



Artwork: [Katrin Davis](#) - Tanka: [Tish Davis](#)

*our sins
unto the seventh generation
we watch
the rivers run dry
and do nothing*

By [Peggy Hale Bilbro](#)
Alabama, USA

*early spring . . .
young doves coo
amid war sirens*

By [Neena Singh](#)
Chandigarh, India

Chrysanthemum, issue 30

*all of us
from blowfly to blue whale
birthright citizens
of a dying planet . . .
who will have the last word?*

By [Jenny Ward Anqyal](#)
Gibsonville, NC, USA

Once Bereft

By [Robert Witmer](#)

Tokyo, Japan

*What would the world be, once bereft
Of wet and of wildness? Let them be left
— Gerard Manley Hopkins, "Inversnaid"*

From Pangaea to the Tethys Sea our Mother Earth goes round, and round our central star appears, the Sun, traveling east to west, from Ethiopia to Hesperides, each day a blessing in this circle of life. Brought into this vital light with plants of every kind and fauna filling land and sea, fruitful, we were. And it was good.

We crept into caves to mark the walls with ochred images of creatures honored for their flesh, their spirit and being, different from our own, yet of the same.

The First Peoples made their homes, dressing their bodies, teaching their tongues, cherishing their kinship with the land.

We learned to turn the very Earth, the oldest of our gods, with plows, back and forth, year after year, reaping, sowing, wearing away the immortal, the seemingly inexhaustible land we would one day forget. And so, as our numbers rose and our cities grew and our knowledge fed our need for power, we tamed and conquered all. Or so we thought we would, quick, ready, resourceful humankind, now more human, less kind, kinship reduced to a great machine.

Our hearts cooled, the Earth warmed, we saw no end in sight. Round and round, each fight, another victory. And then we mastered space itself, we landed on the moon. What sight! The Earth in space – "a tiny, fragile ball of life, hanging in the void." A blue dot where we are all one people, living in one world, together in our need to keep this improbable home home to all creation in all its diversity, its fragile beauty, our one and only home.

*Let the earth last
And the forests stand a long time
— from a poem by the 15th century Aztec poet Ayocuan Cuetzpaltzin*

*weather satellites
go round and round
empty promises*

*fracking
we learn new ways
not to change*

*an electric car
sighs to a stop
the last glacier groans*

*snowmelt
plum blossoms
on a polar bear*

*bird of paradise
a rainbow's love song
in a chainsaw repertoire*

*strip mined
our purple mountain majesties
the emperor's new clothes*

*old pond
spewing toxic waste
a frog croaks*

*the caboose
rattles past the setting sun
dust on stunted corn*

*washing up
on an island paradise
plastic plates*

*rising tide
she lifts her skirt
to wipe away a tear*

*a blue balloon
rising into a summer sky
the child waving goodbye*

*dry riverbed
the old bridge creaks
bone on bone*

Greetings fellow humans,

Our lease on this planet is a fragile one, and it's becoming more precarious by the day. It's always good to know there are others out there who think this is an important issue and are willing to speak up for our planet and its inhabitants. We're witnessing the unravelling of years of hardfought progress being swept away with the stroke of a pen. At a time when the world should be coming together, the powers that be seem content to tear it apart and divide up the pieces. This journal will never be known as "a comfort to tyrants." That includes megalomaniacs, psychopaths, and sociopaths, just in case that isn't clear. This is a struggle of paramount proportions. The earth needs our voices, humanity needs our voices. Life on earth as we know it needs our voices. It's an honor to share these poets' words with you. They are here to inspire and invigorate resolve. Thank you for your continued support of *The Abstractaphy Initiative*. It's here to amplify our voices and shed light in the dark corners of the present. Don't ever let someone tell you "you can't make a difference." I may be insignificant but "we" are invincible. Don't forget about the "we."

Richard Grahn

Founder, *The Abstractaphy Initiative*