



# The CCN Young Muslim Writers Awards

(YMWA)

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For more information or queries email [ccn@crescentsofbrisbane.org](mailto:ccn@crescentsofbrisbane.org)

or

call Dr Mustafa Ally on 0402 026 786.



# The CCN Young Muslim Writers Awards

## (YMWA)

The CCN Young Muslim Writers Awards seeks to encourage and support young writers to become the confident communicators of tomorrow.

CCN's YMWA provides the platform for young writers to harness their skills, invest in their writing talents and turn it into a long-term interest, insha'Allah.

Crescents Community News (CCN) is calling for creative, interesting and exciting poems and short stories for its inaugural CCN Young Muslim Writers Awards from 5-16 year old writers from across the country in the following categories:

- Best Short Story Award
- Best Poetry Award

Closing date is 31st August 2011.

Some exemplars of short stories and poetry can be viewed here: [tinyurl.com/YMWAexemplars](http://tinyurl.com/YMWAexemplars).

### Terms and Conditions

#### ELIGIBILITY

1. All entries must be submitted in the English language.
2. All entries must be original and the author's own unaided work.
3. Submissions must not infringe any copyright or contain defamatory or otherwise unlawful matter.
4. All entrants must be between 5 and 16 inclusive as at 31 August 2011.
5. The Young Muslim Writers Awards are split between short stories and poetry submissions.
6. Both the short story and poetry categories will be assessed according to the following age groupings: Ages 5 to under 7; Ages 7 to under 10; Ages 10 to under 13; and Ages 13 to under 16.
7. Entries submitted in previous awards competitions will not be accepted.
8. The **closing date** for the competition is midnight on the **31st of August 2011** and submissions will not be accepted after this date.
9. **Entries for the Short Story award must not exceed the 4,000 word limit and the poetry should be no longer than 40 lines.**
10. Only ONE entry per person is permitted and there is NO cost to enter.
11. Entrants may submit either a short story or a poem which must be placed in a Microsoft Word document.

## SUBMISSION PROCESS

1. Download the ENTRY FORM from [tinyurl.com/YMWAentryform](http://tinyurl.com/YMWAentryform) (MS Word) or from [tinyurl.com/YMWAentryformpdf](http://tinyurl.com/YMWAentryformpdf) (PDF).
2. All submissions must be entered either online through our online submissions manager, Submishmash, at [ccn.submishmash.com/Submit](http://ccn.submishmash.com/Submit) or emailed to [submissions@crecentsofbrisbane.org](mailto:submissions@crecentsofbrisbane.org) **together with a completed entry form.**
3. Submissions through Submishmash must include both the Entry Form and your short story/poetry document file.
4. Submissions should be typed in font Times New Roman, font size 11, in a Microsoft Word document format, with numbered pages.
5. Submissions must bear the title of the entry in the 'Header' of each page.
6. Submissions must not bear the author's name on the copy of the submission.
7. Once received, entries cannot be amended.
8. The closing date for the competition is midnight on 31st August 2011.

## SELECTION PROCESS

1. Judging for the CCN Young Muslim Writers Awards will be as follows:
  - a. Stage 1: A team of readers will read all submissions and select the top entries.
  - b. Stage 2: The top entries will be put to the judging panels which will assess the entries, giving each a score.
  - c. Stage 3: The judging panels will convene to discuss the winners of the awards.
2. Amongst the criteria, the judges will be looking for originality, use of language, characterization, reader impact etc.
3. The decisions of the judging panel are final and binding, and CCN will not enter into correspondence or negotiation regarding the results.
4. CCN will be unable to contact all entrants to inform them of their progression through the selection process. Only shortlisted entrants will be contacted.
5. The CCN Young Muslim Writers Awards winners will be announced at an awards ceremony to be held in Brisbane during November 2011. More details will be available closer to the time.
6. Details of winners will be made available on the CCN website after the Awards ceremony.

## PUBLICITY

1. Each winner will agree to take part in publicity for the promotion of the Awards which will include - but is not restricted to- his/her name and photograph being used. Writers will not receive payment for this.
2. Winners will retain the copyright to their work but grant CCN the right to publish their work in the anthology and excerpts on the CCN website.
3. Submissions do not need to be centred on topics of Islam or Muslim identity. However these are equally welcome.
4. The submission of an entry will be deemed to imply the acceptance of these conditions of entry.

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# The CCN Young Muslim Writers Awards

## ENTRY FORM

This entry form can also be downloaded from  
[tinyurl.com/YMWAentryform](http://tinyurl.com/YMWAentryform) (MS Word) or from [tinyurl.com/YMWAentryformpdf](http://tinyurl.com/YMWAentryformpdf) (PDF)

*(Please complete all the fields below and submit this form along with your entry)*

<b>First Name</b>	
<b>Middle Name</b>	
<b>Last Name</b>	

<b>Date of Birth</b> (DD/MM/YY)		<b>Sex</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Male	<input type="checkbox"/> Female
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<b>Street Address</b>			
<b>Suburb</b>		<b>City</b>	
<b>State</b>		<b>Post Code</b>	

<b>Contact no.</b> (mobile)	<b>Contact no.</b> (landline)
<b>Email Address</b>	

<b>TITLE OF ENTRY</b>			
<b>My entry is a</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Short Story <input type="checkbox"/> Poetry	<b>My age category is</b> (as at 31 August 2011)	<input type="checkbox"/> Ages 5 to under 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Ages 7 to under 10 <input type="checkbox"/> Ages 10 to under 13 <input type="checkbox"/> Ages 13 to under 16
<b>Details of parent/guardian/teacher</b>			
<b>Full name</b>			
<b>Contact number</b>		<b>Position</b> For example, Principal, Head of English, Parent	
<b>Name of school</b>			
<b>Address of school</b>			

- This form must accompany your entry file when you submit through our online submissions manager, Submishmash, at [ccn.submishmash.com/Submit](http://ccn.submishmash.com/Submit) OR when you email it to [submissions@crecentsofbrisbane.org](mailto:submissions@crecentsofbrisbane.org).
- Submission of this entry form is confirmation that you have accepted to abide by the Terms and Conditions of the CCN Young Muslim Writers Awards and that all the details supplied are true and correct.

# Poetry Exemplars

## Fragile Peace

by  
Shameam Akhtar

The silhouette of a winter willow  
cuts a lonely shape against  
the night sky.

Along the deserted road  
the city is a light box of  
artificial consolation.

The stars pace us, mocking the distances  
at the end of the evenings' make-happy rituals.

The moon prowling low over rooftops  
is a brooding monument of  
shadow and light to the mystery.

But we are adept -  
spinning a new language  
around the old inertias  
because fear is history's seminal work -  
*our way of life.*

And we remain locked in the  
private reading rooms of the mind.

It's a fragile peace  
the man on the radio said.

# Bees!

by

Sehrish Rena Alam

I was in my garden when I heard some sounds!

They came from way away, way out of bounds,

So I went to search these mysterious sounds.

I crept along to see,

Behind the apple tree.

Who was responsible for creating these?

To my amazement I did find the tiniest little swarm of bees!

There was many a bee,

And upon my sight,

They took a fright,

And so did they flee.

Much to my dismay,

As I would have liked them to stay.

To make honey as sweet as sweet can be

For me to enjoy for my tea!!

# Short Story Exemplars

## Love in a Headscarf

Extract by

Shelina Zahra Janmohamed

### *Introduction*

Love.

Amour, ishq, hubb, amor, pyar. All these are words in my lexicon to describe something delicious and mundane, irresistible and sublime. Love inspires great actions, absurd choices and inexplicable consequences. It directs lives and it makes or breaks hearts. It can arbitrate between life and death, and it can connect the body to the soul and join them with lightning. It is the essence of the human condition.

Civilisations do not clash over whether love exists or not. They may differ about what or who should be the object of love. They fight over the same lover. They disagree about how love should be conducted. But love, Love with a capital L, lies deep within every psyche and culture, and fills books with laments and odes in languages and paradigms from the beginning of time. In this modern day when only what we see is allowed to have certainty, and when scientific data seems to hold the trump card for truth, when only what can be measured exists, love defies all of these strictures and dances joyfully before the eyes of human beings and teases them with the promise of the unknown.

Love has been lost to our generation, diluted to ravishing and romance. We ask it to sustain us on a constant high and we feel betrayed and rejected when the adrenaline rush subsides into comfortable companionable love. We have shackled love by limiting its reign to the arena of candlelit meals and moonlit walks. When we talk of love in public, we have now diminished it. I wish for us to reclaim love for our society as a conscious and connected virtue of vast expanse and immense greatness.

We each know inside us that love relates to friends, advisors, parents and those we live amongst. It takes patience, dedication, and selflessness. Some, like me, may also feel that it connects them to the Divine, the Creator who has no shape, place or time, but who simply is.

The likelihood of a Muslim talking about Love in public is small. But like most societies and cultures, Muslims are obsessed with it. In fact, Muslim men and women spend a large proportion of their time wondering where on earth to find a partner. Finding that special someone is so critical to the fabric of Muslim existence, that almost everyone is involved – parents, siblings, aunts, uncles, Imams, even neighbours.

Beneath the translucent veils of Muslim women lie beating hearts, dreams of love, imaginations replete with fairy tales and princes, of happily ever after. Hidden behind the often misleading headlines of terror and destruction that are said to be in the name of Islam are Muslims: ordinary normal people who share that one thing that exalts human beings and connects the sublime within us to our mundane lives – that thing called Love.

Muslim women have many stories to tell. Some of these are horrific. The suffering, oppression and abuse that some women face in the name of religion, but which in reality is driven by culture and power, must never be forgotten and has to be stopped. I feel a double distress, sharing their pain as sisters in faith but also seeing the beauty of my religion misappropriated, misrepresented and abused to serve inhumane ends.

Stories like mine have remained unheard, as they do not fit neatly with prevailing stereotypes which tell tales of Islam's oppression or of those rejecting Islam. Nonetheless, such stories are just as crucial to our understanding of what it means to be a Muslim woman. Not every Muslim woman is subjected to a forced marriage, kidnapping or imprisonment. We are not one-dimensional creatures hidden behind black veils. Many Muslim women, like me, find Islam to be a positive, liberating and uplifting experience. We love our lives all the more for it.

My account is dedicated to all Muslim women, so that humour, hope and humanity can once again become part of our story.

Muslim women come in many shapes, colours and flavours, and my story is simply the tale of one woman's experience. Hidden within my story are the human passions and hopes of many Muslims, both men and women, and of human beings of other faiths and no faith at all, all of whose own searches for love may have been as perilous, heartbreaking and entertaining as mine.

The search for love is a journey to find many different things. It is the search for a partner and companion, for the excitement of romance. It is also the search for a Cherisher, for someone to nurture or someone to be nurtured by. It is a search for meaning, for the knowledge that you have achieved something, for a momentary acknowledgement or for immortality of your name. Love can be the name of the escape from the physical into the spiritual or from the mental into the carnal. The search for love is a resolute journey: to find out what it means to be human, and to share that humanity.



# Crash and Burn

Extract by

Humaira Rashid

It does not occur to him that he has fallen asleep until his mug opens its eyes and says, 'Rewind'. At which point his head snaps up and he stares hard at the mug sat innocently on the table before him, and blinks once or twice just to make sure. Mugs should not talk.

He stretches and rubs his eyes until he sees bright fuzzy stars, then slumps forward on the tabletop. On the opposite wall, an old fashioned wooden clock declares the time to be four thirty in the morning. His eyes burn, his head hurts, the taste of the hot chocolate does not seem to be registering with his frazzled brain, and to top it all- he checks his wristwatch- the icing on the remnants of the cake, he has to go to work in three hours. Fantastic.

He dozes off again before he realises it...

...And then he is awake again. And the clock tells him it has only been thirty seconds.

There is a twisty feeling in his stomach.

The kids in his classes aren't stupid. His skin is pale, almost ghostly transparent. The way his hair stands up, electrocuted, in all directions, and his clumsiness- he walked into his own coffee table last week- they aren't exactly subtle signs, and the kids won't miss a trick. But nothing is wrong with him- medically, anyway. His doctor is the kind of brusque, unsympathetic businessman that nobody wants for a doctor. He's not going to see him because he can do without that kind of character mutilation, thank you kindly. And he has tried the whole warm-milk-before-bed, lavender-scented-pillows package.

Everything, in short, is crashing and burning.