

## POETRY

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### **Trickling Manipulations**

Notifications pour in,  
It's been a while  
that you've heard from them.  
It doesn't register.  
Your mind is yet to go back.  
Remember the manipulations.  
For a minute, you're convinced,  
It's genuine concern.  
And then it follows,  
The Truth.  
Laced with obvious accusations.  
A little sting to your forgetting heart.  
Showing up with snippets and hints.  
Uncovering old dusty graves.  
A little charade of blame games.  
Oh the show must go on.  
The culprit glorified,  
The victim hanged.  
Sneers and subtle grins,  
Hanging up from gutted walls –  
Reminiscent.  
Gurgling, trickling manipulations.

## **Morning After Dark**

How do you wake up  
Morning after a storm?  
Do you count your damages  
Or just move on?  
Does the soft howling,  
The restless wind,  
Pick up on hints  
Somewhere deep within?  
Silhouettes danced  
By the window  
All night long.  
Deeply rooted trees resisting  
The urge to crash down.  
The ancient nurturing rain  
Oh! So angry! Tormenting  
Saplings she raised.  
Morning after dark,  
The wind still hums  
A melancholy tune.  
The bird go on  
Joyfully chirping  
As if nothing shook  
Their place of rest.

## Ghosts

Stashes of hidden treasure,  
Furiously dumped on the sidewalk.  
A cleanse, a detox, sage bundles  
Fuming away bad spirits.  
A little friendly visit,  
Box wrapped in intricate ribbons,  
criss-cross patterns – flattery and sweet talk.  
a pop-up box, the clown jumps up.  
Shrieking fears and terrors of the night  
Right back inside.  
Cleanse away, Cleanse away again,  
Small arrangements,  
Pictures stashed away.  
Only visitors with permission  
Bring Ghosts trapped in boxes.  
Handing out Souvenirs,  
Teasing the air for response.  
Is it absolute lack of concern?  
Merely petty boredom?  
Second time's a charm,  
Or is it the third??  
Fishing out cast off trash,  
Holding it out with smirks.  
Little reminders dancing.  
The air still holds sage fumes,  
Stacks of sage lying in anticipation.  
With *friendly* faces,  
Trash can never go far enough,  
Another sage on fire.  
Another cleanse.  
Smirking faces,  
Scouting for damage.  
Cruel visitors with permission,  
Bring back intricate gifts of ghosts.

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### BIO- NOTE

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Arantxa M.I. Fernandes is a young assistant professor in Goa. She discovered her passion for teaching almost accidentally. Her goal as teacher is to be the person she needed when she was younger. She is down to earth, loves pets, fashion, and compassionate people.