As I leave my home's comforting confine.
Entering the halo of that dim street light,
Which bathes her like an angel, night after night.
I look at that bright face, a child, no older.
Put a woolly blanket around her narrow shoulders.
They shouldn't bear such burdens, shoulders that slight,
Shouldn't have to study here, night after night.
So I take her to my porch, give her a bench, a lamp,
Put a warm mug of milk, into those cold hands.
An impulsive hand reaches out to ruffle her hair,
Then I collect all the stationery that I can spare.
As she smilingly accepts the favours I shower,
Her bright face happily blooming like a flower,
I promise myself to help her dreams take flight
She'll never have to study under a street light.

Hera Havewala

71st East Bombay Zoroastrian Bharat Guide Group

Age: 22 years

Intern, Bachelor of Dental Surgery

SAVE GOD'S OWN COUNTRY

Oh Dear! Oh Dear! Kerala is so muddy.
We could help them by giving them money.
Giving is better than taking for yourselves.
I feel lovely when I help someone else.
And, if we were in distress, they would help
So, we should be helping, and after all as the old saying goes,
'United we stand, divided we fall'.
So don't listen to people who don't help at all!

Kimaya D'Souza
Fun Ki Pathshaala
Christ Church School
Std. 3

COMPASSION

What is better than living with passion?
No guesses? Okay, I'll tell you—it is living with compassion.
What is this big word 'compassion'—do you even know it?
It's nothing but respect and kindness for all, not only in your mind—
better if you actually show it...

Compassion for fellow humans, whoever they are
Age, gender, colour, race, social status—no bar
And for all other living creatures—animals, birds, even trees,
Lions, crocodiles, dogs, pigeons, ducks, spiders and even bees...

Compassion cannot be sold, nor borrowed, nor bought
It is just simple acts of kindness or even a caring thought.

When you don't kill a fox to make yourself a fur coat and pants,
Or always watch your step so you don't step on a snail or an ant.
When you feel the hunger of a poor child and give him food,
Or when you see your grandma sad and do something to uplift her
mood.

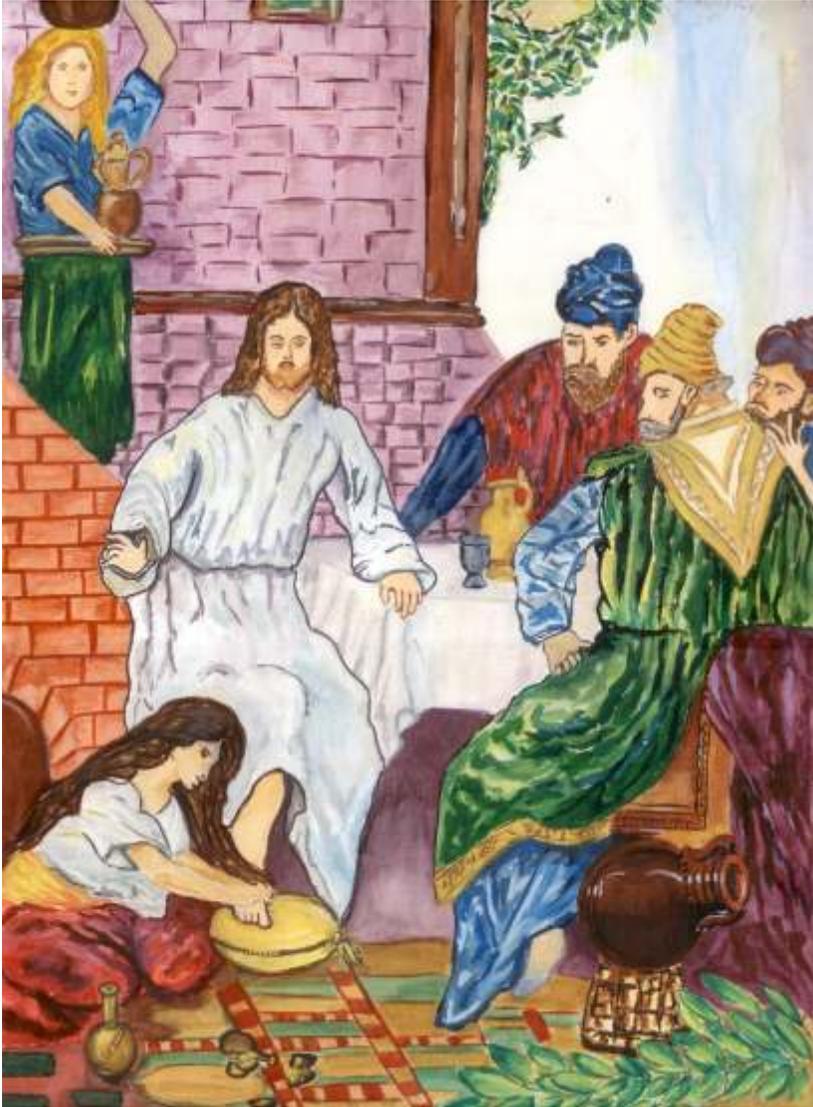
When you smile at and thank the watchman or maid for no reason,
Or cover a shivering puppy with a blanket in the winter season.
When you help a confused old woman to cross a busy street,
Or buy a cold drink for a labourer who's been working in the heat.
When you shed a tear for a homeless man,
Or spend an evening with a sick friend even if it means you had to
change your plan.

When you help Mom lift heavy shopping bags and clear the table after a
meal,
Or when you see Dad looking tense, you snuggle up to him and say,
“Dad, I know how you feel...”

All of the above is compassion; yes, it's just simply that!
See, anyone can do it; you don't need to be a diplomat...
In fact, you can do it from just about anywhere
Whether at school, at home, on the road, or an office chair.
Compassion is just a feeling; it's not rocket science or art...
But it must come from the heart to reach the heart.

Armaan Khetani
The Somaiya School
Std. 5

MARY MAGDALENE



By Malvika Shah

WHOSE WORLD IS IT?

I pity the animals all around me,
Some have no place to live, nor food to eat,
But we are cruel and eat heaps of meat...

I pity the dogs near my bus stop; they have nowhere to sleep,
In their hearts they weep...
People trample on them in the dead of night,
And in the morning, they have no might...

But worse is the state of the cute little panda bears, they are close to
extinction...
We humans are cutting their bamboo forests, and they are dying of
starvation...

Fish are being bred, they are yummy, it is said,
Just for us to eat, a selfish treat...
I'm sure they don't like being in a tank, to be very frank...

So, humans of the world, other beings have life too,
We should share our planet with them, it's what we should do...
Let's all make our world a better place,
And improve the living race!!

Aariya Shah
Young Writer's Nook
Bombay International School
Std 4

A MILLION SMILES WE CAN BRING

I always wonder, why is there war?
When men and children are killed in lands near and far
Why can't there be peace and care?
And let everyone be loving and fair.

Well, our world is not like that,
With hatred and enmity rising far and beyond.
Children are holding guns in their hands
For reasons they don't understand.

We need to end this bloodshed and tears
We need to hold hands and come together.
We need to end the pain and fears.
We need to be the messengers of love in every weather.

Let us, the children of today
End the sufferings of those who don't get to play.
They must be free of the gun,
And come out in the open sun.

Let us express our COMPASSION
Which is the sacred art of LOVE and PASSION.
Let's bring the million smiles alive
So that we all have a lovely LIFE!

Rishi Mehta
The Somaiya School,
Std. 6

COMPASSION

Compassion means kindness,
It even means niceness.
It means when you see a person cry,
To bring a smile back on his face, you try!
But, unfortunately, we are so busy in the rat race,
That we have failed to see who could not keep pace,
Failed to see who needed a helping hand,
Or stopped to notice the less fortunate in our land.
So today, let us pledge with our heart,
No selfishness, no unkind words—we all have to play our part,
To wipe a tear, to hold a hand,
To show that we are there and understand.
That is how love and kindness will spread along,
On our lips a smile, in our heart a song!
No one will be sad or discouraged as they know somebody is there,
To hold them when they fall; their troubles to share.
So, the next time you see someone who needs a helping hand,
Reach out with compassion, I am very sure you can!
You will feel happy by spreading this light,
By acting with compassion and doing what is right.

Meher Kelawala

71st East Bombay Zoroastrian Bharat Guide Group

Age: 8 years

MOO MOO'S TALE ON COMPASSION **(Compassion Through The Eyes Of A Cow)**

I am an Indian cow and I have a story too,
I can tell you things besides just Moo-Moo.
People here are kind to me and treat me as their mother,
(This country for a cow like me is like no other.)

Blessy, a cow, lived with a grandma who just couldn't see,
In the land of beautiful trees, which was called God's Own Country.
Then one day in the rains, the rivers changed their mind,
They razed everything in their way, whatever they could find.

Blessy and Grandma were marooned, (she still could not see)
They took shelter, crying for help, under a coconut tree.
Soon came fishermen and boats and the Navy.
They saved every one of them and took them to safety.
To help every living soul in the floods—they had taken a vow,
They made sure they left no one, and even took Blessy, the cow.

I am an Indian cow and I have a story too.
I can tell you things besides just Moo-Moo.
Barkha, a cow, lived with a man who was just too poor
In a city in the Land of Kings, in a place called Alwar.
One fine day, Barkha set out with her master for a little graze.
Little did she know that she was stepping into a land of hate and
craze.

Save the cow, she heard people say and wondered what was going on
And before her eyes, she saw her master being beaten and kicked
around.
How can a land that loves the cow be cruel in its mind,
And make the cow an excuse to beat up its own 'kind'?

Blessy and Barkha met together many years later,
They had lived their lives and now stood before their creator.
Having seen India, they debated with ruminant passion,
And could not agree to whether we had a heart of compassion.

In a land where people treat even animals with love
How can we have religious fights in the name of a cow?
When people feed animals standing at the temple doors
Can we ignore the voices of our hungry and poor?

Krishna and Radha, our cowherd Gods we worship
From times of yore.
Love and compassion are a part of our cultural lore.
To kindle this kindness in our hearts, let us decide
Or wait for the cows to give their verdict
On behalf of our moral side.

Aditi Vijay,
The Somaiya School
Std. 7

A WHALE OF A PROBLEM

A play by Katie Bagli

Cast: Jiana Shroff, Viona Shroff, Janhvi Barasara, Aariya Shah, Shiraz Aga, Malaika Naik, Thea Jain, Saumya Vyas, Manasvi Dadbhawala, Kimaya D'Souza, Aadya Khanna, Mannat Bedi, Kaabir Nirmal Jaisingh, Varun Satbhai and Aarnav Nagrecha.

Introducer: Good morning friends, you are about to watch the play *A Whale of a Problem* performed by the students of Fun Ki Pathshaala and Young Writers Nook. The play is an adaptation from the book *On the Wild Side* by Katie Bagli. Just sit back and enjoy!

Compere: Scene I. In Mr and Mrs Lakdawalla's house. It is early morning.

Mr Lakdawalla (yawning): Oh what a wonderful morning, oh what a wonderful day. Simmi, where is my breakfast?

Mrs Lakdawalla (enters): Coming, coming. Hold your horses. Rozy had to go all the way to the dairy as there was no milk in the house.

Jenny and Johna (enter, together): Good morning Pa, good morning Ma.

Mrs Lakdawalla: Good morning, dears.

Rozy (enters with tray): Sorry, the toast is slightly burnt.

Jenny: Nothing new about it.

Mr Lakdawalla (reading the newspaper): Hmm, hmmm. (Jumps) Wha-what?

Mrs Lakdawalla: What's the matter with you? Why are you jumping up and down like a jack-in-the-box?

Mr Lakdawalla: The strangest news reported here. A Blue Whale was washed ashore in Alibagh! Of all the things, a Blue Whale! The largest animal on our planet. Here, in Alibagh.

Johna: Read out the whole story to us, Pa.

Mr Lakdawalla: Yesterday morning, at around 7 am, a Kohli fisherman was shocked to see a giant whale on the shores of Alibagh.

Jenny: And then what happened?
(everyone exits)

Compere: And then, this is exactly what happened.
(enter Blue Whale and fisherfolk)

Hurry, hurry! A whale washed ashore.
All of sixty feet, perhaps even more.
A young Blue Whale, that's for sure.

Word goes around, many villagers throng.
With hearts bleeding, they watch her struggling,
Rolling, Writhing, her Flukes thrashing,
Even while the waves came ashore smashing.

The people put their heads together,
How does one tackle this difficult matter?
“She has to be rescued,” proclaimed their leader.

“We have to push her back into the sea,
The tide is now high, but soon it will recede.”
Two fishermen agreed to give up their day's catch
Never mind the loss, the whale must go back.

They could use their fishing boats
And with the help of strong ropes
They could tow the massive mammal
Back into the sea where she belonged.

“Nay,” said their leader,
“The whale is too heavy.
The ropes used to tow her
Will cut into her belly.”

Said the leader's worldly wise wife,
“We can cut down the whale's trauma and strife.
Make a rope out of our saris,

Wouldn't that be soft and nice?"

"Brilliant!" said their leader, and everyone agreed.
All the village women offered their softest saris.
The nine-yard saris were tied end to end
And tethered around the whale's abdomen.

Then began the tricky 'Mission Rescue'.
Singing cheery songs and making much ado
Inch by inch the boats pulled and heaved.
After eight long hours she was returned to the sea.

With a resounding splash she entered the water.
The sari-rope untied, they watched her like a daughter.
The Blue Whale was relieved and thanked all the people
By blowing up sprays that upon them sprinkled.

Bidding fond farewells and showering good wishes
The villagers watched teary eyed the mighty whale vanish.
"Good bye Blue Whale, return to where you belong,
We wish you a good life, may you be healthy and strong."

Comper: Doesn't that make a very heart-warming story? The mighty whale was rescued by the kind-hearted fisherfolk in such a simple manner. No cranes, no machines, just nine-yard saris, their fishing boats and their concern and compassion.

Introducer: That's all, folks, hope you enjoyed the play. Let me now introduce to you the cast: Shiraz Aga, Janhvi Barasara, Jiana Shroff, Viona Shroff,

MOTHER TERESA



By Ananya Mehta

“The mission of 100 Thousand Poets for Change is to help build and promote a healthy and sustainable society. There is evidence that poetry and the arts, in general, do create sustainable communities through an increase in literacy, and critical and creative thinking. Also, bringing the community together to read nurtures individuals and families... The objective of 'Read A Poem To A Child' is to set a connection point with a child as an initial step in sharing creative writing appreciation and skills, increase exposure to poetry and the arts, and to encourage thoughtful dialogue among all the community members involved. It is a way to remind ourselves of the responsibility we share in the future of all our children, and it will make us more sensitive and connected to their thoughts, fears and needs as they navigate through an ever-changing world.”

Michael Rothenberg and Terri Carrion
Co-founders
100 Thousand Poets for Change