



On the Move

A Time to Reflect

Introduction

Poetry from ancient times has been used to express the personal and emotional feelings of a speaker. Here in these pages we want to share with you as part of the On the Move series, a sample range of poems written about different aspects of migration. One is a sombre reflection on the hundreds of people who died in one week in April 2015, attempting to flee their home countries for Europe as well as the thousands who have drowned before them in the Mediterranean.

Another reflects the broken dreams inside the migrant camp in Calais nicknamed 'the jungle'.

All twelve have a particular message that tell a story and paint a picture that captures well the writers thoughts, feelings and emotions.

We hope that you will not just enjoy reading them but that you will find inspiration in them to take action. What action? It's up to each of us.



The Immigrating Expatriate

I'm about to become a migrant

An immigrant,

About to pack my bags

And migrate

To somewhere else,

Go find home in another state,

Oh but wait,

That labels not quite straight

The words are not quite right

Are they?

You wouldn't call me an

Immigrant,

That's right

I'll be an expatriate,

Somehow I'm not part of the migrant swarm

Why is that?

Why am

I an expat?

And not a migrant?

Is it cos I'm not going somewhere you want to live?

Or somewhere that you own?

Is it because my skin is a slightly different tone

Or because I am not fleeing for my life

From the land that is my home?
Why do I get treated
With more dignity
Than the human beings
Currently dying in our seas
We have people on our doorsteps seeking
Refuge
And all they find is hostility
Labeled 1 of a migrant swarm
Instead of refugee
Fellow part of humanity,
Living, breathing,
Could be my sister
Human being.
And you say it is only a word
But so is love and home,
actions start by being heard,
Or spoken aloud or silently,
Wars are started with a word,
Hearts are broken with a word,
Life is spoken by a word,
Or have you not heard
A word that I have said.

Anna

Camp of broken dreams

On false pretences they flock to seek pastures new
Oblivious to the misery and nightmares that lie ahead
The path they travel upon, leads them to a life of perdition
Some walk for months with torn shoes and blistered feet
Some pay fortunes to illegal traffickers to escort them
Families are left behind to avoid the hardship of migration
Others who have seen their families die, travel alone
Once they reach the dreaded jungle, reality sets in
Welcome to the jungle, the camp of broken dreams
Say goodbye to your life, here there is not hope
Forget about those you left behind, you won't see them again
A diversity of cultures, faiths and nations live as one
All have one goal, to find a place to call home
Application after application is refused as they lose hope
Migrant, refugee or asylum seeker, it really doesn't matter
They are all viewed as rats, regardless of their past lives
Odours of rancid air plagues the atmosphere,
Stinking sickens them more than the reminder
of broken dreams

The Silent One

I came to this country

Missing my own home

Meeting new people

Isn't it hard?

Getting a job

Raising children

Amazing chance!

Trying to speak

In different language

Our life is never boring...

New challenges everyday!



Hundreds of cockroaches drowned today

It was just as well they died at sea – no-one holds
funerals for beetles,

this way there'll be less of a mess.

In the old days, we used to buy the cockroaches,
Bring them over the oceans in slightly safer ships,

And we'd have them work in our fields,

Snipping cotton for us as the sun seared their shells.

Here's a secret; the cockroaches have never swum too well.

Back then, we'd throw the sick ones over the side

but now money drowns them,

And we smirk as their brown lungs fill with salt and silt,

We sing as they sink.

Musa Okwonga



The Torch of Lampedusa

Nobody heard them, the 900,
But still they lay screaming.
We were much further out than they were,
And not waving but drowning.

Poor migrants, lured to a better life –
Now they're dead.

It must have been too hot for them
In Gambia, Senegal, Syria, they said,

Oh no no no, it was too hot always,
Still, the stranded ones lay screaming.
We were much further out than they were,
And not waving but drowning.

Skendong



Mother and Son Migrants

I like to watch the documentaries
The human stories I like those

The Syrian refugees
Stuck in Calais, France

A mother and her son
And the son's leg was injured

The reporter interviewed them
But he had to leave because
The rest of the group didn't
Want them getting attention

They didn't have a way
To make it to England
Some migrants managed to
Get into the back of trucks

The son made jokes
As he had difficulty walking
What a strong person

So I remind myself not to complain
As some people have much harder lives

Anonymous

People

People–Amazing

People–Challenging

People – In need

People – In lost

People – In hungry

People–Found

Wendy



New Country

My new home is in a new country.

I know very little of the language and culture.

Memories of my old country will be in my heart forever

The love of my old country will always remain.

I leave for a better life and new opportunities

Hoping to make a bright future for me and my family.

Arty Rico



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