

The Galway Review

Galway's Leading Literary Magazine / thegalwayreview@gmail.com

BEST OF THE MONTH, POETRY

Pallavi Padma-Uday -Three Poems

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Pallavi Padma-Uday is a writer and economic historian and more recently, an awardee of the Irish Writers Centre's Evolution Programme for 2025–26. Her literary writing and essays have appeared in or are forthcoming in Poetry Ireland Review's The Trumpet, The Aleph Review, Abridged, The Honest Ulsterman, The Galway Review, and

elsewhere. Pallavi's two books of poetry are now part of the National Library of Ireland collections. She is currently working on her third poetry collection—shortlisted for Arts Council of Ireland's Literature Bursary—and a memoir.

1| The Vote

This morning there is a mob at my door screaming
through newspapers. I knew the fanatics were lurking
within homes, resting between the tenuous border that
separates misogyny from mass murder. March 9 2024 – they are out
galvanising on Dublin streets the stale inequities that have outlived
their time. They are brandishing a revelation, an ugly truth we have known
for too long, too often. Homes are seats of violence

where silence is bought in superbly mundane ways: a carpet
is a call to action. If it's dirty, it must be cleaned. Evenings are
for feeding, dinner must be served. Three meals
a day, every day. Matter-of-fact rituals

of living. Who buys the bread was never the question.
Who cooks the meals, who does the chores will not ever
change. The people have said it. The Constitution always has.

I begin to see the slow deaths; it comes from caring too much. Mother
is walking the kids to school, mother is organising playdates,
mother is fixing snacks, mother is supervising homework, mother will now
cook dinner, mother is screaming at Alexa for missed timers

and the soup gets burnt.

"...state recognizes that by her life within the home,
woman gives to the state a support without which the common good
cannot be achieved."

This was no will of God

To orchestrate mass burials
To measure wholeness
in fertile wombs, busy kitchens, countless children—

heaven is not within these homes, state is

2 | Suboptimal Provision of Public Goods

The formula is wrong. The quiche and pastries are high quality.
 They are in demand. Two little humans Alia and Zubin
 are asking for different quantities of the meal.
 The formula says
 Two goods: q (quiche) and pastries (p) have
 a price. I've been baking, boiling, frothing public goods
 all the time. I am the friggin' ration shop where market forces fail.

3 | Failing at an education

Silence of the libraries is to make us believe
 we are all worthy of an education. I found myself
 poring over books as I fought off voices –
what the hell are you doing here? – and laboured
 well into the nights. Weekends would come and go.
 I made myself capable of an education. Everyday

on the computer screen, I wrote a poem, then a love letter—
 to random people, saved as draft and progressed
 to more important tasks, reading papers, theories and abstracts.
 Rains drew patterns on the windows, summers changed the plants
 in gardens, winters marched on in warm comforters. Everything life needed
 was at my desk. I followed the routine—of black coffees and cookies,

family in photos, padded cushions on work chair—
I was so particular about kantha weaves in silk threads—so elegant
 it almost looked like a real person on the seat. I had real attachment problems
 but—Layla is framed on my desk—the anxiety is now taken care of. The seasons
 have sunk into tube lights— invisible as air, shapeless as sorrow—and like all good
 things, the hours are never enough. Into this infinity pool, I play
 with the screensavers—weather wallpapers, schools of fish.

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