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EDITORIAL: SHORT STORIES SECTION

"When you read a short story, you come out a little more aware and a little more in love with the world around you", says George Saunders. I remember reading Selma Lagerlof's *The Rattrap* in my textbook and the renewal of my faith in the goodness as if I were the peddler myself and Edla Willmansson is one of those unforgettable fictional characters which will certainly outlive evil! 'On the Face of it' by Susan Hill is another life changing short story. Isaac Asimov's *The Last Question* is perhaps the quintessence, and possibly the fruit (who knows?), of all scientific and philosophical quest. Let there be light! Ah! How can one forget? And how can a person be the same as before after reading a good short story- the transition too great and too quick, across the span of a few pages! "A good short story would take me out of myself and then stuff me back in, oversized, now and uneasy with the fit", says David Sedaris. The art of short fiction is irreplaceable in this context, all the more so because in the crafty arrangement of words within a short space, one meets characters like Edla Willmansson whose imprint would always be a guiding lamp, a welcoming, consoling an

d resurrecting illuminated valley in the darkness of the real world and like Sadat Hasan Manto's *Toba Tek Singh* that would never cease persuading us to question our sanity and keeping our conscience alive.

I encourage all the aspiring writers to begin with short stories to be able to know your craft better. Grab a pen and start writing. "Write a short story every book. It's not possible to write 52 bad short stories in a row."- Ray Bradbury.

We received some amazing entries for this issue of Lapis Lazuli, my personal favorite being Dr. Ratna Raman's **Life-Cycle Spiral**. It's a story that grips the reader right at the beginning and never lets them put it down before they have reached the end. **Aabhi**, **Self-immolation**, **Curfew** and **A Practical Joke** are the other powerful stories. All of these enthrall and teach. They 'take us out of ourselves and stuffs us back in, oversized'. I congratulate all the writers whose stories have found their well-deserved space in our journal and thank them for sharing their works with us.

I wish all the readers 'happy reading!' and expect their reviews and feedbacks so that we can serve literature better.

Aqib Sabir
FICTION Editor
Lapis Lazuli- An International Literary Journal