

Poetry Series

Sandra Martyres
- poems -

Publication Date:
2011

Publisher:
Poemhunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive

Sandra Martyres(5th October)

I hold a Master's Degree in Economics and work for an International Financial Institution. I enjoy writing Poetry more as a hobby, a form of expression and relaxation. Other interests include Reading, Philately, Theatre and Travelling.

Her Diamond Ring - A Modern Haiku Series

it glows through
the dark night
her engagement ring

it won't be replaced
nor added to
a wedding ring

he died that morning
a freak accident
in Afghanistan

she sits crouched
in the darkness
of her bedroom

tears slide off
her diamond ring
drowning her dreams

Sandra Martyres

The Make-Over

She dusted out all the cobwebs,
Ran the Hoover across the room.
No more darkness and misery,
She even drew the heavy drapes
And let in some much wanted light.
The smell of must wafted away.

For years the lady had fretted,
Over illusiveness of love.
She'd buried herself in the past,
Until she chanced to see her face,
In one of the few mirrors left.
The stark image shocked her deeply.

Her lifestyle had taken its toll,
Her shiny eyes had lost their sheen,
Her face wore a grey wrinkled look,
She now bore a strong resemblance
To her Gran - unbelievable,
Today she would dust herself out.

She would focus her energy,
On making that dramatic change.
No longer would she avoid sunshine,
She'd put in some extra effort
To try to forgive and forget,
Life had so much to offer her!

Sandra Martyres

* For Sandra Fowler

Let's light a candle in Sandra Fowler's
memory,
Our talented poet friend who left us
recently.

The winner of numerous awards
yet never proud,
Her sheer kindness made her stand out
in any crowd.

While on earth she did with her poetry
all of us charm,
May the Lord welcome her to heaven's
peace and calm.

Amen

Sandra Martyres

* Of Angels And Devils

The angel of love
rushed past her quickly,
before she had time
to stop and greet him.

The angel of peace
gave her a quiet smile
and hurried away,
she could not catch him.

The angel of luck
disappeared before,
she noticed him pass
she was really doomed.

The devil of hate
smiled enticingly,
and she responded
he stayed to stalk her.

The devil of rage
stopped for a quick chat,
she entertained him
he came back often.

The devil of fright
did at her door alight,
she did not shun him
and lived in fear.

Fright, hate and rage stayed with her
Luck, peace and love eluded her.....

Copyright © 2012 Sandra MARTYRES

All rights reserved

Sandra Martyres

*a Candlelight Dinner - Triolet Poem

Candlelight and champagne dinners
She associated with love
The hallmark of all romancers
Candlelight and champagne dinners
Then she met manipulators
They shocked the young and naive dove
Candlelight and champagne dinners
She associated with love

Sandra Martyres

*the Sea Took Them Away

the sea rolled back slowly
guiltily surveying,
the damage left behind

last night it had swallowed
many tiny houses
and trees along the coast

some dead leaves still floated
on the crest of the waves
proof of the havoc caused

a half naked child walked
right to the waters edge
kicking the sand he sobbed

his tears vanished quite soon
drowned in the sea water
until he cried no more

seeming truly contrite
the waves gently touched him
as if to comfort him

he had lost his parents
his home - now all alone
an orphan of the sea.....

Sandra Martyres

A Banana Peel

A banana peel
Lay innocuously
On the floor beside her

She raised herself
From her easy chair
And lo and behold

She slipped on the peel
And went sliding right
Across the floor

There was no stopping her
All her 100 kgs went
Along with her

Some expressed concern
About the state of the floor
But no one worried about her

A few hours later
She was back her leg in a cast
With a killing look in her eyes

Little Johnny innocently
Remarked that she just needed
To follow her own rules

Had she just looked
Where she was going
Things would have been different! !

Sandra Martyres

A Banker's Prayer

Dear God,
Let our borrowers pay us back
We can take no more flack
We have to remain on track
Or face the inevitable sack
Governments, tax payers, citizens
You name them
They are watching us
With focussed eagle eyes
We are literally surrounded by spies

Any whiff about a distressed asset
Or a loan turning toxic
Even if it is only an empty rumour
Is enough to send our stocks south ward
And of course provide the usual fodder
For dinner time conversations
Which continue to dwell unendingly
On the familiar greed narrative

Bankers' bonuses and compensation
Are believed to have been the cause
Of the recent financial crisis
Apparently we did deliberately
Court disaster by
Totally disregarding long term risk
Just to take home meatier pay packages
Dear God if this were really true
We would not be here now
Offering this fervent prayer to you

Sandra Martyres

A Bunch Of Red Ribbons

Untidy, unkempt hair
A creased muddy dress
Old socks dusty shoes
Tears running down
Her unwashed face
The child was a real mess

A kindly lady passed by
Bending down she
Whispered something
To the little girl which
Brought a smile to her
Tear stained grubby face

Happily reaching out for
Her outstretched hand
The child left only to return
Well scrubbed in clean clothes
Clutching tightly her gift
A bunch of bright red ribbons

When asked what happened
She said the lady told her that
The magic ribbons would shine
Everytime she washed her hair
And she would look as pretty as
Little Red Riding Hood

Sandra Martyres

A Bygone Era

I look back on the days
When children attended school
For an all round education
When bankers were respected people
Who accepted deposits and extended loans
When cricketers were considered gentlemen
Who played the game sportingly
To extol their batting style and bowling accuracy
When music was played on a gramophone
Or listened to from a radio station
When all it took to bring a smile on a child's face
Was a visit to an ice-cream parlour to
Taste the latest Sundae on the menu
Today, I look back at the past
With a sense of nostalgia and
Perhaps with a little bit of regret too
But we have to live in the present
We have to transform ourselves
Or risk being treated
As fossils or relics of the past
So I try very hard not to bat an eyelid
When I see children wasting their spare time
On their play stations instead of
Reading a book or enjoying outdoor games
When the Twenty/ Twenty cricket team easily
Sets aside the image of the Gentleman's game
By playing instead for power and endorsements
When reading novels is considered passé and libraries
Have no takers – they wear a deserted look
When education simply means getting ninety percent
By attending coaching classes who guarantee
The desired percentage for a handsome fee
But I do find it difficult not to squirm at the new role
That the once respected bankers play
Financial intermediation they call it which means
Matching borrowers and investors,
Structuring exotics creating tailor made products
For the so-called financially sophisticated.....
It was all this unfettered exuberance that

Led to the sub-prime fiasco, forcing
Governments into overdrive mode to
Recapitalise unviable banks and take drastic steps
To put the economies back on track
Amidst at all this chaos and confusion
I long to go back in time to the bygone era.

Sandra Martyres

A Candle Goes Out

When the cruel winds of change
Blew over his household
Leaving the family in dire straits
He never once grumbled
His spirit resembled a candle
Blowing in the wind
Defying all the negative forces
His light never blew out
It may have dimmed
But only to brighten again
He lighted up the lives
Of his near and dear ones
And those of his neighbors too
He gave hope to the hopeless
Helped feed the hungry
Placed a friendly arm around the lonely
Dried the tears of the unhappy
Now his candle has finally
Blown out completely
But his life's good work will
Like a legend will live on...

(Inspired by the passing of a very good man and Elton John's - A Candle in the Wind)

Sandra Martyres

A Candlestick

A burning wick
A bright yellow flame
Flickering bright
A little candlestick
Helps to light up her life
Through the long and dark
Cold winter's night.

Sandra Martyres

A Celebration Gone Wrong...

A trendy new restaurant
In a chic part of the city
The family was celebrating
The arrival of their new puppy
"Dogs are not allowed"
Read the restaurant Notice Board
So the puppy had to be despatched
Reluctantly of course
Back home to his new kennel
Some of the evening's pleasure
Was definitely lost
The children were not happy
How could they celebrate
Without their new pet dog
That triggered a family debate
Should they go ahead and sup
Or return home to be with the pup
After much discussion
They decided to set aside thoughts
Of a whining puppy and have dinner
Menus changed hands
Animated discussions ensued
About the choice of some delectable food
In the midst of the ordering
They heard an explosion
All jumped up in the confusion
Only to see two gun totting youths enter
It was perhaps they who'd fired the shots
"Hands up everyone" they screamed
In a petrified voice little Johnny said
"Thank God the puppy is not around...
He has no hands to put up..."
That was the last time they heard his voice
A stray bullet from the terrorist's gun
Just hit him and he was down
His Dad bent down to pick him up
But again he could not
This time the terrorist's gun
Was carefully trained at him

And then he too caved in...
The other guests watched helplessly
While the terrorists pumped bullets relentlessly
Soon there was no one left to tell the tale
The gun totting youths hurried away
Before the cops could block their way
Another case of mindless carnage
Life and property destroyed
There were only unanswered questions
On everyone's mind
Why did they do it to innocent people?
And what did they hope to find?

Sandra Martyres

A Con Game?

The Consultant systematically illuminated
All the darkest recesses of the old office
And smiled cunningly as the worms
Crawled slowly out of the woodwork
Making an unwilling appearance
His plan was seemingly on track
Act One of his mission was complete
He lowered the curtains with aplomb

Act Two would be more complicated
He had to deal with the displaced worms
Placing them in a single can seamlessly
Would definitely be a daunting task
If he were unable to find the right bait
Being resourceful he conjured up a scheme
Every worm who accepted a deep discounted
Stock Option could leave the room quietly.

There was another caveat however
They needed to board the common transport
To take a break at a very snazzy resort
The all too eager greedy worms accepted
Crawling over each other to reach the car
Taking them to a place almost like heaven
But to their dismay they were actually headed
Towards Hell, the white collar workers prison

Act Three was of course the jailer's affair
He had to make sure that he rounded up
All the worms and placed them in custody
A rather difficult task as they were all literally
Paralysed and in a complete state of shock
How could they, the experts, get conned so easily
So they remained glued to their seats stubbornly
And how the jailer extricated them is another story.

Sandra Martyres

A Greek Tragedy

They say with conviction that
Tragedies regularly happen
This is unfortunate especially
When they are of the Greek variety

Here one of the world's oldest
Civilisations is on the brink
Having courted disaster with
A strong sense of determination

Although Greece's contribution
To the European Union's GDP
At two percent is rather paltry
Its actions caused a major tremor

First Greece shook, then did the Euro
The US was not far behind and soon
The whole world was in panic mode
Markets and sentiments tanked again

Reacting fast European mints went
Into action to print billions of Euros
To save not only the Greeks from a real tragedy
But the other PIIGS from the slaughter house

The world heaved a sigh of relief but now
Belt-tightening and generous contributions
To the national exchequers are demanded
The question is whether the piglets will comply

NB: Another economic disaster that was waiting to happen....Greece was the first to be caught in the act of cooking its books....The other PIIGS (Portugal, Italy, Ireland, Spain) who could have problems with their troubled economies forced the Eurpoean Union to take action to protect the Euro and the future of the Union.

A Haiku Selection

A gentle wind blows
Across the meadows and fields
Tossing leaves around

Dark black stallions
Run miles across the farm land
Majestically

The squirrel hides nuts
In the hollows of the tree
For a rainy day

Sandra Martyres

A Humble Poetic Tribute

Just a word of sincere thanks
To a friend I met on PH
One to whom I owe a huge debt
Not of the current toxic variety
But one that I can never repay
He has always been a positive critic
Making me aware of poetic logic
And the nuances of this fine art
All of which are truly important
For the uninitiated making a start
I am now encouraged to explore
New techniques and to read more
As I am clearly and reasonably convinced
That if the right interest is evinced
Even a mediocre poet can aspire
To bring into his poetry some fire
Thank you Michael
For this poetry lesson

(Dedicated to Michael Harmon - a very talented poet on PH)

Sandra Martyres

A Little Ditty

He was caught looking at a hooker
It landed him in a pressure cooker
With his wife letting out the steam

Now he is under house arrest
Until he can pass the roving eye test
With his wife as the examiner

Three weeks have passed uneventfully
He is the dutiful husband, yours obediently
With his wife still watching over ominously

Sandra Martyres

A Lost Poodle

He walked through the woods
With a flickering lantern
In search of his white poodle
The little dog had strayed away
Each step that he took, seemed to echo
The more silently he tried to walk
The louder the crackling of dry leaves
Sounded in his ears raising more fears
He tried calling out to the poodle by name
'Tipper- Tipper' he shouted louder and louder
But to no avail – the pooch did not respond
The woods became darker and darker
And his lantern dimmer and dimmer
Soon he felt warm winds pass slowly
On either side of him and then
A strange sensation overcame him
He broke out into a cold sweat
Wondering if it were a ghost haunting him
So terrorised he was, that even when
He shouted the dog's name again
No sound could be heard
After that he lost track of what happened
Until he awakened to see his anxious Mother
Peering down at him in complete dismay
With Tipper right behind her wagging his tail
He sighed with relief when he realised
That he was in bed and it was just a bad dream...

Sandra Martyres

A Mysterious Neighbour

Sprightly and very much alive
For someone seventy-five
Wearing her trade mark sunglasses
To hide any trace of wrinkles
Are these accessories
Armour to preserve
Her ever youthful image?
Every gesture
Is carefully choreographed
To leave behind an aura of mystery
No one knows her history
Some think she may have been
A fashion designer or a
Classical dancer of yesteryear
Which she neither confirms nor denies
All this conjecture perhaps
Stems from her own wild imaginings
She drops little hints while talking
Leaving people to conclude
That after an illustrious past
She has settled down
In the vicinity to a more
Peaceful and relaxed existence
Yet no one dares question her
Fearing her sarcasm
With haiku-like concision
While fielding difficult questions
From curious neighbours
So she will continue to be an enigma
Until someone uncovers
Her true story –if there is one

Sandra Martyres

A New Romance

She watched him from the shadows
Too shy to say 'hi' she was still suffering
From teenage gawkiness and feared
He would not return her greeting
This handsome young man who
Walked around with an air of true
Self-confidence made her even more
Diffident about even exchanging a smile
Then suddenly to her astonishment
He just turned around and smiled
Then plucking a rose he offered it to her
After that there was no turning back
A new romance was born.....

Sandra Martyres

A Noughties' Flashback

Going back to the early days of Y2K
Almost one and all will recall the times
When conflicted analysts helped to propel
Flaky tech stocks to astronomical heights
Sure the investors smiled as they watched
Their profits inflate like hot air balloons
Then after heading towards the sun
The flakes melted and fell to the ground
Many a happy dream was washed away
And many a disillusioned techie went astray
Faith in the markets was at its lowest ebb.

To avoid the vicissitudes of a depression
Central bankers opened up their vaults
And soon the markets were awash with funds
In stepped the bankers and refuelled their tanks
With all the cheap money sloshing around
The debt-fuelled monsters went on the rampage
While the indulgent regulators turned a blind eye
Soon dark stormy clouds appeared on the horizon
A financial tsunami was about to be unveiled
The first tremors appeared when Northern Rock
Shook like an aspen forcing the Government to step in
To save it from crumbling – then came the real shock

The ailing Bear Stearns fell into the arms
Of a reluctant suitor for a really paltry sum
Another iconic institution -Lehman tanked overnight
There were no takers and it faded away in broad daylight
Soon the waltzing Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae
Ran out of partners leaving the financial world in disarray
By which time the US Government decided to step in
To keep the music playing and the dancers on the floor
It also propped up AIG to prevent it going out of the door
The good news - a few big players like JP Morgan Chase
Managed to stay in the race and keep dancing with grace

Some of the other known icons went out fishing
Hoping to catch a shoal of TARP fish swimming

In a bid to help ease their thirst, hunger and pain
As they watched the evaporation of their ill-gotten gains
The tarnished Goldman was able to quickly dry its tears
By proving to be a better risk taker than all its peers
Now the focus has shifted back to the Regulators
Those worthies who actually stoked the boom
Are now left with the mops and the broom
To monitor and clean up the remaining mess
Maybe when all is finally over they will manage
To win a booby prize for sorting out the damage...

Sandra Martyres

A Passing Cyclone...(Senryu)

A Cyclone would pass
The coast - said the weather men
But it by passed us

Sandra Martyres

A Ruined Escapade

Very late one night
Devoid of any fright
He tip toed outside
Hoping to hitch a ride
But luck deserted him
A big dog chased him
He tip toed back inside riled
But a more pensive & wiser child
Parental advice he'd now heed
Despite his adventure need

Sandra Martyres

A Sip Of Wine

The little boy's eyes followed
The wine glass as its level dropped
He wondered what it tasted like
His Mother seemed to savour each sip
She always seemed happy while drinking
Quite unusual given her sad disposition

Today he decided he must taste it
A longing that he could not control
So he focussed his attention on the glass
Waiting for her to leave it unattended
So great was his concentration that
He did not notice if anyone else was watching

Finally his moment of happiness did come
Someone called out to his mother
She placed the glass on the mantel piece
And walked in the direction of the caller
The young boy seized the opportunity
He leapt over a footstool and grabbed the glass

Just as he was about to take his first sip
Something strange happened a picture fell
From the wall with a loud thud and so did the glass
From his shaking hand - he watched aghast
As the burgundy coloured fluid flowed out
Onto the white marble flooring staining it

He was tempted to lick the ground but
Seeing his grandma's photograph in the broken frame
He desisted, overcome by a sense of guilt and fear
By which time his mother was back on the scene
Pointing an accusatory finger at him for not only
Spilling her wine but for the two breakages as well

Sandra Martyres

A Social Evil

The desperate man
Just got rid of
His only daughter
Her crime
She is a woman
His reason
He has no money
To offer as dowry
Her problem
No bridegroom
Was willing to
Marry her without
Any compensation
His solution
Get rid of the problem
This was reported in
A local newspaper

Sandra Martyres

A Special Prayer

To you O Lord we send
Up a special prayer
Shower your blessings aplenty
On this young and lovely lady
Rid her of her pain and suffering
And peace and happiness to her bring
Give her life a second lease
Free her from this dreaded disease
Put a smile back on her face
You can do it all with your loving grace
Amen

(Specially written for Jon's young friend who is suffering)

Sandra Martyres

A Spooky Evening

The little dog barked at the moon
While the green ghosts flitted around
The dimly lit spaces in the compound
Everything seemed and looked spooky
Even ordinary people walked about
Clad in strange white long robes
Wearing black masks over their faces
Leaving only their eyes clearly exposed
Had they turned into spirits suddenly
'Is this for real? ' murmured the visitor
He felt as if he were in a dream
Which he likened to the famous
Ides of March in the days of Caesar
'No silly today is Halloween' cried the child
'Now will it be a trick or a treat? '

Sandra Martyres

A Stray Dog

He wore a leather collar
Seemed to have a pedigree
Yet no one claimed him
He remained a street dog
One who barked incessantly
To announce his state of hunger
Or that a stranger was on the prowl
On all such occasions there were
The usual dog lovers around
To repond to his every sound
He was the general mascot
And everyone adored him

Children were greeted happily
With friendly licks and wags
He always shared their goodies
Biscuits, cakes and smoothies
He answered to many names
Which many considered strange
He was responding to the voices
He could have stayed in any home
Yet he preferred his usual spot
Near a lampost on the street
Except when it was very cold
He'd camp indoors for the night

This went on for a few years
He was part of the community
Despite his gypsy life style
He was a very polite canine
Never attacking any food until
It was formally offered to him
Then one day calamity struck
The mascot chased a petty thief
Who reacted very violently
He picked up stone and aimed it at
The dogs head leaving him dead
And the street in a state of grief

A Vegetarian's Nightmare

Ram the ever affable Indian
And a very strict vegetarian
Courageously agreed to dine
With his overseas colleagues
At a popular Chinese Eatery
Situated in the heart of the city

He had no idea what to expect
To his complete and utter dismay
On entering the stylish restaurant
While strange flavours greeted him
His dining partners seemed at ease
They did not even notice him squirming

As they waited to be seated
Ram noticed a waiter approaching
A nearby table with a live wriggling crab
That fascinated the children who kept
Touching it against parental advice
Ram was clearly in the wrong place

His dining nightmare had just begun
His first reaction was to up and run
But given his over polite disposition
He shut his eyes and sat at the table
Pleading with all the Gods that
There would be no more live crab calls

Soon he was shaken out of his reverie
When asked to place his starter order
The Steward recommended shark fin soup
Ram, in an embarrassed voice mentioned
That he was a pure vegetarian and after
A lot of explanations the steward left

While the group waited to be served
Animated conversations followed
Chinese food being the topic for discussion
Ram tried to distance himself from the subject

Until someone described a monkey brain delicacy
With all the gory graphic presentation details

The speaker got carried away and continued
Speaking unendingly on this culinary rarity
He aired his views and those of his friends too
By which time Ram was absolutely appalled
He forgot about being polite and literally
Jumped off his seat and ran for his life

Sandra Martyres

A View From My Window - Monsoon Senryu Series

grey skies touch the sea
spelling a dull cloudy day
rain gear required

no birds to be seen
fearing treacherous weather
they remain nest bound

a lone cat stretches
lazily on the wet lawn
and saunters away

office goers rush
into their buildings quickly
to avoid the rain

a near panic scene
on a true manic Monday
high tides worry all

Sandra Martyres

Abracadabra

Abracadabra, all I need is my magic wand
To take me away from chaos and danger
So that I will no longer need to wander
In search of a new home and a new wife
I will be able to lead a different and better life

Abracadabra, where is my magic wand
I am still leading the life of a vagabond
With my sack of worthless bonds
Like all other aspirants to the world of riches
I fell for Investment Bankers' sales pitches

Abracadabra, I am still parted from my magic wand
I cannot turn back the clock
There are no more hidden resources to unlock
As my financial status gets weaker
My future really looks bleaker

Abracadabra, now with the new Presidential savior
The financial tricksters will be in the slammer
And the tricked ones like me can hope with a tad of glee
That TARP will bring us financial peace and harmony
Maybe I will soon my house recover
And with it, a new and attentive lover

Sandra Martyres

Accused (Senryu)

Bernie Madoff is
Accused of making off with
Investor's millions

Sandra Martyres

Alone In The Wilderness

She walks in the wilderness
Searching for a new identity
She is done with her folks
They caused her to run away
Each crushed leaf under her feet
A sad reminder of a broken heart,
And a tattered spirit- no more tears
Left for her to shed, dry eyed
She hopes fate will lead her
Down the right path this time

Having led a life of sheer terror
She could not make another error
Of choice leading to further despair
Her life would then be beyond repair
Battered Egos do not heal easily
They have to be handled carefully
Would she find someone gentle
Like the new leaf springing up
On an upper branch of the tree
Or would she end up again in misery

Sandra Martyres

Alphabetic Inspiration

When all else fails
The Economists look to
The alphabets for inspiration
Will the economic recovery be V shaped?
Yes indeed, say the very optimistic
With the stimulus package
There is only one way
That world economy can go and it is up
Not really, say the less convinced
It will probably be U shaped
The down-turn will stay for sometime
Before it slowly climbs up once more
Then come the zigzag theorists
The shape is more likely to be a W they cry
The economy having gone down
Will first go up and then down again
Before moving up with more confidence
Last but not least, are the die-hard pessimists
They believe that the mother of all depressions
Will not end in a hurry and have forecast an L shape
Meaning that, having gone down
The economy will stabilise at the current bottom
Given that the theories have so far
Centred around only four
Of the twenty-six alphabets
There is still plenty of scope for further
Alphabetic inspiration.

Sandra Martyres

An Ailment Of Another Kind

Suffering from word paralysis
He consulted Doctor Dictionary
A fairly accurate diagnosis was made
Soon the words began to move
But without any co-ordination
There was no sentence formation
Surgery was then recommended
To mend the fractured joints
But the operation was unsuccessful
The patient finally had to call it a day
From poetic activity he stayed away.

Note: Another Take on Writers' Block

Sandra Martyres

An Artist's View

On a cold wintry evening marked by clear skies
The image of a golden ball shines on the ocean
The young artist concentrates on the water
And keenly observes the changing colours
From bright yellow to deeper shades of orange
Every detail of which is reflected in the sea mirror
He notes the fading rays turn to deep red welts
Cutting across the darkening skies
And the new moon struggling slowly to rise
He soon picks up his brush and paints vigorously
He has to capture this special moment on his canvas
Before night falls or else this beautiful moment
A miracle of nature will fade into oblivion

Sandra Martyres

An Eagle's Wing

The eagle just flapped its wings
Before making a graceful landing
On the roof of any nearby building
The young boy always watched in awe
Captivated by the sheer size of the bird
His dream was to fly on its wing
And enjoy the experience of
Soaring high up in the blue skies
He knew it would happen one day
And it did –the only difference
He flew, not on an eagle's wing
But seated in an aeroplane

Sandra Martyres

An Observation

Thunder does frighten
Lightning fires the imagination
Rain cools the impact

Sandra Martyres

An Ode To Paul

A soothe- saying invertebrate
Takes the world stage by storm
By accurately predicting winners
And by deduction the losers too
The ecstatic winners are thrilled
To offer him goodies and publish
Eulogies about his stunning feat
In accurately predicting their wins
The losers of course have their guns
Trained on the poor psychic octopus

Some onlookers observe the scene
With a quiet sense of amusement
As the creature hogs the headlines
"Preserve him, give him 24/7 security"
Shout the soccer tournament winners
"Get your pans ready for fried octopus
Hopefully Paul will make a tasty dish"
Shout the more distraught losers
The muse in me, sits back and wonders
"What is the world coming to - if our
Future lies in the tentacles of an octopus! ! "

Sandra Martyres

And Life Goes On

Daily at the crack of dawn
He would sit in his armchair
Sipping a cup of
Cloyingly sweet tea
Not to displease
His granddaughter
Who had prepared it

For him it was just
Another uneventful day
With the birds as usual
Singing in the trees
And the dog lazily
Slouched on the floor
Right beside him

Occasionally he would
Look towards the sky
As if to thank God
For all the blessings received
Life was not unpleasant
Despite his loneliness
Following his wife's death

He would spend long hours
Talking to the plants
Believing that kind words
Made them grow better
Similarly he would entertain
His grandchildren with
Tales from the days of yore

His neighbours envied
His peaceful life style until
It struck them one day that
He always seemed confined
To his armchair, only then
Did they realise that
He was completely blind.

Sandra Martyres

Anger

You always said to forgive was divine
For me who trusted you that was fine
Until I accidently saw you in action
When you spewed venom at one faction
Of the community - for their only fault
When you passed by - they did not halt

You know Dad - I lost all respect for you
You did what we weren't allowed to do
You lied to Mother almost everyday
Telling her that work kept you away
But that you loved and cared for us
So she needed to cope up without a fuss

When your affair with Lisa was revealed
From Mother I kept it carefully concealed
She'd have broken like my porcelain toy
And I'd have truly been an orphaned boy
So I just stored my anger in a large bin
Waiting for a chance to put you right in

As told to me by a young boy who hated his father - and is still coming to terms
with his disturbed childhood

Sandra Martyres

Another Face In The Crowd

Long sinewy fingers
Typing furiously
E-mail after e-mail
On a laptop
That is falling apart

He happens to pass by
He exchanges a pleasantry
She does not reply
Just continues typing
He feels slighted
She does not know
Her mind on the word flow

Minutes later
His patience wears out
He begins to shout
She seems not to care
Or remains unaware
That he is around
Waiting for a voice a sound
Other than her fingers
Tapping on the laptop keys

Finally she is done
She shuts the laptop
Places it in the case
And, as if in a hurry
To run a race
Moves fast across the floor
Heading towards the door

He chases behind her
But she is too quick
On the street
She beats a hasty retreat
And like a phantom
She vanishes into the crowd

She is nameless
One more of Mumbai's
Unknown working Moms
Leaving home early
Returning back late
Only to start working again
For her children and her mate
She has no time for pretensions
Or his unsolicited attentions

Sandra Martyres

Arranged Marriages

At the appointed time
He appeared in the hall way
Tall dark and handsome
Exactly meeting the description
In the matrimonial advertisement
She entered shyly all dressed up
With fresh flowers in her black
Well oiled long tresses wearing
A traditional silk embroidered sari
She sat on the chair across the room
Stealing coy glances from the corner
Of her dark eyes adorned with mascara

No words were exchanged until
She was sent inside to serve tea
A very traditional introduction
Looked upon as a kind of ritual in
The practice of arranged marriages
She returns with a tray of sweets
And walks towards her intended
His Mother promptly asks if she
Had prepared all of them even before
He has helped himself to any thing

The expression on the girls face changes
She casts a concerned look at the woman
Who could be her future mother-in-law
And announces quietly that they have a cook
O dear, thinks her Mother she has ruined
All her chances with this good looking boy
Why can she not rest her tongue a little
And just stay with a smile and coy looks
The boy diffuses the tension and asks
Polite questions about her place of work
Her Mother begins to wonder why the boy
Should be interested in her job as she belongs
To the generation who believes strongly that
It is the man's role to be the bread winner

The girl's father surveys the scene worriedly
And decides that it is time for him to intervene
He walks up to the young man and sits down
Right beside him -to emphasise his role as
The father of the bride should things work out
He encourages the boy to sample the sweets
And asks his daughter to check if the tea is ready
While she goes inside he praises her casually
Her Mother takes the cue and starts reciting
A kind of litany of her accomplishments
The room gets quieter as the tea is served
Some more pleasantries are exchanged and
The Boy and his family get up to leave
But not before his Mother thanks them adding
That as they have a few other proposals to review
The young lady would hear from them in day or two! !

Sandra Martyres

At War

The sound of guns
Could be heard everywhere
There was no immediate hope of peace
Neither for the young nor for the old
Shivering out there in the cold
Even in the dark and dank air-raid shelter
The frightened people ran helter-skelter
Fears and tensions rose high
As military flares lit up the sky
This was no firework display
But an attempt to keep the enemy at bay
The aged and children were readied for flight
While the rest could only moan their plight
Nothing seemed remotely right
With neighboring countries determined to fight
This exchange of gunfire when finally done
Will leave behind human debris by the tonne
And will then perhaps go down in history
As just another avoidable catastrophe

Sandra Martyres

Bankers And Haircuts

Bankers in trouble
Borrowers on the double
No hair left to cut.

Sandra Martyres

Battered (Senryu)

Black eye broken nose
Battered housewife sobs alone
The world looks away

Sandra Martyres

Beckoning Mountains - A Haiku

Majestic Mountains
Stand tall with glowing white crowns
Tinged with gold sunbeams

Sandra Martyres

Birds

Soaring high
Birds of the sky
You know your way
Across continents
No maps
No compasses
Just the seasons
To guide you directly
To warmer climes

Sandra Martyres

Black Memories

He carefully placed a black rose on her grave
It was perhaps his way of saying goodbye
He also added a card with a black ribbon that read
"For my departed wife as she embarks on a new life"

Back home he ripped up the wall paper
The pale pink colour reminded him of her
He gathered all her clothes and cosmetics
And sent them in a sealed bag to a local charity

When the house was rid of every memory
He brought in designers to refurbish it
With new furniture upholstery and wall paper
He wanted nothing to remind him of her

The neighbours watched the happenings
With more than normal neighbourly interest
They wondered why he had painstakingly
Eliminated even the faintest memory of her

Their curiosity was satiated a fortnight later
With the arrival of two detectives at his door
They spent an hour or so apparently quizzing him
And then came the verdict –he had killed his wife! !

Sandra Martyres

Black Monday

Everything that could for her go wrong
Did go wrong very systematically
Beginning with the coffee percolator
Which exploded splashing coffee
All over the kitchen as it was not
Closed properly- then followed
The toasts - they were burnt to a cinder
Forgotten while the coffee cleaning
Operation was in full swing - with tables
Being scrubbed to avoid staining
There was unfortunately no more bread
To make fresh toast and the Wheaties Box
Had been left open so moisture got in
Making them unfit for consumption
Abandoning all thoughts of having
Any kind of breakfast she showered
And headed straight to work hoping
That the rest of the day would be fine
But alas Black Monday is Black Monday
There was a massive traffic jam
Normal, considering that the holidays
Were over and everyone was heading
Back to work - but extremely difficult
When one is already late - Noticing a
Small gap she tried to change lanes
On a main arterial road - an error
She would regret - another belligerent
Motorist with a larger vehicle retaliated
He alighted his vehicle and blocked hers
Not before letting out a volley of abuse about
Lane changing - an action uncalled for given
That it is rather common in this part of the world
However, she did what polite people normally do
She apologised...this was her error number two
The macho man suddenly donned hero status
And started lecturing her and all the other
Irate motorists that her license should
Have been cancelled long ago- by which time
A cop arrived on the scene and promptly

Fined her and signalled her to continue her journey
She reached work half an hour late, totally famished
Muttering some apologies she went to her desk
In the hope that the Black Monday trauma
Was over with her reaching her workplace intact! !

Sandra Martyres

Black Monday (Senryu)

Black Monday followed
A very happy weekend
Enjoyed with good friends

Sandra Martyres

Black Ribbon

A little packet arrived
Tied with a black ribbon
An ominous sign it bore
The name and address
Was almost illegible
Yet the young girl
Accepted it happily
Assuming that it
Was a birthday gift
From her missing Dad

He had been gone
Mysteriously for
A very long time
And her Mom had
Not offered any
Kind of explanation
She just refused
To talk about him
Leaving the little
Child bewildered

Not waiting for her
Mother to return
She carefully untied
The black ribbon
Unwrapped the
Brown paper
To find a little
Black box and in it
Was a tiny locket
Pinned to an untidy note

But before she could
Open it there was
A knock on the door
The courier man
Completely shaken
Had returned

The box was not
Meant to be delivered
To her but handed over
Only to her Mother

The little girl refused
To return the box
She gripped it firmly
And screamed aloud
That it was a present
From her dear Dad
He had never
Forgotten her birthday
So it just had
To be for her

The Drama continued
Until her Mother
Returned home
And took the parcel
Now it was her turn
To cry out aloud
The locket contained
No picture, just a few
Drops of what looked
Like dried blood

The scribbled note read
"By the time this
Reaches you
I will be dead
Ensure that
Our little girl
Knows nothing
And remembers me
Always as her dear
And loving Daddy"

Sandra Martyres

Blisters

The house went up in flames
It was around midnight when
An elderly gentleman suffering
From frequent bouts of insomnia
Noticed tongues of fire billowing
Out of the home across the road
The orange flames stood out in sharp
Contrast to the black skies of the night
He shouted loudly and awakened
The neighbours who streamed out
All confused in their night clothes

They stared in fear at the raging fire
But no one dared to venture near
The burning home except the old man
He mumbled that he had lived his life
To the fullest and he could easily afford
To take a chance and help the distressed
Then covering his face and braving the smoke
He entered the place to see if he could save
Any of the poor inmates trapped inside
But no sooner he entered he had to rush out
Choking violently with his sleeves on fire

Everyone's attention quickly shifted to him
People began spraying him with cold water
Using a garden hose despite his loud protests
Then suddenly out of nowhere the voice
Of a young man could be heard as he said
' All you good people please stay away
Tis the work of my old Grandpa, he is
Determined to encash his own Insurance
Before my Ma and Pa get to it - don't worry
He is very safe and the house is empty'
So saying the boy vanished unseen-

And as for the old man
All his acts of kindness left him with -
Were the blisters on his burned fingers

Sandra Martyres

Blurred

Driving at high speed
All the images across
The vast terrain covered
Were completely blurred
Yet he carried on bravely
With a mission to accomplish
He had no choice but to drive on
Apart from two short stops
He had not taken any break
For almost eighteen hours
Now the night had fallen
The route was pitch dark
Apart from the headlights
Of the on coming vehicles
His eyes felt heavy and tired
Yet he continued determinedly
After a point in time he felt
That the car was on auto-pilot
It was leading him and he felt
Less pressured by the journey
It was only when he felt a thud
That he realised all was not well
The car bounced up and down
Before landing on the ground
Completely shaken up and
Now wide awake he stepped
Out of the vehicle to assess
The damage he had caused
When his mobile phone rang
In a trembling voice his wife
Declared that their little son
Had succumbed to his illness
The medication that he carried
Would no longer be required
He did not need to speed
The funeral timing would
Be fixed after his arrival
He just sat on the side-walk
His eyes completely blurred

As he wept uncontrollably
For his lost little boy
Whose loving spirit had
Saved him from a fatal accident

Sandra Martyres

Bonfire

It is New Year's Eve
A bunch of children
Sitting around a bonfire
Their faces illuminated
Waiting to burn the
Old man - the old year
Suddenly a glint in her eye
She jumps into the fire
That cute little girl
With a mop of curls
Her friends scream
And try to pull her out
But her hair and hands
Are engulfed in flames
She too begins crying aloud
And tries to jump out
As the frightened children
Run away from her
Leaving her burning
By the time some adults
Realise what is happening
It is too late, the little body
Lies horizontal on the floor
Almost lifeless blackened
A charred face and head
She is all but dead - no one
Could save her - One small boy
Cried out ' We had to burn
The old man not little Jan'

Sandra Martyres

Bureaucrats

Bureaucrats everywhere are a special fraternity
Who manage to make the possible impossible
And then take pride in this achievement
They ought really to be eliminated permanently
From every self respecting country
Especially one raring to go ahead
Ours is a nation of hungry young tigers
Waiting to be unleashed to show
Their power and prowess in every domain
Instead of which they find themselves
Permanently in shackles thanks to the famed
Bureaucratic browbeating – these revered gentlemen
Are feared by one and all including the Ministries
To which they actually belong and for whom they work
These august individuals never miss an opportunity
To get their pound of flesh when the going is good
Exceptionally, they could settle for half a pound
In these days of recession and tough times
Any offer of less, would be considered an insult
To their sense of self importance and propriety
Exercising caution when dealing with them
Is quite obviously the only way to play their game
Challenging them would be absolutely insane
We may carp all we want on this painful issue
But the fact of the matter is that they are here to stay

Sandra Martyres

Buried

She carefully arranged the
last remains of
her poetic ambitions
while he helped to drive
the last nail into the coffin
with his sharp tongue
drill bit
No one attended
the funeral
She was out there alone
There were no tears
except perhaps her own
She carefully lowered what
she considered to be
her works of art
into the earth
for all time to come
hoping desperately that
the creatures of the ground
would feast on the paper
leaving no traces behind.

Sandra Martyres

Business Is Business

A long colourful serpentine queue
Of sincere and faithful devotees
Glides up the hill at snail's pace
To spend a few precious moments
Paying homage to a miraculous deity
Lodged in the small temple
Atop a once beautiful hillock
Now shorn of its verdant beauty
Thanks to the trampling by
The many overzealous pilgrims
Anxiously trying to reach the top
By avoiding the beaten track

The base of the hill is home to
Enterprising hawkers and money makers
Always on the prowl to make a quick buck
They sell flowers, coconuts and other items
To be offered in the temple
Some even dare to advise the pilgrims
About the Goddess' preferences
While the devotees display of faith is touching
The business acumen of the hawkers
Rises to another level altogether
For them 'Business is business'
Irrespective of the place or situation

Sandra Martyres

Cash For Clunkers

Its cash for clunkers
So the advertisement read
He abandoned his jalopy
Hurriedly on the sidewalk
And drove out in a new sedan
Parked in the showroom
Sure he was stopped
Soon enough by the cops
Surprised he glared back
And pointed to the hoarding
He had not noticed the fine print
'Conditions apply'

Sandra Martyres

Changing Times

The vibrant colours
In a darkening sky
With the orange sphere
Remaining at the centre
A brilliant sight to savour
The rivers, oceans and seas
Too pay their homage
Reflecting the beauty
Of the moment
In their clear waters
Until the lustrous ball slowly
Disappears behind the horizon
Only to rise again elsewhere

Sandra Martyres

Cherry Pickers (Haiku Style)

Deep red and luscious
Cherries too tempting to leave
Hanging on the tree

The children were quick
To fill their baskets with speed
Before dawn could break

The trees were soon bare
When the farmers awakened
They just stared in shock

Sandra Martyres

Cinderella

It's Midnight my love
Its time for me to disappear
And leave behind my
Golden slipper
For you to find
Making sure that
There will be another
Evening of pure delight

Don't stop me my love
It's a written rule from above
That your Cinderella
Must leave no matter what
At midnight on the dot
For if she does not
Yours will not
Be a happy lot

Please turn around my love
Cast a glance at the
Beauty that abounds
In this lovely gathering
Of dolled up ladies waiting
To play the game of mating
While you do that
Like lightening
I will be gone
For now
but I promise
I will come back again

Sandra Martyres

Come Back To Me

My dear,

Don't you see that I'm lonely?
Suffering inwardly, I do realise
That it was me who drove
You practically to insanity
But sure I've changed enough
To make you feel truly welcome
Back in your old homestead

For me there is no sympathy
The children do not visit me
Even though I am dying to see
Our latest baby granddaughter
In this house there is silence
No sound of a child's laughter
Please give me one more chance

I'd be ready to wear sack cloth
And apply ashes on my forehead
If I thought it would make
Any difference to you, but
Surely not, you'd probably just
Write me off as a wily hypocrite
So please listen to me one more time

I promise, this is not just a case
Of absence makes the heart
Grow fonder - rather it is the plea
Of a repentant man seeking mercy
This may sound incredible coming
From me, but I am truly serious,
Please forgive me and come back home

Yours affectionately

Sandra Martyres

Come In I'll Give You Shelter From The Rain

A storm was brewing and I was lost in the woods
Dusty clothes brambles in my sandals
Matted hair I had lost my comb
A dirty face as the water had run out too
Just as I was about to despair I heard this voice say
"Come in, I'll give you shelter from the rain"
I turned around and was surprised to see
A rather comely lady neatly dressed
I followed her limping along the beaten path
To a cottage on the edge of the woods
As she opened the door I could have sworn
The place was haunted – an owl perched
On the roof was eyeing me stealthily
A black cat ambled across the floor
Towards his mistress almost listlessly
I took two steps back and headed for the door
My hostess said disdainfully "Why young man
Is not this place good enough for you?
Remember I promised you a shelter from the rain"
Before I could reply the sound of thunder
Ranted the air leaving me terrified
I quickly stepped back in and took a deep breath
Hoping to calm myself instead of which
I inhaled strange particles that I could not identify
I almost choked but was afraid to ask for water
Unperturbed, my hostess offered me a tumbler
With a concoction that was good for the throat she said
I thought to myself- In for a penny in for a pound
Just swallowed the stuff as fast as I could and that is
All that I can remember about the lady's shelter
The following morning I was picked up by a search party
Ambulance – lying unconscious under a large tree
They also opined that I was probably hallucinating
As there was no woman and no sign of a cottage.

Sandra Martyres

Corporate Boards And Lessons

The Board Members never did realise
The effort and patience that went into
Keeping the dying embers of ambition alive
When they closed all the business doors and
Barely left half a window open with slow decisions
And a tepid interest in the welfare of the stakeholders
Fresh air and ideas were soon in very short supply
Almost everyone was gasping for breath
The place was also slowly getting infested with
Negative creepy crawlies who began to occupy
Every available vacant space with intentions
To devour the minds of the more healthy staff
A fog of lifelessness and inertia covered the area
The usual heated internal debates among staff
Became less audible as the lone loud voices
Were seemingly stifled by vested interests
Despair took the place of hope and enthusiasm

It was only when a neighbouring business
Declared bankruptcy and went into liquidation
That the Board finally awakened and began
Moving away from its complacent stand
Admitting grudgingly that they still had a team
Who with the right dose of encouragement
Would seize new opportunities and produce results
Fortunately, this time the board did not fall prey to
The too little too late syndrome
Instead they opened the doors wider and
Let the fresh air in giving one and all
Adequate time to adjust to the new climate
Revive the company and its bottom line
Moral of the story – It is not always that
A competitor goes bankrupt at the right time!

Sandra Martyres

Counting Coins

The haggard looking old woman
Perhaps a beggar from another area
Sat at the corner of the street
Clutching tightly on a grubby bag
One that had certainly seen better days
She had an interesting look about her
There was still a glint in her eye as
She greeted each and every passer by
Yet none stopped to even smile at her
They just ignored her and hurried away

When dusk fell she moved her base
And settled herself under a nearby tree
Turning her back to the world she
Started quietly but very meticulously
Counting the coins in the bag
By sorting them denomination wise
She did not know that she was watched
By a petty thief from the area until
He swooped from behind knocked
Her on the head and fled with the bag

He had not bargained for the fate he met
Another thief with the same intention
Soon pounced on him and snatched the bag
A huge commotion followed by which time
The woman herself had alerted a passing cop
They say the hand of God is always near
Both the thieves were finally handcuffed
And carted away leaving the woman to start
Counting her coins all over again with
A smile on her lips...'All's well that ends well'

Sandra Martyres

Crying At Your Window

I knocked on your window
Hoping that you would answer
However that was not to be
You did not wish to hear me
You just sat in your corner
Smoking away incessantly
Coughing your way to glory
Or so you thought, no pleading
No caring, no cajoling worked.
Last night my fears came true
As I stood below your window
The coughing stopped suddenly
I tried to climb up and peep in
To check if you were alright
But I could not, I slipped and fell
So I just sent out a silent prayer
That you would sleep peacefully
And peacefully you did
But this time it was for good
Never to awaken again - Ofcourse
There would be no more pain
Not for you but I will suffer
From the acute pain of rejection
And the loss of you forever
You cut me off from your life
When I objected to your friends
Your life style, the drugs the fags
However, as your Mother I kept trying
To help you, but always ended up crying
And today is no exception, as I leave
To attend your funeral to say
My final goodbye, I know my tears
Will never dry - I am still not sure
If there was anything I could have done
To save you from that terrible end

Sandra Martyres

Cut And Paste

No more burning the midnight oil
And pouring over tomes to find
Information or do research on
Any person, place or subject
The life of the student has changed
And it is all thanks to the Internet
That virtual fount of knowledge
Available at the click of a mouse
From one's very own house
But alas there is a negative side
To this life of comfort and ease
Student have become past masters
At the infamous routine of "cut and paste"
Originality, presentation and writing skills
Treasured and propagated by the likes of me
Are no longer valued and considered passé

Sandra Martyres

Dad

Dad, we watched you wither away
All of eighty kilos by night and day
The one and only saving grace,
Was your ever smiling face.
While we reached the depths of despair,
You calmly declared that life was not always fair.

Despite the breathlessness and the pain,
Never did you really complain.
You bore it all stoically
Telling us it was but folly
To keep visiting doctors to find a cure
For a fatal illness that you just had to endure.
But we refused to believe -
That eventually we would have to give up and grieve
We continued our search for newer medication
With an even greater sense of determination
Alas! Despite the doctors' skills and our dedication
You quietly left us in search of a new destination.

Sandra Martyres

Darkness (Senryu)

No stars in the sky
Moon hidden by dark grey clouds
Heavens mourn quake victims

Sandra Martyres

Dawn

At the break of dawn
We awaken to the music of
Migratory birds chirping away happily
These colorful little creatures
Perched high up in the trees
Call out to their mates so lovingly.
Having left the freezing zones
Of the north they have headed south
To regions with milder winters.
Truly a lovely way to welcome the start
Of another, otherwise routine day.

Sandra Martyres

Death (678 Style)

Death is recession proof
Bringing in new business deals
For Insurers and Undertakers

Priests and florists too wait
Along side the grave-diggers
To ride on death's rich gravy train

Remember the tourists
Death leaves something for them too
Monuments like the Taj Mahal

Sandra Martyres

Death (Senryu)

The death of a friend
Can leave one devastated
Fate is often cruel

Death robs you of friends
When you least expect it to
Anger fills the void

Why do the good guys
Have to suffer and die young
While the crooks survive

Sandra Martyres

Depression (A Senryu)

Depression results
When ideas are suppressed
and feelings ignored

Sandra Martyres

Destiny

We plot our own destiny
Be it the path to happiness
Or the road to ruin.
Despite the highs and lows of our lives
It is we and we alone
Who plot our own destinies.

We can choose to be changed
Or be the agents of change
We can remain chained
To the taboos imposed by society
Or we can unchain ourselves and be free
Whatever we chose will finally
Make or mar our destiny.

Sandra Martyres

Dew Dropp (Haiku)

A little dew drop
Standing on a yellow leaf
Whose thirst will it quench?

Sandra Martyres

Dictionary (Senryu)

Dictionary fear

Bad English and wrong spellings

Earn the teacher's ire

Sandra Martyres

Dining Out (Senryu)

Wining and dining
At the Ritz Carlton Hotel
Sign of affluence

Hamburgers and fries
At the swank new McDonald's
Sign of teenage greed

Slurping tea slowly
At a Mumbai pavement stall
Sign of being hard up

Sandra Martyres

Diwali

And God said
"Let there be light"
And there was light
To conquer the darkness
So too at Diwali
The little oil lamps
Adorning every home
Help to keep out the
Dark and evil spirits.

The fireworks light
Up the night skies
A feeling of love
And Camaraderie
Descends on one and all
The "lets celebrate "
Contagion effect is felt
Across the country.

Greetings are exchanged
And sweets distributed
Generously to everyone
Both the rich and the poor
Experience the joy
That comes out of
Giving and sharing
Even in recession times

Wishing all PH members a happy Diwali

Sandra Martyres

Don'T Cry For Me

Don't cry for me my friends
Instead, when I am gone
Just say a little prayer for me
And let me go my way alone
My spirit needs to be freed
To traverse a new universe
To find a quiet resting place
Where peace and harmony
Shall reign forever - Remember
I came into this world alone
Like those before and after me
And I have to leave alone too....

Sandra Martyres

Down Memory Lane - In A Local Train

It was a trip down memory lane
My journey on a Mumbai local train
Boarding the Ladies Compartment
I managed to land a window seat
Which in my younger days
Was considered the veteran's treat
As only the fleet-footed and the agile
Were able to leap into the moving train
For these coveted seats to stake their claim

I watched as the passengers boarded
Most with household provisions loaded
But each with her own seat preference
Some chose to sit in the direction
Of the moving train
While others opted to be with friends
The short distance travelers
For convenience, just stood near the door

If you are a regular train commuter
You will probably wonder
What's so special about this mundane routine
But believe me it is not as boring as it may seem
A journey on a local train can be quite an experience
The chatty ladies provide entertainment and education
All you need to do is to keep your eyes and ears open
To treat yourself to fun and free advice on any and everything

You can hear hot tips on the stock market
Get free lessons on bringing up children
Easy recipes for their teatime snacks
Quick home remedies for coughs and colds
On the lighter side there is the latest gossip on the stars
And opinions galore on the current TV soap operas
If you are lucky you may even get a slice of cake
In case a passenger decides her birthday to celebrate

I savored every moment of the trip
Listening attentively to all the ladies around me

Not being a regular I did not have my own clique
So I was free to choose and spent time listening
To the many animated discussions
Ranging from politics to children's obsessions
All in all by the time I reached my destination
I had the sensation that I was wiser far than when I started out

Sandra Martyres

Dress Code (Senryu)

Draconian dress codes
Deny college girls their rights
and protect the villains

Note: A reaction to a recent diktat issued by some Indian States preventing College girls from wearing jeans to avoid Eve- Teasing! !

Sandra Martyres

Earthquake

The earth rumbled
Buildings by the dozen tumbled
With the hundreds trapped under the debris
Wailing like the proverbial banshee
Pathetic and tragic scenes did emerge
The entire nation experienced the scourge
The screams for help and shrill cries
Desperation writ deep in people's eyes
All the acute suffering and pain
Was driving even the survivors insane.
The questions uppermost in their mind
How much life, would they, in the ruins find?
Would the relief supplies arrive in time?
Would the sniffer-dogs smell or hear the living whine?
How many would be extricated
from the rubble before getting asphyxiated?
And finally when would the tremors cease
To give people time to grieve and their tension ease.

Sandra Martyres

Easter Time

Little Johnny is dreaming
Of Easter eggs and bunnies
Of treacle cakes and cookies

His Mom likes to indulge him
After all that is all she can do
To make his day a bit happier

Ten days ago he was diagnosed
With a rare form of cancer
And little hope of survival

Little Johnny has no real clue
All that he knows is that he has to
Take daily painful tests at the hospital

His Mom puts on a brave front
Whenever she is with him she tries
To tell him that he will soon be better

Little Johnny never complains
He seems to find happiness naturally
In the birds that fly or the sweets he eats

Easter is a really special time for him
His Mom will make doubly sure of that
He will have the best egg hunt ever
She knows - for him there will never be another

Sandra Martyres

Ego (A Senryu)

A little ruse and
His ego was badly bruised
Not much left to lose

Sandra Martyres

Elections

What won't a politician do to get votes
He'll sell his soul and even distribute currency notes
He cares not a fig for the admonitions
Of the sometimes overzealous electoral commissions
He always manages to find the right excuses
To condone his Election Code abuses

The educated class remain passive spectators
To the unacceptable behaviour of these traitors
Then absolve themselves by claiming
That there is no candidate worth pursuing
They do not exercise their franchise
Since all the candidates proclaim is a pack of lies

I dream of the times when an Election
Will become a time for reflection
When the educated electorate will open their eyes wide
Exercise their franchise using their intellect to decide
Whether the candidate has the right stature
To merit being part of the government or legislature
Only then can the country hope for good governance
And with it the happiness and progress of its citizens

Sandra Martyres

Elixir

He sipped the elixir
With the same degree
Of guilt or satisfaction
That Adam had
When he bit into
The forbidden apple
Offered to him by Eve

What followed was really
Quite unimaginable for him
He slipped quietly
On to the cold floor
And went into a stupor
And remained so for
Several hours to come

He was totally clueless
That the surrounding tribals
Were furiously beating
Their home made drums
To revive him or awaken him
But right through the ritual
He just remained comatose

His friends looked on
In total fear and dread
Of the weird tale that
They would have to weave
To explain to his folks
That his condition was
The result of a silly bet

Then all of a sudden
Like a breath of fresh air
In a room of tensed people
Something strange occurred
A large vase of flowers
Fell mysteriously

To the ground

The deafening sound
And the cold water
Splashing all around
Seemed to have stirred
The lifeless young man
His eyes opened wide
And he attempted to rise

He friends still suffering
From shock first stared blankly
Like paralysed zombies
Then quickly smashing the glass
Containing the remaining
Elixir they fled the place
Carrying him with them

Sandra Martyres

Enchantment (Senryu)

She truly believed
That distance lends enchantment
And distanced herself

Sandra Martyres

Entangled

O what a tangled web we weave
When we choose to deceive
Or to be deceived
We need to realise that we receive
What we as ordinary mortals choose to give
Let us not, therefore, live
In a state of blissful ignorance
Of the rest of the world and its tolerance

Just yesterday you did loudly cry
That to her letter you did not reply
So now you need to explain why
The problem has been raised to the sky
If only you had been frank and told the truth
You would have spared yourself and Ruth
All the pain and the disharmony
Including having to face so much ignominy

Her paranoid father and ruthless brother
Taunting you and your poor harried mother
About the love letter that you wrote to her
Such emotional outpourings are best kept verbal
Since the written word is considered immoral
Remember that in our hypocritical society
It is only the high and mighty
Who can get away with just anything
While lesser mortals like you will always feel the sting
Of the shame that even innocuous actions can bring

Sandra Martyres

Fallen Star - Senryu Poems

He lost it fully
His celebrity status
Like a fallen star

He just wonders why
There are no fans queueing up
Outside his mansion

He lives in anger
Despising the sychophants
That surrounded him

Sandra Martyres

Fat Finger (Senryu)

Fat finger syndrome
The bane of many writers
Often causes heartburn

Sandra Martyres

Fire Cracker (A Senryu)

A bright fire cracker
Sped across the skies leaving
Trails of coloured stars

Sandra Martyres

Fist Bumps (Senryu)

Hugs and handshakes are
Passé in pandemic days
Fist bumps replace them

Sandra Martyres

Floppy - My Mascot

Every day after you walked out on me
I hoped and prayed that I could flee
Flee from the city I shared with you
Flee from everything that reminded me
Of the long evenings spent together
Sharing views on everything even the weather
But alas that was not to be
I could not leave this riveting city
So I continued to feel only loneliness and pain
More so when there was torrential rain
This went on for a very long time
I lived with my fears and unsung rhyme
Till the day I met Floppy a street dog
He wagged his tail so lovingly
The very first time he set his eyes on me
I took him home and he made my day
Since then he's been my mascot
And never has he strayed away

Sandra Martyres

Flu

Beware all you carnivores
Flu is adding to your sorrows
We first heard of Foot and Mouth disease
The one that finished sheep with ease
Then came Mad Cow Disease
Or Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy
And its human version Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease
Beef went off the restaurant menus
MC Donald's and Burger King
Really felt the beef sting
When their cash registers ceased to ring
Soon suspected herds of cattle
Were unceremoniously destroyed
And governments declared using all their gumption
That beef was safe again for human consumption

Just when we thought CJD menace had ended
Another even worse virus on us descended
Avian Flu or Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome
Took the world by storm forcing people to stay home
Masks, disinfectant soaps and vaccines
Were the order of the day
If someone sneezed you just ran away
Travel advisories were quickly released
Each time a new locality
Reported a case of the disease
Medical Researchers worked night and day
To produce vaccines that would keep the Flu at bay
The incidence of the disease had begun to decrease
And everyone looked for some peace

Then came a new version - the infamous Bird Flu
Chickens were slaughtered by the score
To ensure that the virus did not spread or grow
Imports of bird meat came to a virtual halt
The prices crashed, chicken farmers went bankrupt
There was a clear fear psychosis
That quickly led to a kind of neurosis
But with all the preventive measures and costs incurred

This epidemic too was controlled and normalcy returned

Today Flu has been taken to a new level
The pig or the swine is the latest devil
The virus was reportedly born in Mexico
But no one knows for sure
Governments are not taking any chance
Quarantine Zones are being set up to enhance
Awareness and to identify possible carriers
At airports, seaports and all other travel queues
Of course bacon is going off the breakfast menus
And no one talks about Porky the cute little Pig
He is now referred to by the swear word swine
No longer can we dismiss this problem in lighter vein
Swine Flu is causing even stock markets some pain
The Sensex, the Dax and the CAC are all on the wane
For which the blame is pinned on the spreading swine flu
No one knows the damage it will finally do
To the world's tottering economies
Already grappling with other crises

Sandra Martyres

Forgiveness

Good Friday is a stark reminder
Of the triumph of good over evil
Of forgiveness over real anger
Of love over jealousy and cruelty

Going through the Agony Service
And the touching homilies delivered
By a young and enthusiastic priest
A feeling of sadness descended on me

How many of us believe in tit for tat
We just have to react to any action that
Affects us and if it remotely hurts or annoys
We ensure that we make a fair bit of noise

Looking at the crucifix standing before me
I wonder how the Lord was so kind
Despite the blasphemy the cruelty and the pain
He died with words of forgiveness on his parched lips

Sandra Martyres

Freedom Is All I Want

Set me free set me free
I was never meant to be
Confined to a bird cage
In a concrete jungle
I need a more conducive habitat
To be able to make a new start
Neither the cable not the internet
Can curb my frustration or regret

I have to insist that I want to be free
You my dear, are also free to decide
Whether you want to accompany me
Or remain in this world of make believe.
Myself, I can no longer stay cooped up
In this place you call a condominium
Do not lecture to me on the premium
You you had to pay to keep out the crowd

I need my freedom to explore
The nooks and crannies of the world
To experience the beauty of nature
To discover new features
And find my place in the world
Will you continue to deny me this request
Would you rather I stay behind
And shrivel up in this plush prison?

Sandra Martyres

Frozen

Each little raindrop
Turned into an icicle
A coloured prism

With every cloud burst
Hale stones rained on the city
Dropping down chimneys

The little flowers
Quivered as the hale stones hit
And fell to the ground

Sandra Martyres

Frozen In A Court Room - Senryu Series

'Your Honour' he said
'When black stones smashed my windscreen
I froze at the wheel'

'You did not react
Very surprising young man
Here ice does melt fast'

'Your Honour - I agree
About the ice melting part
My son threw the stone'

(Judge in an aside to his Assistant)

'Why is he in court
What indeed is the offence
He is being tried for'

'Elementary Sir
His son has just stoned your car
He is a minor'

'In that case I do
Decree that the father does
Double time in jail'

Sandra Martyres

Geriatrics Club

Septuagenarians & octogenarians aplenty
No one's glass is empty.
There is enough food and wine
For all in style to dine
The party is in full swing
Everyone is having a real fling
No semblance of fatigue or fear
An ambience of camaraderie and good cheer
No sons and daughters to fret and fume
No grandchildren to complain about
There is no mention of pain only pleasure
To be shared with each other in full measure
Is a time to celebrate and not to debate
About the future which they await
It is New Year's Eve at the Golden Fern
The Senior Citizens' preferred Tavern.

Sandra Martyres

God Will Find A Way

My son, these are a few lines that I want to share with you
Remember God is there, even though with life, I am through

My son, even if you have no money you do not have to stray
No matter what, never lose hope or trust God will find a way

My son, even if it is a question of mind over matter
Remember, God takes care of the odd mad hatter

My son, even if it seems so, this is not the end of the world
Keep the faith, God has his own plans which he will unfurl

My son, with these few humble words of advice I leave you
Remember the values we have shared and you will sail through.

May God bless you always.....

Sandra Martyres

Golden Arches

She walked under the golden arches
Enjoying Nature's generous blessings
Laburnum in full bloom and glowing
A strong wind blew across the park
Taking with it a cloud of yellow petals
Which scattered to form a yellow carpet
Some settled on her head like confetti
She remembered her own wedding day
When she walked under artificial arches
With a groom who was artificial too, for
He left a few years after the ceremony
She now treaded very gently not wanting
To damage the petals lying on the ground
She just wished she was not alone
The blessings would have doubled
If she were walking with her true love
Under these beautiful golden arches

Sandra Martyres

Goldilocks

Goldilocks, of fairy tale fame
is now no longer
only associated
with having strayed
into the neat home
of the three bears.

Our versatile banker friends
those over-imaginative
investment geniuses,
always on the prowl,
to uncover a new theory,
have coined a fresh one
"The Goldilocks Economy".

It has nothing to do
with either her golden locks
or with the three bears.
Surprisingly, it refers
to the near perfect
temperature of
baby bear's porridge.
Not too hot and not too cold
Our luminaries have hit
upon a new inflation measure

A Goldilocks Economy
is a benign one
where inflation
moves in a narrow band
Of two and three fourths percent,
Dodging fears of deflation
and ofcourse hyper-inflation too
Put simply - It is as ideal
as the temperature
Of the porridge! !

Sandra Martyres

Good Morning Sunshine

The strong aroma of coffee
Rant the air- his wake up call
Within minutes he was up
Washed and changed ready
For his morning cuppa armed
With weighty newspapers
He settled down in an easy chair
His wife placed a tray beside him
Then savouring each sip of the
Delicious Arabica brew just
Out of the coffee percolator
He began reading the news aloud

Outside birds tweeted in the trees
Butterflies flitted among the flowers
Caterpillars crept up the stems
The puppies jumped around
It was a typical day in early Summer
One which warranted staying outdoors
To absorb the sunshine and breathe
In fresh air enjoying the surroundings
The neighbours being early risers
Were already mowing their lawns
A feeling of joy overcame him
Looking upwards to heaven he smiled
Thanking God for another lovely day

Sandra Martyres

Good Old Donald Duck

He is still quacking aloud
At the age of seventy- five
He is Donald Fauntelroy Duck
Of Disney fame
Recently described as being
Irascible yet innocent
Clumsy but elegant
Stinky but lovable
in the Deutsche Presse-Agentur

We all agree that Donald
Has served his country well
From the troubled days
Of World War II to the present
He has entertained people of all ages
And starred in several
Propaganda shorts too
He even won an Oscar
In nineteen forty-two
For his scintillating performance
In Der Fueher's Face

Despite all this hectic activity
He has aged very well
Surviving many appearances
In films, TV serials and now
Even popular video games
Donald keeps changing
with the times and keeps pace
With technology too
Let's raise a toast to him
On his platinum jubilee and wish
That he makes it to a century

Sandra Martyres

Goodbye

So you needed a subject to call,
Then, I guess that will be all.

Goodbye, my erstwhile friend,
There is nothing left to mend.

Backwards I did bend,
To be a kind and dear friend.

But alas, I suppose that is life
One long battle against strife.

Let us bid farewell and call it a day,
Wish each other well and go our own way.

Sandra Martyres

Goodbye Dear Father

It is difficult to say goodbye
We will miss your daily homily
Through which the right messages
You did so gently seek to convey
We will miss your kind heart and
The peaceful smile that you always wore
The attentiveness with which you listened
And advised us when we were in trouble
We will miss the blessings and prayers
That you showered on us so unstintingly
Even as you did suffer illness and pain
It is now the Lord's turn to look after you
Just the way you did look after all of us
Your ever increasing and demanding flock

Dedicated to a priest friend who expired today

Sandra Martyres

Goodbye Mom

To the tune of "Nearer my God to Thee"
Did we try and set her spirit free
Tears streamed down my face
As they covered hers with white lace
Then came the nailing down of the coffin
I would no longer watch Mother's frame stiffen
Gently the casket was lowered into the ground
While the mourners stood solemnly around
The priest then signaled to us
To shovel some mud into the grave
"You have to truly bury the dead"
Was what he seemed to have said
We bid our last farewell to Mummy
Along with our friends and family
Funerals are always so emotionally painful
Although we do know that death is not final
It is only the spirit of the dear departed
That is really freed and liberated
And even as her mortal remains perish in the earth
There will be another birth.....

Sandra Martyres

Goodbye Mr. Taxman

Wearing a face
Like a tranche of steak
Injected with Botox
He dueled with the guys
He looked upon as captors
The infamous taxmen

He flung a sheaf
Of financials at them
With a vicious challenge
Should the blood suckers
Find any irregularity
He would be prepared
To auction his last shirt
If need be to pay the fine

The tactic seemed to work
The menacing looks melted
They stopped the posturing
Stance and reverted
To a more acceptable
Politer tone
Being a veteran at the game
He went on undaunted
Maintaining his tough
And unshaken honesty stand
That he deserved the respect
Of even the incorrigible
Disgruntled, obnoxious taxmen

After several hours of
Peering over his numbers
And the punching in of figures
Into their calculators
The unwelcome intruders
Seemed convinced that he was
Not one of the evaders
They walked out more
Silently than they had entered

Mr. Good Citizen
Immediately shed
The bloated Botox look
Sighed a sigh of relief, smiling
The sweet smile of success
At yet another of his
Successful and
Scintillating performances.

Sandra Martyres

Grandma Is Lost

Dark clouds on the horizon
As the family assembled
In their ancestral home to
Visit their octogenarian Mother
An old lady with deep wrinkles
Sad eyes and sagging cheeks
Seated on a cushioned cane chair
She just glared stubbornly at them
Holding a spoon firmly in her hand
Vehemently refusing to touch the soup
In the plate placed before her as
She believed that it had been poisoned

All the coaxing and cajoling
By each member of the family
Both individually and collectively
Was of absolutely no avail
She just seemed to be repeating
That her family wanted to be rid of her
So that they could get access
To her substantial savings
Her children looked on in shock
Their Mother always a gentle lady,
Had suddenly undergone
A personality change

The youngest granddaughter
Began to weep uncontrollably
Something strange had happened
Her grandmother was not the same
The old lady no longer had kindly eyes
Instead she wore a haggard haunted look
Like the cruel witch in her fairy tale book
The doctor was finally summoned
To explain the horrible change
One look at the lady and
He did calmly proclaim
That she was just another victim
Of the infamous Alzheimer's disease

Sandra Martyres

Graveyards

On All Souls Day- armed with candles
The family heads to the graveyard
Time to pay our respects solemnly
To the deceased members lest they
Remain forgotten forever in the earth
Each one bends down to light a candle
And place it on the cold gravestone
Of a loved one- now in another world
But not before reading the epitaphs
Grandfather's is the most impressive
'Here lies a man -Husband and Father
Devoted to God and his Family and
Last but not least - Ginger his Dog,
May his soul rest in peace ' Legend
Has it that he wrote it himself.....

Sandra Martyres

Grey Matter

Grey matter remains
A scarce resource rarely found
On political ground.

Sandra Martyres

Haiku -2

Black birds on a tree
Singing melodiously
'Tis good to be free

Dark clouds looming large
Heavy rains are being forecast
Will the ducks arrive

The garden beckons
The air carries their perfume
Roses in full bloom

Sandra Martyres

Haiku -3

A lonely sparrow
Hopping on the window sill
Crumbs filling his bill

In Kenya's Masai Mara
Hungry lions lie in wait
Preying for a bait

Dolphins leaping over
The waters of the river
While other fish quiver

Sandra Martyres

Haiku -4

A bird flies across
The grey skies flapping its wings
To beseech rain Gods

At the end of May
The tulips of Amsterdam
Will bow down and die

First monsoon showers
Ushered in with mirth and glee
Trees too are dust free

As May fades away
Cherries berries and other fruit
Are sighted in June

Sandra Martyres

Haikus - Some New

Moths sat up all night
In flickering candle light
Seeking storm respite

Summer is right here
A profusion of marigolds
Golden days unfold

A bright red carpet
Of fresh gulmohar flowers
Welcomes the monsoons

Coconut palms sway
All along the lovely bay
Gently with the breeze

Sandra Martyres

Handicapped

He loathed it when he had to go out;
he was the one whom the boys
laughed and joked about.
Here comes our three-legged stool!
they jeered from the nearby school.
Being handicapped and lame
brought their insults and to him shame.
He shuddered, holding back a tear,
and hobbled away in absolute fear.
They considered him an easy prey.
They almost always got their way.
His own disability he could not fight.
They took advantage of his plight.
He often questioned their nastiness:
Why deny a lame boy happiness?
It did not change their vicious ways;
he hobbled on through troubled days.

Sandra Martyres

Happy Days

Happy days are here again
As we say goodbye to torrential rain
The sun shines again in bright blue skies
Migrant birds are chirping in the trees
New Butterflies keep flitting around
The park is alive with nature's sounds
Winter flowers are now in full bloom
Quieting hopefully the prophets of doom

Sandra Martyres

Hard Times

The company was downsizing which they
Euphemistically described as right sizing
The Management casually brushed aside
All signs of employee antagonism
And for those who were to lose their jobs
They deliberately ignored the fears and sobs
Making insensitive comments that the staff
Could even benefit by catching up on lost sleep and
Seize the opportunity to relax in the coming months
As there would be no need to rush to be in time
To swipe their access card sharp on the dot of nine
This callous Management attitude just exacerbated
The anger of the staff already frustrated

During recession times no matter the effort put in
New jobs are hard to come by
And the fear of failure increases with every try
Ill health and insomnia become common
Worry begins to paralyse the jobless ones
As they think about daughters and sons
Apart from having to face nagging spouses
And landlords driving them out of their houses
All this misery because some moneyed nerds
Knew not how to manage their herds
Had they followed the proper ethical business path
They could have avoided this dreadful aftermath.

Sandra Martyres

Haunted! !

After ten long years
Johnny returned home
Everything seemed unchanged
The Aged father sat
in his usual garden chair
Johnny rushed forward to embrace him
But his father looked away
Did he not recognize his own son?
It really seemed that way
He screamed out to him
But he continued to look away
So he shouted his own name
But the old man still looked away
Father, have you forgotten me?
He asked him finally
This time he stared blankly
Johnny panicked and rushed inside
He found his mother seated
Serenely in her usual chair
She did not recognize him either
When he tried to greet her
She just looked into space
And then quietly disappeared
He ran outside again
His father was no longer there
Johnny was at a total loss
He leaned across the wall
And asked a neighbor in a voice quite meek
If his parents often played hide and seek
The neighbor glared at him in shock and disbelief
Then in a calm voice announced
'As you were pursuing your career at sea
You heard not your helpless parents' pleas
They succumbed to a dreadful disease
You should visit a shrink immediately
This house has for over four years been empty'

Sandra Martyres

He Relied On His Sense Of Touch

He relied on his sense of touch
Without having to say much
Randy was a young blind child
Brought up almost in the wild
Surrounded by illiterate lads
Who looked and behaved like little cads
Yet he was always very mild
A very gentle and well mannered child
Walking and feeling his way around
Which did everyone astound?
People would keep watching in awe
As he ambled towards the door
He did not trip
He did not fall
Nor did he for any help Call
He had no white cane
He simply used his alert brain
Then came his real test
He had to go to school like the rest
No teachers wanted him in their class
They feared he would never pass
If he from birth could not see
How would he even imagine a tree
Or learn the alphabets
He would be a drag on the other children
But the world is not short of good Samaritans
One came forward like an Aladdin
He led the boy to a distant cave
And with clay models and Braille
To him the required knowledge gave
Soon he gained enough confidence.
In his mentor's loving care
he was able to shed his diffidence
He went back and joined school
Today he is looked upon by all
as a model child who answered his call
One who gives to hope
to all physically challenged children
That even in this tough and cruel world

Given a chance they will be able to cope.

Sandra Martyres

He Went Fishing

Fishing tackle in tow
Hoping for a big catch
Jack headed towards
The cool clear waters
The sea was calm and
The sun shone brightly
It was the perfect day
He readied his gear
Fixed the bait with care
And lowered his tackle
Into the water at the edge
Dangling his rod he broke
Into song - a fishing ditty
That sounded nice and witty
But he was awakened soon
From his quiet reverie
By a huge mass that got
Entangled with his gear
The rod seemed to bend
Under the heavy weight
Then he lowered himself
To see what it could be
And wasn't he surprised
To find an extraordinary
Jelly fish looking creature
Stuck to his rod which was
Stationary, while his bait floated

He shook the rod violently
To rid it of the jelly like intruder
But he could not extricate it, left
With no choice, he hauled it up
Only to find that it was not a fish
But something heavy and strange
Packed in reams of bubble paper
Deciding not to take a chance
He called up the local police
They too seemed reluctant
To unravel the parcel and

Display the contents since
There was a distinct stench
That worsened as they undid
Each sheet of the wet packing
Finally what was revealed was
A complete shock for everyone
A dead little baby tied to a stone
And drowned in the sea apparently
To wipe out any trace of her - this
Brought tears to everyone's eyes -
How could anyone ever murder
A defenceless child and drown her! !
Fortunately a hospital name tag
still dangled from the decaying wrist
Jack hoped that the perpetrators
would be quickly tracked down and
Punished for the heinous crime
He never went fishing again.....

Sandra Martyres

Heart Break (Revised)

He broke her heart
He tore her apart
He crushed her ego
He shattered her dreams
Coz he felt threatened
He then took an impulsive
decision to change jobs
And had the audacity
To think that she'd
Follow him to another city

She had had enough
There was no way
She would follow him
Teary eyed she packed
All her belongings
And walked away
But not before telling him
That he'd have to look
For another partner
To dance quietly
To his miserable tune

Sandra Martyres

Heat And Dust - A Senryu Poem

May brings heat and dust
Coupled with humidity
When will the skies weep?

Sandra Martyres

Her Music Stopped Yesterday

Playing the piano
Appreciating music
Will never be the same again
For any of us dear Teacher Aida
We will miss your sharp ear
That did instill both awe and fear
We realise that you expected not less
Than the very best we were capable of
You berated us and encouraged us
Alternately - you gave us self-belief
We often wondered why you struggled
To teach us when you could have easily
Played for the Philharmonic Orchestra
To earn a name and fame for yourself

We recall all the times you took us
To the grand concerts at the NCPA*
To learn from and listen to the world's
Best pianists - you taught us the fine art
Of different arrangements, discussed
Our performance with the Trinity College
Examiners and even when we thought
We had let you down at an examination
You were quick to offer your handkerchief
And dry many a tear of disappointment
We owe you a debt that can never
Be repaid, we can now only promise to try
To maintain your high standards of perfection
Goodbye Teacher Aida - may you continue to play
Your beautiful music in the company of angels

* NCPA - National Council for the Performing Arts - Mumbai

Sandra Martyres

Her Sea Tale

Her tale is really a very unhappy one
She married a Captain hoping to have fun
She wanted to discover the world with him
Instead of which she only saw the ocean
For he always made sure that
She stayed back on board at every port

In sheer desperation she took a decision
At one such port she stealthily disembarked
And hid herself in an empty warehouse
Just before the ship was set to sail
She watched her husband on the deck
Talking animatedly to a fellow crew member

He was totally unaware that she was ashore
As the vessel sailed she waved it goodbye
Remaining riveted to her hiding spot
Until it was completely out of sight
That was the last she hoped to see of him
Her ex-husband the mean and captain

A sense of peace then came over her
The worst was finally coming to an end
No longer would she in loneliness whinge
Every time her husband went on a Binge,
Leaving her to her own devices
While he indulged himself and his vices

Now she hopes to lead a more normal life
At the port, taking up odd jobs to support herself
While continuously hoping always that her husband
Will never return to claim her back
So that she can enjoy her new found freedom
And be relieved from a lifetime of boredom

Sandra Martyres

His Goal

Each hesitant baby step
Took him a few inches more
Towards his ultimate goal

His environment did not help
Living in an overcrowded slum
Meant many obstacles to overcome

Yet he tried to strive further
Without encouragement or help
From his good for nothing father

What really egged him on daily
Were the pathetic living conditions
They were forced to survive under

Long queues for drinking water
Sporadic electricity and noise
From the constant squabbling

The neighbours tried hard to live in
A forced and dull kind of harmony
But that was virtually impossible

The basic facilities were inadequate
To receive a fair share one needed
To be assertive and even aggressive

All these daily irritants and miseries
Led to his increasing efforts to study
And appear for every scholarship exam

Till one day an eminent journalist
Picked up his story and published it
A philanthropist was really touched

He asked to meet the young boy alone
After quizzing him quite thoroughly
He confirmed that he was a real genius

Life changed almost overnight for the boy
He gained admission to the best university
With all his boarding and tuition fees funded

He left home happy but sad at the same time
His smiling Mother's worn hands and tired eyes
Made him promise that he would be back soon

To make sure that she lived a better life
Away from the drudgery and the hardships
That plagued her daily in the dreary slum

Sandra Martyres

His Last Embrace In 2009?

He has once again raised his ugly head
Taking the shape of a deceptive desert serpent
His first port of call was the most talked about Emirate
Which he slowly but surely drew into a tight embrace
Leaving it both breathless and penniless
As the news hit the headlines it sent shivers
Down the spines of both bankers and regulators
Both already under tremendous pressure over the
Economic excesses of past decade exposed in 2008
The world reaction was stark as markets tanked in unison
Leaving the rich and famous once again in shock
They are now desperately trying to assess the impact
Of the financial meltdown on their plush Palm Island villas
The real estate honchos are also licking their own wounds
Will they disappear into oblivion as their investments
Like sandcastles get blown away by the desert winds
Is this really the last kiss of the financial demon in 2009
Or will he slither away in search of a new destination?

Sandra Martyres

His Lovely Lady

Dark almond shaped eyes
Delicately shaped eye brows
Long brown eye lashes
A flawless skin
and her perfect face
She carries herself
with enormous grace
He is indeed obsessed
with his beauteous love
Each time she passes him
He stares back at her
in sheer agony
He wants to hold her in his arms
Reassure her that with him
She has nothing to fear
As he will always remain beside her
To love, protect and guard her
But he have been warned
That the slightest hint
of any advances
Would absolutely
ruin his chances
To win her over he needs
to wait patiently
Until she decides
to reach out to him
But inspite of her
seemingly indifferent nature
He still craves this beauteous creature
So will someone tell his lovely lady,
That her silence is killing him

Sandra Martyres

Hitched (Senryu)

A gold wedding band
Flashes on her ring finger
Too late to back out

Sandra Martyres

Home Stories (Senryu)

Milk can overturned
The neighbourhood cats slink in
And lick the floor clean

A full cookie jar
Mother has excelled herself
Daughter overjoyed

A posie of flowers
Gifted by her little boy
Mother's heart just melts

Sandra Martyres

Hunger (Senryu)

He stood on his head
Hoping someone would give him
A slice of fresh bread

Sandra Martyres

I Cannot.....

I cannot relax and read a book
There is always dinner to cook
I cannot think of staring into space
I may miss a chance in the rat race
I cannot sit back and read a novel
There will be snow in the pathway to shovel
I cannot spend an extra fifteen minutes in bed
There is always breakfast to be prepared
I cannot invite friends on weekdays to tea
There is always kids' homework to oversee
I cannot, I cannot, I cannot
I am tired of being that super robot
I now need to break free from this drudgery
And stop feeling guilty endlessly

Sandra Martyres

I Don'T Know Why

I don't know why we are the way we are
Why we lie when the truth is often easier
Why we walk past a beggar untouched
When all that it would take to change his mood
Are a few rupees for him to buy some simple food
Why we crib about the state of the nation
Never admitting that it is partly of our creation
Why we choose to believe that the country's ills
Are generally caused by other people's feeble wills
Will we ever try to understand
That no one can clap with only one hand.

Sandra Martyres

I Have Decided

Each time I try to show you
A better way to do
Something or
To deal with
Someone
You retaliate with
A nasty repartee
So from today
I have decided
To leave you
To your own devices
My advice I will only
Share
if you care enough
to ask for it,
or if you dare

Sandra Martyres

I Often Wonder

The dizzying city lights
The speeding trains
The unending queues
Of people in a mighty hurry
I watch them all
From my little seat on the wall
Nothing surprises me any more
Neither the scams nor the scandals
That are regularly reported in the journals
Stories of men and women
Whose only creed is unabashed greed
They have no time to dwell on the means
For them it is only the end that counts
They do not ask why they need the millions
They concentrate on how to make them
For them talks about simple living
High thinking or even just plain ethics
Are considered to be
The idle pastime of neurotics
In this environment I often wonder
If there is any scope for improvement
Or will we just drift with the tide
And await a providential denouement.

Sandra Martyres

I Searched For You

I could not bear
The thought of you
Not being there
So I searched for you
Everywhere

I walked the streets
Searching for you
Asking people along the way
If they had seen you
But no one seemed to know
Where you had gone

I left the city
In search of you
I walked miles and miles
Through rugged terrains
Asking and seeking
But I could not find you

Now I am old and weary
I can no longer search for you
I can only your picture carry
In my wallet
So that I can always remember you
The way you were
When you left

Sandra Martyres

Images

At the break of dawn each day
when I awake
my eyes invariably stray
to that niche in the wall
where a portrait used to hang
a hook
rusty with the ravages of time
still there
and while I stare
the wall
is suddenly no longer bare
the image of a face appears
with those piercing eyes
as always so endearing
and that proud smile
of a young ambitious man.

Gradually the image changes
a receding hairline
graying whiskers
a wiser look
a kinder smile
yet in those eyes
something seems amiss
I see a sadness that never used to be.
And as the image slowly fades
as always
and the memories of a lost decade
invariably remain
I wonder why.

Sandra Martyres

In My Dream

I danced with you - last night

In my dream

It was our favourite - the Viennese Waltz

In my dream

I sipped some heady wine and clinked glasses with you- last night

In my dream

I dined with you at our special bistro -last night

In my dream

I loved you like I have never loved before- last night

In my dream

Now I am awake at the crack of dawn

Alone again and forlorn

My dreams like you must disappear

As I face another lonely day and suppress a tear

Sandra Martyres

In Times Of Gloom And Doom

It is not all gloom and doom
For hope there is always room
Look at the beggar across the street□
He does not beat a hasty retreat
When a mean and miserly passer by
Shouts an expletive on hearing him cry
He believes that behind every mean guy
Lurks someone with extra food to supply
Neighbours have watched this man for years
And often worry when he disappears
They perhaps cheer when he re-appears
After seeing him around for so long
They know that to their area he belongs
They do not allow him to stray too far
When the going on the street gets sour
They get together and donate veggies
To keep him from getting too edgy
Hence their motto for the current recession
Is not to avoid going into depression
They need to do all that they can to stay afloat
And if unaffected they would not gloat
They always keep the lowly beggar in mind
After all he still manages to find
Sustenance from the big hearted and kind
Begging for them is obviously not a possibility
There are other ways of facing vulnerability
Rolling up ones sleeves and mucking in
While the going gets tough will bring a win
Their idea is to use all the resources available
To find a financial solution that is suitable

Sandra Martyres

In-Laws

I never cease to be amazed
By the manner totally unfazed
Of recounting dreadful tales about in-laws
Most of which resemble the behaviour of out-laws
We are obsessed with the mother-in-law syndrome
With unending woeful stories told from many a home
To make bad matters worse even the most popular TV serial
Focuses on exactly the same subject material
And despite the reams already written
The average Indian woman is still smitten
By the mother-in-law / daughter-in-law equations
That have been carried down to her over generations
Given that more women are entering the work place
We can only hope that this family centred menace
Will ultimately get watered down
And that such tales will not only draw a frown
But disappear completely over time
Leaving women a happier social code to define

Sandra Martyres

It Ended With A Sandwich (Revised)

Like a green caterpillar
Trying to hide
By balancing on a stem
Between two green leaves,
She stood in the park
Between two large croton bushes
With lemon and brown leaves
Matching the colours of her clothes,
What looked like
A once-floral dress.
Taking care not to draw
Attention
By the rustling of leaves,
She sat on the ground,
Unwrapped a packet of sandwiches,
And began to devour them.

Then, out of nowhere,
A little boy appeared
Crying loudly that his lunchbox
Was empty, that he was
Hungry.

They found her lying
In a heap on the ground,
Beside a half-eaten sandwich.
The dress she seemed to be wearing
Was really a worn and dirty
Blouse and skirt.
In a hurry to finish,
She had choked on the food,
The first she had eaten
In days.

*Inspired by an article in a magazine

Sandra Martyres

It Is Time To Thank You...My Ph Friends

I start with my countless dear friends and poetesses
Meggie, Karin, Marilyn, Fiona, Catrina, Christine, Naidz
My namesake Sandra Fowler, Carol, Fay, Allie, Jasmine
Mamta, Amary, Anjali and Roshni just to name a few
I can count on them for a word of advice or two
Every time I post a poem or try out something new
They are the reliable rocks on whom I test my talents
And till today they have never played truant

Next come the three stalwarts from the sunny South
There's Kesav, Samanyan and Sathya
Also my regular readers Leslie, CP, Jon, Shan,
Ahmad, Lawrence, Vijay, Alf and Dr. Sheth
On whom I also bounce off my poetic ideas
And eagerly await their reviews and comments
To be sure that the other readers will not lament

The two Indiras – outstanding poets in their own right
Reading their work is a poet's delight
They give an insight into the real and the surreal
Many of their works are poetic pearls
When they review a poem they do so with a focus
If the works are not up to speed, the writers gets pilloried

It would be totally ungrateful of me
If I were not to make special mention of ye
Michael, Carl and Kesav on whose talents
I take the liberty of drawing frequently
To improve my poetry presentation or seek an explanation
To get a better understanding of a new poetic form

And finally to all my friends whom I may not have named
Specifically in this little piece of poetry
I would like to thank you for reading and commenting
So generously on all my good and not so good efforts
Thanks to all of you I am almost glued to this site
Reading and sharing your work has been a real delight

(Inspired by Karin Andersen and Meggie Gultiano)

Sandra Martyres

It Takes

It takes courage to change
It takes patience to perfect
It takes time to accept
It takes love to forgive
And it takes determination
To achieve any or all of these

Sandra Martyres

Jungfrauoch

Chugging along in a cog wheel train
Up the mountain focussing on the beauty
Of the Swiss Alpine Range - a visual treat
And standing atop Europe's highest peak
Leaves one revelling in the glory of nature
With clear blue skies and bright sunshine
Adding to the splendour of the mountains
Sunbeams dance on the fresh snow piled up
Like mounds of freshly whipped cream
Hesitant steps are taken for fear of leaving
A dark black trail in the pristine surroundings
But the temptation to sink into the snow is too great
Inhibitions are soon shed and people are on their knees
Scooping up snow to create the largest snowman ever
Realisation dawns that a lot of effort will be required
Yet no one gives up and an hour later the body is ready
Then comes the head, the eyes are two black buttons
The mouth is a red hairclip and a hook the nose
A woollen scarf is wound around snowman's neck and
As the creators step back to admire their handiwork
Cameras go into action to capture this work of art
A wondrous moment meant to be savoured forever!

Sandra Martyres

Jungle Tales - A Haiku Series

The hungry lion
Plunges the jungle into
A state of fear

Soon he spots a deer
Peace reigns as he gets his teeth
Into his prey's flesh

His family waits
Patiently for leftovers
While the lion feasts

Mother lioness
Keeps a watchful eye as her
Cubs play hide and seek

Sandra Martyres

Just One More Day

Death stares me in the face
Dares me run to her final race
Yet I sit here clinging to hope
In my dour white hospital robe
I watch quietly as my friends
Sign out leaving empty beds
They who have answered the call
Of the Angel of Death hovering
Around the room almost constantly
She has already made her choices
And I know that I am one of them
But each morning I plead that she
Gives me just one more day so that
I can savour one more happy memory

Sandra Martyres

Just Yesterday

It seems like just yesterday
We had talked unendingly
About our future together
What happened thereafter
I have absolutely no clue
Why you chose to leave me

Now I feel left behind all alone
Staring blankly at the wall
With only a series of questions
For which I can find no answers
Please tell me why you shattered
My future and with it my dreams

Sandra Martyres

Justification

A housewife's nightmare
Justifying daily each and
every rupee spent

Sandra Martyres

Knocking

He knocked on many doors
But none did open for him

He tried his hand at many chores
But did not succeed with any

He took to writing poetry prolifically
But no publisher was convinced

He finally became a grave digger
And successfully buried his dreams

Copyright © 2011 Sandra MARTYRES
All rights reserved

Sandra Martyres

Knowledge (Tanka)

Her colleague explained
That knowledge was her power
Dissemination
Of which would empower others
She ignored him and prospered

Sandra Martyres

Lady Godiva (Senryu)

Lady Godiva
Today enthrals the whole world
On chocolate boxes

Sandra Martyres

Last Night

Last night
I spotted
A star
In dark skies
I smiled
She twinkled

I was
Sad, lonely
Perhaps
She was too
Lone star
In dark skies

We soon
Connected
Instant
Companions
Happy
For a night.

Sandra Martyres

Lenders - A Tanka

Lenders chasing dues
Are like hungry lions in wait
Swooping on cash flows
Just as the preying creatures
Bite into their victim's flesh

Sandra Martyres

Lenten Thoughts

A time to reflect
On our lives
A time to deflect
Attention from mundane things
A time to repent
For all our misdeeds
A time to make peace
With our misguided friends
A time to abstain
From food and wine
A time to pray
For those in pain
A time to thank God
For all that we have
A time to pledge ourselves
To doing good whenever we can.

Sandra Martyres

Letters

Dear Mom and Dad,
I need just one more drag
On that glorious fag
I do not have the money
I realize you do not think it is funny
I will definitely repay you
If not in cash then in kind
But right now I need to sniff the stuff
Please, all I ask for is for a single puff
As parents you are a parsimonious pair
You claim that for me you really care
But if you really did
You would part with the quid
And of me and my problems you'd be rid
I do not know how to sound convincing
Since your threats and your ranting
No longer bother me
I will be as I want to be
And to hell with you and your kind
With one puff I can easily unwind

Dear son,
You think that it is fun
For us to try and manage an adult's life
And with it, all the attendant strife
Over the years we have had but one aim
Caring for you and bringing you to fame
From the time you took your first independent baby steps
Until you successfully cleared your high school exams
We stayed by your side
As parents, friend and guide
Now everything seems such a sad shame
Where you are concerned, we are the only ones to blame
Our responsibility does not end
We seem to continuously have to defend
Our reasons for refusing late nights
Even though we are well within our rights

To stop you from smoking and ruining your health
Inhaling dangerous substances with such stealth
It is now time that you come to terms with life, get sane
Shake your self out of your reverie and start living again

Sandra Martyres

Life

Life is so uncertain
No one knows when the curtain
May suddenly fall
It does so without any warning call
One needs to be prepared
It is pointless just getting terribly scared
When Death's Angel stops by
Some degree of preparation will ease the cry
This may sound like a tall order
But it is always better to anticipate life's border
Remember a heap of good deeds
Will help the process and rid one of sinful weeds
Making the path to death easier
Fear will not come in the way of meeting one's Maker

Sandra Martyres

Life In The Fast Lane

In my new job I speed across the Expressway
From Mumbai to Pune and back every other day
I think it is a privilege to live "in the fast lane"
Despite warnings that life would never be the same
Father regularly raised the alarm
That to my private life I was doing only harm
But I chose not to pay any heed
And focused on the corporate creed a.k.a. greed
Now my wife is talking seriously about separating
None can change her mind not even parental berating
My children say life will be fine without their dad
They care not if their decision is good or bad
As I am never around when they need me
And to them all that I seem to hanker after - is money
My troubled river looks to be in full spate
But again father tells me it is still not too late
All I need to do is change gears
Altering my course will chase away everyone's fears
I must lessen the pace of my work life
Give quality time to my children and wife
But it will be difficult for me to play this new role
It is like asking me to vault from pole to pole
I have not done this family bit in years so I'd rather
Not be the doting husband and loving father
I prefer to stick to the fast lane and risk the pain
Of possible loneliness even if it drives me insane
After all that is what a great career is all about
In the corporate world you cannot reach the top
If you get all mushy about family life and stop
I am sure that they will soon wake up and realize
When the cash dries up and they have to economize
My wife and children will look at a picture much wider
And accept me as their much needed sole provider
So Dad it is not that I disregard your precious advice
I am ambitious and if need be, I am willing to pay the price.

Sandra Martyres

Lizzie's Kitchen

is bare
nothing to cook
no LPG to keep the flame burning
with a cold and hungry look
children huddle there

Lizzie stops at the food stores
on one street
to buy
on credit
something to feed them

But storekeepers are blind
to her, are deaf
to her pleas, unconvinced
by her promises to repay.
They seem to forget the children
she speaks of are
not her own,
but other peoples' children,
abandoned,
and wandering the streets.

but Lizzie will not give up
dismay on her face
she turns away
heading for the next street
hoping she will not meet
there
the same fate
to touch the right chords
and return home with something
for them to eat
this time
she begins a new refrain

who among you will watch
your children go to bed hungry
if you rich folks cannot and will not

then why should poor me be different

Sandra Martyres

Loneliness

Humans were created
To be related
To stay united in families
And for the families to live
Harmoniously in communities
It happened systematically in the past
When dependence levels were high
And relationships were made to last
Now older people look back and sigh
For today things have changed
Each individual is an island unto himself
Considered capable of meeting his own needs
Both temporal and intellectual

There are jobs, books and the media
To educate him and keep him busy
There are restaurants and fast food joints
To cater to every pocket and palate
Bars, night clubs, theatres and all else
To entertain him but after that - what
Every man and woman needs to return home
To people who value and care for him or her
This is what is really beginning to disappear

The resultant sense of loneliness is a killer
Here is where people lose out
Staying in the perennial rat race
Looking for more material comforts
And that illusive state of mind
Commonly referred to as their own space
Societal recognition is their only ambition
Selfishness takes over and they are
Unable to stay connected to each other
Broken homes strained relations
Are not uncommon thereafter
Is this the way we want to stay?

Sandra Martyres

Loneliness - A Senryu Suite

on a damp dark night
in flickering candle light
she counts the shadows

the patter of rain
on her windowsill disturbs
her concentration

a lonely victim
of old age in a fast world
the choice is not hers

Sandra Martyres

Lonely Lady

I need you dear to patiently listen to me
I am just an old and lonely lady.
Indeed I do have family living around me
But none has time for me, a poor old lady
My children and grandchildren are always busy
Their life style leaves me feeling dizzy
They zoom around in their fancy cars
They say they need to reach out for the stars
In their high speed rat race and money chase
For me there is neither a role nor any place
My presence is cramping their life style
I need to leave and go away for a while
Then perhaps if they do miss me
They may even change their attitude towards me
If they do not, I will no effort spare
To find another home where people care
Hopefully I will then be more at ease
Among caring people, less difficult to please.
But for now my dear please sit right here
And help me to overcome my depression and fear

Sandra Martyres

Looking For You

I'd have climbed any mountain
I'd have swum across the sea
I'd have done just about anything
If I could have reached you

I'd have walked the length of the city
I'd have crawled through the pipes
I'd have spent my very last cent
If I could have found you

But alas you have been very illusive
As elusive as the Scarlet Pimpernel
And I had no way of really finding you
So I just had to stop looking for you

Sandra Martyres

Losing Patience

It calls for tremendous patience,
Super special listening skills,
A sympathetic bent of mind,
To focus on the long-winded tales,
About her pedestrian life style.

For many long years, I have been
That bottomless receptacle,
Into which she emptied her stories,
With wave-like regularity,
There's now a danger of over-flow.

She needs to stop the loud talking,
Lest I have a nervous break-down.
I can no longer tolerate
That unending inane banter,
It's time for her to find a new friend.

Sandra Martyres

Lost In Translation

So you want the butter
And the money for the butter
What on earth is he talking about
She never asked for butter
Why this obsession with butter

You are not comfortable
In your own skin he yelled
She had not spoken of any
Kind of discomfort whatsoever
At least with regard to her skin

It is raining ropes he said
Strange she thought – Of course
There was rain but what did
It have to do with ropes
She saw no connection

Note: A literal translation of some French idioms/ expressions- the English equivalents being
have one's cake and eat it too
is not comfortable with himself
3.It is raining cats and dogs

Sandra Martyres

Lost Love

I stand at my window
Watching her from across the road
Deftly move around the mom and pop store
Each customer that she serves
Touches in me a raw nerve
Had I been a bit less chauvinistic
I would not have lost my beloved little mystic.
She has now to work for a livelihood
Her pride would never have withstood
My arrogance and my family's haughty gaze
Directed at her humble origins and simple ways.

Sandra Martyres

Madoff Llc

Bernie Madoff has become a household name
And the questions raised are the same
How did he manage to gain so much clout
With large investors without raising a doubt
How could he have for so long and so blatantly
Abused the trust of the rich and the gentry
After all he had used the age old Ponzi Scheme
To put paid to many a client's financial dream
Were the regulators napping at the wheel
While Madoff LLC diligently set out to steal
For the common man what is even more amazing
Is the ease with which the billions went missing
There are still no clear explanations or indications
As to how or why the fraud went long undetected
But finally when an insider spilt the beans
The authorities quickly and efficiently did intervene
Reams of paper evidencing fraud and client records
Were produced before the courts along with witnesses
The Judgement was clear despite his advancing age
And his apology he will spend his life confined to a cage

Sandra Martyres

Management & Stress - Senryu Style

Poor management
Is how they refer to it
And it is quite true

They expected him to
Sit in a pressure cooker
And ignore the heat

They were mistaken
He coolly switched off the gas
And walked off the job

Now he is stress free
And they have a vacant post
Waiting to be filled

Sandra Martyres

Managers

In these recessionary days
Managers are looking for ways
To pressurise the employees to deliver
It is almost like they have a viral fever
I want more meat on the bone
He consistently and loudly seems to moan
He is another Manager of a large corporation
Who drives the employees to frustration
Precision and decision-making are not his talents
He can never strike the much-needed balance
Between his management role
And reaching the corporation's business goal
So he just barks and screams hoping to redeem
His own confidence and self-esteem
But alas what does he achieve
Not much even by way of reprieve
The Directors no longer in him believe
And the poor unfortunate will soon be forced to leave
Either to join the ranks of the unemployed
Or find another job where his skills can be deployed
The legacy he leaves behind is a demotivated team
With scant hopes of ever achieving their career dream.

Sandra Martyres

Markets (Senryu)

For stock investors
Calculators and cell phones
Are still their life lines

The bulls and the bears
Squabble over market shares
Leaving banks cringing

The stinging truth is
That manipulators drive
Thrive and stay alive

Sandra Martyres

Marooned

They placed their ears to the ground
to pick up the slightest sound
A nomad family was in the desert marooned
for days at the mercy of the sun and moon
They hoped for a caravan or a camel cart to pass
that could help deliver them from their morass

But for them fate had decided otherwise
They remained alone under the burning skies
For their aged father dear it became too late
He could no longer for any succour wait
silently he lowered his head and died
A tragic end to his long and painful ride.

The nomads took his death in their stride
And chanted to keep his spirit on their side
Perhaps they were right to do so
they did not face a second death blow
Help arrived in the form of a straying camel
They rode to freedom on this loving animal

Sandra Martyres

Matchmaker

Matchmaker, matchmaker
Find me a match- a good catch
I have no warts nor a freckled face
I can try to be the picture of grace

Matchmaker, matchmaker
Make sure the guy is worth my hand
My parents have said they are willing
To take care of the wedding billing

Matchmaker, matchmaker
I may even come down in my wants
If by chance you find no other takers
I would settle for a banker or a baker

Matchmaker, Matchmaker
I have one last request if I may
Let not the neighbours know about this
The best chances I cannot afford to miss

Sandra Martyres

Memories

While leaving -I forgot none of them
I wrapped them all systematically
In cotton wool and bubble paper
And carried them with me carefully

During the long tedious voyage
I checked on them several times
To make sure that they were safe
After all they were my only baggage

I was very sure that you would never
Return to search for me so I had to
Treasure at least the memories
Of the good times we spent together

Sandra Martyres

Missing You

Tired eyes afflict me
Reams of paper to read
Yet I try to slip in a letter
To you my love
So that you know
That I always remember
You- as you were
Though you read them not
I store them carefully
Like little treasures
In a drawer close to my heart
You are I know in another world
Far better than I can imagine
But I hope that somewhere
In your heart too there will
Always be a place for me
As I miss you terribly.

Sandra Martyres

More Views (Senryu)

Insanity runs
In the Duckworth family
Bernie cooked his cat

Very low morale
In the firm does not augur
Well for the future

When schools do become
A breeding ground for racism
Education stops

Sandra Martyres

Mother

Mother dear

With you around we had nothing to fear

You could easily dry every tear

With just an encouraging word, and a little fuss,

We still wonder how you managed all of us

Six noisy, hungry, thirsty children

Vying unendingly for your attention

Of course it was not always hunky dory

The solution for you was a simple story

We listened to parables, fables and other tales

That were meant to teach us to smoothly sail

Through life's trying situations

The old adage -Spare the rod and spoil the child

Was impossible to follow for someone so mild

We were merely told a story & admonished to be good

If not, we risked missing your charming smile and good mood

We lack your simple wisdom

When dealing with our own children

Without your unending repertoire of stories

That told of great persons and their past glories

We cannot discipline them with your degree of finesse

It is something about which we can only reminisce.

Sandra Martyres

Mother And Child - A Senryu Series

a tear is trapped
on her determined eye lash
refusing to fall

her suffering child
must not see her unshed tears
she is his strong Mom

medical reports
do regularly confirm
his days are numbered

with undying faith
she talks of miracles and
God's mercifulness

Sandra Martyres

Mothers' Day 2010

'Is there anything to celebrate? '

'Of course there is my dear
We have three healthy children'

'Indeed, the lazy parasites
They never raise a finger to help me and
They only eat us out of house and home'

'But dear they could have been worse
Their noisy friends could have moved in too!
So let's count our blessings and celebrate
We could have suffered a worse fate
Happy Mothers' Day'

Sandra Martyres

Mumbai Remembers 26/11

This day will remain deeply etched
In the minds of the citizens of Mumbai
It is unforgettable for reasons that
Are really best forgotten-
It was the day when terrorism
Like lightening struck the towers
Of some of the city's prize monuments
Engulfing them in flames while
The sounds of thunder reverberated
From deep within shaking the faith
And the confidence of the city and the nation
People just ran helter skelter as if possessed
No place seemed safe on that fateful day
Red rivulets trailed behind the ambulances
As they made their way to the hospitals
Carrying the remains of the massacred -
Victims of the terrorists' brutality and bullets
The targeted buildings and areas kept
Billowing thick black smoke and red flames
Into the atmosphere for seventy-two hours
Until the saviours descended sliding down
Ropes suspended in mid air from helicopters
To rescue the hostages from the throes of death
And their ordeal stage managed by their captors
But the pall of gloom remained over the city for days
As it mourned its dead and saluted its heroes

Sandra Martyres

My Aunt Rose

She was indeed a special lady
We never forget to raise a toast
In her honour at every family do
She left us at the age of ninety-two

She was in every way very dainty
Even at the ripe old age of ninety
She carried a handbag proudly
Always wore matching shoes

Powder and pearls were a must
A scarf added colour to her dress
Everything had to be perfect
She would not have it otherwise

Amazingly she always sat upright
In her very own high backed chair
And listened with an interested air
Age for her was not a barrier

She loved visiting her kith and kin
Especially if she could get a word in
She doled out plenty of sound advice
In a manner that was quite nice

When Aunt Rose did breathe her last
It was without any kind of warning
She just did not awaken one morning
The family knew what they had to do

Meticulous as she always was
Aunt Rose had left clear instructions
How she was to be dressed and even
Who was to be invited to her funeral

Sandra Martyres

My Grandmother's Gift

These are the poems I have read over the years
They gave me solace and stilled my tears
When my faith in human kind was shaken
When my ego seemed completely broken

These are the poems that gave me self-confidence
When I was overtaken by a sense of diffidence
Restored my belief in myself
Helped me overcome my grief

These are the poems that reminded me
That relationships are just transitory
They are meant to be savoured as long as they last
And then consigned to memories of the past

These are poems I leave to you my child
Tattered and torn but carefully filed
Treasure them like I have, over the years
They will help you shake off your fears

Signed - Your loving Grandmother

Sandra Martyres

My Humble Abode

Money, money, money
In a rich man's world
Honey, honey, honey
I don't belong there
You have to understand
I won't do anything underhanded
Even if it means losing you
To one of the spoilt and rich few
True it will break my heart
And perhaps I will never make a new start
But I have my principles and taboos
And you need to respect them too
I prefer having less but staying peaceful
Rather than being rich and feeling miserable
If you think you can share my views
I will be more than willing to welcome you
To share my humble abode
Located on the next parallel road

Sandra Martyres

My Little Blue Angel

My little blue angel
He always watched over me
Right through my childhood
He kept me out of trouble
I always knew what to do
And when to do it
I was the envy of the class
With seemingly little effort
On my own part
I touched everyone's heart

My parents told me
Never to fear the truth
As my little blue angel
Always knew what
I had or should have done
Sometimes it was not fun
It made other kids angry
For them I was a spoilsport
But even that did not deter me
From following him faithfully

Now I need to tell you
Who the little angel was
He was my baby brother
Who always smiled at me
His elder sister ever so lovingly
Until the day I saw Daddy
Take him away in a little box
And Mummy tearfully explained
That he had gone to heaven
As a little blue Angel to love and protect me.

(This story was told to me by a young girl)

Sandra Martyres

My Story

I walked out on her twenty years ago
Although I had nowhere to go
I was young and brash
Tired of listening to unending lectures
On how I should be living,
Or how much attention I should be giving
On whom and when I should spend my money
Enough was enough – that's what I said
The day I decided to break away

I traveled for miles and miles
To find a suitable lodging
After a harrowing search I ended up in a dingy flat
Dimly lit and smelling musty
Reluctantly I laid down my bag
And fell asleep on the creaky bed
From that day on there was no turning back
I did not return Mother's calls
I let the mobile ring and clock
Hundreds of missed calls
She seemed never to give up
But I did, I changed the number

That was twenty years ago
Much water has since flowed down the river
I look back with a cold shiver
Now Mother is dead and gone
I return home to manage her estate
Her Lawyer summoned me via an advertisement
Placed in a local newspaper
The house is the same - almost the way I left it
Of course it cries out for repairs
The once highly polished stairs
Now look old, dull and worn
I can almost, on Mother's face see scorn
For her everything had to be just perfect
She would not have it any other way

Mother's desk in dark mahogany well crafted

Where she her literary works had drafted
Books about which I often dreamed
Maybe Mother was not as bad as she seemed
That thought crossed my mind
As I opened the desk from behind
Like a tornado a flood of envelopes fell out
Each one bearing my name
Written in her meticulous hand
I selected what appeared to be the latest one
An envelope that was whiter than the rest...
The note inside read – "My son it is a pity
That you will see this when I am gone
I just want to say that
What ever I did or did not do
Was only meant to protect you
You father disappeared leaving us penniless –
But I let you believe that he was dead
To tell you the truth I was scared
Trust you will now forgive me
And let my soul rest in peace
To you I bequeath my life's savings
A million pounds in stocks
Plus the royalties on my books
My penname is Helen Oaks –
And my Book Different Strokes
Won a literary award
Despite the accolades and felicitations
For me there was no real celebration
As always I was alone
Your Mother'

Sandra Martyres

My Tryst With A Parasite

A parasite visited me
And did climb up
My leg gingerly
By the time it reached my knee
I began to feel very uneasy
But there was precious little
That I could do
Seated in a theatre
Attired in a pair
Of slim fit trousers.
Then as the little creature
Wended its way higher up
I avoided a scream and
Did unobtrusively try
To trap it
And keep it wedged
Firmly under my knee
To prevent more discomfort
And just when I did think
That I had achieved the feat
Of cornering the little devil
Under my trouser leg
With my finger nails
I had to quickly concede defeat
It had escaped my clutches
And was back upon my knee
So engrossed was I
In this disturbing activity
That I failed to observe
My curious neighbor
Intently watching me.
Embarrassed and red faced
I requested him to
Focus on the stage play,
And to stop staring at me
And my antics with a flea
To my complete dismay
He dismissed my comment
With a sleight of hand

"Dear lady, " he said
"I hope you realize
How much I despise
The likes of you who
Come to theatres
And spend their time
Adjusting their clothes"
By this time I had the
Parasite firmly in my grip
"Don't worry gentleman"
I retorted, "The object
Of my anguish is about
To be destroyed
Then you will be able
To regale your friends
With a comment like
You had paid for one ticket
But were able to watch
Two performances"

Sandra Martyres

My Valentine

Your innocent look
Your piercing eyes
Always leave me mesmerised
Your straight long black hair
Tossed about with a nonchalant air
A pretty girl without a care
Your perfectly chiselled nose
Gently sniffing at a red rose
Your Cleopatra neck
Adorned with a diamond speck
I think of you by day
And dream of you at night
You are my perfect Valentine
You will make me feel divine
Only if I can be your Valentine

Sandra Martyres

Native Belief (Senryu)

Most natives look on
Cadillacs and Hamburgers
As US symbols

(inspired by Josh Ozersky Yale's article on The Hamburger)

Sandra Martyres

Neighbours

In metropolitan cities they say
It is easier to walk out on a bad marriage
Than to be rid of a bad neighbour
The former is resolved by separation or divorce
But the latter means running an unending rocky course
Since good apartments are difficult to find
We found ourselves in a dreadful bind
Everything we said was twisted around
Making us wonder if we were going unsound
Any simple act of neighbourly kindness
Was interpreted as a sign of weakness
The unpleasantness got louder
And neighbourly interactions rowdier
We experienced this for two long years
Living in a state of stress driven by all kinds of fears
Till one day when we could stand it no longer
And stepped out to show them who was stronger
We approached the local law keepers
And recounted all our grievances
Without omitting the details of our horrific experiences
Immediate action was taken
Our recalcitrant neighbours were summoned and berated
That no further complaints would be tolerated
That this was their final chance to reform
Or else they risked facing societal scorn
Hopefully they will from ignominy now refrain
And let us lead normal lives again

Sandra Martyres

Never Give Up

When failure makes you fall on your face
Never give up

If your best friend lets you down
Never give up

Even if the whole world is against you
Never give up

In brief no matter how life treats you
Never give up

Remember there is always a loving God above
Waiting to shower on you His everlasting love
So never give up

Sandra Martyres

Observations..(Senryus)

Solar energy
Lights up the village homesteads
Not electric lamps

The blind student cries
He does not need a text book
He reads only Braille

Inebriated
Another glass of whiskey
He gets less frisky

Sandra Martyres

Old Perkins

Perkins is a lucky man
He systematically leaves
His wife to carry the can
He lives just as he pleases
Life for him is a breeze
Whenever he remembers
He gives Mrs. Perkins
A loving pat on the back
His way of acknowledging
Her significant contribution
To the easy going life style
That he has been enjoying
For a quite while
Poor gullible Mrs. Perkins
Continues to support him
Until one fine morning
When she is making breakfast
And he is half awake and yawning
In comes a buxom young lass
Dressed in clothes quite crass
With a wailing babe in her arms
On seeing a shocked Mrs. Perkins
She deposits the baby
Into the nearest chair
Shouting that it is high time
That Perkins takes responsibility
And proper parental custody
Of his very own progeny

Sandra Martyres

Old Perkins - A Sequel

Mrs. Perkins, really one of a kind
Cannot leave a helpless and hungry,
Innocent little child unattended
His angelic smile melts her heart
She picks him up and commiserates
With him for having such a Dad

She treats Perkins like a non-entity
And focusses all her attention
On the baby making it clear that
There will be no more tasty meals
Set out for him, she coldly declares
That the time had come for him to
Take care care of himself and his food

Distressed with the new baby at home
And his loving wife's icy attitude
Perkins tries to look very contrite and
Makes himself useful by meekly
Offering to go shopping for baby food
Including some tasty tidbits for himself

Mrs Perkins sets a new code of conduct
Any more adventures and her spouse
Will be out on the street with his brood
Stressing that no more babies would
She tolerate - no matter how cute they are
Perkins knows she means business this time

Sandra Martyres

On Being Diplomatic

He grits his teeth
And bites his tongue
To calm his nerves
And keep remembering that
He has to be diplomatic
Irrespective of the nerds
That surround him
Or their idiosyncrasies
That hound him
He has to be diplomatic
He does not utter a word
That could be misconstrued
Leading to a long and painful feud
He has to be diplomatic
Even if practices around him are unfair
Causing him a further loss of hair
In addition to other health scares
To challenge them he will not dare
He has to be diplomatic
So what is diplomacy all about?
Quite simply he will shout
It is about being a hypocrite
Someone who refuses
To call a spade a spade
And instead concentrates
On mouthing meaningless niceties
Instead of some well deserved profanities
That would have gone a long way
In keeping the pigs under control and at bay

Sandra Martyres

On Being Free

I just want to be free
Free as a bird flying high
To distant lands across the sky

Today I feel caged
Each time I look around
The four walls of my apartment

The books, the music
The pots and pans are all stark
Reminders of being tied down

I want to leave them behind
And experience true freedom
Before earth finally swallows me

Sandra Martyres

On That Fateful Picnic Day

On that fateful picnic day, when
To prove that we were different
We bravely plunged into the dam
To exchange wedding vows
Amid a cheering group of friends
We held hands and sent up a prayer
Sealing our union with a kiss
The glorious moments unfortunately
Did not last very long, we were struck
With the awful feeling of being
Caught in a whirlpool with
The angel of death hovering close by
Terror was writ large on the faces
Of all our friends and witnesses
As they faced the prospect of having
To dive into the water to save us
Eventually they did brave it and we
Were all fortunate to come out alive
To celebrate our wedding in a church
With all the traditions - white dress
Bouquet and dad giving daughter away
With our rescuers, family and friends

Sandra Martyres

On Throwing A Shoe Or Two

The Simple art of throwing a shoe
Has really caught the imagination
Of quite a few
History says that the Russians were
The first to uncover its alternate uses
When their President made a shoe point
At the UN, to express his displeasure
More recently, the US President got a scare
But managed to duck in time to avoid the pair
Of shoes aimed at him in quick succession
At one of his Iraqi press sessions
Our local journalists not to be outdone
Have also joined in shoe shooting but not for fun
The Home Minister being the latest target
Of an unhappy pressman's shoe attack
But he rather quickly and graciously
Accepted the Newspaper's apology
And forgave the impulsive journalist
For this act of indiscretion
Soon thereafter, a leading daily
Carried an article on the art of aiming shoes
It strongly advised practice sessions
Stating that the purpose is not to let the shoe
Make contact with the targeted politico
Rather the intention is only a moral point to score
The right approach is therefore to leave a margin
Of at least twenty inches and aim for the wall
As politicians are not known to remain
Riveted to a single spot they keep moving about
And the last thing a shoe thrower would want
Is for his sole to actually wound the targeted soul
But the older and the smellier the shoe
The greater the impact in terms of a moral blow
The gender of the shoe does not matter
Looked at from an economic and utility point of view
One could always choose a lady's shoe
As she generally has a surplus pair or two
And the heels will act as a great deterrent
Especially when the target is grossly errant! !

(Inspired by an article that was published in the Times of India recently)

Sandra Martyres

On Tigers And Owls

A hungry tiger
On a moonlit night waiting
For a tasty bite

The wise old owl howls
A cyclone is on its way
Tomorrow for sure

Sandra Martyres

Only A News Item

She sat on the wall
Of the water front
With a vacant look
On her gaunt face

Yet no one stopped
To even glance at her
The world moved on
Uncaring, unconcerned

The following morning
A tiny news item appeared
In a local daily with a picture
It was undoubtedly her

The article read like this
Young woman ends her life
Jumping from the wall
Into the water below

Hers was the typical love story
Gone wrong - he had led her
Right up the garden path
Leaving her pregnant

He went on his way when
He heard about her condition
Stating that he had no intention
Of supporting her or the child

Fearing parental wrath
And society's vicious tongue
She chose what she thought was
The best way out of a bad situation.

Sandra Martyres

Page Three

In our current
Celebrity obsessed culture
Many people establish
A symbiotic relationship
With popular dailies.
A snapshot on page three
Is also the ambition of
Many a wannabe
The skimpier the outfit
The flashier the jewelry
The greater the impact
Is the general belief
Many a cute young thing
Sporting a little black number
Would be delighted to
Feature on page three
For if she does succeed
All her dreams would be
Fulfilled
As there is nothing more
Satisfying than arriving
At a Page Three do
Hanging on to the arm of
A guy featuring in "Who's who"

Sandra Martyres

Paradise

He went out to buy a ticket to Paradise
A place where no one would him despise
Where snow capped mountains appear
Against deep blue skies that are clear
Where a man's caste colour and creed
Is something no one is likely to heed
Where fruits and vegetables are aplenty
And nobody's granary is ever empty
Where music is played ever so softly
And nothing is ever overly costly
Where the poor are never treated badly
And the rich part with their money gladly
The travel agent searched desperately
And then raising his head announced clearly
That there was no such place called Paradise
The poor man went back with tears in his eyes

Sandra Martyres

Parakeets (Haiku)

Nature's aggressors
parakeets are green meanies
with fetching plumage

Sandra Martyres

Peanuts - Anyone? ? ?

Candidate No 1

'If you pay peanuts
Only monkeys will
Probably work for you'
So said the candidate
To her prospective boss
He remained undeterred
'What if I raise the bar
And offer a cashewnut'
He yelled out - but she
Had already walked out

Candidate No 2

'Please come in 'he said
'Make yourself comfortable
While I make myself some tea'
The candidate was surprised
But said nothing, just watched
'How do you like peanuts'
He shot the first question
' Don't mind them Sir'
She replied looking confused
' No further questions
Young lady - you're hired'
'But Sir ' she started to say
' Now what's the problem
You said you liked peanuts
And that's what I pay! ! ! '

Sandra Martyres

Pink Slippers

She always wore pink slippers
They were her signature footwear
When one pair wore out completely
She quietly produced another

The neighbours thought it strange
But no one dared comment on them
If pink slippers were what she wanted
Then who were they to question her

Then one day realisation dawned
She had made it her goal in life
To make women aware of their rights
Pink slippers were the right reminder

When she died the female population
Of the town was seen sporting them
They believed that it was the only way
To pay tribute to her who had just died

She had used a simple but colourful way
To teach them that if they wanted success
They needed to display sisterly togetherness
And sporting pink slippers was just one method

Sandra Martyres

Please Remember

I am who I am and
I'll be whom I want to be
No one can change me
So do not even try
You will be wasting your time
In much the same way as if
Your were trying to make the
The blue skies look less blue
Or the tiger change its stripes

I am happy the way I am
I may not have much money
But I have that peace of mind
That is not always easy to find
Whether you are looking for new
Avenues for safe investment or
Chasing borrowers to get it back
Either ways it generally leads to
Financial uneasiness and fatigue

Why don't we agree to disagree
You stay the way you want to be
And leave me to my devices
Then I'll be free to find my own ship
To sail the calm or choppy seas
To look for the hidden treasure trove
Of happiness under the rainbow
And who knows I could strike gold
And find myself a new love too

Sandra Martyres

Poetic Pru

There was a young lady named Pru
Who wrote lots of cheeky poetry too
Her writing made hubby so afraid
That he ran away with the maid
But Pru wasn't one to sit back and rue
She just bid him goodbye & away she flew

Now she chirps around in a new town
Sporting a smile with no hint of a frown
She very proudly introduces herself
As Poetic Pru without power or pelf
But her admirers are many they wait
Like drooling puppy dogs at her gate

Then hungrily lap all up her writing
With a charm that is really disarming
On her side she struts around pleased
Sure that as soon as her book is released
There would be many a willing taker
To endorse her publishers faith in her

Sandra Martyres

Poetry - Or Random Thoughts

One of the pleasures on a holiday
Is the ability to lose oneself
In the imaginary world of poetry
Without having to feel guilty

So here I am perfectly relaxed
Enjoying a break from the chaos
Of the real world sipping coffee
And typing random poetic thoughts

Always hoping that my readers
Will like what I write and not scoff at me
For imagining that I am writing poetry
When all I am really doing is recording
CRAZY RANDOM THOUGHTS! ! !

Sandra Martyres

Politicians

The political fraternity is an expendable race
Often the cause of a nation's fall from grace
They never miss an opportunity to spread across
Every available nook and corner of the country.

They assiduously work towards building a group
Of sycophants to satellite around them and cater
To their every whim and fancy no matter how
Ridiculous and inappropriate it may seem

Then pretending to be agents of change they
Get involved in phoney philanthropic activities
Hoping to touch the hearts of the poor gullible
Man on the street by making false promises

If elected, they would ensure that homeless are
Given a roof over their heads and the hungry
Are assured of at least two square meals per day
What more can the have-nots aspire for from a leader

The tale changes post the election celebrations
They gracefully accept the congratulatory messages
Then go into the ceremonial huddle to supposedly plan
The best way to address the electorate's demands

After weeks and months of planning not much action
Is really visible from the ground apart from a few crumbs
By way of policy decisions to keep the common man quiet
Then the excuses coming pouring in with a vengeance

Soon one begins to notice their families appearing
In all public places demanding special treatment
Like VIPs they have to be boarded first on aircrafts
Trains are delayed to make way for them when they are late

These are just some innocuous requests taken for granted
They can get far worse and woe betide the one who refuses
To toady to their wishes - veiled threats follow and it is
Only then that realisation dawns – never trust a politician! !

Sandra Martyres

Power Cuts - Senryu Poems

Plunged into blackness
Another power failure
Back to the stone age

Electricity
Has become a luxury
Meant for the powered

Ram the IT geek
Bangs his computer asking
Who can save his work

Poor Mira stays calm
Her simple dinner is cooked
On a charcoal flame

Save as bookmark
And check this box if you want to show the text in your
'I recommend you to read' list, Confirm or Close

Sandra Martyres

Prison Dreams

Madoff and Stanford
Leaving wealth and luxury behind
Now dream in prison

Disgraced Ponzi kings
Sleeping in musty jail cells
Dreaming of old friends

No more caviar on toast
No more uncorking champagne
Just sharing dreams with fellow gaol birds

Sandra Martyres

Puddles - Of A Different Kind

Little Reena wanted a puppy
Said she'd do anything to get one
Her parents were against the idea
And promised to compensate her
With other gifts, goodies or toys
If only she'd stop all that noise
About wanting a squealing doggy
But Reena would have none of it
She in turn offered to do her bit
By not eating sweets for a week
And keeping her room very neat
Her Dad's heart melted and
He finally gave in and led
Her to a pet shop not far away
Within minutes she was all smiles
A tiny pomeranian wagged his tail
And the child was sure he wanted her
She jumped up and down as her Dad
Settled the bill and carried the dog off
In a special basket with a rubber bone
And other puppy accessories but
What they did not realise was that
Puppies need to be trained and soon
On reaching home Reena let the pup
Run loose and sure enough there were
Puddles all around the room - her Mom
Was not pleased as she had to mop up
The Dad rushed out to buy a Dog Book
Before he returned his slippers
Had been systematically chewed up
He could only see the soles and a
Very flustered little Reena in tears
' Dad I did not know that puppies
Can be more troublesome than babies
But please don't return him to the shop
I will help you and Mom to bring him up
I will train him to keep the house clean
You keep your footwear out of reach
And we will name him Puddles'

Sandra Martyres

Puerta Del Sol

I leaned against a building wall
In Madrid - at Puerta del Sol
It was an interesting morning
Busy shoppers teeny boppers
Shaky old men reeking of beer
After a heady evening earlier
All moving around gingerly
Savouring the place leisurely
In addition to the monuments
I also noticed several statues
Placed strategically in the square
Surprising I thought, as they
All looked freshly painted
Then one unexpectedly moved
My curiosity was quickly aroused
I walked up to take a closer look
And lo and behold it was a man
Painted like the Statue of Liberty
With a small black hat in front of him
Each time some one dropped a coin
He acknowledged it with a nod
As did all the other statues....

Later nearing lunch time I felt
The usual hunger pangs
Watching everyone munching
Spanish goodies and headed
Quicky to a nearby Tapas Bar
To sample a plate of paella
No sooner did I sit down
Than I noticed a musician
Just below the window playing
Some soul stirring pieces
On his shiny Spanish guitar
I felt enchanted and led into
A different world altogether
What could be better than
Sipping Sangria & eating Paella
To the beat of a musical star

After a tasty meal I stepped
Back into the square to discover
A finger painter demonstrating
His talent with style and colour
He was churning out postcards
Using only his thumb and forefinger
I was again the dumbstruck tourist
And this was only Day One I had
Three more days of excitement left...

Sandra Martyres

Punching Bag - Senryu Style

Unleashing anger
He punched the bag with gusto
Until he dropped dead

His mean employer
Meant to claim bag damages
From his pension dues

His spouse sued the boss
For harassment and the loss
Of her bread winner

The matter reached court
The Judge was very astute
He banned punching bags

Sandra Martyres

Punished

Tears rolled in rivulets
Down his grubby little face
A punished school boy
Standing in disgrace
His only fault
If it could be so called
Was his inability
To correctly spell
A fault that did not go well
With his school teacher
A strong believer in
The merits of the age old theory
That sparing the rod
Always spoilt the child
So he did just that
In the fervent hope that
His student would remember
That pain always followed
Every spelling memory lapse
Little did he realize
That all he had succeeded
In doing was scarring
The young child and
Developing in him
A fear of the language
And the School Master

Sandra Martyres

Purrfect

Purrfecting the art of purring
She does exactly that
our dear imaginative
and near perfect pet cat
We notice that each time
she wants something
the volume and tone of her purr
changes to reflect
her sense of urgency
The higher the pitch
the greater is her need
to spur us into action
to provide her with
the object of her desire
A piece of fish
generally exacts the
highest decibel purr
Its flavour drives
her almost crazy
The purr frequency is lower
for a saucer of milk or water
So the greater the urgency
the less pleasing the purr.

Sandra Martyres

Quiet Acceptance (Senryu)

His wife sings aloud
Songs about old love affairs
He listens and sighs

Sandra Martyres

Rain

The skies are overcast
But will the clouds last?
Or will they slide across the sky
And simply pass us by
To settle over another village or town?
Our land is parched and brown
The cattle are lean and hungry
The wells are empty
The village is almost deserted
The villagers have started moving away
No longer can they stay thirsty.
But I see the skies are getting darker
I can feel raindrops
Am I imagining?
No it is truly the rain
I see the drops sliding
Down my window pane.
I smell the delicious smell
Of wet earth
All will soon be well.

Sandra Martyres

Rain (Senryus)

1. The Rain Gods relent
Opening the heavens flood gates
To water the earth
2. Children love the rain
Just splashing in the puddles
Their favourite game
3. Barefoot in the rain
But beggars do not complain
No rain means more pain

Sandra Martyres

Rains 2 (Haiku)

The heavens relent
Clouds burst with torrential rain
Watering the earth

(for Indira Babbellapati)

Sandra Martyres

Ravens

O black birds,
Flying high
Across the sky
Come not nigh
You bring ill-luck
With all that you pick up
On your daily jaunts
To your favourite haunts.

Sandra Martyres

Regret

The seas were beckoning him
Or so he genuinely believed
They helped him introspect
About his present loneliness
He spent hours sitting on a rock
Focusing on the regularity and rhythm
Of the waves as they lashed the shore
Trying to forget his lost love
The sprightly young woman
With a shock of curly red hair
One who had brought meaning to his life
Regretfully he had been ignoring her
In his constant search for power and pelf
He spent more time hobnobbing
With the rich and famous while his
Lady love spent long evenings alone
And just when he thought that
He had achieved all that he wanted
She decided to call it a day
Packed up her belongings and
Left for an unknown destination
He wondered unendingly if it was
Another man who was the driver
Of her decision to leave him
One who had showered her
With his undivided attention
But he will never really know
As her parting note was terse
"While you continue your single-minded
Search for both power and pelf
I am embarking on a search of myself
Please do not bother to look for me
Goodbye and good luck"

Sandra Martyres

Reminiscing On Mother's Day

Torn between my Blackberry
And my little baby
Is already a tough call
But that is not all
As a working Mom
My cup of woes
Often overflows
A sulking husband
A whining baby
And to top it all
A very demanding Boss
Leaving me at a total loss
My head spins not knowing
On whom I should focus my attention
Indeed I must admit
It is to my baby that I generally submit
He who makes the loudest sound
Is bound to make me turn around
Between husband and boss
It is often the lucky toss
In no particular order
Husband can be chided even derided
For not taking up his share
Of responsibility to manage our baby
This baby line does not work with the boss
He never stops reminding me
About the human approach of the company
In allowing me working hour flexibility
In order to support top table diversity
Never a thought for my high levels of anxiety
So in the interest of propriety
I try to do my bit for my family and society

Sandra Martyres

Retired Dad

Whiling away his time
Crushing dry toast and
Spraying the crumbs
In the porch
Watching the birds
Pecking at them and
Calling their friends
To join in the feast
Truly a delightful way
To start off the day
As a retired Dad

His wife watches
With an irritated look
On her ageing face
She says nothing
But he is sure
She is wondering
Who will clean
Up the place
When he is done
With playing games
On his first day
As a retired Dad.

Sandra Martyres

Return To Sender - Addressee Unknown! !

As each tear dropp slides down
The window pane gently
She stares out onto the street
He promised to be back for her
That was over a year ago
All her letters to him come back
'Return to sender - addressee unknown'

Any attempt to telephone him
Meets with very much the same fate
The service provider promptly replies
'This telephone number does not exist '
All kinds of thoughts cross her mind
Is he dead or has he found another
Woman with whom to share his life

She posts an advertisement and a photo
In the Missing Persons newspaper column
Yet there is no response from any quarter
The police tell her that they are too busy
With more heinous crimes to solve
They see no purpose in getting involved
In what looks too much like a lovers' tiff

She becomes even more paranoid
Appointing a detective to help her find
The love of her life who has disappeared
But this man too draws a blank as she
Cannot provide any details of his family
So his whereabouts she will never know
Until he himself surfaces to tell the tale!

Sandra Martyres

Reunited

I still imagine her sitting in her arm chair
Twirling her large rosary beads with her
Long sinewy fingers and praying silently
Very often she would seem half asleep
Yet always alert to the slightest sound

Her face was the picture of serenity
Nothing in the world ruffled her ever
She read the obit column every day
Without commenting even if she saw
A familiar name or face in the paper

She probably recited an extra rosary
For the soul of the departed friend
Then one day I heard a distinct cry
As she glanced through the newspaper
It fell from her hand she looked pained

Suddenly that sense of peace vanished
Tears rolled down her cheeks steadily
She did not speak for several minutes
I scanned through the obituaries column
But found no name that I knew in the list

When she did finally speak she insisted
That we send for a priest immediately
When he arrived- we left the room and
Waited patiently for him to finish and
Explain all her troubles if permissible

He emerged from her room very quietly
With worry writ all over his aged face
He called the family together and told us
That our Aunt Jessica had just passed
A day after her twin sister had died

Everyone looked up in a state of shock
No one had any inkling about her twin
Apparently born retarded she was sent

To a home for special children - later when
Aunt accidentally found out they denied it

But she was not one to give up very easily
She did her own detective work and located
The home where her sister was lodged and
The name, under which she was registered
The child was moved out before she saw her

Although she maintained that calm facade
The fate of her sister often troubled her
Sot he day she saw a news article about
A depressed lady with her sister's name
Having committed suicide she was devastated

When the priest confirmed her worst fears
She wept pitifully made her peace with God
Closed her eyes and said that she was joining
Her dead sister -whom she could not meet
At least they would be reunited in heaven

Sandra Martyres

Sailor Man (Senryu)

Goodbye sailor man
Our short lived friendship ended
When you jumped ship

Sandra Martyres

Saluting The Sun

Your strong light can be blinding
Your sharp rays can cause scalding
You are sometimes blamed for balding
Yet you mellow down before twilight
And paint the sky to our utter delight
With shades of orange red and yellow
In winter they just meld in the background
As you stand out in your supreme glory
A golden ball heading towards the horizon
Then we watch in sheer awe as you disappear
Leaving behind some coloured streaks in the sky
Until darkness falls and the moon takes over

Sandra Martyres

Saved! !

As the speeding train passed by
There was a sharp shrill cry
Followed by a morbid silence
A young man was found
His head facing the ground
With a bleeding eye and a fractured nose
Broken spectacles and torn clothes
A pathetic sight he was

Fellow passengers merely walked by
Leaving him alone perhaps to die
People passed around him
As if they did not see him
Focusing instead on a fallen tree
Sadly, his condition did not inspire them
Basic human kindness did not stir them
To lend a helping hand to the injured man

Hope came in from an unexpected quarter
A young shoe shine boy seeing him
Let out a loud cry and rushed to a call box
With the speed of a wily little fox
And soon there was an ambulance hooting
With a medical team to the rescue
The young man missed a date with fate
Thanks to a kind hearted shoe shine boy

Sandra Martyres

Screen Fatigue

Tired eyes worry me
I cannot see clearly
The screen before me

My head begins to ache
I need to take an Aspirin break
All writing I shall for now forsake

But I have for another day
Stored my poetic ideas in a tray
Lest they should escape and run away

Sandra Martyres

Seashore

Sitting alone at twilight
On the waters edge
Watching the waves
Lash the shore
And slowly recede
Each water crest
Brings back memories
From the past
I recall my school days
When I'd rush back
Just to scour the beach
For unusual coloured shells
A beautiful collection I had
Then came my College days
When we argued in groups
Sitting on the shore
About the advantages of
Socialism versus Capitalism
Whether Keynesian Economics
Had lost its relevance etc.
I was soon into my first job
Total commitment meant
No time to waste on the seashore.
A couple of years later I met
The man I meant to select
As my life partner
And was back again at the seashore
Spending long evenings
Hand in hand talking animatedly
Of a bright and happy future together
But alas that was not to be
We were forced to part
And went our separate ways
I stopped visiting the seashore
For many years thereafter
I did not want to remember
What I wanted to forget
But today I feel differently
The hurt and the pain

Has lessened with time
I can sit in peace
Reminisce about the past
Enjoy the cool breeze and
The rhythm of waves lashing the shore
Alone....

Sandra Martyres

Senryu - A Few

Anger hath long life
Coming back time and again
Just to inflict pain

Stock markets bring gains
But with it comes lasting greed
And corruption breeds

Friends reunited
Old fires reignited
Leaves them delighted

Bring in the moolah
Be careful about how much
Greed is not a crutch

Sandra Martyres

Senryu - A Few More

Gold fish swim around
the glass fish tank peacefully
teasing greedy cats

A bouquet of red roses
for his special young lady
instead of a ring

Opt for cloud seeding
to save the withering crops
as rains play truant

Sandra Martyres

Senryu Poems

The serenity
On the face of the Buddha
Shames his disciples

The tempting ocean
Sucked him into the wide jaws
Of a hungry shark

He dreamed happy dreams
Of more conquests and money
As he slept in jail

Sandra Martyres

Senryus - 2

Bees are a buzzing
Do avoid all that fussing
Fresh honey is at hand

A tiny rain drop
Balancing on a big leaf
Can evaporate

A peach and a pear
Juicy tasty monsoon fruits
All ask for a share

Sunlight gets dimmer
Large clouds on the horizon
Farmers prayer answered

Luscious red apples
Hanging from a GM Tree
Are they safe to eat?

The forbidden fruit
Attracted Adam and Eve
And God was deceived

Sandra Martyres

Senryus - 3

Everyone competes
His energies to deplete
Or others defeat?

A fresh cricket match
One untimely boundary catch
Team hopes badly dashed

Starting late daily
Facing the traffic melee
Life remains unchanged

Success is his guide
But it must be bona fide
Else he feels defiled

Sandra Martyres

Senryus - 4

A slice of pineapple
Juice drips down his grubby face
Flies too want a share

He smokes cigarettes
Lying in a pensive mood
Life is not easy

Cars zoom up and down
At midnight in the big city
Insomnia thrives

Books are quickly closed
Knowledge stays between the covers
Ignorance prevails

Sandra Martyres

Senryus - 5

Sell not your poor soul
Popularity cannot
Be your only goal

Morals disappear
As wealth doth accumulate
And new friends pile on

The new Government
has too many Ministries
decisions could freeze

Chant mantras slowly
The Gods are in no hurry
To answer your prayers

Sandra Martyres

Senryus - A Collection

Another Village burns
Terrorists on the rampage
Who will capture them?

A sudden buzzing sound
A large bee-hive looms ahead
Honey is at hand.

Walking in the park
Approached by a young trickster
Wallet disappears

Sandra Martyres

Senryus -7

His leaky pen moves
Across the blank white page like
A confused cockroach

Mourners assemble
Resembling a long black snake
Waiting for a take

Lively banter heard
Holiday makers are back
Summer has ended

Sandra Martyres

Senryus -8

The automobile
Industry is in shambles
It needs a driver

He who jumped the gun
Apparently for some fun
Now stretches in jail

Winner or loser
It should not truly matter
If you played the game

Sandra Martyres

Senryus -9

Church bells are pealing
Calling the faithful to pray
The donkeys just bray

Sandra Martyres

Serenity (Senryu)

The face of Buddha
Depicting serenity
a great stress buster

Sandra Martyres

Serious Thoughts

Run the marathon
It will help you regain form
To face life's tough race

In a pensive mood
Looking for inspiration
Or just time to brood

Do not over-eat
Your neighbour could be starving
Share the extra meat

Sandra Martyres

She

Streaming red eyes
He did ask the whys
But she didn't answer
His fury grew like cancer

Soon she shrivelled up
Refusing even the tea cup
Something that she liked
She feared it was spiked

He finally abandoned her
Her family had to rescue her
They had no real choice
She required medical advice

Some years passed by
She would often cry
But never uttered a word
Her voice was not heard

Then came her final day
They had watched her pray
Before lying down in bed
Later she was found dead

Under the bed covers
Lay a letter from her lover
Where he made it very clear
That his wife was still dear

NB; A story of a young woman forced to marry an old man. She later meets a younger man who promises to elope with her- the usual tale just before the appointed day he announces that he is actually married.....

Sandra Martyres

She Dared To Be Different

She dared to be different
She packed her bags
And walked away quietly
From the familiar scene
The family looked on
Shocked and dismayed
As she caught a bus and
Disappeared into the night

No message did she send
No calls did she take
As she wanted anonymity
She destroyed her identity
She went on to change
Her appearance and her name
These were her first steps
Towards her own independence

The family finally stopped
Trying to track her down
Bowing to the inevitable that
If she wanted to break away
Then it was her wish to do so
But what they never really did
Was to try and understand her

Sandra Martyres

Shining Black Eyes

Shining black eyes
Peering at me in the dark
I am in a new house
Fear descends on me
In huge tsunami like waves

It is pitch black in the room
I am really paralysed
Too afraid to reach out
And switch on the night light
I shut my eyes tight

I send up a prayer
May God make my torturer
Disappear quietly even before
The next wave of fear hits me
I wait a few more seconds in hope

I finally open my eyes
Relying on the power of prayer
Black eyes is gone
A feeling of sheer relief
Descends over me, I can relax

But no, as I turn around
Black eyes is on my bed
Very near my head
I cannot even scream
Dear God what is happening

Its time to do something
There is no choice
I am alone in this house
I jump out of bed screaming
Turn on the lights quickly

The door bell is ringing
My terrified neighbours look on
Black eyes has disappeared

I have no explanation
Maybe it was only a bad dream! ! !

Sandra Martyres

Simple Life

Life is a beautiful dream
Though it may not always so seem
Look at the flowers that surround us
They appear and disappear without a fuss
As do the birds in the sky
They just continue as long as they can to fly
I watch in awe as the cows lazily graze
They are in no hurry to reach fields of maize
The juicy grass is good enough
They are not chasing after better stuff
It is only we who are not satisfied
Until we have all life's luxuries tried
We go far and wide in search of fun
And when we face problems we just run
This is a lesson we need to learn
From lesser creatures how to earn
Happiness from the simple things in life
Leaving aside complexities and strife

Sandra Martyres

Single In The City

The busy days roll by rather quickly
The evenings are a bit longer
Despite the omnipresent idiot box
The heaps of unread books and DVDs
Sometimes loneliness slips in
Surreptitiously through the door
Making the room a bit cloudy
Even the lamp in the corner
Begins to get dimmer and
Vision deteriorates as
Tears fall gently like
Tiny raindrops forming
A little pool on the floor
Being a single woman in a big city
Though safe is not always easy

Sandra Martyres

Slum Dog Millionaire

We keep asking why so much fanfare
About the film –“Slum dog Millionaire”
This is not an attempt to sound grim
About the popularity of the now famous film
But to understand why the world only applauds
Films on poverty and its dark innards
Signifying that only the worst side of the city
Brings out feelings of sympathy and pity
Could it have not portrayed a more
Balanced image of India to even the score
There are definitely pillars of great progress
The burgeoning middle class who sincerely stress
On good moral values and the importance of education
Giving us pride of place and a high degree of perfection
In many areas involving high technology
We can seriously claim to be the best globally

But of course on the other hand all is not bad
There is even reason to be glad
Danny Uncle has won the heart of many a slum kid
Thanks to him they will from their poverty be rid
They can even harbour dreams of entering Hollywood
If not, at least they can aspire for a career in Bollywood
These natural little actors would have remained inconnu
Had they not been selected to be part of the Slum dog milieu
For that they have to thank Danny Boyle
Who tirelessly worked with these little sons of the soil
But we like many others too would have been a lot happier
Had the movie had painted a less bleak picture of India.

Sandra Martyres

Snakes And Ladders

In this wild corporate jungle,
You just cannot afford to bungle.
It is a dangerous game of snakes & ladders
The players being cobras or even worse -adders?
The reptiles wait in the wing
To seize any opportunity to sting
All you wannabes on the ladder aiming for the top
Should be prepared for an unplanned stop
You will hear wagging tongues and hissing sounds
As the slimy creatures make their rounds
They keep planning their moves and counter-moves
Hiding in the building's numerous grooves
Should you one day find a snake coiled around your chair
You can no longer stand by shocked and blankly stare
Cause if you do, you risk being swallowed alive
In the corporate jungle only the lean and mean survive

(Written prior to the sub-prime debacle - when the sharks were at their meanest best)

Sandra Martyres

Snow White

'Did you know
Boys that
Snow White,
Was always
Very polite.
The Dwarfs,
They learned
A thing or two
From her
And that Boys
Was very true'
She cried
' If you know
What's good for you
you will listen to me
I am Mrs. Snow,
Your new Teacher'

Sandra Martyres

Some Questions

What does it take to endure and prevail
When all around you is falling apart?
What does it take to stick to your values
When all around you it is money that talks?
What does it take to select the path to goodness
When all around you are aiming for glory at any cost?
What does it take to beat the rotten system
When all around you are fuelling it consistently?
The answer my friend is staring you in the face
To do right be humble and seek God's grace

Sandra Martyres

Some Women's Fate

Blackened faces
Broken noses
Battered Wives
Bleak future

Lunatic spouses
Love eludes
Least resistance
Little concern

Social ignorance
Sorrowful state
Serious lapses
Silent sufferers

Lethargic society
Lackadaisical cops
Low arrests
Life Continues

Sandra Martyres

Standing Tall After A Fall

You will my friend recall
The day you made me fall
O what a terrible fall it was
When I realised the cause
Your Mother had chosen for you
Which is what most good Mothers do
A gentle, obedient and perfect bride
She left you no choice but to quickly decide
That our friendship had to be set aside

Of course you tried to explain to me
That I could never hope to be
Fully accepted into your family
Being a foreigner and well-educated
I was a bit too liberated
To ever get integrated
Into a conservative Indian household
Where women do whatever they are told

So your promises had to be broken
And the price you paid was just a small token
To meet a really noble cause - your filial duty
For which you said God would compensate me
There was no need for me to be upset
I could my eyes on another more eligible guy set
And with those comforting words you disappeared
Leaving me teary eyed, shocked and deeply disturbed

Now after all these long years
I no longer shed for you any more tears
In fact I even thank you for dispelling my fears
For leading me to discover new friends
Who happily did a helping hand extend
To pull me out of a state of despair
And help me my broken heart to repair
That terrible bad dream I no longer recall
I am now standing tall after the fall

Stars - A Senryu Style Poem

I followed a star
Right to heaven's pearly gates
But I was too late

The star disappeared
Saint Peter had no place for me
I am back on earth

Now if I see stars
I'll gaze at them in the sky
Saint Peter can wait

Sandra Martyres

Strategy (Senryu)

Shampoo Strategy

Lather, rinse and then repeat

Works effectively

A simple smile can

Win the hearts of one and all

No reason to frown

Culprits must beware

The long hand of the law can

Reach them anywhere

Sandra Martyres

Street Children's Painting Dream

It was the Mumbai Street Children's
Talent scouting evening out
We gave them a canvas,
An easel and a box of paints
Told them not to exercise
Any restraint
The picture was theirs to paint

Hectic activity followed
Vibrant colours were mixed
In the palettes before the brushes
Went into use
Some went for bold strokes
Others used pastels and
And went for milder strokes

We watched the transformation
Blank canvases soon took colour
The pictures ranged from
Sunny skies and butterflies
To moonlit nights and fireflies
Some did give nature a pass
And opted to paint the school class

After working for an hour and half
The pictures were ready for display
The children proudly handed in
Their very own works of art
And anxiously awaited
As the judges went on stage
To review the paintings and
Make their choices known

For the young artists
It was a defining moment
As they waited for the results
Three of them would be selected
To represent Street Children's Block
At the Inter-school competition

This would help them pay
For their further education
Without having to rely on families
Already suffering deep deprivation

The prizes went to the three best
Original paintings and for the rest
We have made it our life's mission
To try and find for them admission
Seeking corporate sponsorships
And wherever possible even scholarships
So that they can realise their dreams
Without making any parents scream.

Sandra Martyres

Stress

Stress consumed him completely
He became a nervous wreck
Losing weight and his good looks
His hair grayed prematurely
His arteries hardened before time
Everyone noticed the slow changes

But he insisted that he was fine
All medication he stoutly refused
His mind and body he just abused
Till one fine day he had a coronary
He could no longer take the decisions
His family had him admitted to hospital

But before the doctors could see him
In the ambulance, a stranger greeted him
It was none other than Saint Peter
He asked the semi-conscious man
If he was prepared to meet his maker
Or did he seek another chance on earth

The terrified man begged to stay back
To which Saint Peter reluctantly agreed
Provided that he lived a more regulated life
By resting his body and his mind regularly
He also needed to plan his work and time
As procrastination led to missing deadlines

In a split second Saint Peter had vanished
And a Medico was peering into his eyes
Immediate surgery was recommended
He acquiesced and it was successful
Now back home he is a different man
It is goodbye stress as he works with a plan

Sandra Martyres

Style Statement

A near perfect face
Exuding a touch of grace
A Cleopatra-like long neck
Enhanced with delicate jewellery
A long flowing black gown
Falling loosely over the tall slim body
Long well manicured finger nails
Bright red painted toe tails
That is her style statement.
And a good one too.

No one knows who she is
Or from where she comes
But who cares
With her stunning good looks
She is always surrounded
By tall handsome wannabe guys
Craving her undivided attention
And eager to have her hanging on their arm
But will she or wont she
Make a final choice of a guy?
Or will she continue to play
The hard to get game?

Sandra Martyres

Sub-Prime

He is a victim of the infamous sub-prime
More by default than by design
He kept lending money and more money
At interest rates that were not funny
Revenues seemed to be accruing
No one sensed the trouble brewing
And they egged him on - his bosses
But that was way before the losses
Now he faces a court of enquiry
To establish that he acted without authority
By throwing caution to the wind
While granting loans he could not rescind
But no one, least of all his bosses will admit
That driven by greed they too did covertly commit
The company's precious resources to NINJAs
The guys with no income, no jobs and no assets
Now, he can only hope that the court will reveal
What his bosses have sought to conceal

Sandra Martyres

Summer Is Here

Summer is here in our midst
The trees are dressed up again
From my special vantage point
I see a profusion of yellow,
Purple, pink and white flowers
Amid different types of leaves
All paying homage to the Sun

Down, closer to the ground
Periwinkles seem to twinkle
While the roses in full bloom
Spread their delicate perfume
Nearby the pansies and the phlox
Seem to be vying with each other
For a place in the little flower beds

Tweeting birds are perched in the trees
Beautiful butterflies keep flitting by
With little boys trying to catch them
In this bright and happy atmosphere
Both the old and young stay outdoors
Enjoying nature's glorious moments
On a near perfect summer's day

Sandra Martyres

Sunbeams (A Haiku)

A blanket of snow
Covers the river valley
Sunbeams dance on it

Sandra Martyres

Superstition

She wears a blackened face
With her head lowered
A clear sign of disgrace
For in her home she has no place

Her swollen red eyes
She does look worldly wise
But remains penniless
And is virtually homeless

Who could she be
Abandoned by her family
She is yesterday's young bride
Remember her groom died

She is the unfortunate victim
Of a very deep superstition
That widows only bring ill luck
A reputation with which she is stuck

No villager will support her
She will be treated like a leper
Her fate was after all pre-decided
On this public opinion is undivided

Sandra Martyres

Systemic Risk

A term frequently touted
By the now over-zealous
Regulators, the world over
An easy excuse for them
To explain the spawning of
Crooks like Bernie Madoff
In the developed world
And of course closer home
The crooks of yester years
Not forgetting the present
Mother of all financial crises
Caused by the Sub-prime excesses

The question on everyone's mind
- the exact meaning of systemic risk
Well it is actually a poor reflection
On a benign regulatory regime
That is known to turn a Nelson's eye
As long as the economy is in fine fettle
With the stock markets booming
It is during such heady days that
The market watch dogs are often
Caught napping at the wheel,
The global arena soon becomes
A very fertile ground for the more
Imaginative financial players

Some get into a huddle while
Others act independently
And come up with ingenious ideas
To keep the market befuddled
Until they grab the first rich pickings
And then make a sly and unsung exit
By the time the authorities react
The worst has already happened
Several investors who have been
Relieved of their earnings or fortunes
Cry foul and ring the alarm bells
It is then that the blame game starts

Each side keeps berating the other, but
Ultimately the hammer falls on the system
And the result is filed away as a systemic risk
To be addressed by the now fully awake
Regulators! !

Sandra Martyres

That Face

It was at a cultural fair that
I noticed a man staring at me
I had seen that face before
Of that I was reasonably sure
Patrician features with a greying beard
Dark brown piercing eyes and a long nose
But he vanished into the crowd
Before I could even approach him
My brain went into hyper-active mode
I just needed to remember his name
Or where and when our paths had crossed
But my mind seemed to have gone blank
So I decided to scour the fair grounds
To spot him again and have a face to face
I walked briskly down each lane searching
I peered carefully into each stall for any trace
Of the man who kept my mind pre-occupied
But alas all my efforts were in vain for he
Seemed to have disappeared never to be seen again
And I still cannot even remember his name

Sandra Martyres

The Aftermath

The town wore a deserted look
Rubble scattered and piled
All around the skeletons
Of the once beautiful buildings
The wrath of the Gods was evident
From the trembling of the earth
And the loosening of the grounds
That for centuries had supported the town

Traumatized children covered with dust
Rummaged desperately through the debris
To recover their toys and prized possessions
Some adults went in search of fresh water
While Others shell shocked sat around in groups
Speaking in muffled voices of the quake
It was as though they were afraid that noise
Of any kind would bring on more tremors

Rescue workers were still trying desperately
To reach the town which had been cut-off from
Civilisation after the main bridge collapsed
Then something unusual happened
There was a strong wind which blew across
The affected area taking with it the dust
The survivors seemed to look cleaner and
Could even identify some scraps of food
Like biscuits and bread which looked edible

They called out to the children more audibly
And started rationing out the morsels of food
As well as sips of juice from the cans
Which were found intact in the rubble
Soon signs of hope returned into their eyes
Amazing how a little food can help boost morale
Even in desperate circumstances like earthquakes
So until the fresh supplies and aid reach them
They can only hope that another holy wind blows by

The Artist

Setting up his easel
On the edge of the garden
He arranged his brushes
Sorted out the water colours
Then searched for his subject
A rose bush caught his fancy
Shutting his eyes he imagined
An idyllic setting for the flowers
Making some rough sketches
On the blank canvas he turned
Towards the roses touching
Each one, feeling the texture
Soon he mixed several shades
Of pink on the palette before
Picking up the brush to paint
His student watched in awe
As the canvas was transformed
The bush was transplanted
It seemed to move slowly from
The ground straight to the canvas
The green leaves took on a hue
That did the pink roses justice
Each petal stood out proudly
As if it were a special creation
In its own right meant to enhance
The beauty of the cluster of flowers
By late evening the painting
Was nearly complete and both
The Artist and his student seemed
Pleased and fascinated with
The transformation of the canvas
Their way of glorifying nature

Sandra Martyres

The Baker's Boy

Pedaling furiously on his bicycle
At the crack of dawn
Is the the baker's boy
Delivering freshly baked bread
To the village folk as they get out of bed
He is being chased by a horde
Of crazed little street dogs
All trying to get their teeth
Into his basket of warm bread
It is a battle of wits for this sleepy head
As he tries to avoid the quadrupeds
And save his precious bread
This only increases their determination
To sample the baker's tasty creation
By which time boy is wide awake
The canine interest he needs to break
After a moments thought
He casually whistles to the dogs
And throws a bun afar
As they all chase the rolling bread
He pedals hurriedly straight ahead
Taking advantage of the minor respite
Steadfastly he rings his cycle bell
The children – their orders happily yell
He hands over the bread –collects his charge
And by the time the silly dogs have returned
He has, his days wages, already earned
His bread basket is empty
But his pockets are full
With a smile on his face
He heads back to the bakery
To plan for the next day,
His street dog strategy

Sandra Martyres

The Barefoot Boys

The hot sultry day
Does little to stop their play
These barefooted boys
Who have never played with any real toys
Are happy to use the cricket ground
When the more fortunate are not around
To bully them and monopolise the pitch
Making it look like the privilege of the rich
They use broken pieces of bamboo
As makeshift wickets
Their bats are carved out of plywood
The ball however looks authentic
Probably a cast away of a cricket maverick
Maybe some day one of these little prodigies
Will proudly represent his country
Either for a test match or a twenty/twenty
Indeed it is their most cherished dream
To be selected for any state level or national team

Sandra Martyres

The Basket Weaver

The little child munched on a crust of bread
While her Mother wove baskets by the dozen
They sat together on the floor of a little room
Without exchanging a single word
Yet there was a tremendous feeling of peace
With only an occasional sound when she tossed
A finished basket onto the heap in the corner
And stretched for a fresh roll of cane to begin
The next one which would take an hour to finish

She stopped work at midday and stretche d out
Then opening her capacious bag she took out
A small lunch box containing cooked food
She shared it out equally with the child -
One ate from the container while the other
Used the lid as a plate - the meal was silent too
Both appeared ravenous as the food
Was polished off in a thrice -Had there
Been more they would finished it as well

After a short break she resumed her weaving
And the child took a short nap on the floor
The Mother worked quietly until the child awoke
She thrust another crust into her little hand and
Whispered something to her-the child went out
And returned with a man whom she called Father
He looked like a waster someone who had never
Done a jot of honest work in his life - he slumped
On the floor and the woman got up to make his tea

He sipped it and smashed the cup on the floor
Perhaps it was not hot enough -the child cringed
The Mother dodged a blow from his unsteady hand
He seemed to be in a rage and stumbled out returning
With a stone the size of a boulder which he aimed at
The poor woman's head and in seconds she was flat
Bleeding profusely but dead -the child cried out
He threatened to kill her, but she managed to escape
Hearing the commotion the neighbours rushed in

It was then that the Basket weaver's story came to light
This obnoxious man had promised her a better life
Being naive she believed him and ran away from home
Very soon her dreams were shattered she realised that
She would be leading a life of drudgery without money
She learned basket weaving from a gypsy woman and
Tried to support herself and the unborn child at the time
While the husband -an alcoholic abused her all the while
He killed her this time as she refused to give him money

Sandra Martyres

The Big Fat Wedding

The half-naked street children
Were totally awe-struck as they
Watched the bride-groom
Mount a gaily caparisoned pachyderm
Right in the middle of the city
A brightly coloured sunshade
Was also part of the paraphernalia
Along with the procession of friends
And close relatives who followed
Dressed in their wedding finery
Carrying trays of sweets and gifts
It was the usual ostentatious ceremony
Totally in keeping with the tradition
Of the big fat local Wedding

At the time I stood by and wondered
What went on in the minds
Of the poor children and of course
The other ordinary passers by
Was it one of disgust or resentment
How could any human being irrespective
Of his social status or his power
Tout his wealth with such gay abandon
When the millions of less fortunate citizens
Know not where their next meal is coming from

Sandra Martyres

The Black Box

After the air crash
A massive search was set up
To trace the black box

Nothing could be found
In and around the crash site
Raising suspicion

Then came the experts
With their new simulators
To recreate events

Tents were set up soon
And every piece of debris
Filmed and listed

The missing blackbox
Remained a mystery for all
The sleuths were called in

Their first opinion
After investigation
Was rather fuzzy

Their far-fetched theories
From terror to negligence
Were convoluted

Soon the villagers
Appeared and casually
Unearthed the box

They thought it looked vile
They hid it well underground
A mystery solved

Sandra Martyres

The Black Flag Demonstation

Grey skies greeted him
As he walked off the tarmac
Further down he noticed
A black flag demonstation
And a lot of slogan shouting
He stopped in his tracks
Wondering why they seemed
To be directing their ire at him
He could not fathom the reason
Putting on the stiff upper lip
And a very brave front he walked
Towards the demonstators
All the while wondering if
Had chosen the right path
By going into national politics
He had made no speeches
Nor had he accepted any
Inappropriate expensive garlands
But as he came closer he heard
The shouts very loud and clear
From his own party men and women
'Stop tweeting or we'll ban Twitter'

Sandra Martyres

The Black Swans

In Iceland early one morning
A black swan without warning
Made a dramatic appearance
An extremely rare occurrence
It was actually the first of a series
That would raise many queries
Unexpectedly dreams were shattered
With Stock Markets getting battered
They called it a financial holocaust
The result of greed and blind trust
In unfettered capitalist manoeuvres
That made fools of gullible investors
Write offs and bail out plans followed
The bankers their pride finally swallowed
And set about changing their strategy
To cope with the crisis intelligently

But no one imagined that the Black Swan
Still lurking by and watching with scorn
Was waiting for an auspicious date
To announce the arrival of his mate
A second black swan sauntered in
This time with a bang and a lot of din
It spewed not fire works but smoke
Into the skies which did really choke
Not only Iceland but rest of Europe too
Flights were grounded and no one flew
The world watched in horror and fear
As the black ash blew out of the crater
Airports still look like a chaotic mess
Leaving stranded passengers in distress
Hopefully no baby swan will arrive with the stork
The adult pair having already caused enough havoc

NB: I have extended Nassim Nicholas Taleb's Black Swan Theory to describe the recent unparalleled catastrophes that hit a small country like Iceland

Sandra Martyres

The Boss & The Guru - Senryu Series

The first quarter ends
Boss has only three to go
And not much to show

Top lines are lagging
Well below targets with his
Bottom lines sagging

In sheer despair
Boss consults a guru who
Guarantees success

But in the fine print
The Guru's assurance is
Subject to payment

It is a tough call
Boss brushes aside the Guru
And works on his own

Nothing does improve
A panic attack grips him
Boss recalls Guru

Guru raises fees
His payback for the heart burn
Caused by the delay

By mid year figures
Show an impressive pick up
Boss smiles benignly

But the company
Is not convinced, boss is fired
And the Guru hired

Sandra Martyres

The Christmas Tree

Dressed in tattered clothes
And an old rain coat
Two sizes too big for him
The little boy gazed longingly
At the Christmas tree
Standing outside
A large shop window
The sparkling lights
Left him totally fascinated
As did the neatly wrapped
Gifts strewn at the base
Of the snow laden tree
'Who will be the lucky child
To open all those presents? '
He perhaps wondered quietly
As he settled himself slowly
On the cold ground outside
The flashy shopping arcade
Then closing his eyes he possibly
Dreamed a happy dream
For when he was found
Frozen to death in the morning
His face still wore a smile

Sandra Martyres

The Cocktail Party

Swirling a glass of claret
In his capacious palm
The pompous politico
Seemed to grin foolishly
At the serious audience
Confronting him, when
He overheard a guest remark
'If you are expecting
Some pearls of real wisdom
To slide off his wine soaked
Tongue and addled brain
Then you had better consider
Inviting him all over again
To a tea party without any
Wine or Whiskey'

Sandra Martyres

The Competition

As an aspiring poet
He was determined he'd win
He just had to meet the challenge set for him
So frantically he did scribble and scratch
To find words that would rhyme and match.
He worked tirelessly for hours together
Sparing no thought for the ugly weather.
He ignored the winds and stayed focussed
Concentrating on the work lying before him.
He was almost confident that he'd win
The first prize at the competition.
Then came the thunder and the rain
And he wondered if he'd worked in vain.
He listened impatiently to the clock chime
Realising he was running run out of time.
He would never reach the venue
At the appointed hour to recite his verse
And just as he was beginning to despair
A kindly neighbour explained with care
That there'd be other chances
To publish his poem and win acclaim
After all it is not every day that there is rain.

Sandra Martyres

The Conch

The music of the seas
The rythm of the waves
The diving of the sea gulls
The sounds of the the fish
Swimming across the waters
All this and more I heard
As I placed the conch to my ear.

Sandra Martyres

The Confessional

Sitting in the last pew of the Church
I stared at the long queue for Confession
My imagination started taking me places
As I noticed many familiar faces
Father forgive me for I have sinned
The opening line of each penitent person
Kept reverberating in my mind
Goldie was the first - he would, I thought
After the usual formality just blurt
'You know father all those schmuks
For years lined their velvet pockets with
Freshly minted green backs from the press
Using my advice but today both me and Fab
Are treated like outcastes and subjected to
Endless hours of questioning leaving us no time
To even shop for a fresh suit at Saks, it is they really
Who should be facing you in this confessional'
The priest blesses him and the next in line is
None other than Mr. Bear with a stern look
'Forgive me Father' says he "I am not a crook
I just did what the investing world really wanted
They made money for a long time and I of course
Earned my wages and bonuses but nothing
Lasts forever, everyone knows that so why
Did they persecute and finally finish me? '
Father blessed him and signaled for the next
'Bless me Father' he said 'I am only a lay man
My brothers and sisters have all prospered
At one time or another with my advice - But
I am only human - a lay man, I repeat and
Humans make mistakes but for me the stakes
Have been far too high - I have lost everything
No more private jets, sedans or luxury cruises
My penance on earth is more than done -
Bless me father....' Father did just that and
Decided to take a break closing the Confessional

Sandra Martyres

The Family...A Senryu Series

She always stood tall
Ignoring all protocol
Husband felt left out

Her daughter grew up
Leaving Mother in the shade
And a bit jaded

The son was more mature
He just watched them all compete
Never taking sides

Sandra Martyres

The Game Of Love

Her Mother had told her that
Love was a game of give and take
With sometimes a bit of heartache
But her Mother did not mention that
Love could be really very illusive too
Like chasing a moving shadow

So she believed in his love implicitly
She cherished every moment that
The two of them spent together
Hid the heartache that she felt
When they were forced to part
She followed her Mother's advice

She waited for his calls and letters
Savoured every word exchanged
Replied with equal love and fervour
But the good days did not last long
The game became one-sided
She wrote - he did not care to reply

Then on Christmas Eve he wrote
About his change of plans and how he
Had no option but to take her leave
It looked like one big deception
When she read shortly after about
His very flashy wedding reception

Sandra Martyres

The Goldman Fracas

Goldman the great banking icon and sensation
Has most certainly lost much of its brilliant sheen
And with it many a young financial engineer's dream
Of finding a position in the once august institution
The Investment Bank is still the talk of the town
But for reasons that replace its smile with a frown
It wears not a shining but rather a tarnished crown
And investors grieve as its stock also tumbles down
Its arrogance is now replaced with quiet defiance
In an attempt to prove to the banking fraternity
That the SEC cannot obliterate its royal paternity
Is that an act to retain its press and public image
To minimise and control its reputation's damage
Whatever be the strategy this erstwhile blue chip
It will need a near miracle to sail its large ship
In the turbulent waters of private and public ire
And save its Management team from regulatory fire

Sandra Martyres

The Great Indian Monsoon

A maddeningly elusive phenomena
The exact date of arrival of the
Great Indian Monsoon and then
The intensity of the rainfall becomes
A source of trepidation, anticipation
And even exasperation when it falls
Short of expectations and outside the
Normal Averages calculated state-wise
Or pure misery when it exceeds the normal
Ranges in any of the flood prone regions
Yet year after year the weather pundits
Get into a huddle to make their predictions
Which are more often than not way off the mark
But that does not stop them from pontificating
Airing their views and misleading the farmers
I often wish they would get out of the business
And let the Gods decide on when, where, and how much....

Sandra Martyres

The Great Wall

Standing on the great wall
Surveying the terrain below
My mind walked through
Many years of dynastic rule
And Chinese culture too
Then I found my self immersed
In a different era belonging
To a totally different world

Sandra Martyres

The Hummer (Senryu)

In America
The Hummer will stop humming
It will in China

Sandra Martyres

The Impossible Trinity

The Economists are back again
This time with more new jargon
The Trilemma....as if the dilemma
Were not enough to confuse us
In ecclesiastical terms it is described as
The Impossible Trinity - which simply implies
That a country has the option of making
Any two of the three choices available
Monetary independence and /or financial
Integration and/or exchange rate stability
To boost its economy but definitely not all three...

Apparently Asian economies have successfully
Conquered the trilemma and have been able
To stage a 'V' shaped recovery, unlike their
Western counterparts who are still busy
Grappling with the global financial crisis
The trilemma it appears was far easier to solve
Than its ancestor the dilemma - the reason
Elementary as Sherlock Holmes would say
In reality they had only two choices anyway
Their healthy exchange reserves made the
Impossible possible... Asian giants were left with
The remaining two to focus on and no Trilemma

Sandra Martyres

The Invitation

'Come into my parlour'
Said the banker to his customer
'Help yourself to some organic green tea
We believe in staying healthy
And keeping our clients that way too
No extra sweeteners for our loans
In case you borrow too much
No additional interest on your deposits
We do not like sharing too much our profits
We need to pump them back as capital
So that the regulators have time to chill'

'I truly appreciate your hospitality'
Said the customer to his banker
'But I just don't seem to get it right
I thought that the Government
Had just bailed you guys out with
Pots of taxpayers money to help you
Lend us cheaper money, to increase demand
So as to set the Industry wheels back in motion
And drive the cruel spectre of recession away
You were supposed to usher in a new era of prosperity
But you seem to be doing just the contrary'

'Well, well well my dear revered client'
Said the banker to his customer
' I can see you are just another poor victim
Who chooses to place implicit faith in the press
Those gentlemen love to identify a fall guy
And then pursue him with a sense of glee
Their axe has now fallen on the banking fraternity
While we may have earned fat salaries and bonuses
Remember the economy too thrived and
With it the nation's GDP, but this is really the past
You know as well as I do that happy times rarely last
So let's get down to the business you came to discuss'

Sandra Martyres

The Last Will

A sombre look greeted her
As she entered the door
Of the old family mansion
Her last visit was almost
A quarter century earlier
The day she was asked to
Leave home as she had
Decided to marry a pauper
The man of her choice
Defying her parents' wishes

Today she had been summoned
By the lawyers to be present
For the reading of her father's will
He had died a few weeks earlier
Her Mother was dressed in black
Looking the true distraught widow
She barely raised her eyes to throw
As much as a glance at her daughter
It made her wonder if she had done
The right thing by coming after all

The Lawyer had given her no choice
He said that it was her father's last wish
That she should be present there and
That should be reconciled with the family
At least after his death - he never forgave
Himself for her departure - being proud
He did not want to admit it to anyone
But in death there is no pride so he felt
This was his last chance to take care of
The future of his middle-aged daughter

Her only sibling - an older sister considered
To be the heir apparent remarked on how
Slim and young she looked despite her
Her husband's poverty which she imagined
Would have taken a toll on her life making
Her feel very uncomfortable in their midst

None of them had bothered to keep in touch
Her sophisticated look and designer outfit
Came as a surprise to all, but the real shock
That awaited them was yet to be unveiled

In his last will, the father had left his entire
Fortune to her with a single word... 'Sorry'

Sandra Martyres

The Lesson

All dressed up and no where to go,
This is the story of Nina Row
For weeks every evening,
She has been standing
Waiting for her fiance to dropp by
Her long waits just end with a quiet cry.
For he does not turn up at her door
Little does she know he is settling an old score
She had won the top award at a Music rendition
A feat that perhaps diverted his attention
The surprise that she could challenge him
In the world of music, greatly angered him
And in his jealous mind he did contrive
The best way, his point home, to drive
Would be to keep her unendingly waiting
With promises that would come back a courting
While he is busy massaging his wounded ego
Her young radiant face is beginning to lose its glow

Sandra Martyres

The Little Crab

As the little crab climbed
To the top of the basket
Hoping to make an escape
The bigger crabs pulled him down
And when the consignment
Did reach the market place
The Fisherman's son was delighted
To find a small crab in the bag
He picked it up carefully
Drooling at the thought of soup
But this time the little crab
Reacted fast, he bit the boy's hand
Falling quickly to the ground
As the child reduced his grip
Undaunted by the crack in his shell
He scuttled away in search of
A safer place, far away from
Fishing baskets, boys and big crabs.

Sandra Martyres

The Little Worm - Haiku Series

Lounging on a leaf
The worm was happy until
A bird spotted him

Taking a close look
The bird felt like a quick snack
And swallowed the worm

Now battling for space
The worm lives with the creatures
Eaten earlier

Sandra Martyres

The Lonely Hearts Club

There are many poems
Written eulogising love
And there are as many
Perhaps decrying lost love
Enough to warrant starting
A Lonely Hearts Poet Club

The Membership rules
Would be very simple
All aspirants would need
To have been jilted, divorced
Unlucky in love or just lonely
To be able to join the Club
Any takers? ? ?

Sandra Martyres

The Long Road To Nowhere

Desolation had overtaken him
As he trudged night and day
Through brambles and thickets
Armed with just a backpack
And a piece of bamboo

Forsaken by friends and family
He decided to vanish
From any kind of civilization
Where no one would find him
Not even by sheer accident

The road was long and arduous
The journey tiring and tedious
No place to rest in peace
Could he find, there was always
A need to stay awake and alert

After trudging several long days
And at times during the night too
He finally reached a cradle in the hills
It beckoned him to climb in
And lie down among the clouds

Using the bamboo deftly
He stepped into the green valley
Drank thirstily from the stream
Shut his eyes tightly and focused
On the angels playing the harp

He was at last in a place close to heaven
Away from the miserable people he knew
Enjoying the music peace and calm
That he had dreamed of for years
For the first time in years he smiled

No one seemed disturbed by
His ugly and terribly distorted face
The birds of heaven sang to him

A welcome song that he longed to hear
No one else had, not even his natural Mother

Sandra Martyres

The Lure Of Lucre

Money they say
Entices almost everyone
Especially those who believe
That unless they have it in plenty
They are lesser humans
For them, in the early stages
The hard work may seem like fun
When raking in the moolah
In the form of higher wages
But that could change
All too soon when greed
Begins to take over
When the lure of lucre
Becomes difficult to ignore
When they just stop living
And focus only on earning
Never mind if it is ill-gotten
Leaving them no time or energy
For their folks back home.
The families feel the change
And begin to yearn
For the days long gone
When there was less lucre
But more time and affection
For sharing with one and all

Sandra Martyres

The Manipulator (Senryu)

A smile and a chuckle
Greet the manipulator
Trying to strike a deal

He shrugs his shoulders
Pretends to abandon it
We wish him goodbye

He learnt his lesson
He will not repeat that stunt
At least we hope so

Sandra Martyres

The Man's Choice

He discarded the last remnants
Of the cigarette that he was smoking
And crushed the butt on the floor
Using his good foot, the other
Was in a cast –the result of a fall
Then picking up his crutch he hobbled
Towards the main door of the house
From where he walked on to the street
The little dog followed him quietly
Always remaining a few steps behind
Goodbye he mumbled to the place
And set about his journey to heaven
Three days later his body was picked up
From a garden near the cemetery
The poor dog wailing by his side
A scribbled note in his pocket said
That he was tired of life and his ailments
And if he was found lifeless anywhere
No one was to blame as he had simply
Decided to accept God's invitation to
To take up residence in His Kingdom

Sandra Martyres

The Master Blender Of Another Kind

Attuned to the tinkle of tender
He is a true master blender
He blends wonderfully among
Both the very rich and the not
So very rich with finesse
Nobody does ever guess
His true motivations or his
Reasons to stay in their midst
He keeps them regaled with
Scores of money jokes and
They lap them up sportingly
Pleading for more and more
Then comes the crux
The moment he is waiting for
Someone asks if he is a
Consultant or a stock broker
He smiles and gently agrees
To share his contacts & expertise
Many flock around him
Hoping to benefit from his
Financial Wisdom and stock tips
Some want the first mover
Advantage, so they commit
A few millions to him to invest
I have often wondered if
They are set up by him
Or if they are investors for real
All the same this is only
The start of the start of his game
From jokes he moves on to recount
True stories of financial success
How paupers became millionaires
What he fails to tell ofcourse is how
He converted one time billionaires
Into millionaires with his well blended
Advisory services but that happened
In another time in another place! !

The Mocking Two...

You mock me
Because I am not pretty
You mock me
Coz your friends are more witty
You mock me
For singing this little ditty
But I mock you
Because you are not true
I mock you
For putting me in this stew
And I mock you
Because you are you
About that there is
Nothing you or I can do

Sandra Martyres

The Monster

it arrived
surreptitiously
it attacked him
quite suddenly
it consumed him
this once healthy man
it emaciated him
he is half his size now
it robbed him of his youth
his brow is deeply furrowed
it grew and multiplied
causing him excruciating pain
but before it destroys him
let us pray that he is rid of it

Sandra Martyres

The Mother

Two unwashed hungry children
Wait at the door for her to return
It is well past her usual time today
Tears of fear roll down their cheeks

The failing light from dusk to dark
Adds to the tense atmosphere
The older child suddenly decides
To put on a brave act for his brother

He whispers into his ear very slowly
That Mother is probably delayed at work
And has probably missed her regular train
The younger boy seems more at ease

Both jump on hearing the gate open
Relief on their faces to see their Mom
Returning with a lot of shopping bags
Hurriedly she enters and hugs the boys

She apologises for being late and promises
Them a special treat after they shower
Soon two well scrubbed boys appear but
When they near the dinner table they notice

Their Mother sitting in a rather pensive mood
They sense that her mind is preoccupied and
This time the tears are in her eyes - her boys
Do not even remember that it is Mother's Day

Sandra Martyres

The Old Man And His Muse

Lying inert on his creaking bed
The old man entertained himself
Watching a spider spinning a web

The little creature deftly moved
From mirror to ceiling weaving
Long almost invisible lines of mesh

An hour later its web was ready
With several tiny insects trapped
Within its very delicate precincts

The old man smiled like King Bruce
He too was impressed by the spider
Its determined and indomitable spirit

Each time it slipped or fell, undeterred
It went back to its job on hand quietly
Following its ' never say die' philosophy

Sandra Martyres

The Old Man And The Pickaxe

He spent his life wielding his axe
In the hilly region of the Nilgiris
Cutting wood to pay for his food
And that of his growing brood
His home was the one place
Where a hungry child was assured of solace
The numbers kept growing as the word spread
About his generous heart and his tasty bread
Till one day when at the break of dawn
The woodcutter's pickaxe was not heard
The news spread like wild fire
And the villagers rushed in to enquire
To their consternation there lay before them
The tired old man lay slumped over his pickaxe
Although no more trees or wood would he fell
He left behind a beautiful tale for villagers to tell

Sandra Martyres

The Old School

Every new idea offered was carefully
Mothballed and kept on the shelf and
It wasn't the result of power and pelf
He had grown old doing things exactly
The same way that he had been doing
During the years and decades gone by
Innovation and originality he believed
Were the foolish rantings of idle minds
Any reference to which he brushed aside
He sincerely believed this clear approach
Was meant to control the rich-poor divide
Silly newfangled ideas just led to social chaos
The rich got richer and the poor stayed poor
And so he continued with this silly myth
Until a new leader appeared on the scene
One who was really wedded to good ideas
He immediately sent for the old fossil
And in no uncertain terms put paid
To his 'age old wisdom' and sent him
Packing down the road into oblivion
A sad end for a well-intentioned soul.....

Sandra Martyres

The Old Villager - A Villanelle

She cowered each time the old man appeared.
Although the geezer seemed innocuous,
He looked unkempt and his habits were weird.

To ensure that all her daily tasks were cleared,
The wall clock's ticking was meticulous.
She cowered each time the old man appeared.

In a large family she had been reared,
Whose rules, she thought, were quite ridiculous.
He looked unkempt and his habits were weird.

When he lit his pipe and singed his beard,
He began to look even more hideous.
She cowered each time the old man appeared,

But in the village elders were revered,
So to his ways they were impervious.
He looked unkempt and his habits were weird.

To village etiquette she had deferred,
Though she found their behaviour curious.
She cowered each time the old man appeared,
He looked unkempt and his habits were weird.

Sandra Martyres

The Oppressed

The have-nots world over are increasingly
Choosing the path of violence
To address their never ending woes
This is a very worrisome trend
In countries with teeming millions
Caught in the quagmire of poverty

Thanks to the regular oppression
Displacement and dispossession
Of the poorest of the poor
By the rich and privileged classes
Certain segments of the population
Even believe their lives are expendable

They are willing to join forces and
Are prepared to risk their lives through
Armed attacks or suicide bombings
Especially if they can take with them
Their well-heeled tormentors -truly
A case of sweet revenge worth dying for

Can the so-called educated classes
The backbone of most populous countries
Wish away these unfortunate multitudes
As an ugly blot on their social fabric
Not at all they have waited long enough
For basic social justice and they deserve it

Merely holding symposia on subjects
Like financial inclusion and human rights
Will not placate or help the affected people
Both the authorities and society in general
Need to take steps to tackle the disease
Instead of merely focussing on the symptoms

(Inspired by an article that I read in the press today)

The Painter

He packed up his canvas
Put away his paints
And took a walk.
He had to clear his head of
All the fuzzy thoughts
That coloured his vision,
Making it impossible for
Him to complete the picture
That he had in mind.
A perfect work of art,
One that every connoisseur
Would want to possess and
Display proudly on his wall.

While walking, he met a sage
Sporting a pair of well worn
Sandals and simple clothes.
On seeing him, struggling with
His easel, paints and canvas
He simply remarked 'Dear Sir
You are an artist, if you move
Around with such a heavy load
Your mind will be distracted
And your creativity affected.
You will not see any subject
Worthy enough to be painted-
Shed that baggage and feel
Your imagination run riot'

Sandra Martyres

The Passing Of Grandfather

Out there in the freezing cold
Lo and behold!
Stood our dear old grandfather
He seemed to be waiting for grandmother
Though she had passed away a while ago
But our aged grandfather remembered not
He thought she had as usual wandered out
So he cried out her name
Lest she get lost in the fog
While she went wood picking in the bog

I gently touched his shoulder
And bid him return home
To wait for grandmother
Reluctantly he followed me
As we entered the room
I saw that special smile upon his face and
Could have sworn that grandmother
Was in our midst...

He slowly lowered himself into a chair
Right beside her empty one
Then extending his hand
As if he were clutching hers tightly
Peace and serenity writ all over his face
Closing his dark brown eyes
He softly murmured – My dear I love you
Never will we part again...
His tired body slumped in the chair
We almost felt his spirit leaving the room
As he was reunited with grandmother

Sandra Martyres

The Poet

The house is empty
An eerie feeling prevails
Parting drapes reveal

Soulful music plays
She is found dancing alone
To familiar tunes

He lets out a sigh
Hope to catch her attention
The dance continues

Ethereal music
He too is soon moved by it
And begins swaying

His mind reacts as
The muse in him awakens
And he writes a poem

Note: A story in senryu style verses... He visits an old flame after several years..

Sandra Martyres

The Power Of Pink

A dainty little girl skipped across the park
Dressed in pink from ribbons to shoes
Her Mother followed close behind
Not many people cast a glance at them
All were busy with their own wards
There was however a man in a wheelchair
Who seemed completely fascinated with her
His eyes were focussed on her intently
His attendant did not appear to notice
That a sense of calm had descended on him
There was even a hint of a smile on his troubled face
'Alisha' – he finally shouted to everyone's surprise
For he had not uttered a word in years
Now he was calling his young daughter long dead
In a fatal accident along with her mother and brother
He, the father managed to survive or just about
For he was crippled and he had lost his speech
But the little girl in pink seemed to have changed that
She reminded him of his very own child and the fact
That she turned around and gave him a big angelic smile
Only convinced him further that there was life after death
That Alisha was reborn in a new family, was a happy thought
Much later he did comment that – it was the power of pink
That changed his life on that fateful day in the park.

.

Sandra Martyres

The Power Of Prayer

Each time I am depressed
Or feeling low
I turn to God
I send up a little prayer
To Him to help me keep running
So that I not have to stop

Each time I am physically exhausted
Or really low on mental energy
I turn to God
I send up a little prayer
To Him to keep my morale up
So that I not have to stop

Each time I am hurt
By a friend or foe
I turn to God
I send up a little prayer
To Him to keep my head high
So that I do not have to stop

Each time something goes wrong
Owing to an action of mine
I turn to God
I send up a little prayer
To Him to help me rectify the error
So that I do not have to stop

Each time I have sent up a prayer
For whatever reason
God has turned back to me
And smilingly if not answering it
Has given me the courage and strength
So that I have never had to stop

Sandra Martyres

The Prisoner

As the gas chamber is getting readied
The prisoner's blood pressure cannot be steadied
Although the Supreme Court judgment is still awaited
The wardens are sure that this inmate's future is slated
He will get what he deserves - capital punishment
They set about preparing him up to meet his end
They tell him about last wishes the normal court trend
He appears repentant and still hopeful
He even claims that given a chance
He will mend his ways, sever his ties with the underworld
He will don the mantle of a good citizen
And will honestly complete an additional term in prison
When released he will work for social upliftment
Of the underprivileged members of society
For the prison wardens his promises are
Merely prevarications as he just wants his freedom
So that he can go back to exactly from where he has come
Only this time he will make sure he is not caught
Leaving his family destitute and distraught'
The courtroom is tense as the judgment is delivered
The prisoner looking wan just shook and shivered
As he learns that he has been awarded the death penalty
An order delivered by the judge with an air of finality
And no further appeals would be allowed
So with his head lowered he enters the gas chamber
He will not be heard of again, no one will mourn his death

Sandra Martyres

The Prodigal Son

It was after dusk, there was no one else around to see
The crime scene with the villain trying to flee
Except the young lad clicking on his camera furiously
Hidden in the shadows and moving noiselessly
He captured every movement of the criminal's
Attempts to escape
His pictures would soon flash on the TV screens
Shattering the villain's dreams
The whole town would be on high alert
Searching for clues and the blood-stained shirt
No efforts would be spared to track down the man
Every nook and corner the police would scan
How could a crime like this go unsolved?
A common cheat, a liar, someone gone astray
He would stoop to any depth to get his way
Yet until now he could not be caught
As everyone just feared his father's wrath.
But today with all the photographic evidence
It will be difficult for him to feign innocence
Besides he no longer has father's protection
To save him from prosecution
Father himself has fallen from grace
He no longer enjoys political clout and space

Sandra Martyres

The Runaway Bride

Six yards of silk
Draped around
Her slim figure
Pale faced and shy
She faced them
Her future in-laws
They peered at her
Closely, as if looking
For some kind of fault
Her parents had not
Prepared her for the
Travails of married life

Silently she left with them
For her new home afraid
Unshed tears in her eyes
The groom had sent
His parents to fetch her
As was customary
In their community
They had exchanged
Wedding vows based
On their horoscopes
Matched by the gurus

She had no clue about
what to expect, apart from
Her mother's advice
That as a married woman
She had to obey and respect
Her young husband
On the way to her new home
Her in-laws tutored her
On their expectations
The rules of their family
She listened in silence
For about an hour or so
Then at the next bus stop
She alighted and ran

For her life before the
In-laws could chase her

Sandra Martyres

The Sea Shells

As each wave slowly recedes
It leaves behind a few empty shells
All along the winding seashore
These little colorful protective units
Attract and even fascinate almost
Everyone frequenting the seashore
Often they become collectors' items
With Some choosing to string them into
Necklaces and bracelets to adorn
Themselves but none spare a thought
As to what happened to the true owners
Those little sea creatures who lost
Their lives to the treacherous waves when
Even their shells could not save them.

Sandra Martyres

The Secret

It carried like
A whisper in the breeze
I watched it float delicately
As it rose above my head
And landed at my feet

This little secret
That we were all to keep
But which got whispered
From mouth to mouth
Silently but not silent enough

It moved back and forth
Depending on the direction
That the gossips' ship set sail
Soon everyone had more
Than a gentle inkling of the tale

Brandy's sister was seeing
Whiskey's elder brother
But she did it under cover
All was well until Bacardi
An admirer started the whisper

Gossips ensured that the breeze
Covered the town and news spread
With the speed of light until
Old Monk appeared on the scene
To deflect the whisperers' attent

Sandra Martyres

The Silent Beggar

He stood quietly by the door,
Every bit of clothing he possessed he wore
He was a pathetic sight
He brought human misery to light
His dark brown eyes said it all
There was no need for any begging call.

But they just pretended
That on them he had not descended
It was as if he did not exist
They passed by ignoring his open fist
Has the world become so terribly uncaring
That we can pass a poor man with such daring?

Sandra Martyres

The Star (Senryu)

A star crossed the skies
With my dreams hidden inside
Darkness reigns supreme

Sandra Martyres

The Story Of Little Johnny

The Newspaper boy walked up to the house
Only to find the door ajar and no one around
Unusual he thought, as little Johnny too
Was missing from his vantage point at the window
He left the paper in the doorway and rang the bell
There was no response not even from the dog
Then as he reached the gate he had a strange urge
To enter the place and check why it was so quiet
Turning back he spotted what looked like a child
Lying inert on the floor covered with what appeared
To be a very thick and heavy blanket of snow.
All kinds of thoughts rushed through his mind
Who was this boy and where did he come from?
Was he dead or just frozen in the cold?
He approached the figure on the ground with fear
Looking closely at him he realized it was Johnny
Beneath the woolen cap and the thick muffler
He spotted the rosy cheeks and tight brown curls
With snow flakes entangled in them but, he did not
Touch the child in case he was hurt or even dead
Big tears rolled down his freckled cheeks
The Newspaper Boy, terrified by now ran across
The street straight into a neighboring home
Crying aloud that little Johnny was probably dead
Being Christmas morn most people were still asleep
After the midnight festivities so he shouted to be heard
Ambulances and Police rolled in and a ruckus followed
The Noise finally awakened little Johnny's parents
They struggled outside in their night clothes
To check what all the noise was about and froze
As they saw the police shoveling away in their garden
They could not imagine that it was their own son
Being extricated from several inches of snow
He had probably been sleepwalking and had slipped
What they discovered was amazing - Johnny was asleep
With his pet dog stretched across him to keep him warm
The little boy did survive but the doggy did not....

The Stranger

The train is late
It will be a long and tedious wait
At the little village railway station
The stranger finds a vacant seat
Next to an attractive village belle
He pulls out a newspaper
And slowly lights a cigarette
Seconds later, he finds her staring
She has never seen a Caucasian before
He smiles, she looks away embarrassed
The colour of his skin is unusual
He appears paler in his grey clothes
When compared with her colourful skirt
And even more brightly coloured bangles
The contrast is striking
She looks at her own sunburnt brown skin
And then shyly glances at him
Will she or won't she ask
A question about his origin?

Sandra Martyres

The Takeover King - Senryu Sequence

Sparks flew right across
The full length of the Board Room
Spelling doom for all

First the CEO
Followed by the CFO
Then the Directors

As the rumours spread
Like wildfire everywhere
Employees shuddered

But one lone person
Smiled quietly and that was
The takeover king

He made commitments
To mop up shares quick and cheap
An ownership bid

Well ethics be damned
Was his mantra for success
When taking fresh stakes

Focus on the end
The means are not important
Is his take on life

Sandra Martyres

The Thief (Senryu)

Kneeling in the pew
Eyes lowered in devotion
Who would suspect him?

Sandra Martyres

The Townie's Village Experience - Senryu Style

A throbbing headache
Effects of a village binge
Asprin out of stock

Summons villagers
To set out in search of drugs
To relieve his pain

He walks out himself
Frustrated with their slow pace
To find some tablets

Luck eludes him too
Opts for a home remedy
Townie chews on herbs

A cow approaches
To share his green goodies and
His headache vanished

Sandra Martyres

The Toxic Asset Boom

In these days, with investors so blind
Only one thought crosses the mind
When there is an untimely death and attendant gloom
Is whether, he is another victim of the toxic asset boom
Just a short while ago, there seemed to be no room
For any economists, warning of the impending doom

The markets were awash with liquidity
There was not a single doubt about serendipity.
Sub-prime borrowers were, by bankers, eagerly sought
For the opportunities, to create wrappers, that they brought
Caution, credit scoring models were thrown to the winds
With structured product sales, the banks' coffers were filling up.

Sins of extravagance were blissfully ignored
And bankers unceremoniously cut-off the umbilical cord
To release themselves from the safety of the Basle 2 womb
Only to realize that they are moving towards their career tomb
Pension and Hedge Fund Managers are no longer head-hunted
They all seem to have been, into some kind of oblivion, shunted

Big bonuses and celebrations are things of the past
Some are now hoping that at least golden parachutes will last
So that they can go out in search of other greener plains
Leaving their successors to pick up the messy reins
But if their companies are beneficiaries of the TARP
They can, at best, aspire to join the angels with a harp

Sandra Martyres

The Train Bombing

Over a year has gone by
She was on that train
She heard the blast
But she was riveted to her seat
She could neither shout nor move
She was choking
Like she had swallowed her own tongue
A feeling of numbness had gripped her
Everything went blank she later said
When she woke up in a hospital bed
Anxious doctors were peering into her eyes
To look for some signs of consciousness
She slowly stared back at them
She still could not speak
Then the tears flowed freely
And only her mother's voice could be heard
'She's alive, thank God she's alive ' she cried
This is the miraculous story
Of Anita -my dear friend
I too whispered a silent prayer
To thank God for having saved her
From the terrorist's master-minded disaster.

Sandra Martyres

The Veil

At the tender age of fourteen
She was summoned to appear before
The senior women of the clan
All dressed in their traditional long cloaks
With only their faces exposed
She approached them in fear
Afraid of what she might have to hear
But, they in one voice without faltering
Did solemnly declare that no longer
Could she walk around freely
She now needed observe the social taboos
Whenever she ventured outdoors
She would have to cover her head
With her late mother's long veil
That they so graciously presented to her
It was made of satin and had what looked like
Embroidered mesh on one side
They declared that as the senior women
It was their duty to initiate her
Into the accepted tenets of clan behavior
She had reached the age of puberty
And like all good women in the community
She would have to follow the rules
No more kicking footballs outside school
No more talking to strange boys
She needed to hide herself under the veil
Which they carefully draped around her head
The only light she could see was through
The mesh that covered her face
At home she could still move around
With her face exposed
On hearing the stringent code of conduct
She cringed but spoke out aloud
That she was a modern young woman
She was educated
Why should she be forced to follow
Archaic rules framed by some old fashioned men
Just to show their power over women
The elders stared back in shock

No one had ever dared to raise such questions
And then they all spoke out in unison
Child –we women have no right to talk of freedom
That is the way it was and that is the way it will be
There are no exceptions not for you and not for me

Sandra Martyres

The Writer - A Senryu Series

The ink in his pen
Dried up and he wrote no more
Book left unfinished

Shorn of ideas
He shred all his manuscripts
And made a bonfire

He waits patiently
For his disappearing muse
To stage a come back

He believes in his skill
And hopes that it will return
Along with his muse

Sandra Martyres

The Young Hawker

mid morning
walking under
the scorching sun
big beads
of perspiration
slip down his face
yet he continues
the young lad
has a mission
his wares to sell
before the sun
goes down
evening falls
his goods remain
unsold and
cold winds blow
in his direction
his morale
is very low
he will face
the usual beatings
from his master
now instead of
beads of sweat
there are tears
of fatigue and fear

Sandra Martyres

The Young Man

The Angel of Death
Knocked on his door
"Are you ready? " he asked
The young man said "No"

The Angel disappeared
Only to reappear later
"I spoke to God" he said
"You have one more chance"

The young man still fuzzy
Said "Any terms and conditions"
The Angel replied softly
"Only true contrition" will do

"That's not really fine with me"
The young man retorted
"If by definition it would mean
Saying sorry and coming clean"

The Angel grimly stated
"Young man you are an ingrate
If pleasure is all that you want
I fear that you have sealed your fate"

The young man was quick to reply
"Really, God I do not mean to defy
But seriously it would be difficult
For me to turn over a new leaf"

The tired angel quietly vanished
While the young man imagined
That soon he would be banished
From all the good things on earth

He sighed and readied himself
For the worst - a torturous journey
To hell, hoping to catch up at least
With friends from his colourful past

Sandra Martyres

Tobacco (Senryu)

Chewing tobacco
Passtime of the unemployed
Nightmare of the state

Sandra Martyres

Trading Exotics (Three-Liners)

This one is dedicated to Investment Bankers

Trading exotics
Experiment with enchanting toys
And ignore all the noise

Cause wary Regulators
Are generally slow to react
When bankers go off track

But protect your bonuses
The fisc is waiting in readiness
To slap on new taxes

Remember to watch your step
Disgruntled investors are
Waiting to finish you too

Sandra Martyres

Tsunami? ?

He tickled my face with a feather
I smiled back
Lying blissfully on the sand
We were on our honeymoon
Sunbathing on the sea shore
Life seemed so wonderful
Too good to be true
I thought - if this is what
Marriage is all about
I should have married earlier
He seemed to read my thoughts
He moved closer to me
And brushed his lips on my forehead

Just as we were about to embrace
I felt the sand under me rumble
I shuddered and deftly turned the other side
Then the ground beside me opened
And swallowed him up
I screamed but no words would come
I tried to dig him out
But someone pulled me away
I have no idea what happened thereafter
I found myself in a hospital bed
With a bandaged head,
Heard people buzzing around and
Talking about a new Tsunami in muffled voices

Again, I tried to call out,
But I had lost my voice
All I wanted to know was
Whether they had been able to save
My beloved.
A kindly nurse bent over me and muttered
That the Almighty had been merciful
He had saved me from the earthquake
And the giant waves that followed it
I described my husband and
I asked if she had seen him

She did not reply
But from the look in her eyes
I knew the answer
I had lost my beloved to the
Wrath of the seas....

(This is not an autobiographical poem...it is the story of what happened to a dear friend)

Sandra Martyres

Tweets

Sitting comfortably
On the highest branch
Of the banyan tree
They tweeted together
In perfect harmony

Sometime later they
Quietly disappeared
They were thought to be
Enjoying wedded bliss
On their honeymoon

Their friends eagerly
Awaited their return
They were really missing
All the loving tweets
Exchanged across the net

But alas that was not to be
Somewhere along the way
The lovers parted company
No one knew until only one
Was heard tweeting alone

Sandra Martyres

Twilight

Lying on a beach in silence
Watching the setting sun as
Shades of orange and red
Flash across the grey skies
Which grow darker as the fire ball
Touches the horizon
And gently disappears behind it
The village musician
Captures the moment
On his flute and the air is soon
Filled with a soft melody
That transports
The listeners on the ground
Into a whole new world
Of peace and harmony
All earthly worries and troubles
Are absorbed by the sands
And washed away by
The waves lashing the shore
With a steady rhythm in tune with
The musicians flute
The stars make an appearance
As the skies get blacker and
Twilight turns to night

Sandra Martyres

Twitter And Tweeting

Being all of a twitter
I went about tweeting
And was surprised
With all that I found
Snippets of valuable and
Important information, but
I also discovered
Soon enough that the wags
Had been there too
Juicy gossip was doing
The tweeting rounds
In compressed form
The tweeters are often
Like quacking ducks
In a pond of murky water

I just wonder whether
All the non-tweeters know
What the wags
Are talking about
Tweeting can be fun
But it can be scary too
One or two line pieces on
Presidents and PMs
On Royalty and Chancellors
No one is spared by
The tweeting community
They seem to work overtime
Recording every line
And in so doing, ofcourse
They boost their chances
Of increasing their followers

Sandra Martyres

Unemployed

He said that he always lacked a sense of real greed
His conscience did not permit a spirit freed
Despite several visits to and discussions with his peers
He could never rid himself of the his unending fears
He could not conceive breaching the rules
He lived strictly by the values learnt at school
But respecting rules seems to have been a show-stopper
Since he claims that he is still just another pauper
As he could never adopt the young MBA flashy style
Although on the job he always ran the extra mile
He despised them as belonging to the arrogant lot
Waiting like hawks for an opportunity to spot
They did not hesitate to break the rules
Especially when it helped to increase their bonus pools
They scoffed at his references to values and ethics
Dismissing them as holy noises made by spineless lunatics
So today he has joined the ranks of the unemployed
Not knowing if and where his skills can be redeployed

Sandra Martyres

Valentine's Day

She sits waiting for the doorbell to ring
Attired in her most gorgeous gown
It is unusual for her to be dressed in time
But today is special it is the 14th of February
And she is waiting for her Valentine

Will he or won't come around
To accompany her to the grand Ball
Meant to celebrate Valentine's Day
Nervously she arranges her dress
Sprays a little more perfume - a new one

Minutes seem like hours at times like this
Her eyes move from the clock to the mirror
The silence in the room is almost ominous
Until the doorbell finally rings, excitedly she jumps
Only to trip over the voluminous gown

With a sprained ankle she hobbles to the door
Looking a mess with tears and eyeliner
Rolling down her cheeks Prince Charming is unfazed
Placing the red roses in her trembling hands
He gets on his knees to examine the ankle

He is truly a man for all seasons
The ankle is bandaged and the tears dried
Sportingly he changes the venue to
A cosier place with a candle light dinner for two
Tears give way to smiles sealed with a kiss

Sandra Martyres

Vexed By A Volcano

The world seems to be
Turning topsy turvy
I hear from the whisperings
Of the older generation
They seem almost convinced
That the world will end soon
What has triggered this despair
The answer lies in the calamities
Of unimaginable proportions
That are plaguing planet Earth today
The latest being the Icelandic Volcano
Spewing thick black clouds of toxic ash
Into the atmosphere creating panic
As a dark blanket hides the blue skies
Bringing the airlines on their knees with
Gounded flights, desperate passengers
Adding to their list of never ending woes
Should these sky borne emissions continue
The airlines for one will encounter problems
Of the likes of which they have never known,
Losses and debts will mount leaving behind
For them a smoking volcano of another kind.

Sandra Martyres

Vibgyor - A Splash Of Colour

The lovely fragrance of flowers
Pervades the whole atmosphere
Ceramic pots of little violets hang
Against the indigo coloured screens
Adorning the living room while
The blue bells thrive in the garden beds
Alongside pleasing green ferns
The yellow buttercups do attract attention
As do the orange marigolds in full bloom
But in this colourful garden
The deep red rose still retains
Pride of place

Sandra Martyres

Victims And More (Senryu)

He is a victim
Of pure greed - he ate his way
To the cemetery

The ambulance stopped
To carry away victims
Of failed traffic lights

The baby did scream
perhaps he had a bad dream
Or was he hungry?

Sandra Martyres

Vienna

I left my heart in Vienna
The country of Mozart
Sacher cakes and Schnitzels
The country with amazing castles
Like Schonbrunn & Hofburg
With their exquisite interiors
Gleaming chandeliers and paintings
Life size portraits of the Royals
Surrounded by perfectly manicured
Gardens with beautiful flowers
The country overflowing with talent
Where street artists extoll their works
Musicians dressed in period costumes
Offer orchestra tickets at discounts
So much is happening all the time
I would love to go back to Vienna
Just to roam the streets all over again

Sandra Martyres

Waiting At The Bus Stop

The freezing winds
Chilled her to the bone
Her heavy black overcoat
Did not seem to protect her
From the treacherous cold
She stood at the bus stop like
One with Parkinson's disease
The passers by just stared
And walked away quietly
While she continued to wait
Her son was arriving
By the late night bus
After completing a jail term
For a crime he did not commit
She wanted to be the first to
Hug him and take him home
After his dreadful ordeal.

Finally after what seemed
Like hours and hours
The Bus rolled in and she
Rushed to the exit door
Waiting excitedly as
The passengers alighted
But she did not spot him
Desperation overcame her
And she boarded the bus
To check if he had fallen
Asleep on one of the seats
But she found no commuters
As she turned to the driver
To inquire about her son
She heard a soft voice say
'Mother - thank you for
Waiting for me - but my spirit
Has forsaken me I cannot
Come home again goodbye'

Walking In The Rain

Walking in the Rain
Sharing an umbrella
A chance to get closer
And cling to each other
Without attracting the
Unwanted attention
And comments from
The city's idle passers by
Whose furtive glances
Can spoil all chances
Of enjoying some quiet
Moments of togetherness and fun

Sandra Martyres

Water Thoughts

Huge waves approach us
Menacingly from the seas
Like a tsunami

Monsoons lash the door
Creating panic inside
Will the rain enter

The seas beckon him
Miles of clear deep blue waters
But he cannot swim

Sandra Martyres

Weddings - Some Observations

an angelic smile
on the face of his lovely bride
the groom is ecstatic

the fairyland feel
twinkling stars and soft music
a garden wedding

the bride's dress sparkles
as she dances the polka
the spotlight is on her

the flower girls skip
to the music showering
confetti on all

A unique three tier cake
That took ages and patience
Is one of its kind

smiles and champagne
flow freely as guests mingle
and enjoy the party

the last such occasion
took place thirty years ago
may this one be happier

PS: Inspired by the Royal Wedding

Sandra Martyres

Where Has All The Music Gone?

Where has all the music gone?

The singing birds

The humming bees

The quacking ducks

The noisy geese

The village crooners

Have all been silenced.

Instead we have the screeching sound

Of industry's wheels as it turns around

Production is in full swing

But little pleasure it will bring

To the villagers who have been displaced

Their simple faith and trust was misplaced

To make way for wannabes to occupy their space

And make their mark as they enter the rat race

Like the birds the village voices have been stilled

Just as their land grabbers had probably willed

Sandra Martyres

Who Am I

Who am I
A news maker
A political shaker
A conscience waker
No I am none of them

Who am I
A struggling writer
A diehard idealist
A social activist
Perhaps I am a bit of all

As I discover myself
I put my fears and failures on the shelf
Go to enormous lengths
Working hard on my strengths
To start living and stop worrying
About who I am

Sandra Martyres

Windswept

Her long tresses tossed in the air
Gave her a rather unkempt look
As she raced across the sands
In a daring attempt to challenge
The elements irrespective of
How strong they appeared
To the less adventuresome

Passers by clinging to each other
To avoid being blown away
By the treacherous winds
Stared in amazement at
The diminutive figure as she
Appeared to be racing against time
Defying the strong northerly winds

The seashore wore a deserted look
Apart from a few stragglers
Trudging along cautiously
But that did not deter the young lady
She continued with what looked like
A suicidal mission as the dark clouds
And huge waves made their appearance

When night fell she was less visible
The life guards were called in quickly
To make sure that she was not drowning
Huge flash lights and police cars
Appeared on the shore to confirm
That the young woman was still alive
But she seemed to have vanished

The rescue team opined that even
If she were drawn into the waters
The incoming tides would have returned
Her alive or dead to the seashore
In the distance they spotted an elderly man
Dressed in a well worn leather jacket
Sitting on a cliff smoking a pipe

The life guards rushed towards him
Hoping that he may have noticed her
But he merely raised his wrinkled face
To announce that their rescue operation
Had come twenty years too late
His daughter who had been swept away
By the seas usually visited him on a windy day

Sandra Martyres

Winter Skies

The snow cascades down
the window pane leaving
Long slim rivulets behind
Slowly the icicles form and
As dawn breaks and lights up
The winter skies brightly
I see little rainbows peeping
Through the thin glass strips
Like a beautiful kaleidoscope

Sandra Martyres

With A Little Bit Of Luck

With a little bit of luck
We will conquer all our ill-luck

With a little bit of luck
We will find true love and happiness

With a little bit of luck
We will scale the mountain top

With a little bit of luck
We may even win the jack-pot

But where the hell
Does one find that little bit of luck?

Sandra Martyres

Women's Day

Life is a real drudge
Yet I, a poor housemaid, try not to bear any grudge
You, my lady, have led a relatively sheltered life
You have no idea what it is to be a battered wife
You have never known frustration and anger
The kind one feels when one cannot satisfy a child's hunger
Yes I am the voice of dissension
Against any Women's day celebration
I am that perpetual underdog
The one who is expected, in all weathers, to slog
With no hope of any respite
Always having to put up a very tough fight
To protect, at least, my children's rights
I will never have the possibility nor the luxury
Of being able to discover the real me
As I continue to be a victim of deprivation and poverty
The day I am able to see some light in my life
The day I stop being a good-for-nothing's wife
I will join in the Women's Day Celebration
I will salute the world and our great nation
Jai Ho

Sandra Martyres

Work-Life Balance (Senryu)

A work-life balance
Management gurus spiel meant
To placate the staff

In truth this remains
A plain and simple gimmick
Just another trick

Jack Welch too did say
Work-life balance dreams display
Lack of ambition

Sandra Martyres

Workplace (Senryu)

Piles of papers stacked
For review and approval
His pen is missing

The empty cabin
heralds another lay-off
Cleaner starts sweeping

Do as I tell you
yells the Boss impatiently
and resumes his game

Sandra Martyres

World Environment Day

The fifth of June is
A memorable day for
All true nature lovers

World-wide most people will
Raise a toast to Nature on
Environment Day

Please save the green trees
They are our present and future
Natural health source

Sandra Martyres

Writers' Block

The blank screen
Stares me in the face
What should I write about
A poem on love
Or a story on the same subject?
Ideas rush through my mind
At the speed of light
My fingers cannot keep pace
As the thoughts just race
Then all I see is only a confused mass
Of stray ideas that make neither
A fine poem nor an interesting tale
So I need to fold up my laptop
And type again at a later date
When I have a nice poem to recite
Or a proper story to relate

Sandra Martyres

You

Every time you pass by
You leave behind another lie
She wonders why you make her cry
Instead of leaving her in peace to die

Yet you insist on coming again
Just to remind her of the pain
That you are capable of inflicting
But this time she is not reflecting

Her health is slowly failing
Her medical bills are piling
You have no intention of helping
So what is the use of visiting

Why don't you leave her alone
She cares not where you roam
It's your life that you need to live
To you she has nothing more to give

Sandra Martyres

You Are Gone Forever

Why did you do this to Aryan and to me
Just yesterday we were one happy family
Then almost suddenly
God decided that you had leave us and flee
Neither He nor you seemed to care
That without you
Our hearth and home would be bare
Why were you in such a mighty hurry
To abandon our young son and me
You left, behind, for us, just the key
To the remains of your inert body
I looked into little Aryan's eyes
To comfort him as he silently cries
He knows not that you are gone forever
He weeps because you do not answer
I tell him that you have become a star
And that you will always watch over us, from afar

(a poem dedicated to a young colleague who lost her husband last week)

Sandra Martyres