



damazine

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Tovli Simiryan – United States

Cloud Nine

Tanja Cilia – Malta

Candy floss clouds.
On stratus cloud nine when you call me ...
Under a pileus cloud when you don't.
Alto cumulus, altostratus, billows, cirrostratus,
Words that flow like cumulonimbus, mellifluously
From the text; as "I love you" surges from your lips
Ten thousand times: never enough.
Visible masses; condensed droplets; frozen crystals.
Congealed tears. Homogenized sorrows.
Suspended in the atmosphere.
Contrail spiral on the horizon; future beckons ...
Orographic silver lining is our love.
Cumulus heaps of good weather and
Cirrus curls cascading on the pillows
With a life of their own.
Mammatus-nimbus-orographic-stratocumulus.
My head in the clouds when I think of you.

Tanja Cilia lives in Malta, Europe. She is a newspaper columnist, journalist, and features writer. She also formulates puzzles and writes poetry. Tanja has always been fascinated by the aura of words, and has been writing for Allied Newspapers (Malta) since she was 14 years old. Contact her at tanjachilja@hotmail.com.

Manifestation Supreme

Anjum Wasim Dar – Pakistan

Green leaves trembling
With the tremors,
Shivering with laughter.
What do they see
That makes them murmur
Sweet rustlings,
Tender whisperings,
Like the twittering
And the flittering,
Manifesting Nature
In the green sea;
Waving leaves
Like the waves,
Moving the living
And the dead,
Spread for miles yet
With limits bound.
Trunk so firm
In the ground
But the green
So serene,
Silently brave,
Taking life's chance,
Continues with the dance,
Happy to be, to us unseen
With What they see around.
Manifestation Supreme.

Anjum Wasim Dar was born in Indian-held Kashmir and migrated to Pakistan in 1952. She was fortunate to have had a literary cum religious environment at home. She holds a Master's degree in English Literature and has published numerous articles in national newspapers and magazines. She currently teaches English literature at PAF College of Education. She has three children.

A Gathering of Children

G. Miki Hayden – United States

After Ibn Jubayr lost his job at the Japanese grocery, his cousin and wife invited him to share their small apartment in Queens. Ibn Jubayr would stay home with the babies, Jagbir, age four, and Battuta, age five, thus saving the couple from having to pay for child care. On the weekends, Ibn Jubayr would try to find a new job.

Ibn Jubayr hadn't the slightest concept of discipline in dealing with children. He consequently let these two sweet little things walk all over him according to their will, which was quite well-developed for boys of their age. They ran the man ragged with their ideas for fun, and without a word of protest from their vassal. Ibn Jubayr complied with all their whims and played every game, being sure only that the boys had their meals at the hours appointed, that they were toileted and cleaned, and that they were dry, warm, safe, and didn't fight.

Outside their apartment building was a small playground, and on nice days Ibn Jubayr took the children there. He helped them dig in the sandbox and pushed them on the swings while they screamed for more.

During moments when he could sit on the bench and watch them instead of being sent hither and yon by their buoyant orders, Ibn Jubayr would speak with the equally vigilant working-class Arab mothers.

"You make such a fine father, Mr. Jubayr. You are a treasure," the women would sigh.

Then, one day, one of the mothers begged Ibn Jubayr to look after her own son during the work week. "My cousin Hosayn can get me a job as a cleaner where he works in the City. The extra money would help so much, but how can I do it unless someone takes care of Umar? You are so trustworthy, Mr. Jubayr.

"I would be able to pay you \$10 a day, plus \$10 a week for Umar's food." The woman practically wept, begging him, and Ibn Jubayr said that he would try to accommodate her but that he must first ask his cousin's permission.

He, thereafter, went to his cousin Ali and presented the case, proposing that he give the cousin \$30 per week from Umar's care to contribute toward household expenses. The other \$20, Ibn Jubayr decided, he would send home to his brother and his brother's wife. That he might sometime need a few dollars for himself had not yet dawned on him.

Ibn Jubayr returned the next day and told the grateful mother that he would tend her child as she had suggested. Arrangements were made for him to begin as soon as the woman's job was secured.

Seemingly only minutes later, after Ibn Jubayr had wiped the tears over a trampled sand castle from little Battuta's eyes, another mother approached and pleaded that Ibn Jubayr give her the same opportunity to go to work in her nephew's nearby grocery. If Mr. Jubayr might look after her little daughter until two o'clock, the mother would take the child home and still pay the full \$10 per day.

Ibn Jubayr was amazed at the thought that he might have \$100 a week in his hands so easily, but, again, he requested his cousin's consent, for the children must play in the family's apartment. This time, when he promised them \$60 of the \$100, the cousin's wife refused.

"It would not be right," she objected firmly. "If we take \$50 toward the rent, the rest will be yours."

Thus the matter was settled, and the following week, Ibn Jubayr began to be led around by the nose by four healthy young animals instead of two. They dragged him this way and that and he followed obediently, cleaning up after their messes and heating their meals in the kitchen while keeping eyes in the back of his head on their activities in the living room.

It took only to the second week when a knock on the door in the evening brought another set of devoted Muslim parents.

“Our boy, Abdullah, is so big and smart for his age,” explained the father to Ibn Jubayr, as the startled cousin and his wife listened to the man’s petition. “He is ready to learn his Arabic alphabet and numbers. Unfortunately, no Muslim school is located near here. Would you be able to teach him these things? We would pay you \$50 a week if you would only tutor him after his regular morning nursery school.”

Ibn Jubayr’s cousins were so sympathetic with the father’s entreaty that they insisted Ibn Jubayr accept his first student to enroll.

“Ah, I would find it a pleasure to teach a child his Arabic letters,” Ibn Jubayr agreed, beaming in excitement. His fondest dream at home had been to one day teach school, but so many necessities had prevented his traveling down that path. He had, however, studied as a boy, and knew many of the Arab poets by heart. Some might term Ibn Jubayr a scholar, for such was his bent.

It only took until the following week for still more Muslim parents to come forward and ask that their children be included in the new “school”. Ibn Jubayr’s ability to wash, feed, and teach his charges had its limits, however, and here he had to draw the line and refuse.

He lay restless on the living room couch where he had been assigned to spend his nights. He worried over how he might solve the problem and expand his enterprise. He heartily desired to comply with the additional requests — as he wished to retain for the little ones an influence on them of their lovely Arab culture.

The next morning, Ibn Jubayr tied together the five boys and girls under his supervision with a ribbon, abjured them not to stray, nor to pull away, and brought them safely to the nearby mosque. Here, he explained his dilemma to one of the elders, and suggested that a space in the mosque be made into a schoolroom, where he could both teach, and care for the youngest ones at the same time. He would pay the mosque a sum for the use of the room and would hire at least one helper so that none of the children would be neglected.

The elder listened to Ibn Jubayr’s request and admitted that the council had hoped to start a school in the neighborhood at some future time. The youngsters’ ability to read the Qur’an was essential to continuance of the faith.

The elder then tested Ibn Jubayr in his knowledge of those pages and found him accurate to a fault — the fault being that Ibn Jubayr began to swoon with divine emotion as he recited the prayers.

Ibn Jubayr departed so softened by his encounter with the Word of Allah that he had to hug each child tenderly to his breast before marching the group home.

Ibn Jubayr kept his eyes open for a suitable assistant and fretted.

When the elder came to deliver the judgment of the council, the man was somber. “We will allow your school,” he said, a stipulation to come lurking in his voice.

Ibn Jubayr lit up without waiting to hear what was to be asked of him.

“You must take Mrs. Malik as your assistant. She is licensed as a preschool teacher and, besides that, she needs a job.” The elder frowned at Ibn Jubayr, perhaps anticipating a harsh or angry response. A man might be too proud to take on a woman helper at the insistence of the council.

“Why, this is a perfect arrangement,” Ibn Jubayr declared. “She and I must speak as soon as possible and we can open the school as soon as —.” The next day would have suited him. He saw no impediments. But perhaps that sounded impetuous. “Next week.”

He sang and danced with the babies once the elder had left and showed them how to clap their hands to the tune.

Nor was Mrs. Malik a disappointment to Ibn Jubayr — her face suitably swathed in a plain cloak about her head — no, not veiled. Not many were in this country.

Mrs. Malik was a woman of fine breeding — a widow, polite, living on the sufferance of her in-laws. Licensed as a teacher, she had found no work in the public school system, which was in the midst of cutbacks. Her father-in-law, an elder of the mosque, had thought of her when the new school was discussed.

With the announcement that the school was to be opened, Ibn Jubayr received several more applications for placement in both the daycare and the after-school program. He calculated that, in addition to his cousin’s children (whom he would take for no fee), twelve children would attend at the incredible sum of \$50 each, or \$600 a week! Of that, he must give \$100 to the mosque, leaving \$500, or \$250 each for himself and Mrs. Malik. That he was the “head” of the school, and the entrepreneur, and might thus take more, never entered his mind. The sum that he was about to earn seemed sufficient to his needs and would allow him to both pay a generous rent at his cousin’s and to send money home.

The sum of \$250 a week was agreeable to Mrs. Malik, as well. Her situation was similar to his, she confided in him. She would pay her relatives an undisclosed amount in rent and a large portion of the remainder would go to her family in Pakistan.

Ibn Jubayr decided, since they were now an official establishment, that he would begin the day more formally. In his soft voice, he shyly chanted a little prayer. He tried to teach it to the babies, but they flubbed the words, which they could not pronounce. No matter. Their inabilities would not be held to account by Allah, so much as their studious attempts.

Mrs. Malik was in charge of taking the youngsters to the bathroom and washing their hands and faces on an as-needed basis. Ibn Jubayr was so used to taking care of each and every child’s every need that he was unsure what else to hand over to her, but he soon found his new partner to be an excellent comforter of minor hurts and quite skilled at guiding the small hand in brandishing a crayon.

In the afternoon, when the older children showed up, the two adults fed all the boys and girls a tea-time snack of milk and rice. Then Ibn Jubayr became the schoolmaster, and Mrs. Malik took the younger children aside and put them down to nap or softly sang songs with them as the older children said their letters or marked them awkwardly on scratch paper.

Ibn Jubayr felt that he had handled the organization of the establishment quite well, and Mrs. Malik was very obliging in following his wishes as he laid them out. “If that would be acceptable to you,” he noted with each suggestion he made.

“I have no objection,” she would respond.

After the first several days, it occurred to Ibn Jubayr that, in addition to her sweet nature, Mrs. Malik was a pleasant-looking woman with a quite handsome smile. That women in their world covered their faces at all seemed a great shame. Surely Allah delighted in such soft femininity.

But this opinion Ibn Jubayr kept to himself.

The days with the children went magnificently — better than Ibn Jubayr could have imagined. Mrs. Malik finally put Ibn Jubayr straight in regard to who was in control: the adults or the children. She had observed him at first, then finally, with a wise word, explained that he must set limits for the babies who subjected him to their slightest fancies. The idea that he might oppose their will was a new one to Ibn Jubayr, but when he wavered, thinking he must allow the children to make him their plaything, Mrs. Malik stepped in with a firm hand. This was a wonder. He need not defer to their every wish.

Perhaps she was a better nursemaid than he. He offered to put her in charge, but she demurred. So they went on as they were — quite happily, it seemed.

Then one morning Mrs. Malik came to Ibn Jubayr as he fed the wee ones their cereal and asked to speak to him. He was loath to turn his back on the youngsters while they had decorating ammunition in hand, but the woman appeared so serious and pale that he stepped away with her for a moment.

“Don’t throw the food out of your bowl,” he admonished, turning around quickly. “Yes, Mrs. Malik. Something is troubling you.” He took his eyes from her face to watch the children. The cereal was soggy and soft, but the smallest, Jamal, fuzzy-headed and round, and barely a toddler, had some trouble swallowing, and Ibn Jubayr must be cautious lest the child choke.

“The council says that we must correct the way we have established ourselves,” Mrs. Malik explained. Ibn Jubayr watched *her* now, her black hair covered by a white cloth, pallid skin flushed under the shroud that cast a shadow over her features.

“Yes,” he said. “Yes, of course.” They might want the school in another room. Or the voices of the children bothered the men at prayer. (Could one hear a child’s voice and find it a bother? These were sounds that rose directly to Allah, and one’s prayers might easily be carried with them.)

“I must look after the girls and you will look after the boys,” Mrs. Malik explained.

He pondered the wisdom of such a prescription. “In the morning only,” he surmised. For modesty’s sake.

“And during the Arabic lessons.” Her eyes would not rise to his.

“No,” he announced. She had taught him to be quite decisive. He went back to the children.

She came after him. “No?” she repeated.

“No.” He dabbed at little Fatima’s face with a wet cloth. “That is, unless you yourself dislike the current way we have of doing things.”

“I? No. I don’t object.”

“Then we will go on as we are,” he said. “If it is not satisfactory to the council, we will find another place for our school.” Maybe he trembled a little when he said that, knowing that if the leaders of the mosque objected, the parents might not follow where he went.

“I understand,” Mrs. Malik responded.

Nothing further was said on the matter either by Mrs. Malik or in word from the council. Surely Mrs. Malik had presented his response in some soft, diplomatic way.

They went on as before.

One thing of significance, however, was changed. Mrs. Malik began to teach Ibn Jubayr English — and, since they were there, the children as well. They practiced every morning for one hour.

Mrs. Malik was a fine teacher, Ibn Jubayr realized, and probably ought to run the school. Perhaps she even ought to teach the after-school class their Arabic, which, apparently, she was well versed in, too.

But she declined. That was Mr. Jubayr's place, Mrs. Malik said, and she wouldn't have it.

Finally, when he had been teaching for more than two months, and despite the best of his efforts to give his earnings away, had accumulated some funds, Ibn Jubayr thought he would move from the sofa in his cousin's living room (giving them a little something every week, nonetheless, since otherwise they would miss the money.)

"I've found a rather large, sunny apartment in the neighborhood," he told Mrs. Malik when the children were napping. "There's a separate kitchen, which is quite nice, and one can place a dining table in it."

"Oh, Mr. Jubayr, I'm so pleased for your good fortune."

"We have been fortunate, Mrs. Malik, it is true, directly by the Will and Beneficence of Allah."

"Yes."

"Nonetheless, it would not be so economical for me to take the room alone." For some unknown reason, his voice had begun to stammer, all on its own accord.

"Surely you'll be able to afford it."

"Well, this is what I was thinking ... It seemed quite a good idea to me at least. Perhaps we could marry and both share the apartment. Such a plan might be quite sensible. That is, if you think that it would." For some reason, although it was a chill winter day, Ibn Jubayr's body ran a sweat and he was stifling.

"That would be very satisfactory, Mr. Jubayr. If you feel that it would be."

"In my view, it would be ideal."

After a minute or two it struck Ibn Jubayr that he had proposed to her as he had wished he might, and, furthermore, that she had accepted him.

Edgar Short Story Award winner G. Miki Hayden teaches at Writer's Digest online workshops. Her first novel, Pacific Empire, appeared on the New York Times summer reading list, and her nonfiction instructional, Writing the Mystery, was nominated for three awards, winning one. Miki's latest is a style and composition guide, The Naked Writer.

A Starbucks Like This in Palestine

Greggory Moore – United States

This would be the most happening place in Palestinian Territory. Just imagine if they had a Starbucks like this there. I don't mean the coffee or the white-bordered green lettering, I mean the sitting outside like this, in safety, no chance of a rocket from a gunship. Sure, it's possible somebody might shoot you here, but it's so unlikely that no one thinks of it as a risk. People would flock there. You'd want a courtyard for a thousand, at least; it would be the world's most popular Starbucks, no doubt. And then there's the music: I hear Coltrane here, Monk, Jobim; I've heard Nick Drake, I f——g heard Modest Mouse a couple of times. They would freak out; it's a garden of paradise with the flora replaced by brown metal tables beneath umbrellas of green. There'd be a whole hipster scene. Palestinians for Peace would form and meet there, organize, recruit: *Brothers, join us*. They'd read poetry to each other. It would seem un-Arab to some, but most everyone would admit that things had been better all around since it opened. *It's not like the kids have just up and dropped the Qur'an. Maybe we should go down there with Mahmoud one night, meet some of his new friends, try a nonfat blended iced mocha, what the hell*. People would be less high-strung from having a little safe haven of muffins and tea. That's an oblique miracle God could perform: magically keep a Starbucks in Palestine safe, safe from everybody, safe for everybody, no one could be killed there, nobody even hurt. That's going too far, of course — it's not even like that in the U.S. I just get to wishing for them and I get carried away. For a moment I get caught up in "Wow!" and "What if?", just the feeling of it for them, the first time they walk in and see it and hear the music and know that it is somehow safe, seeing the cute little barista behind the counter: Hi, welcome to Starbucks, what can I get started for you today?

Greggory Moore is a lifelong resident of Southern California. He currently lives in Long Beach, where he is engaged in a variety of word-related pursuits – writing of all sorts, editing, proofreading, reading (of course), even minutes-taking. He has long been disgusted with the shameless and destructive ways in which his country has comported itself internationally under the so-called guidance of the Bush Administration.

Byblos: Past and Present

Katie O'Sullivan – United States

Byblos Past

Sometimes when her housework was done,
she climbed the wall-clinging patio stairs to reach the flat roof.
Shaded by grape vines,
she lay on her belly across a discarded mattress,
watched peoples' busyness on the castle square below.
If the hour was early, hawkers of postcards, worry beads,
evil eye talismans and embroidered silks set up booths.
The hubbly-bubbly man arranged tobacco for his water pipes,
the custodian swept smooth the castle's dusty steps.

If she arrived later, she spied tourists clutching guide books,
hesitating between castle or port, waving away eager guides.
A sign, *Lemonada – 25 Piasters*, beckoned the thirsty invaders
who were intrigued by the small Arab entrepreneurs
whose blonde hair, she heard them guess,
was inherited from the Crusaders.
They would be wrong.
The sellers were her kids performing the American rites of summer,
until chased off by local vendors.

Once, at night,
when humanity was sucked to sleep,
the melding of earth and sea lost in a circle of black,
she climbed the stairs and found herself
enclosed by a fishnet of brilliants, flung by a giant hand.
Standing quiet, she pulled the nearest ice-edged star to her chest,
and waited
until dawn gave back the horizon.

Byblos Present

Curious traveler of the internet,
I finger the mouse,
searching for the town
I loved best ... remembered best.
 and panic
when finding within its website
a public relations blurb:
of festivals, jazz musicians,
stadium seating,
metered parking lot,
air fares and hot sweet deals,
clustered
with whoring *popups*,
pimping *cookies*.

I close the window,
lest it burn in my memory.
I click and find in Documents
my own reminiscence:
the sun's first caress
along an eastern ridge,
trellised grapevines, lemon trees,
quiet cobbled streets, fishing boats,
ancient, fallen columns,
twilight lingering in
shadow-filled archways,
evening softness melding into night,
somewhere a dog barking.

**Byblos is a coastal town in Lebanon.*

Katie O'Sullivan lived in Lebanon with her family for 15 years. She has studied at the University of California, Los Angeles, and received her degree in Near Eastern History from the American University of Beirut. Now in Texas, USA, she has been writing poetry, short stories, memoirs, and essays for the last seven years, some of which have been published in journals, anthologies, and online magazines.

Proselyte

Tovli Simiryán – United States

“Incidents like these happen in war. But Rumi kissed us and promised: ‘The minute I heard my first love story I started looking for you ...’” John Walker Lindh

If it weren't for God, I wouldn't be in this mess. Lost in heavy, coastal fog, I followed voices churning out satisfying sound, releasing a comforting pitch that filled every cavity from within.

Eventually, the air dried, becoming thin, crisp, and authentic. Men with penetrating voices surrounded me. Their welcome was instantaneous, inclusion sailing from their eyes. Converging flesh to flesh, hand to hand, with tears tapping the back of their wrists as sustenance. The tallest of the group wanted me to rest, to sit comfortably among them and drink the last of their water.

“It's sweet. Now that you've arrived, there will be plenty of water and food. The desert feels different already.” An elderly man with a scarred face looked directly in my eyes as he spoke. They needed the desert, a mapless country sliding into distant horizons and threatening to reveal something marvelous.

“We are *your* nation.”

“We have been singing for *you*.”

“*You* have found deliverance.”

“*You* have rescued us.”

They gave me a comfortable bed and I slept. The sound of their songs rose inside me. They were not dreams, but ambition. I recognized their faces and voices in the distance of my slumber. “*It's as though the fog coughed him up. It is as if the desert had roads all along and we just noticed them.*” I heard them sing from inside my soul.

“*It's the same world, the same nation, yet boundaries have extended.*” I wanted to believe them. Their melody was rich, interesting — almost cute.

“*What will he reveal? Is he benevolent? Will our portion be assigned?*” It's then I felt frightened, as though dreaming was dangerous, that nothing would be left of me if I trusted them, or listened to their prayers and song. I woke and they were watching, as though something was opening only for them. The youngest, a man-child, ageless and unsure of himself spoke first.

“Baba, his eyes are opening. He is finally with us. I see. I see!”

“Stand back, Muhammad. Don't get too close. What do you see?” The tall man grabbed the boy's shoulder the way a father shows guidance, turning impatience into doctrine and inheritance.

I sat up quickly, embarrassed for sleeping and offering indiscretion carelessly revealed as wisdom. They expected much and saw something in the sand that had been there before, something they coveted, a treasure they desired and thought I could provide. If I made myself smile, repeating their melodies from memory, perhaps I would be allowed to stay, to absorb the ether of desert secrets and be left alone in peace and pointed in the right direction. It was a lot to ask of them.

“Will you reveal yourself?” The voices spoke with softness, the presence of childhood and tolerance. *“Bless us with a godly soul and fire burning above any mountain in language we’ve not heard before. Clean our souls, make us complete. We are leaders among our people.”*

Their faces were lean. Their gaunt bodies wrapped around their skeletons like snakes inspecting a corpse for anything valuable. They moved low, into the earth in a place no one else wanted, disappointed, yet resolved to destiny and inconspicuous purpose. I was sorry for their tears, provocative voices and spiritual ambivalence. But they wanted pieces of *me*; a portion so deep nothing would remain to sustain essence. I would disappear, an apostate standing on the horizon envisioning the end of desert stillness. There would be no more voices to follow.

“There is nothing I can give you. My soul is not yours. I’m not like you. You’ve mistaken my appearance as significant. I am merely traveling, enjoying the flatness of this land, anticipating desert sliding into beach and ocean behind a pleasant breeze, and solid economy inclusive and available for persons who’ve set borders and price tags on belonging.” My speech haunted my own soul.

“Were you not part of last year’s exodus, the flights from Ethiopia, saving what was left of our forgotten people? Did you not accept the gracious charity every man and woman, wanting to be part of the nation, donated to the cause?” The tall man was frustrated. He pushed little Muhammad aside. His height was all that was necessary to produce shade, making sunlight disappear and stars threaten to dance like dust fading against an evening sky. His hatred became the seed of his people, splintering, flowering, until it produced a wound that could never be healed.

“You drank our water. You have taken all we have.” The old one was angry.

“We have expectations, rules and doctrine.”

I stood to leave. I needed my own place, but they feared my leaving them. Their melodies changed. The pitch of their voices grew sharp like weapons intruding from distant enemies thought to have died out during the last war. Their songs turned harsh, overly personal and in one swift burst of finite synchronization their bony hands covered the air like many angry wings.

“You are selfish and preoccupied with your own survival. We are your people. Can’t you see we need you? We want every piece, every word you have to tell us.”

Desert sand is razor sharp. It spreads like beads of sweat on pale skin, producing blood. The night sky pleased me. The giant stars exploding with fire from distant times made me believe God was watching out for *me*. My people raised my entire body into the wind, their wrists and elbows locked into place, their muscles sinewy and determined. I marveled at the darkness of their flesh and wished it was my flesh.

“Give us your soul.” Muhammad cried, disappearing with his elders into sandy portals that reminded me of indentations one claims as legacy and pathways to heaven. It was then foreigners invaded.

I felt every piece that cracked or shattered — skin, teeth, breath, draining from air onto sand, knowing nothing would be left. Rope, nails, plastic cord, and the sound of tape ripping the universe into layers was the only melody they would remember. I heard emptiness, or an echo slapping against metal with me inside. They prayed in front of God as vessels so broken, God fell asleep, exhausted, tired of supremacy, resolving to intervene at the point history kisses the future.

“I have nothing left for you. I will love you, that’s all. Is it enough?” This was the last time I spoke, my last prayer harvested from the language of my enemy.

I never saw the desert again. They would not let me go. The wooden stretcher was hoisted above the multitude, every eye crying without tears, yelling: *apostate, traitor, enemy of the people*. Their weapons were loaded and they left metal inside our flesh and my skull was covered with nightfall and loud metallic sounds, as if rain were bullets. Soon it was quiet, but even when I made my voice as soft as a prayer, they remained angry and could not hear. But I survived and eventually nothing else mattered to me except living, silence, and the tiny windows inside the prison they provided.

Tovli Simiryan lives in West Virginia, USA with her husband, Yosif. Her short stories, essays, and poetry have appeared in many literary journals. She has also published two volumes of poetry. A collection of short stories and memoirs will be marketed by HDM Publishers in 2009.
