

*Dark Poetry Day*  
by Richaundra Thursday

It is World Dark Poetry Day.  
It is also the day Matthew Shepard  
Was robbed of everything he had  
But a story,  
Beaten like a used metaphor,  
A not-yet-dead horse,  
And left tied to a fence  
Like a witch, like a sacrifice  
To a blind corn god of hate.  
I want to write about ravens  
But his college scarecrow body  
Keeps them at bay.  
I conjure castles of stone and secrets,  
But they bleed into asylums  
Where men and boys  
Repeat lies like hail marys:  
The chemicals, the scissors  
The metal bars, anything better  
Than what they are.  
I wish the monsters  
Always turned out to be gorillas  
Or inchoate wraiths, metaphorical wolves  
But instead, it's always just men,  
Banal in their maintenance of status quo  
Not so easily banished  
Yet so much easier to ignore.  
All I can think to write is:  
Void, abyss, loss, eternal dark  
Despair, torture, escape, madness.



*Tormented*  
by Megha Rani

Sometimes I stop myself  
from messaging you,  
bothering you,  
reaching out first  
when I know you won't  
just because  
I'm afraid

of those three dots,  
your phone blinking  
expectantly  
on the off chance  
you're waiting  
too.

I let myself wonder  
if this is some sort  
of fantasy  
realm,  
this world where  
you're waiting  
for me  
like I'm waiting  
for you,

where  
"she  
is  
typing"  
is a promise in itself,  
a vow that one of us  
is trying,  
breaking down  
the walls of silence.

I wonder why it throbs  
aches and hurts like hell  
every time that moment passes me  
touches me gently  
with its fleeting touch  
but leaves blisters and scars on  
my suppurating skin  
leaves me  
shuddering in pain  
a moment spent in hell

I wonder why I choke on my words  
mumble and stammer every time  
your name is mentioned  
in a passing conversation  
I turn mute  
and all the screeching and the screaming  
fails to bring out the pain and agony  
flowing through my pores  
are left untouched

I wonder why my quill  
still bleeds when I write  
and words scream and  
howls of pain;  
I guess,  
they are waiting eternally  
for me  
/to realize this/  
to start  
writing about you again.

*Ellipses*  
by Juliette Sebock

