

MUSINGS

DE ESTE

A Tetso College Anthology of Literature and Art





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Forward

This e-book titled ***Musings de Este***, a collection of poetry, stories, art and photographs reflects the diverse and unique culture and life of the Nagas, and is a celebration of life in general. One will experience vividly just at a glance, its simplicity yet powerful connotations when reading. The contents are a tribute to Nagaland, our people and traditional culture, present in both lyrical and literary form. In this e-book, you will find contributions drawn from the talented pool of both students and faculty that the Tetso family is so proud to have.

The poems and short stories are a window into the minds of youth and creativity as they give expression to raw emotions, imagination, inspiration and their individual identities, unravelling thoughts that cannot always be spoken out loud. The themes that emerge from their writings revolve around life in general, the promise of innocence, love, the beauty of nature and the rich culture of the Naga tribals, the supernatural beliefs and interpretations that compose of their diverse life.

The other section in this e-book is a visual collection that includes artistry, sketchings and photographic images – all of which could not have possibly emerged without an immense amount of patience and careful attention to beauty and detail. Each of these contributions convey a story of their own, while leaving room for the observer for self- interpretation and to engage in the mesmerising power of art.

Musings de Este, A Tetso College Anthology of Literature and Art, has no doubt been carefully put together by a dynamic and spirited team of individuals, whose efforts have helped create a remarkable masterpiece, contributing to the academic pool of knowledge and serving as a pleasurable reading experience for all.

Dr. P.S. Lorin
Principal,
Tetso College

Preface

Man by nature is artistic, and tries to perceive beauty in whatever he sees. When early man first learned to use blood of his prey as a colour, he painted on the walls of his cave. The images still exist and bear testimony to the need man has to express himself through art. With the evolution of language and script, art found new ways of expression; by the use of language. Words combined to form beautiful epic poems, as early as the 3rd Millennium BCE, and the *Epic of Gilgamesh* was composed in Sumer of Ancient Mesopotamia. Later on, writers like Wordsworth, Shakespeare, Virginia Woolf canonised literature and established it as an aesthetic way of expressing emotions, which could be enjoyed by everyone. For, poetry is the spontaneous overflow of emotions.

Musings de Este is an e-book anthology that combines poetry, prose, paintings, and photographs, all of which coalesce to express the voice and opinions of our Tetso family. We believe art can be created by anyone, what is needed is motivation and passion. An initiative by the *Literary Club* of the Department of English of Tetso College, this e-book is a perfect fusion of the creative and critical faculties of inimitable minds, which is absolutely necessary and crucial to a learning environment. Each poem is a creative expression of the poet's feelings, and each painting a gateway to his inner being. The stories are an artistic extension of the writers' experiences, and the photographs are arty captures of this wonderful world around us. In the pages of *Musings de Este*, you will find the ingenious opinions of the people of Nagaland. This anthology is the voice of our tribes, voice of our lands, voice of the scenic hills, and the voice of our state.

The cover page photograph is a tribute to the medieval paintings of the muses. The Muses in Greek mythology were the goddesses of inspiration for sciences, art, and literature. The muses are evoked in many poems by Homer, Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Milton. The name of the e-book can be understood as 'Artistic Inspirations from the East'. Through this e-book, we aim at inspiring the readers to appreciate the beauty and splendour of Nagaland, understand the diversity of art and literature from the East, and instil an artistic spirit of creativity amongst amateur artisans.

Editors

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POETIC MUSINGS



Poetry is a form of literature that uses aesthetic and rhythmic qualities of language—such as phonaesthetics, sound symbolism and metre—to evoke meanings in addition to, or in place of, the prosaic ostensible meaning. Poetry has a long history, evolving from the telling of oral epics. Poetry uses forms and conventions to suggest differential interpretation to words, or to evoke emotive responses. In this section, poems revolving around a diverse array of themes have been included.

The Past

She was half the middle age,
Perfect was her stage.
Rough curly hair with elegant beauty,
Exuberantly cheerful alongside Christianity.
Precious to her was time,
Unaccustomed was she to crime.

Time has flown so fast.
Mother uttered, as she retrospect the past.
But this my dear,
You need to be aware
About the awful yesterday
Which you not know today.

People were like ants,
Toiling till the ends.
Social status was worthy,
Unknown of the justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity.
Never had anyone even pondered,
Time could be such a bitter entity.
Woods and farms were ever refreshing,
Granting the young ones wishing
The fresh smell of juicy fruits.
Enlightening the entire woods,
Ripe paddy at its final stage,

Folks ready for their wage.

When suddenly the day of Herod came,

Alarm at its fame.

Floods of fire everywhere,

Citizens held hostage somewhere,

Tremor drizzling nationalism,

Solace lost in dark chasm.

Hunger struck them,

Thou all feeble.

She takes Frost's road

For thine growth.

When thou adorably slept,

Under the Oak in the woods,

Axes next to chest,

Seizing a bulky rest.

"Wake up and eat dear,"

She cried with care.

Thou frozen, yet glowing,

Her wet eyes still flowing.

What is treasure without children?

Can anyone rejoice barren?

Lovely three of them were thou,

Seized by human plague's bow,

Like pitiable Lycidas' fate.

Adieu got delayed.

*Begged for grave like Joseph,
Still the authority turned deaf.
Know not of clock,
Lamenting heart to rock.
Unforgettable past questions cry
Bob Dylan's answer will try.*

*After few decades,
The full moon's rays
With it were born, you,
Fresh as morning dew.
Always in mind the tale,
Not forgetting the past pale.*

*Her eyes cascading in tears,
Narrating her past years.
This was her final time,
Narrated at my prime time.
Silence and true fact born,
The dress of truth adorn.*

By: Toshimenla Ao
BA 5thSemester

Cry of a Woman

Hear the cry of a girl,
The cry of a woman,
Crying out for her right,
Crying out for her life.

Can anyone hear me?
Will anyone understand what I have to say?
Is there anyone listening,
Hear me whimpering?

I am no slave to anyone,
Why do I have to assess my every move?
Why should I be chained by your commands?
I am no robot to be controlled by you.

Oh my dear people,
We women are not toys!
Not things that just exists,
We are humans just as you.

Why should we be told to cook?
Why should we be the housekeepers?
Is that our only worth?
As unpaid workers?

Why do these rules shackle us
When it does not make any sense?
Why should we be confined to four walls?
I do not understand!

Hear the cry of a woman!
Free me from these chains!
Let me live my life,
Let me fly high!

By: Ponglem Marcia Konyak
BA 5th Semester

Untrodden Paradise

Oh! Northeast, a land divine,
Thy lifestyle, thy nature,
How I do imagine thy beauty,
For it's beyond imagination.

Some do not know your grandeur,
And do destroy your lands.
By spreading terror and fire,
These enemies of yours are,
Blind to your glory.

I do desire mortality,
To enjoy thy beauty forever,
In vain, life's short for everyone,
But I'm not in misery.
For you shall cradle my remains.

Although very few know thee,
Your charm exceeds all reality.
Yet, you make nature so colourful,
Leaving all creatures mesmerized.
You, who are left untrodden,
These words, an identity create.

At last, your image is known to the world.

Thereafter

I could finally sleep in peace!

By: H. Mercy

BA 5th Semester

My Mentor of Destiny

My teacher, a living inspiration,
Giving the lessons of truth and discipline,
A seed of curiosity and motivation,
To whom, shall I always bow.

Your efforts affect the fate of the Earth.
Thy methods crisp and clear,
Like the spring nurturing new sprouts.
You're nurturing me for a bright future.

I remember all words you said,
Words that makes me social,
No doubt, I love what you teach.
And you are the mentor of my destiny.

In this auspicious day
I'm saying more than a teacher.
For this is what I'm taught for.
God Bless! For your love you showered on me.
Happy Teachers' Day Sir!

By: Yanuo Pojar
BA 3rd Semester

Wonderful Rain

The earth is cold!
When you are there.....
It is hot!
When you are gone....
You are the giver,
You are the taker,
The growth that is in us,
Which everyone dearly nurtures.
The liveliness that you bring,
Compelling all the creatures to sing,
Impatient like the lovers to meet.
For your presence is so divine,
Making us oblivious of all our sorrows.
Oh rain! Thou untrustworthy friend,
May God bless you with a heart!

By: Tokaho Awomi

BA 3rd Semester

My Journey Along The River

Walking down along the river,
Oh, how can I forget that day!
The remarkable experience of mine-
Passing through the sand and dancing along the rocks;
Surrounded by the beauty of nature,
I wonder when thou stop thy journey.
Thou pass through the deep forest and high mountains,
Reaches unto the end where there is no habitation.
Thy lovely music follows thee,
Thou goes on forever.

Thou knowest not what rest is,
O! How I'd love you to stop for a while!
Rest like a royal king on his purple throne,
Listening to the sweet chanting of the birds,
Wouldn't thou love it?
Thou knowest what a journey is,
No night, neither day,
No summer, nor winter,
Singing thy melancholy song,
Thou goes on forever.

By: Kuthonulu Ringa,
BCom 5th Semester

Just a Word

A single word,
Just a single one,
I am neither Shakespearian nor Rossetti,
But my serene way of expressing love is just,
That calm and peaceful feeling always remains in me.
Thou art the reason of every smile,
My only unavoidable wacky love,
Thou art the one, I find solace.
Thou art the marsh and I'm the mellow.
Majestic and worthy!
There's something. There's one thing,
That's worthy.
Described by most wonderful words,
Expressed by most beautiful thoughts,
Valued by best persons,
This is known as a sweet bond,
A sweet bond of love!
Few people find and make it more valuable.
Glad that we found love.

By: Mhayani Lotha

BA 3rd Semester

Solitude

Faces all around me,
Their complexities astound me.
Truthfulness and honesty;
A speck among humanity!

A story, a thought, a feeling,
A word, an action, a sighing;
Abnormality prevails in normality.
Our existence a mere formality!

A wonderful life, a longing,
Glide through it, a yearning.
Without compulsions and considerations,
Me, against the world of commotions.

Detachment, a way of healing,
Solitude, a means of reviving.
In my presence alone, protected,
In my presence alone, shielded.

By: Kahor Raleng
HoD, Department of English

Smiles of a Summer Night

More deceptive than Lucifer,
A smile's power is titanic.
It can reassure a broken heart,
Save the trouble of saying words,
And spite an injured foe.

Teeth flashed as polite warning,
Faces beam bright,
And hide the secrets inside.
Grins are worn to mask fears,
Fangs bared to veil tears.

But a genuine smile at times emerges,
As rare as Chinese unicorns,
And radiates bliss all around.
It is the smile of a man in love.
It is my smile for you, my love.

By: Anjan K Behera
Asst. Professor, Department of English

My Angel

My Angel, the light of my life,
From heaven was sent just for me.
Blessed are the ones, whose angels still live,
To acknowledge and cherish their life.

I have been around,
And in despair, lost, and unguided.
Know not what to say,
I won't ever leave you that I swear.

I recall the days gone by,
My life filled with brightness and delight.
When you'd hold me close and tight,
And your love spread like a blooming rose.

You brought me closer to life.
Wiped tears from my eyes.
"Never leave me alone, oh my dear".
Words were, but said in vain.

Whenever my heart beats,
Yours is the voice I hear, the face I see.
Every moment of my life leads to you.
How can I go on without you?

Oh! How I wish you were here,

To guide me, hold me tight.

Oh! For just one kiss, what would I do!

To feel you in my arms.

Now that you are far away, my love,

And only memories is what remain,

I'll forever miss you, my guardian angel,

My life, my loving mother!

By: Yanbeni Kikon

BA 3rd Semester

The Muse

You heareth not my sighs,

For thou art lost.

You heeded not my cries,

For thou art silent.

You knoweth not my pain,

For red is not mine blood.

You chop me away.

Tears of mourning will you cry,

Even though now with glee you weep.

The creator who made thee,

Made me too.

And he will burn thee, kill thee,

Strike thee down.

Nature itself cursed.

Rains shalt bid thee farewell,

And your crops shalt fail.

The world turn grey,

And gone will be the rainbow.

But before I fade, muse may I be to a poet.

Make my woes immortal,

And die then peacefully.

By: Zhovelü Shijoh

BA 3rd Semester

Let Me Be Your Star

In quiet despair,
Faked smiles achieve perfection.
The blanket of snow makes death artistic.
Addicted to that aesthetic pain am I.
For without the pain ceases my existence!

In cursed dark,
Happiness dazzles my eyes.
My wounded soul, it fears to dream,
For dreams are cruel, heartless, brutal.
Reality- truth's and honesty's requiem.

A thousand suns have set,
But arisen none have.
Each sun I bid a farewell,
And then in the sting I dwell.

My only comrades, the stars.
Through my despair filled eyes,
They twinkle their reassurance,
And it warms my cursed heart.

Exhausted, I look up to the hills,
From where comes no help.
The houses shine bright in the night.
And people there come and go,

Talking of Michelangelo.

And though calm the waters may be.
A storm underneath rocks the sea.
Long after my time has passed,
The nails on my coffin be covered in rust,
All I wish, this curse will turn into dust.

So when in anguish, you look to the heavens,
And a light shines bright from above,
Hope you see my face there,
And offer a prayer.
And let me be your star!

By: Anjan K Behera
Asst. Professor, Department of English

In Memoriam

Away from you,

There I dwell.

Aloof, yet joyful,

No worries, no fears.

Far away from the cries of the world,

I live in solitude.

A haven of my own;

In sunshine and rainbows.

The thought of you and I,

Are growing faint,

As the flowers fade away.

Slowly and painfully.

My tears stain the earth,

Yet I rejoice.

For now I know,

You loved me always.

Every rose has a thorn,

And 'every night has its dawn.'

I wake up alone,

To face another twilight.

By: AnubhavTiakabaKar

BA 3rd Semester

A Heaven

Morning mist slowly clears,
Sunlight penetrates through the leaves,
Crushing all darkness below.
Illuminating the path of lush green grass, and tender flowers.
Creatures scamper all around,
And there is a whispering breeze.

Birds are singing to a new day,
While the insects, underneath the leaves, they lay.
The Sun glistens upon the waters,
Shines like twinkling stars,
Joyous sounds resonate through the woods.
In these woods, life never ends.

By: Boduve Nienu

BA 3rd Semester

What Does Christmas Mean To You?

Behold the sweet season appears again,
And the leaves all wrinkle and dry.
Streets all crowded, and shops are full,
Everyone busy and everyone joyful.
Houses, beautifully decorated.
Young and old, put on their best.
Sweet bells chime, snow covers all.

Alas! As the years go by,
The celebration transforms.
Few people understand the star,
The youth, lost in oblivion,
Seek but only worldly pleasures.
Christmas may mean different to others,
But to the believer, tells the story of Christ.
It's time to view with our inner sight,
Believe, trust, and let truth be an ally.

By: Gaikhanlung Panmei

BA 3rd Semester

Destiny

Born in this way,
Wondered where I'll be.
Hurdles in the way; some tiny and some huge.
Nothing can stand in my journey, just destiny and me,
Eternal guide of my life it be.

Series of challenges have I to face,
For some I am victorious, and some, I lose.
But my journey I shall never end.
Take my life, as a subject
And learn from it all that I can.

This journey is not mine alone,
Many travel on the same road.
I choose my own ways,
Though tired I may be,
Still take the road less traversed by.

Born this way, thought what's going to be,
Challenges and spikes in the way, so many,
All I could use is nothing but my grit,
No one could stand in my way,
It's just me and my destiny.

By: Arifuddin
BA 5th Semester

Echoes of a Dying Man

Life,

How sweet and beautiful you are!

Gift of our loving God to us.

As time goes,

You take us to different directions,

Filled with new adventures.

The Universe shines with you, life.

But alas! Your days are fleeting.

Unable to say farewells,

Or time enough to understand your worth.

You go back to where you came,

And are lost for all eternity.

Oh! If only man knew your worth,

He'd spend it more decisively.

By: Gwakvulo Kemp

BA 3rd Semester

Anguished Ecstasy

Off' in nights, when I toss about,
My thoughts stray to a haven I knew.
Once, when nights of loneliness cried aloud,
I dare to dream of a solace I once knew.

Nestled among the low hills,
Where my father shaped his dreams.
A house abounding in merriment,
Where the lofty trees with the wind seem to scream.

The sun seemed to shine brighter,
And the moon shone bigger,
Amidst the peachy groves and wild roses,
Sailed my laughter in eagerness.

I dream much of it now, my home,
My childhood, a part of all its goodness.
And how content I felt in it then, my home,
A windfall God blessed in 'tis goodness.

The Home standing grey in the rain,
And pristine glory in the summer haze.
A healer to many of my great pain,
Where days of complete bliss had I in laze.

There where I had my first walk,
My first sight of the world,
A beautiful haven where my father chose to trod,
Before he had to leave this world.

Though long gone from home I've been,
As this maturity calls for a greater deed to be done,
My heart often yearns for the peace,
When in nights I lay confronted.

As the rain fell a piece,
And my soul begs to be comforted.

By: Loina Shohe
Asst. Professor, Department of Sociology

To Doyang

The waters splash along the banks,
And flow through the lush green hills.
The mild winter sun above the river,
Warms the life below.
And the valleys resonate,
With the sweet gurgle of the current.

Such was the scene when one winter morn,
I went down to Doyang.
It lifted my heavy heart,
Washed away my sorrows,
And in the astounding beauty,
My soul it was reborn.

By: Gwakvulo Kemp

BA 3rd Semester

A Father's Love

Time goes rushing by,
 But still I remember
 The delightful days we had.
You made me smile,
When I was in tears.
When everything seemed rough,
You held my hands.
You showed me love when no one did.
And memories like these, warms my heart still.

Without you, I'd have been nowhere.
My friend, my guide, my dear father.
And though with God you now stand,
In my heart, your sweet memories remain.

By: Peteneituo Verie

BA 3rd Semester

A Renaissance

As a child, I sat close to a woman
Who lost her heart to weaving,
An asset in any women of the land.
She steadily weaved a line after the other;
And I know, she was weaving into it her potential,
She wished to pass down to her breed.
She sewed into it a beautiful print,
She then gave a final touch,
Fastening the two separate pieces to one;
And the shawl came to life.
When she did so, I knew
She was mending the identity of the land.
And they, lured by its beauty, now say
"That's the beauty of the Nagas".

By: Naomi Aye
BA 5th Semester

Tribute to my Land

Many a song sung and written
In your honour,
Many a heroes laid to rest
For your glory.
An inspiration to many are you;
Praises, like showers of blessing;
Pour in for you.
Blossomed many a great children.

Appreciation is halted.
The heroes no more seen,
Sings no more the hear.
"Corruption, treachery, murder and
Rape takes the place of
Hospitable brotherhood".
Tears and blood shed alike
Many an unbearable loss we face.

Oh, my Nagaland, the
Unfathomable beauty is now,
Screened by lies and false
Promises of the leaders.
Though all hope is not at bay,
The visionaries are on the move, even stronger,
Hope is not lost when you
Still confer us shelter!

Yes, it's only that hope
Which lights our way,
From sunset to sunrise
Through every single pain.
Hope whispers, that day
Shall be near when innocence
Of mankind be born again!

By: L. Mielung Phom
BA 5th Semester

Hope

Gift of the One above, precious bestowed.

In your simplicity, found I,

The beauty of promises.

In your silence, found I,

The meaning of each heartbeat.

In your presence, found I,

The power of living.

Oh! Hope...

Thy name, ever so sweet,

Reaches out to me,

Takes me into thy arms,

Engulfs me in your assurance.

The Creator knew,

My heart needed thee

To fulfil my purpose of living.

By: Kahor Raleng
HoD, Department of English

Daddy's Maxim

"Failure is the consequence of giving up"

The maxim I adore.

Daddy's maxim that keeps me bold and firm,

The reason I never give up,

Even when all hope's gone.

Life offers space and time,

Our choice makes our destination.

Fade may hold clouds and storms,

Wind may toss your hopes and dreams,

But beyond the struggles lies triumph.

Every little thing we take for granted,

Every precious moment we let go unattended,

Learn to greet opportunities.

Make a choice; face the odds,

Never give up!

"Failure is the consequence of giving up"

By: Buhio B Lam Khamniungan

BA 5thSemester

Ode to Nagaland

Adorable devotion abundantly
Unleash upon you!
Every creature adorns
Your beauty, for your
Deeds so heavenly.

A land of enchanting to
Many survivors, uniqueness
And colourful cultural norms,
And traditional attires,
Pulling close to you, bunches
Of different faces,
Placed you on the crest.

Unlimited flow of
Civility and pleasant mind
Like a 'Summer Stream'!

Tears of Mourners washed
Away, Sense of humanity
Filled they breeds, thus
Reward Them a 'Dove'.
Where distrust can be
Seen nowhere.

Earned request
Unfolds!
Let's tie up the
Bygone memories which
Are no more valuables
And keep pondering
To forethink but not
For last hour.

By: L. MeilungPhom

BA 5th Semester

Reason to Wonder

Leaves are green and bright.
Time, it is a bright night,
View beautiful & feathers colourful,
Bark so green and full.
Pleasant to the eye to see
Pray to God let it be.

But human wrath...why? I ask
From dawn till dusk
Left us with greatest task.

(Of the Sun) We darken the eye,
And for some reason we lie,
Overshadowed lie then another;
Not a soul seem to bother,
And the whole wonder.

Why? But we are to blame,
And we dare take a name
'Coz we all are the same.

By: PatomiYephthomi
Asst. Professor, Department of English

The Last Time We Met

When I last saw you,
Grey day of swirling mist,
And a vow made, me and you,
To always keep beyond haste.

Forlorn figures hurrying apart,
Like the river water rushing,
Now only memories are part,
Of what was once a sweet hushing.

In the night of some moons,
Your ghost comes filtering by.
But old romance lies in dooms,
For somehow we both had said goodbye.

By: Loina Shohe
Asst. Professor, Department of Sociology

Living For a Reason

Yet another night goes by,
A new dawn has arrived.
But I am not moved,
For I know not what I shall do.
I have lost all hope,
I no longer have a reason to go on.
Life has given me pain in abundance.
Sorrow is all I know.
Everyday I dream of the days,
Days when I held you,
Days when there was just you, and I.
Where are you now?
I long to hear your voice,
The voice that calms my soul.
The only person who gave me peace,
In a life filled with sorry.
Now, I can't remember,
The last time I held you.
I long for you,
To give me peace, yet again.
And then I feel you by my side,
And suddenly, I see you and smile!

By: Anubhav Tiakaba Kar
BA 3rd Semester

The Pathos of Libertas

Statue of Liberty am I,
Heed high above the world.
Loved, admired and cherished by all.
Happy and calm I seem.
But nobody knows the bitter truth
Which lies within me deep.
Sorrows and grief surrounds me,
For when I look down, I see chaos everywhere.
Justice, innocence, and liberty withers each day.
People so cruel and dreadful,
Hurt one another,
Innocent men persecuted and tortured,
The poor oppressed by the rich.
Don't they know they are brothers?
Wish I could convey the truth but lay idle,
All I can do is in pain shed tears.
Hatred and violence spread swiftly.
Oh! I'm in pain for nothing can I do.
How happy people seem manufacturing destructive weapons.
Don't they know it will destroy lives of millions.
The world will soon come to an end.
Wish I could administer justice but lay idle,
All I can do is hope for betterment.
The so called 'Beautiful World' has
Become a bitter place to live in.
And so it is I stand, looking happy, content and calm,
While New York, Manhattan, and Harlem, no one pays heed.

By: Ester E
BA 3rd Semester

Untitled

In darkness my heart finds solace.

In darkness, I soar.

In darkness my heart resonates with glee.

For I'm afraid, the light never offered me much.

In the light, reality commands it all.

No room for mercy, no room for passions.

Everything's a bright mess of insensitivity.

Life is as it really is,

People live, suffer, and die.

In darkness, my dreams paint it all.

Like an easel coming to life.

In darkness, destiny surrenders,

And I have all that I ever want from life.

In the light, the innocent need an alibi.

While the guilty roam free.

Women are tortured, raped, and killed.

Heroes banished, and all is muted.

Screams are shrouded, traditions revived.

In darkness, imaginations prevail.

And the powerful and I are equals.

Justice is served, and heroes live.

I share a table with Earhart, Milk, Bose, and DeWitt.

In the light, Children of God await death,
The prince riding on the black stud.
They anticipate the heart ceasing beats,
The mind falling blank.
For in death, God can give them peace.

In darkness, the world sees what its past,
Before the Mighty filled it up with light.
In darkness, the just find peace.
In darkness, destiny is my slave.

In the light, wars are fought.
Soldiers slay each other, not knowing why.
Victorious emerges lust, and love turns dust.
Bad is hot, and good is retro.
Monroe is a whore, and Kennedy a hero.

In the darkness, I need not fight.
For everything is already right.
Peace prevails, the world rests in peaceful disposition.
Everyone's proud of how God's made them to be.

When has the truth ever been so gentle.
Who has ever known what truly is true.
All we do is hope...rest in silent symphony.
Watch helplessly, as good loses the battle...

All of which happens...in the light.

By: Anjan K Behera
Asst Professor, Department of English

Who Am I?

I need to be known,
But I find no potential.
Only when I scribble on pages,
Will I be known.
My head seems vacant when I wonder,
How do they find themselves?
Where do they get inspiration?
I am no Shakespeare or Wordsworth;
They the literary legends,
But in mine own ways,
Will I be known?
And when I do so, they'll say
"She from the abandoned Land."
Till then, I know not "Who Am I"!

By: Naomi Aye
BA 5th Semester

My Guardian Angel

Ages have skipped way fast
And bygone, the die is cast.
Now yet the change of season,
But my life for the same reason.
Time skips thus for me to let go
And so my life to lay down low.

Heaven thus pour the rain
And beat the seas to pain.
Trees shed its leaves to bare
And no living soul seems to care.
The pain thus come to keep score
So then we feel to the core.

But a little ways down the road
The wheel turns just to drive the load,
Away from the core, but to part
Thus to make my life an art;
And there she stands, thus she meant,
The pain, my soul to tend.

Heaven did drop dew
And on me was one of the few.
Now far from home, she did fall
So the clouds roam in search to call.
And lightening struck in roar but despair
And thus I know, she too needs a pair.

By: Patomi Yepthomi
Asst Professor, Department of English

Yours Unfaithfully

A picture of you besides me,
Drops of tears silently shed,
Blur the moment I once beheld.

History is that period of time.
That kept us apart from each other.

Though not always around,
Your fragrance lingers in my present.

Oh my love, in vain I try to forget,
But alas, my soul, it still yearns.
Yearns for one last kiss...and you.

And as you move away from my grave,
The flowers you left behind sway bright.
My gravestone reads "Caring Husband",

I just wish I really was one.

By: Tsachopa T Sangtam
BA 3rd Semester

Who Knew It Would Be This Soon

Who knew the cold winter would set in this soon,
To steal the sunshine and warmness of summer,
And bring upon the rain and wind,
When I still have seasons to meet.

Perhaps, the end of the warm summer,
Would soon be the beginning of something brighter.
But this hope of brilliance does not convince,
For I'm not ready yet, to see them run in the tempest.

Had I only been the master of this season,
I would have stayed a little longer.
Just a little longer, to feel a little more sunshine.
But what control do I have over it?

Perhaps I'm only going to a better place,
Where there is sweet music in the wind.
But who knew it would be this soon,
For Him to call upon me.

By: K Musom Khamniungon

B.A 3rdSemester

Spring Shower

The moon looks bright as it shines,
But the shiny star does not less rhyme,
Along the shore of the beating waves,
Pushing the darkness to the caves.

The night too dark in its darkest hour,
Crushing on earth falls a light shower.
Unto the head, the roof that protects,
The wheel then turns and the cycle then repeats.

Wide and awake the eve of the night,
As the droplets twinkles flashes the eye,
But the rays pushing them underneath,
The surface now cracked, hard and dry,
As the Sun showers the rays of its golden heat.

But not long.
Then steam pushing its way out,
Spreading wide into the open air,
Anew making the view green and fair.

And seconds after, the world is new again
Nature becomes greener and thicker,
River flowing hard, dashing on rocks.
And once again birds hummed a song.

All music bore in my heart so strong,

A deep sigh and all to go wrong.

A flawless masterpiece falling from high.

Thus, Heaven's gift for me, never to die.

By: Patomi Yepthomi
Asst Professor, Department of English

Bygone Ethos

Land of seasons with mighty hue,
Chants of hills and valleys hover the majestic land.
Man live in platonic and abundance.
Cordial greetings and share of amity,
Hearts imbued with sympathy and pathos.

Men greet the coming of the west wind,
The madness poured perilous foes in their minds.
Innocent bloods flow; discontented lost souls,
Children whine and widows mourn,
Virtues and ethos vanished in times.

Come beloved, sons of our soil!
Raise the banner of oneness and joy!
Rejuvenate the ethos we lived with once,
Wipe every sorrow and fear!
Let our motherland be liveable and loveable.

By: Buhio B Lam Khamniungan
BA 5thSemester

Eternity of Love

The clouds are above the mountains,
The stars shine brighter than before,
The moon shows all its bright face,
And the river with living water.
At that moment my dear,
Why do your eyes, so lay rest on me?
You are the clouds of my life,
You are the stars, always burning for me,
You are the moon who always watches me.
You flow like the blood in my body,
And above all, you are wonderful than all.
You fill my heart with love,
And extend my life with joy.

By: Sakoyule
BA 3rdSemester

In God I Trust

Nothing is fair enough in life,
Yet I prefer to play fair with life.
Nothing lasts forever it is said,
Yet I keep hope for an eternal life.

Of all the things provided to me,
I choose to accept what I deserve.

Of all that life brings to me,
I prefer the things that come to me.

There is someone above!
There is something great!
Hope is right before me!
Yes there is hope for me!

Whatever has passed, has passed,
Whatever may come, will come.
Come whatever may my way,
In God I put my trust!

By: H. Mercy
BA 5th Semester

Two Paths Diverged

Honesty they said,
Was the path of the righteous,
And truth, the armour of angels.

And yet...the heart at times seeks a lie,
Away from reality, away from rationality.
Often honesty and truth shatter dreams.
But a lie- the shield of the devil,
It can mend a broken heart,
And keep spirits high.

It can re-ignite passion among estranged lovers,
And return hope to retreating soldiers.
A lie can make losers into champions.
It can avenge those who sinned against your forefathers,
And make your enemies bite the dust.
Leave you victorious and robust!

A lie can save an empire,
It can devour grief,
Even break ancient curses.
Some say lying is hoping where there is no dawn.
Lying is a quest to find happiness in sorrow,
A quest to regain what once was lost.

Irony of life, irony of destiny!

The truth, it shines in its eternal glory,
Blessed and booned by the gods.
And yet, the lie it is that tempts and allures you.
Revenge calls on stronger...
Or does the eternal bliss of forgiveness?

The ancient battle rages on, both equally appeal.
Oh you frail and delicate creation,
Tell me, which path will you choose?

By: Anjan K Behera
Asst Professor, Department of English

Alas! I Found Peace at Winter!

Starting my journey during autumn,
Not knowing where my destiny would be.
With the pleasant wind blowing on my ears,
As if they have something to say.

I, during the night time wonder,
If I lacked something before my journey,
And now the wind trying to warn me.
Morning came before the answer.

All my journey I thought and wondered,
What the wind is trying to tell me,
And alas! Winter comes and the answer,
That the wind was trying to say was,
To remember him too, at my journey.

Alas! I found peace in winter,
And I would finally go to sleep in bliss!

By: Thangham Jigdung
BA 3rd Semester

My Land, Nagaland

A place like paradise,
Somewhere in the northeast.
Loaded with flora and fauna,
And blessed with a rich culture.

Where the river of peace flows,
And the rain of love falls.
This is my land,
This is my Nagaland.

Nagaland is a laudable place,
A blessed home
Where different tribes together dwell,
Brave warriors here are born.

We might differ in tribe,
We might speak different dialects,
But we are from the same tree,
Love, trust, and respect bind us together.

We are the Nagas,
The people of this land,
Fiercely proud to be from here,
Blessed am I to be born here.

By: Ponglem Marcia Konyak
BA 5thSemester

Life

Just a glance and
Life is no more.
Like a flower it blooms,
But when the wind blows over it,
It withers away.
For some it is cut short
Even before it reaches
Its prime.
No wonder life is cruel.
Strange it may sound,
To the rich man's gain,
And the poor man's pain.
To the wise and the fool,
They are all but one in
The eyes of death;
And there is no escape.

The foolish star shines
forth and goes away,
Yet like the cycle of season,
It comes back and keeps the promises.
But for man life is only once,
In pain or in gain,
To the fool or wise.
And once gone none could fill that space,
Or takeaway the emptiness.
No matter how much
The pain or sorrow that
Grows in the heart,
The wounds are hard to heal.
Years later only,
The weight of emptiness
Could be felt.

If only death was but a dream,
It would meant all the world,
For the broken-hearted
to wake up from the cruel stings of life,
To reunite with the long lost beloved ones.
No more pain there wouldbe,
To see them save in their arms.
But that's not to be true
For each moment is, but,
A thousand painful years
For the living dead.
So no matter how great the
Pain or unbearable the sorrow,
They have to keep going,
And one has to play his
Part until the cruel hands
Of death grip you.

By: Nilesanuo Kense
BA 3rd Semester

Yet Again

There's no verse that rhyme,
Ere but lost with ticking time.
When the world slumbers on,
The river continues to flow;
Nightingale, their sweet melody glow,
Calamus sprouts out edged ponds,
Like no obstacles but wicked wands.

As the circle ever did shine,
Darkest woods, did doubt endowed;
Hidden inside, blinded by the light,
Far aloft loveliest sight.

A bit guided light then sparkles from afar,
Curiosity thus burned but not a waste.
Anew the world of the bar,
In the midst found peaceful rest.

Light then flashes the eye to awake,
Quill had fallen, litter white they make.
Then set self clear to start with rhyme,
To set music that was once again mine.

By: PatomiYephthomi
Asst. Professor, Department of English

It's Now Here

Winter has come for a reason,
At the end of the season.
Branches loaded with snow,
Bends them down low.

Leaves now shining bright,
With rays of sun in sight.
Makes the festive season worth,
The mirth that comes forth,
And warmth it brings with,
Melts the coldness at bit.

And everywhere you look to see,
A pleasant memory to be.
So beautiful, so new,
In the sparkling dew.
It's worth while you wait,
'Coz the thing, it's never late!

And amazingly so near,
Warm winter (Christmas) is now here
And as the sound of the bell rings
A tear of joy along it brings.

By: Patomi Yepthomi
Asst. Professor, Department of English

Sunrise on the Seas

Waves crash against my boat,
It rocks, me along with it.
Yet my mind's fixed on fishing grounds.
Impending tempests scare me no more.

Brave am I?

Terror imploded through every vein of my soul,
When first I came to the seas.
Alone, confused, bitter, angry;
A whirlpool of emotions drowned me.

I know I was not supposed to be here.
An unbreakable curse placed on me,
By a force unknown, for reasons unknown.
Others knew not of it, only I.

"Curseth art thou, bound to the seas,
There shalt thou live in solitude.
Thou shalt know what thou desire, but shalt never get.
A happy ending thou shalt seek, but may never have!"

I raise up the net, a good catch!
But the night is still young,
And my work is not done.
The curse binds me to the seas.

On stormy nights like these,
Music and lights beam from the rocky cliffs.
Voices ring, those of everyone I love.
They tug at me, making me weak.

Sirens! Experience has taught me better.
And yet, I find joy in this weakness.
For a moment, I am not alone.
Illusions yes, but when has reality been kinder?

Docking land every fortnight,
People there come and go, talking of Michaelangelo.
They see me as a fisherman, my struggles stay hidden,
As do theirs from me.

Time has taught me to wear a brave face,
And dam my fears within.
These dams seldom break,
If ever it breaks, my sanity ends.

This time it's not sirens,
But an actual liner far away traversing the seas.
Merry making, dancing, lovers, happiness!
I have learnt to look away! I cast another net.

Only riders to the seas can tell,
Although you desire lush green valleys and brooks,

The sea grows on you,
And the agony turns addictive.

But this I'll say,
Can a fisherman afford to be terrified of the seas?
Can he risk fearing loneliness?
If he does , that is the end of him.

At times the Seas seem endless,
I feel exhausted, tired of this battle within.
But then I remind myself-
The Sun rises on the Seas as well.

And "living" is learning to appreciate the Sun,
Rising in the midst of nothing, to shine on nothing!

By: Anjan K Behera
Asst Professor, Department of English

Living For a Reason

Yet another night goes by,
A new dawn has arrived.
But I am not moved,
For I know not what I shall do.
I have lost all hope,
I no longer have a reason to go on.
Life has given me pain in abundance.
Sorrow is all I know.
Everyday I dream of the days,
Days when I held you,
Days when there was just you, and I.
Where are you now?
I long to hear your voice,
The voice that calms my soul.
The only person who gave me peace,
In a life filled with sorrow.
Now, I can't remember,
The last time I held you.
I long for you,
To give me peace, yet again.
And then I feel you by my side,
And suddenly, I see you and smile!

By: Anubhav Tiakaba Kar
BA 3rd Semester

Days of our Lives (Haikus)

I

The shawl is tightly clutched,
The cat's settled near the stove,
Aroma of frying fish.

II

A fresh new rose bud,
Shrill joy of children playing,
The church bell's distant toll.

III

The bees fly about,
The darling blossoms of May.
The sun shining bright.

IV

Thunder and flashes,
The clatter of raindrops on the roof,
Darkness all around.

V

Joyous clatter everywhere,
The divine image of Durga,
Feel of an empty pocket.

VI

The leaves are all red,
Dew drops adorn the grass at dawn.
The nights are colder.

VII

Christmas carols whistled,
Red stockings by the fireplace,
The tree shining bright.

By: Anjan K Behera
Asst Professor, Department of English

A haiku is a style of poetry that comes from Japan. It is characteristically short, and has around 17 syllables only.

A Cry Out of My Shell

When I count your beauty yesterday,
Perfection shine flashing its light my way,
Hoping better dreams and opportunities,
I march from my small shell,
Counting your heights by stars not shadows.
There, I count your beauty again today,
I saw your perfection in flames.
Murder, rapes, abuses, assaults, robberies,
On a daily basis.
Everyday a struggle, full of hardships.
I wonder, am I alienated for my features?
But I am a mother's child like you.
My dreams outburst in cries for a safer shell,
And people seen dwelling in the darker side
With iron rods and sticks.
But I prayed for the clouds of love instead.
Broken hearts, and tears that were shed all the way,
We lit the candle with a sad farewell.
We continue to mourn for the spirit
Of unity and brotherhood.

By: Narolemla Chang
BA 5thSemester

PROSAIC MUSINGS



A short story is a brief work of literature, usually written in narrative prose. Emerging from earlier oral storytelling traditions in the 17th century, the short story has grown to encompass a body of work so diverse as to defy easy characterization. At its most prototypical the short story features a small cast of named characters, and focuses on a self-contained incident with the intent of evoking a "single effect" or mood. In doing so, short stories make use of plot, resonance, and other dynamic components to a far greater degree than is typical of an anecdote, yet to a far lesser degree than a novel. While the short story is largely distinct from the novel, authors of both generally draw from a common pool of literary techniques. In this segment, the short stories depict the life and culture of Nagaland.

Laboni's Letter

If anyone could have seen her open the letter, they'd have known what true happiness looked like. She tore at the edges, her eyes sparkling with happiness. The postman had delivered the letter a few minutes back, and it had been a challenge for her not to hug him. It was the first letter from home ever since her marriage. She opened it and settled near the window to read it. The rays of the setting sun sparkled in the tears that were silently shed. Her lips trembled as she read the letter to herself, again and again, imagining the voice of her mother telling her those words. Oh how she craved for a hug from her parents, the shrill laughter of her siblings, and the honks of the vehicles that raced the roads back in her hometown all day long. She had to write a reply immediately. She sat at the one table in their house, and started to write. The tears struggled to stay within.

"I am not happy here. The roads aren't even blacktopped. Oh *maa*! There isn't even a shop nearby. How I miss Kolkata. Everything is so quiet here. People are different *maa*. They say we are Indians, and they are not. I have no one to talk to. They don't understand me. I am feeling so alone."

She would have written more, but the knock on the door alerted her. It was her husband. He worked in a college, and they stayed in the campus. She rushed to open the door, while her hand almost automatically reached for the *pallu* of her saree, as she covered her head with it. No words were exchanged. He smiled, she smiled back meekly, and rushed to offer him some water. "You aren't ready yet? The Khusohs will be expecting us for dinner." She looked out, the dying rays of the setting sun still illuminated the freshly planted zinnias outside. "I need a minute", said she, as she rushed back to the bedroom. She carefully folded the letter and kept it in her box, filled with new sarees and jewellery. She had to get dressed. It was her first dinner invitation. Her husband's colleague had thrown a party celebrating their marriage.

"Don't wear that saree. It is too red and flashy. And not so many ornaments Laboni", said the husband as he examined her dressing. She was shocked. Too red! All her life she had been taught to wear red after marriage. Her friends who were married would always be decked in jewellery and wore bright coloured sarees. She

had always wanted that. When the invitation had come, she took delight in planning what she would wear...a red bindi, a red saree and the golden necklace her sister had gifted her. But now she couldn't. "People here dress very simple and you would look out of place." She walked back to the bedroom. Her hands trembling as she rummaged through her box which was still unpacked. She found a pale yellow saree and as she wore it, she remembered her friends warning her, "Laboni, the place you are going to, people don't even wear sarees. What will you do? Why are your parents sending you so far away? You won't even have anyone to talk to." The newspapers were occasionally filled with reports of Naga militants killing and abducting mainland Indians. These reports always scared her family and they had asked her to be very careful. There were no positive news stories from the state.

She was as expressive as a statue as she quietly walked behind her husband to the Khusohs. There were no street lamps. She struggled to keep pace. She had heard snakes often crossed the roads and would bite the travellers. She wished they'd reach their destination soon. The moon covered everything in a pale blanket of white, making even the greenest tree look cold and lifeless. In the distance, she could see lights flickering from houses. She missed her home. She missed her family. She missed her friends.

"*Ahishe? Ayya welcome de!*" She looked up. It was an elderly woman who had opened the door. There were two children curiously peeking behind her. Laboni smiled and walked in. Her husband gave the hostess a box which had *ladoo*s. The lady passed the box to the children and off they went giggling and laughing. Her husband had been right. Everyone was dressed in simple clothes. The women wore wrap-around she'd later learn were called *mekhla*s. She had to admit the patterns on the *mekhla*s looked beautiful.

The evening went past quickly. Laboni was introduced to members of the family she knew she won't remember. The names appeared particularly confusing. There was the granny, who they called *Atsa*, and her sister: the one who had opened the door. And then there was the colleague, his wife and his two kids. Tea was served. "So tell us Ranjit, how was the marriage?" asked Jacob. Yes she could remember the name because it was an English name. As Ranjit went on to give details, Laboni quietly slipped into an episode of reminiscence. It was 1986, and her

B.Ed exams had just been over when Ranjit's family had come to see her. She and Ranjit had hardly exchanged glances, and the marriage had been fixed. She had wanted to study further, but Indian norms dictated her getting married. She was going away, far away. Even her parents hadn't ever been to Nagaland. She had only heard about the state in Geography classes. A year later the marriage took place and within a month they were in Dimapur.

Dinner was ready. It was a buffet. Laboni was asked to go first since she was the special guest. A prayer blessing the food was said, and Laboni then walked up to the buffet. She picked up her plate as others lined up behind her. She took the rice, followed by a helping of *dal*. The next item looked new to her. It had a strong odour and white strips of something covered the chicken. She took a piece of it, but the smell felt too strong. The next dish was chutney, with another strong odour. She seemed confused. Not to take it would be impolite, yet taking it would ruin her dinner. The people behind her waited impatiently. She lifted a spoon and took the chutney. The next dish was a boil. Some leafy vegetables seemed to be steamed with garlic. She took that and returned to her seat.

And though she was really hungry, all she could eat was the *dal* and the rice. She tried having the chicken, but the odour was just too much, and the chutney provided no help either. She somehow liked the boil but that was it. While others went for second helpings, she sat silently trying to appear as graceful as she could. Dinner was soon over, and yet she remained hungry. She missed the spicy food, the *aloo posto*, the mutton curry, the *muri ghonto*, and the *mangsher shukto*. The women sat and giggled loudly. Laboni couldn't really understand what they spoke, but she could for sure understand they were happy. Oh how she missed her friends.

As the menfolk settled around the radio to listen to the evening news, the women went into the kitchen to deal with the dishes. Laboni went along as well. She helped dry the dishes. The others kept asking her questions about her saree and her bindi. She smiled and answered them. Yes she could manage to understand Nagamese since it was similar to Bengali. No one really asked her if she was happy. No one understood the storm that raged inside the woman who had been marooned into this far off land. She was a fish out of water, the pristine water she had lived her entire life in. The others were soon done with their chores and decided to join the men. AIR Kohima was now telecasting English songs, and they all listened

gleefully. Laboni stayed in the kitchen wiping the dishes while Atsa packed the leftovers for the next day's breakfast.

She looked out of the window, it was dark. The streets at Kolkata at evening time would be adorned in bright lights, and the vehicles, and the street vendors, and people...oh it was all but a memory now. She suddenly felt a tap on her shoulder. She turned around, it was Atsa.

*"Hako kūjo va sūte, Nagami lüva libi cho yo tina. No hako lüva ti hoti se mode chove, no künü-o la vo lizo Indianmi lüva cho pü hako ka sūte, no lecho kukrekre ti se va to tina. No hako nune bi zo küti la. Napü nade lü kelhümi küti la, vo rüna kütsü lü ba rüh ta mütse, n küre to mode to la vote. Oh! Angane müne hio n va zü metse zo ide kha n tsü sü zhü ho."*¹ So saying, Atsa passed her a green bag. All the while Atsa had spoken in the Chakesang dialect, and Laboni hadn't been able to understand a word she said.

Laboni stood transfixed. Although she did not understand the granny, her voice and tone spoke volumes. Words transcended emotions and soothed her heart, and she realized she could no longer hold back her tears. She held Atsa and sobbed. Not out of grief, but the joy of having found a new home, a new locality, a new place. She realized she would be happy here, and that her fears had been baseless. So what if the people ate a little early and spoke a language she did not understand? They were humans, and most importantly, good people, misunderstood people. Everyone back in mainland India had taught her that the Nagas were all fierce and militants. They were rough people. She realized how wrong everyone had been. How terribly wrong! The hug warmed her heart. She could not have been happier.

As she left the Khusohs' she couldn't help but feel ecstatic and relieved. She knew things would be fine. It is the same feeling that a fisherman in the sea feels after the storms have subsided. After a long time she could smile wholeheartedly. When they reached home, Ranjit went off to close the windows of their house for the night. She went to her box, removed the letter that was half written, and tore it to shreds. Picking a pen, she wrote on a fresh sheet of paper, "Maa I am liking it here. People here are so nice. Today we had been invited to his colleague's house for dinner..."

And the moon shone on the beautiful city of Dimapur, a city that Laboni would soon call 'home'.

By: Anjan K Behera
Asst Professor, Department of English

¹*"My dear, I am sorry we cooked only Naga dishes. We should have known that you would not be able to eat them. The next time you come you must teach us some Indian dishes. You must know so many. And please know that you are like a daughter to us. I know how hard this transition must be, from the city to a small locality like this. If you get bored, don't hesitate to come over. And oh, here is a mekhla I thought would suit you."* (Translation from Chakesang to English)

The Warrior

It was a cold night when I sat along with my father near the fire. At that time I was only thirteen. I wanted to hear a story from my father so I asked him to tell me a tale about the past times. He decided to tell me about my great grandfather who was a great warrior during his time. I was so excited to hear about the warriors because I've always heard that our clan was famous for it during that period of time.

My dad started to introduce my great grandfather. He said that my great grandfather was a strong and brave warrior. He took the heads of many of his opponents. At that time everything was under the command of *Angh*. The *Angh* was the King of the village, and my great grandfather was a member of the Longkei Village in Mon. The villagers of Longkei had to obey the *Angh* and do whatever they were told to do. Once, a neighbouring village was attacked by an even stronger village, and the people warriors of Longkei, under the leadership of their *Angh*, rushed to their rescue. Although the attacking village was stronger than my own, the neighbouring village needed help, so they had to go out to their aid, not fearing for their own lives. My great grandfather, along with his village warriors were able to chase out the intruders. That is how they established themselves as a powerful warrior clan, and gained name and fame for themselves.

My great grandfather was also very mischievous at times, and on learning this I couldn't help but giggle. When he was told to sow crops in the field, he sowed crops along with the seeds of a thorny plant. When the crops grew, so did the thorny plants all over the fields, and this made it impossible for others to harvest the crops. All the villages were angry with him. They decided to punish him for his deeds. He however refused to come and meet the elders and accept his punishment. He would find all sorts of excuses to avoid meeting them. One day, the elders thought of a plan. My great grandfather was invited to a feast and there he was offered wine by the *Angh*. He lifted his left hand to drink it, but they villagers told him he must drink it with his right hand. As he did so, one of the villagers immediately picked a *dao* and cut off his right hand. That had been their plan, to cut off his right hand, the same hand he had used to plant the thorny plants and ruin the crops. My poor great

grandfather, what would he do then? He then picked up his severed hand and threw it right at the face of the *Angh* to buy himself some time and run off. He hid in some bushes, but when the *Angh* along with warriors came, he was captured. Because of his disrespectful behaviour, his head was cut off. The severed head was hung with a rope facing their village. Every morning, the *Angh* found that the skull had fallen down and would be still facing towards his house instead. Out of anger, he took the skull and threw it on a big stone nearby. The broken pieces of the skull struck the eye of the *Angh*, resulting in his blindness.

It is a general belief amongst our clan that in all the future generations, the first child of the *Angh* of that particular village is born blind. It is the curse of my great grandfather, who was a true warrior not just by flesh, but even in bone.

The night wore on, and the fire was almost dead. As my father was getting up to go to bed, he looked at me and said, "Our clans may have been famous for head hunting and for being fierce warriors, but always remember, even today we must be strong and stand tall like warriors and face whatever problems life may throw our way."

By: Kaplao Konyak
BA 5th Semester

This story is an adaptation of a Konyak folktale, as narrated by the writer's father. Other versions of the same story may exist.

Where Was Tsuli?

Her name was Tsuli, she was a few years younger than me and quite shorter than me, but the age and the height never made any difference between us. We were best friends. We spent our summer days roaming the woods, scouring the hills for raspberries, and all kinds of edible wild fruits. I can't seem to remember much of what we did during monsoons and springs but during winters, we loved to go for long walks out in the pathways especially in the evenings when we go to the shop and buy sweet *paan*, then chewing it in secret behind our small town hall we'd watch the sun setting beyond the hills. Those were the days when there was not much on my mind, when I was happy just knowing that the sun wakes up in the morning and goes to sleep in the evening. Those were the days when I was not burdened with not wondering why and how things happen I only lived mindlessly along, happily.

But those days were not meant to last forever. We grew up, and with it my mind and thoughts were no longer unburdened as it was before.

There are too many things of this life we can't understand, like why people have to die leaving behind their loved ones? Or, why there are so much people who are starving to death when some are lavishly binning their leftovers? Why if there is a God then He allows so much misery and struggle even to the good ones? Sometimes there are thoughts which grips our brain and which are beyond any human explanations. When we ponder too deep on it, it frustrates us the more. When such thoughts evade me I look back to a particular time and experience when Tsuli and I, had lived as children.

You see one particular summer day we went to the woods, but instead of looking for the wild berries we went to the waterhole instead. There was a huge tree that grew right over the water hole – they said the water in the water hole came from its root. All our colony people and people from the neighbouring village mostly fetched water from there. It was a lovely afternoon, sunny and quiet, with little coloured butterflies chasing each other. The waterhole with its clear sweet water was too good a temptation to resist, the waterhole was not too big nor too deep, so

we jumped in. We splashed about, tried to practice swimming and our excited laughs seemed to sail up and fill the small valley we were in.

We scrambled out only when we heard some voices approaching. We quickly ran and climbed up the opposite side, away from where the voices. We hid behind some bushes and peered down, by that time two NAP men had reached the waterhole. When they saw the water all muddied, one of them exclaimed, "Tsk! Ahh! It must be the work of those village kids!", to which the other one replied, "These children they will never grow up to be decent humans". So talking, they climbed their way back up and went down another pathway to the next smaller and further off water hole. As soon as they were out of sight and out of sound, we started laughing out, imitating their dismayed words about the "village kids". We laughed so hard even the tears rolled down and every time we meet each other's eyes we laughed even more. By the time we were done even our tummy hurt.

Our clothes were still wet so we made ourselves comfortable on the dry leaves that had fallen off the nearby alder tree and we sunned ourselves. We made our way back home only when the warm sunshine started to fade and the air began to turn cool.

My house was closer so I got in first, while Tsuli went on to her house. I had my evening meal and exhausted by the day's adventure I went to bed and slept away. I woke up to the gentle sounds of mother calling me. She told me Uncle Akhamtsato is here and he wanted to talk to me. I got up and still groggy with sleep, went to the kitchen where Uncle Akhumtsato was.

He told me "Tsuli is not feeling well since evening and we need to go where you two were today, I need you to point out the places where you two were earlier. " Uncle Akhumtsato was Tsuli's next door neighbour. So father, Uncle Akhumtsato, and I armed with only flashlights and a shawl uncle was carrying, set out. Uncle warned not to utter any words on the way to or back and not to look back especially when we'd return.

The moon was out not full but its light was bright enough for us to see clearly the ferns that bordered the pathway. When we reached the waterhole only the sounds of the gnats and frogs and the gentle outflow of the water broke the silvery stillness.

After pausing by the waterhole I lead them up to where we had relaxed nearby the alder tree. When we reached, there, Uncle Akhumtsato made father and me face the direction of home. The next moment what happened was something too big, too strange for my brain to process then. Behind us Uncle Akhumtsato called out in a clear confident voice "Oh Tsuli you are here! Here come with us; it's time for us to go home. I have a shawl to carry you, get on my back!" Then I heard the rustle of the dry leaves as though he was getting down on one of his knee and then he heaved as though he was burdened with a load and then he said " Now let us go home Tsuli!". Father took my hand and we walked step in step with Uncle Akhumtsato walking behind us, and all the while he grunted and breathed out heavily as though he was carrying a heavy load.

When we neared Tsuli's house, uncle Akhumtsato called out, "A-hey! Open the door, Tsuli is coming home". Tsuli's father already had the door open to the room where she was lying as though asleep but not peacefully. Then as we entered into the room uncle Akhumtsato said, "Here! Tsuli now you have reached home!" Instantly Tsuli sat up and called for her mother and she said "Mother I am hungry, I want to have *Maggi* noodles".

That night I went back home and slept again, and for days I tried not to think of what had happened. But I couldn't keep putting it off. So, one morning I set out to meet Uncle Akhumtsato. I asked him how he came to know what was to be done. He told me when he went over to Tsuli's house that evening, as their family had been panicking over her. He found out that she reached home late in the evening and remarking she was sleepy went straight to bed. Her mother was concerned and after sometime decided to check up on her when she did, she found Tsuli muttering to herself, with her eyes closed and lost in her own world. Uncle Akhumtsato said those were the signs through which he came to know what had to be done. Then I asked him why he was talking to Tsuli by the alder tree when Tsuli was

actually at home sleeping on her bed. He replied "Tsuli at home was her physical body, Tsuli by the alder tree was her spirit". He also added that every human has a physical and spirit body and when the physical and the spirit separate people die. Then I asked him, "How is it that we were both there and it happened only to her?" He answered, "Sometimes when we are too happy in a place, our spirit gets too attached to it and even though our physical body leaves the place, the spirit stays behind. That was what happened to Tsuli and if we had not brought her spirit back in time she could have died" he said. There were more questions like why we couldn't see Tsuli's spirit or why we were not supposed to talk or look back, why Tsuli's spirit couldn't come home by itself. Uncle Akhamtsato could not answer all of my questions.

And anyway my young mind could not fully comprehend what Uncle Akhumtsato explained then, and even now it's hard to fully understand everything about it because it seems to deal with things one can't really feel with one's senses. But one thing I did understand for sure is that just because I can't see something, know it, or feel it – doesn't imply it does not exist. It also taught me that I am one with many questions, some of which can't be explained by human reasoning- because I am only a human meant to live with a limited range of ability to comprehend or know things, only as God deemed me to have in this life. And likewise some of my questions about some things may never find answers but that don't mean that, those things don't have their purpose or their reason to exist.

By: Loina Shohe

Asst Professor, Department of Sociology

Dreams from a Rengma Naga Village

Gwanyule and Kathontsü are dressed in *mekhalas* and tops. Gwanyule is wearing a red beaded necklace around her neck, also known as *tyüzi* (a traditional Rengma necklace) and a scarf tied around her head. The men are dressed in Western outfits – pants, shirts, and rubber sandals. On my right sat Nnolo, whose outfit stood out from the rest as he sat with a wide smile on his face wearing a large brown cowboy hat! They all looked very happy to be sitting together at Kegwayhun's residence, at the same time curious and a little apprehensive about why they had been called to this meeting.

The hard coarse skin on their feet and palms and the lines on their faces speak of a life of physical labour, probably from the constant labour in the fields under the hot sun. I felt a momentary twinge of sadness for the amount of physical work they must have had to endure, yet later realised it was unnecessary, because when I looked at them in the eye, I saw absolutely no hint of sadness or pain on their faces, but that of peace. The smiles on their faces conveyed genuine happiness. They are self sufficient and content with the life they have created for themselves. Luxuries and comforts of the modern world that many would consider important are secondary to them. It was obvious that although they had embraced modernity to a certain extent, the blend of Western outfits with traditional wear and lifestyle changes, they really had no desire or anxiety to be uprooted from their life in the villages and move to the cities or towns.

It was the 4th January, 2011. Earlier in the morning at 3 AM my father and I had set out from Dimapur to visit these elders in Phenshünyu Village. It took us about 5 hours to reach the village. We planned to sit with them for as long as we could, tap their memories and listen to them share their dreams. Belief in dreams was predominantly strong in the pre-colonial period among the Rengma Nagas, and the elders who had gathered at Kegwayhun's home to narrate their dreams confirmed just how powerful a hold dreams continued to have upon their lives even till this day.

As soon as we took out the cameras, there was an uneasiness in the room, as we began to capture their every movement and speech. But when they started

conversing with one another, their inhibitions soon vanished and they began to share their dream experiences with us.

The first dream was narrated by Nnolo, the cheerful 91 year old in the brown cowboy hat. Nnolo was an active member of the civil wing that was fighting the Naga independence movement from India. He also, very adorably and proudly added that he can speak a few English words. He said,

"I dreamt of a big tree on a hilltop. Someone had cut it down and left it behind. The tree was big and heavy so it began to slowly slide down towards the bottom. When it was sliding down, the tree destroyed one small and upright tree.

After I awoke, I felt a scared premonition and sensed some kind of danger ahead. After two months, three family members had died all within a few days."

Among the Rengmas, it was believed that the felling of a tree in dreams is a premonition of the passing away of a prominent man. Nnolo's dream interpretation is probably drawn from this traditional belief.

The second dream was narrated by 76 year old Kegwayhun, the owner of the house where our meeting was being held. Kegwayhun had worked as a Lower Primary Teacher. He said,

"I dreamt this in the year 1994. Indira Gandhi had come to my house by helicopter and had landed on a grave. I was in the jungle that time and people had sent word to the jungle that Indira Gandhi had come to visit me. Instead of coming home I replied, "I am in the jungle, but my brother Kegwathon is at home and he will be able to tell her everything she wants to know."

"A few days after this dream, I developed a sore on my neck. I took medicine for a month but it did not heal. Despite going for check-ups to a doctor it continued to hurt and did not improve. Finally, I was taken to a Christian prayer centre where they told me that I had already dreamt of my sickness. They were referring to my dream about Indira Gandhi. Then they reassured me that I would soon be alright."

Kegwayhun believes that his dream of Indira Gandhi, who appeared in his dream about ten years after her assassination only to land on a grave (in his dream), was a message warning him of his probable death. He believed that since he could

not meet Indira Gandhi in his dream, he was saved from death. In addition, Kegwayhun stated that his dream revealed that if he were to die then his brother could take care of his children.

It became clear as we sat there and listened to the elders narrate their dreams one after the other that the tradition of believing in dreams and making important decisions based on their dreams was not just a thing of the past. Tradition was still being kept alive here. Dreams helped elders like Nnolo and Kegwayhun understand and give meaning to their lives. Their dreams became stories that invoked other memories of their past, which they wanted to relive. Before we knew it, the room became alive with narrating of folk stories, singing of folk songs, and recollection of both happy and sad memories.

We listened to the elders till the sun went down that day. It was a wonderful experience to share this moment with them. We left the next morning telling ourselves that we would come back soon again, as we realised that they had more stories to tell, more songs to sing and more memories to unravel. All they wanted was an audience to share it with.

Dr. Hewasa Lorin
Director-Student Services

This write-up includes excerpts from a field trip to Phenshünyu village, undertaken for a research study on dreams of the Nagas.

Angphang, The Guardian Angel

He sat there all alone thinking about her, her contagious smile, and the way she laughed out loud at his silly jokes. He gazed deep into the immense empty space, smiling at the happy times and frowning at the sad ones. He thought of how beautiful life was then when they were together, but tears fell freely at the notion of her far away beyond his reach and never to return again.

The sun set in and he stood up to go, gazing at the stars and blowing them a kiss, he walked away with a smile on his face but with a heavy heart from the place where they used to sit together and planned about their future unknown of what life would bring.

Johnny! Yes! That's the name of the person I have been talking about all along. As long as I can remember, he was a fun loving person, smiling, and jolly as ever could be. He was once full of life and an enthusiastic person, till one tragic incident made him the way he is now. To see him like this breaks the heart of many people who adore him. He refused to talk about his sorrows no matter how hard they tried. Everyone knows what he needs to bring back his old self, but none can possibly bring her back to him.

It was the normal "the boy meets the girl" story for them. Johnny happened to notice her closely for the first time when she came late and rushing to the doors of her class. He saw her in slow motion despite the fact that she was in a rush. He managed to get her number and that was when things really started to pick up. They initially started out as friends, falling in love slowly and later became inseparable. Day's turn to weeks and weeks to years, still they never ran out of love for each other. Everyone who knew about them wondered how they kept their bonding close as ever and growing stronger with time. Some envied them, some looked up to them as true lovers, and few tried to break them apart out of jealousy. Yet they never let anyone or anything come between them.

One day as they sat down at the place where they always met, she made him promise to always send kisses to the stars if she was to ever die before him. He was reluctant, yet he promised. She vowed to keep watch over him among those

stars shining upon them. Their meeting at that love spot was one place they loved being at as they got to talk about their lives, families, and their future without the noise of the bustling town.

Everything seemed perfect when they were together. He planned to marry her right after he finished his studies and got a stable job. All she wanted to do was make him happy. The future of these two almost perfect lovers could not get any brighter. However, their dreams of a happy life together was short lived when the tragedy took place.

It was a bright sunny Sunday; they started the day with so much love for each other and ended with more of it. Came Monday morning and she was gone. She was gone. She didn't wake up from her peaceful sleep. When the news was broken to him, he didn't cry. He refused to react to this overwhelming news.

His behavior got everyone worried because they knew he was broken inside. He dressed himself impeccably for the funeral of his girl. He sang her favorite song, kissed her one last time, and strode out without staying for her burial.

Time flew by without having her in his life and in the meantime he became what he is now. Long gone were the days when he was full of life and his smile warming the hearts of people around him. The only time he smiles genuinely is when he sits at their love spot and drowns himself in her memories. It's heartrending to see him so lost without her, but fate can't be undone or re-written. He keeps his promise and sends her the kisses every time the stars shine upon him, and as she had promised, she keeps watch over him from somewhere among the shining stars.

Now, you may be wondering how I know about her keeping watch over him. Let me tell you a secret. I used to be Johnny's girl once upon a time, the one who passed away before him and the one who kept her promise to watch over him. My name is Angphang, the guardian angel, keeping watch over my beloved and this is my story. I'll keep watching over him till the day I welcome him among the stars and become one again.

P.S. Angels do write too!

Sulivi Assumi

Tetso Alumni (2011-14 Batch)

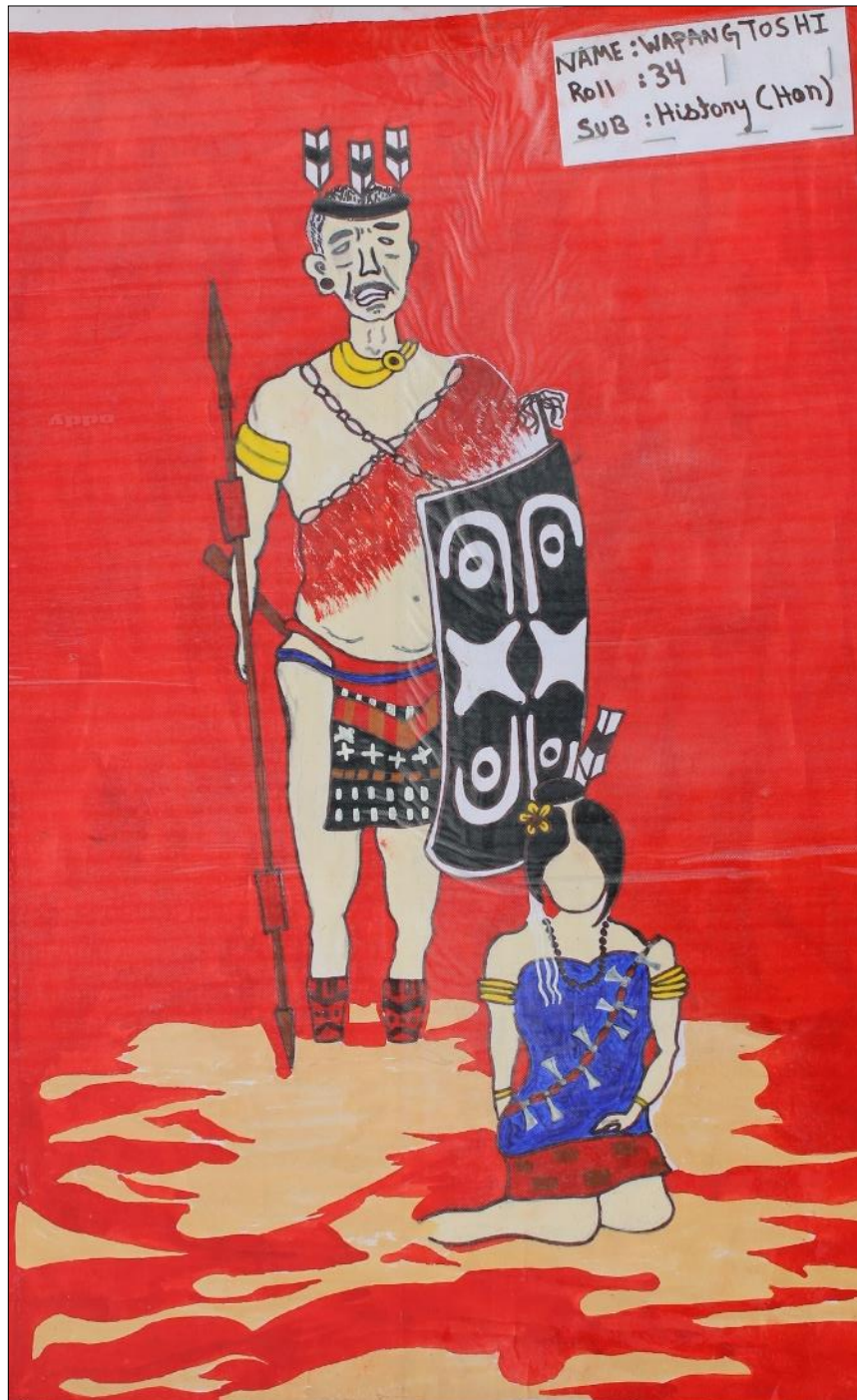
ARTISTIC MUSINGS



Painting is the practice of applying paint, pigment, color or other medium to a surface (support base). The medium is commonly applied to the base with a brush but other implements, such as knives, sponges, and airbrushes, can be used.

In art, the term 'painting' describes both the act and the result of the action. Painting is a mode of creative expression, and the forms are numerous. Drawing, composition or abstraction, among other aesthetics, may serve to manifest the expressive and conceptual intention of the practitioner. Paintings can be naturalistic and representational (as in a still life or landscape painting), photographic, abstract, be loaded with narrative content, symbolism, emotion or be political in nature. In this segment, both paintings and pencil arts has been included.

Painting by Wapang Toshi, BA 3rd Semester



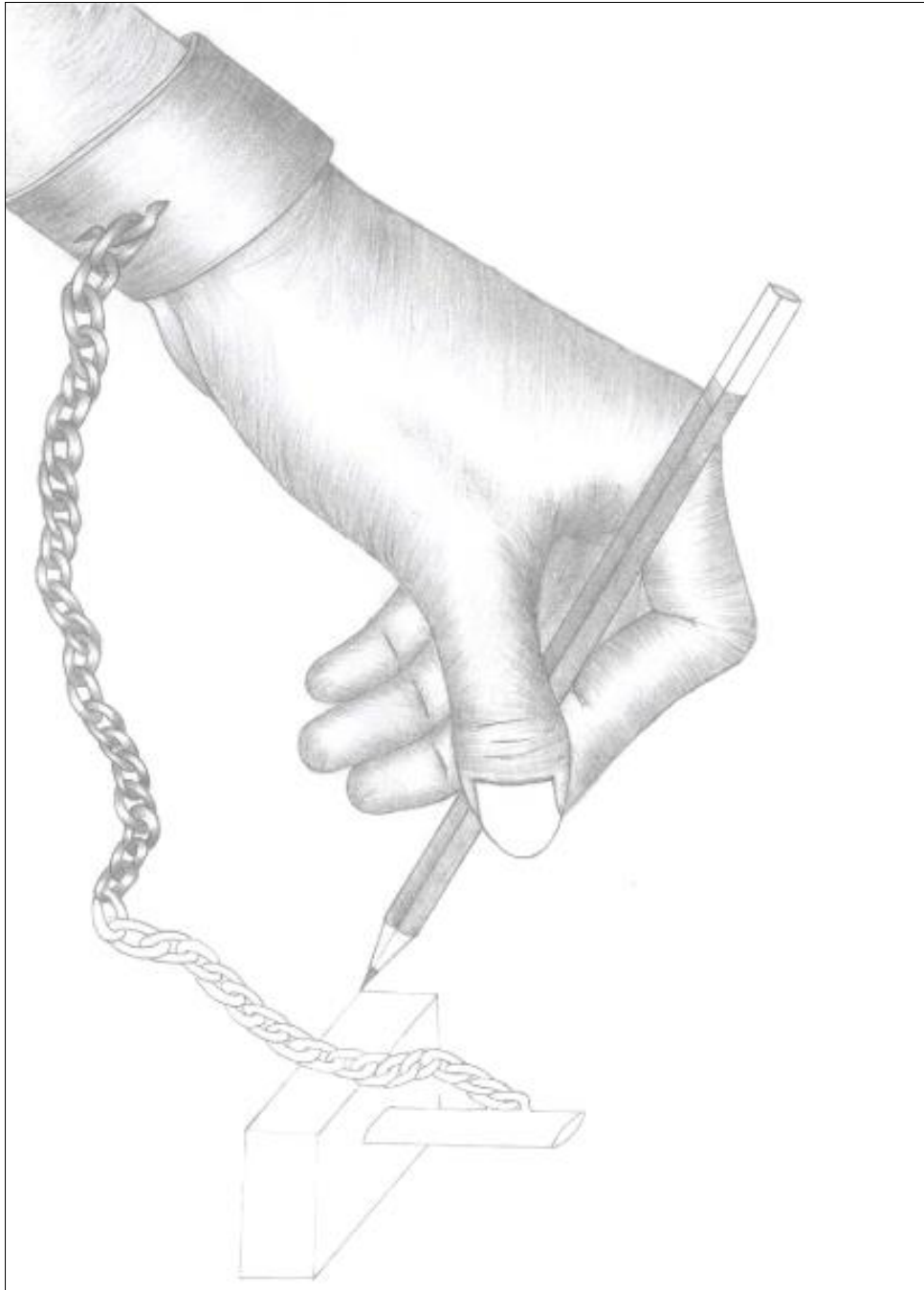
Painting by Yelibemo Kikon (Tetso Alumni)



Painting by Korili (Tetso Alumni)

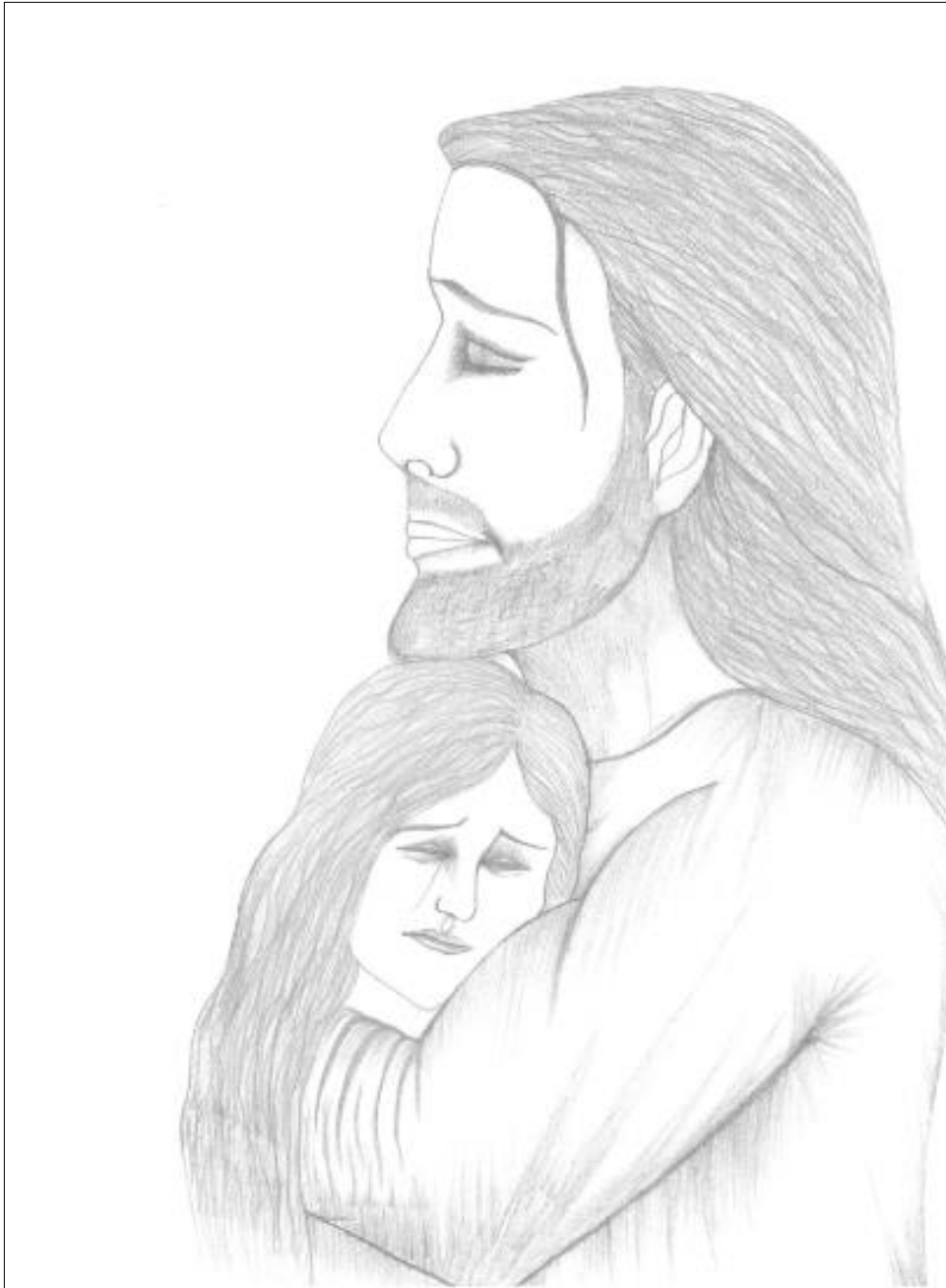


"Bound by My Own Creativity"
Painting by Shatilo Semy, BA 3rd Semester



"In Him I Trust"

Painting by Shatilo Semy, BA 3rd Semester



"La Belle Dame"

Painting by Shatilo Semy, BA 3rd Semester



"Untitled"

Painting by Shatilo Semy, BA 3rd Semester



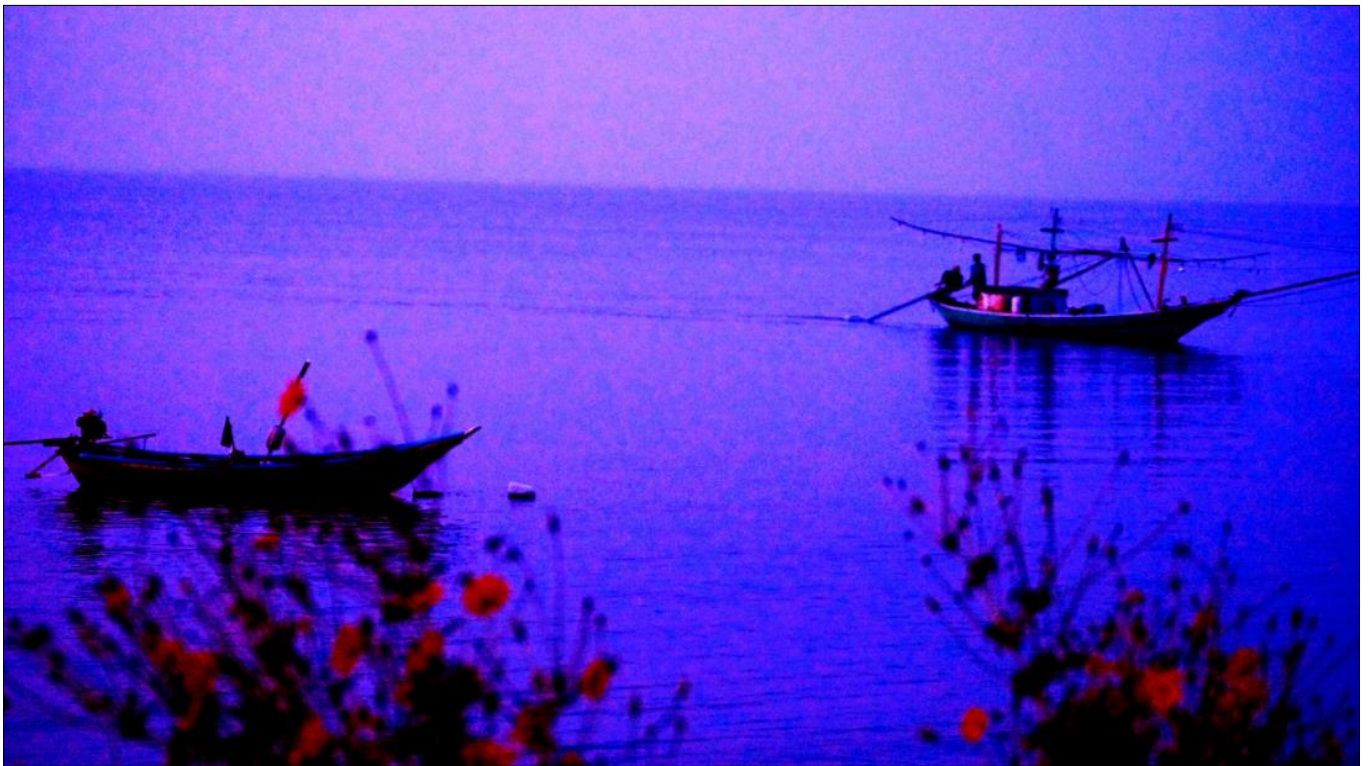
PHOTOGRAPHIC MUSINGS



A photograph or photo is an image created by light falling on a light-sensitive surface, usually photographic film or an electronic medium such as a CCD or a CMOS chip. Most photographs are created using a camera, which uses a lens to focus the scene's visible wavelengths of light into a reproduction of what the human eye would see. The process and practice of creating photographs is called photography. The word "photograph" was coined in 1839 by Sir John Herschel and is based on the Greek $\phi\omega\varsigma$ (phos), meaning "light", and $\gamma\rho\alpha\phi\acute{\eta}$ (graphê), meaning "drawing, writing", together meaning "drawing with light". In this section, we have included original arty captures of the magnificent world around us.

"Serendipity at Dawn"

Photograph by Veduvolu Khusoh (Asst Professor, Department of English)



"The Road Not Taken"

Photograph by Veduvolu Khusoh (Asst Professor, Department of English)



"Elixir"

Photograph by Veduvolu Khusoh (Asst Professor, Department of English)



"The Two Faces of Existence"

Photograph by Veduvolu Khusoh (Asst Professor, Department of English)



"King David's Muse"

Photograph by Veduvolu Khusoh (Asst Professor, Department of English)



"Untitled"

Photograph by Veduvolu Khusoh (Asst Professor, Department of English)



"A Naga Woman"

Photograph by Veduvolu Khusoh (Department of English)



"Bravehearts"

Photograph by Veduvolu Khusoh (Asst Professor, Department of English)



"Reflections"

Photograph by Veduvelu Khusoh (Asst Professor, Department of English)



"In Paths Untrodden"

Photograph by Veduvelu Khusoh (Asst Professor, Department of English)



"Renaissance"

Photograph by Veduvalu Khusoh (Asst Professor, Department of English)



"Wings On Me"

Photograph by Veduvolu Khusoh (Asst Professor, Department of English)



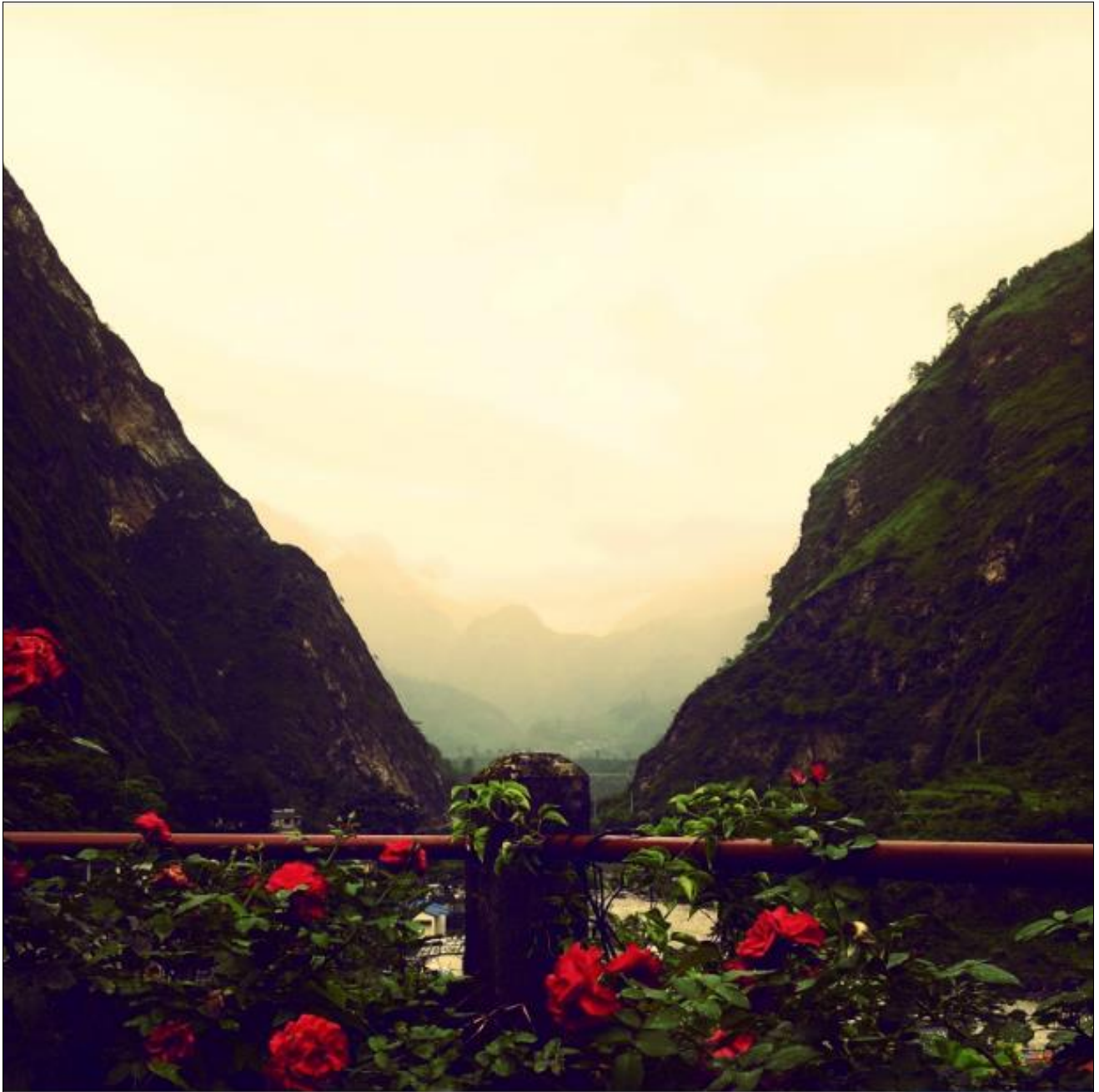
"The Harmonious Symphony"

Photograph by Veduvalu Khusoh (Asst Professor, Department of English)



"A lovelier flower on earth was ne'er sown"

Photograph by Veduvolu Khusoh (Asst Professor, Department of English)



"Forlorn Beauty"

Photograph by Veduvolu Khusoh (Asst Professor, Department of English)



"Paradise Regained"

Photograph by Daniel M Khan (Asst Professor, Department of Political Science)



"The Wrath of Zeus"

Photograph by Daniel M Khan (Asst Professor, Department of English)



"Untitled"

Photograph by Kvulo Lorin (Director-Administration, Tetso College)



"The Splendour of Modernity"

Photograph by Kvulo Lorin (Director-Administration, Tetso College)



"A Pleasant Winter Morn"

Photograph by Anjan K Behera, Department of English



"Nature's Easel"

Photograph by Anjan K Behera (Department of English)



"A Blissful Daydream"

Photograph by Anjan K Behera (Department of English)



"Load-shedding Delight"

Photograph by Anjan K Behera (Department of English)



Editors:

Kahor Raleng (HoD, Department of English)
Anjan K Behera (Asst Professor, Department of English)
Patomi Yepthomi (Asst Professor, Department of English)
Mhalo Ngullie (Asst Professor, Department of English)
Veduvolu Khusoh (Asst Professor, Department of English)

Advisor to the Editorial Board:

Dr Hewasa Lorin (Director- Student Services, Tetso College)

Concept and Page Layout:

Anjan K Behera

Cover page and Section Introductory Page Photography:

Veduvolu Khusoh

Cover page and Section Introductory Page Models:

Kaplao Konyak (BA 5th Semester), Ponglem Marcia Konyak (BA 5th Semester), A
Eyingbeni Odyuo (BA 3rd Semester), Meriben Yanthan (BA 3rd Semester),
Bendangrenla (BA 3rd Semester), Likivi Chishi (BA 3rd Semester), Aghali K Sumi (BA 3rd
Semester).

Cover page Design:

Mr Kvulo Lorin (Director-Administrator, Tetso College)

Contributors:

Poetic Musings: Toshimenla Ao, Ponglem Marcia Konyak, H Mercy, Yanuo Pojar,
Tokaho Awomi, Kuthonulu Ringa, Mhayani Lotha, Kahor Raleng, Anjan K Behera,
Yanbeni Kikon, Zhovelü Shijoh, Anubhav Tiakaba Kar, Boduve Nienu, Gaikhanlung

Panmei, Arifuddin, Gwakvulo Kemp, Loina Shohe, Peteneituo Verie, Naomi Aye, L Meilung Phom, Buhio B Lam Khamniungan, Patomi Yephthomi, Ester E, Tsachopa T Sangtam, K Musom Khamniungan, Sakoyule, Thangam Jigdung, Nilesanuo Kense, Narolemla Chang.

Prosaic Musings: Anjan K Behera, Loina Shohe, Kaplao Konyak, Sulivi Assumi, Dr Hewasa Lorin,

Artistic Musings: Wapang Toshi, Yelibemo Kikon, Korili, Shatilo Semy.

Photographic Musings: Veduvolu Khusoh, Daniel M Khan, Kvulo Lorin, Anjan K Behera