

# Verse of Silence

Summer Issue, July  
Issue 2, Volume 2



# Verse of Silence

*A literary venture to facilitate your creative curiosity.*



**Issue 2, Volume 2**

Summer July

(Poetry, Short fiction, Literary reviews & Visual arts)

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# EDITORIAL



It is summer already and I am high on William Shakespeare's Sonnet 18: **Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?**

And you?

I am so glad that after putting in rigorous efforts with regards to the creative presentation of the magazine, Verse of Silence is taking newer steps towards providing an unbiased platform to artists across the world. With our online poetry contest for our Indian Audiences, Poetry in Pamphlets, being judged by renowned poet Akhil Katyal we are entering into the new arena of poetry i.e. Pamphlet Poetry. The results of which will be declared by 15th August. Top 25 entries selected will be published in a poetry pamphlet that will be made available digitally worldwide.

The top 2 winners selected by Akhil Katyal will be featured in the next issue apart from getting cash prizes and a copy of Akhil Katyal's award winning poetry book **How Many Rivers Does the Indus Cross**.

As far as the summer issue is concerned, it is crisp, full of fresh, gripping, high on emotions poetry with some amazing short pieces and observational poetry, the issue also has a few stories ranging from stream of consciousness situational nuances to everyday life wacky fiction stories and finally some amazing macabre artwork pieces exploring nature and paranormal intended to evoke varied emotions from the prospective observers.

To the readers, I hope you enjoy reading this issue as much as you enjoyed the last one.

To the artist, we are so proud of you and your creativity and we wish you all the best for your future endeavors.

Now, leaving you all to the Verse of Silence, Summer Issue 2019.

Lots of love and chai,

Editor-in-chief

Kavya Sharma





POETRY



## 4 POETRY

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### **The Bravery of The River**

*by Vaishnavi Sharma*

i used to pocket pebbles from river banks;  
you bend your back in a smooth curve, stretch your fingers,  
reaching for small stones on slippery seabeds  
- there's fear in fascination and fascination in revoking fear.  
if the waves decide to swallow you,  
the violent river will not hear your pleads of mercy,  
the sky will refuse to look your way  
and you will try to scramble out of the drowning current.  
know, that the language of your gasps is a stapled collection  
of illicit sounds for the streams. there is no bravery in the tides,  
they seem to replicate your core, it's their justice.  
i still pick pebbles from river banks;  
you hesitate with your steps on piercing stones, decide against  
dipping your hand in the flow of the fierce,  
watch from afar prior to plunging in your adventure,  
you think thrice, for the sake of the threads of attachment  
hooked to your heart, believe in the wiseness (hah, fool!)  
of denying intimacy to the tempestuous.  
the river will not devour your courage,  
for you have none and the sky will bow in repulsion.  
maybe growing up, expanding and contracting into this person,  
handicaps your brave.

### **ABOUT THE POET**

An 18-year-old student, walking through life losing her pens, temper, paints, mind, etc. She likes to talk (a lot) about poetry, history, sciences, and politics. Can always be found with her nose in between the pages of a book, uninterested in the torments of this world. She writes at [www.umvaishnavi.wordpress.com](http://www.umvaishnavi.wordpress.com).



SHORT FICTION



# Alex and Rehman

ADITI HOLAY



It used to be a town once. Nothing was special about it; just an ordinary town with ordinary people and their ordinary lives. They were not always ecstatically happy but they were content.

Today only the contours of broken house frames stand testimony that once there was a living and breathing civilisation at this place. Today only its corpse remains.

Even the “marhaba” arc at the entry of the town is completely destroyed. We will never know the name of this town; it is lost from the map forever. Soon it will be lost from the memories of the people who abandoned it long time back, for survival.

Rehman is wandering through the rubbles with one hand tightly clasped around his DSLR. He is searching for something, something interesting.

*More often than not, dead has more interesting story to tell, than the living.*

Rehman wants to be the voice of the dead. This was not always so, but covering this war has made him realise it. Also the media house he works for has agreed to pay good money for his photos and he needs money to buy his bread. He has always liked taking photos. He was never good with words, photos expressed what he could not. So this job arrangement works for him. *Arrangement- isn't that what we all do at some point or the other in life?*

For passing military troops and vehicles of humanitarian groups, sight of Rehman loitering like a ghost in the lives of departed, was not unusual.

*Aren't self proclaimed peace keepers doing the same from behind their guarded offices of power?*

But Rehman's face looks similar to the people of this land. This similarity is unusual or a start of a conversation for sure. After all, he has his roots in Pakistan. Only his Swedish accent and Swedish passport reveals his official identity on paper.

*But what is his true identity? At this point, even he doesn't know.*

Born to a Pakistani father and a Swedish mother, he carried the baggage of a confused immigrant for all his life. His parents were working hard to set up a good life, provide Rehman with a good living. Sensitive kid at heart, Rehman wanted home not house. Real conversation not pocket money. They were not wrong but he wasn't either. When he found out he has an elder half brother at Karachi, he flew to connect with him. His mother did not approve of it, his father did not see any point in it. But Rehman wanted something to connect to. Did he find it there? *Looks like he is still searching.*

He has taken couple of pictures. After clicking each, he is looking at it for minutes. Maybe trying to recreate the scene of how it would have been- with small children riding in this half burnt bus, smiles while drinking coffee through that broken cup, content faces working on tarred sewing machine. So many things he is trying to capture in that one frame. Now he seems tired, mentally and emotionally. He walks upto the main road, near the check post. There is a lone standing tree few meters from the check post. Rehman sits under the tree and takes out his flask. He contacts his ride- guarded vehicle given to the journalists; only to find out that he has one hour to kill at that place until his ride arrives.

A military jeep has pulled up at the check post. Check-post is nothing but a barricaded half fallen room. This unnamed town is half way between two important army bases. But the check- post has no real significance.

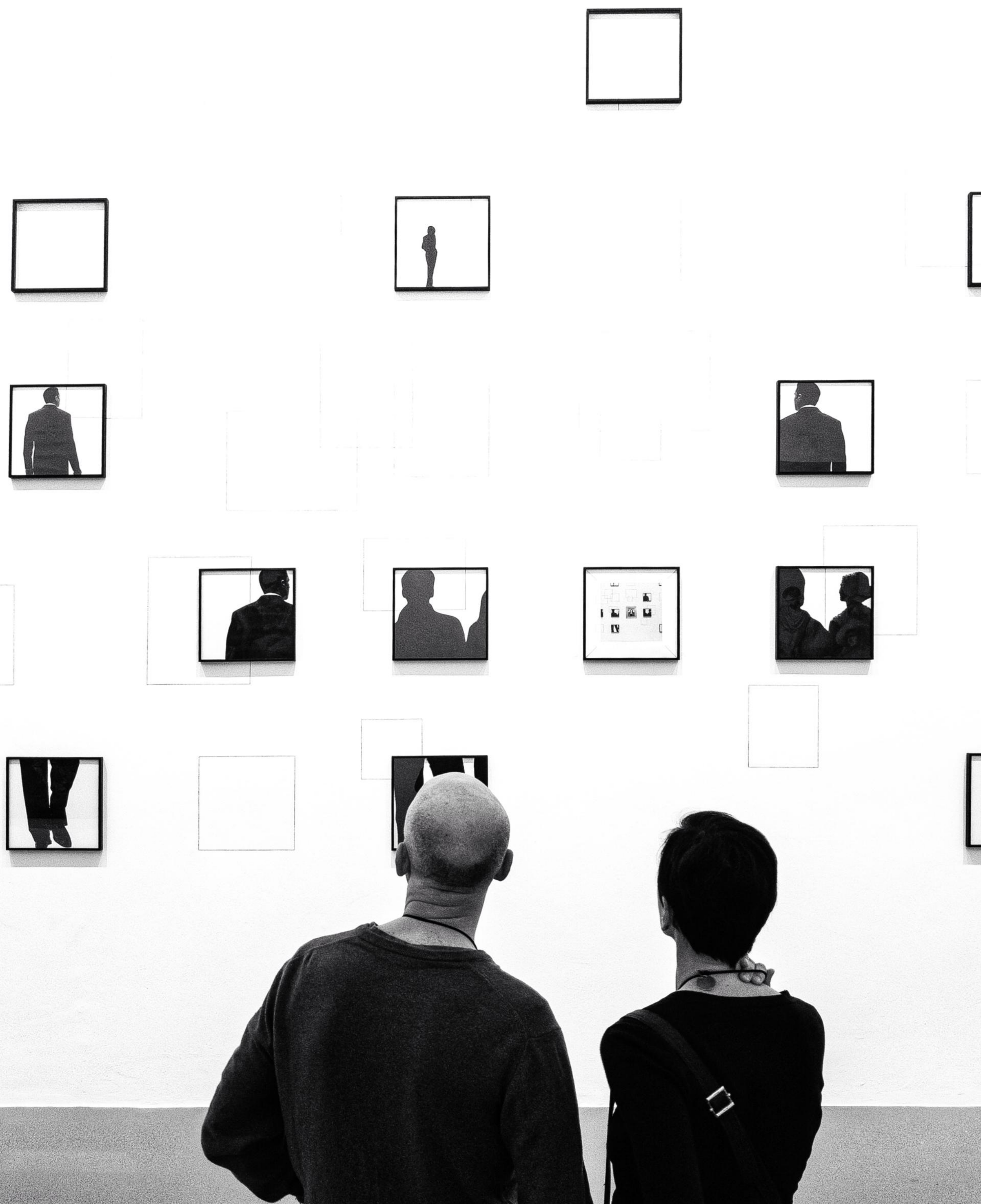
*People are passing through while going from somewhere to somewhere, this town is no one's destination.*

But Alex and his co-soldier from the third regiment are there today. They have stopped the vehicle to check on some local intel. Alex is thirsty, scorching heat is making his head throb. He has spotted a guy sitting under the tree with a flask. Going by his grey trousers, half jacket, small grey bag-pack and camera, Alex has quickly judged him to be a journalist.

*Stereotypes come to all of us naturally.*

Alex is now standing near the journalist. “Hey there. I am Alex. Have you got some water, brother?”





VISUAL ARTS

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creative curiosity.



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