

Fun in the sun brought to you by
QUILLKEEPERS PRESS

TAN LINES

Endless Summers, Blue Skies, and Sun-Kissed Skin



*A Summer inspired anthology of essays, memoirs, poetry,
prose, and short stories*

This anthology of poetry, prose poetry, essays, memoirs, short stories, and photos is a celebration of Summer. The summer solstice marks the first day of summer in the northern hemisphere. It is the longest day of the year, whereafter the days become gradually shorter. The word "solstice" comes from Latin solstitium from sol meaning Sun and stitium meaning still or stopped. There are many ways to celebrate the Summer solstice. One popular way is to gather at Stonehenge and many first hand accounts claim there is a special energy present on that day. Here at Quillkeepers we would like to honor such a glorious event by celebrating summer inspired literary works that celebrate warmth and light.

This collection is unlike any other in Quillkeepers Press, LLC's past as we have included photos and chose to print this book in vivid color versus our usual black and white text only compilations. The pictures within were submitted by the artists themselves, or scouted as stock photos by our editors. All photos are given credit where ever applicable



QUILLKEEPERS
PRESS

Dear Reader,

When we decided to create a Summer themed anthology, our first thought was for it to center around the Summer Solstice in June. The summer solstice marks the first day of summer in the northern hemisphere. It is the longest day of the year, whereafter the days become gradually shorter. The word “solstice” comes from Latin *solstitium*, from *sol* meaning Sun, and *stitium* meaning still or stopped. There are many ways to celebrate the Summer solstice. One popular way is to gather at Stonehenge and many firsthand accounts claim there is a special energy present on that day.

However, we quickly realized the whole of our demographic is across the globe. Therefore, while it is summer in June in the Northern hemisphere, it is winter for our neighbors to the south. We also realize not all writers celebrate the summer solstice per se, but most hold fond memories of the summer season, regardless of what corner of the globe you trot. So, we decided to shift gears to be a bit more inclusive.

Within this collection, you will find essays, memoirs, photography, poetry, prose poetry, and short stories with (you guessed it) summer themes. We hope wherever you are, and whatever season you happen to be reading this compilation in, that it keeps you warm. We hope it helps conjure up some of your favorite memories of summers past.

With love and light,

Stephanie Lamb, EIC
Quillkeepers Press, LLC

Copyright © Quillkeepers Press, 2021
Book Cover Design by Quillkeepers Press
Edit by Stephanie Lamb
Format by Stephanie Lamb

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form or by any electronic or mechanical means, including information storage and retrieval systems, without the permission in writing from the publisher, except by a reviewer who may quote brief passages in a review.

This compilation contains some works of fiction. Locales and public names are sometimes used for atmospheric purposes. Any resemblance to actual people, living or dead, or to businesses, companies, events, institutions, or locales are completely coincidental. Any references to pop culture are owned by their specific companies and are not the property of the author.

There are some nonfiction poems here within that represent thoughts of the author. Any resemblance to actual events, locals, or persons, living or dead, is entirely coincidental.

ISBN: 979-8-5096-6386-4

Short Stories

Melissa Bandy	9
Revisiting	10
Tanya E. E. E. Schmid	17
Finding July	18

Memoirs

Phyllis Merion Shanken	23
Just A Little Longer	24
A Parent's Nightmare	26
Chris Carbaugh	28
Land of the Sky	29
Ashley Bunton	36
Women Like You	37
Sue Gano	43
The Crab Spider	44

Poetry

Dea F. Enniss	49
Don't Mourn Me, I'm not gone I'm Happy	50
Graham Feeley	51
The Forgiving Sun	52
Enoch Black	53
Sonnet to the Summer Fae Solstice	54
Tom Daley	55
A Cousin Asks for a Recipe for My Mother's Peach Pie	56
June Nights	58
Defiance	59
Examining a Collage of Tidepool Detritus My Shirttail Cousin Preserved in Plastic	60
Seascape (Cloudy): Gerhard Richter	62
Stephen Barile	64
Summer Solstice - Mono Hot Springs	65
Sean Thomas Lavallies	68
Butter Pecan Summer	69
The Strawberries in Her Hair	70
Let It Be	71

Tricia Knoll	72
The Light Waltz	73
Nights in Late June in Vermont	74
Kylene Melton	75
Funnel Cake	76
Jemma Chawla	77
Plunge	78
Make Your Own Light	79
Vitamin Sea	80
A Different Time	81
Suzanne Cottrell	82
Lazy Summer Day	83
Seashore Blues	84
Oppressive Night Drive	85
Fun Summer Memory	86
Secluded Berries	87
Emily Bradley	88
Cupcake	89
All Those Mothers, Gone	90
Cryptogram	91
Lisa Molina	92
Helios Will Return	93
Solstice Stars and Paradise	95
Wave Loving	97
I Hear the Waves	98
MonHattan Maid	100
Forever Summer	101
Ashley Reynolds	102
Earth Partners	103
Jane Fitzgerald	104
Walking Heads Down	105
Siblings	106
Bay Time	107
The Cottage on the Bluff	108

The background is a watercolor-style illustration. It features a central sunflower with a yellow face and brown outlines, set against a backdrop of soft, blended colors including light blue, purple, and warm yellow-orange. The overall texture is soft and artistic.

SHORT STORIES





Tanya Elizabeth Egeness Epp Schmid

was a Doctor of Oriental Medicine until 2014 when she started a permaculture farm. Her work has appeared or is forthcoming in *Valparaiso Fiction Review*, *Sky Island Journal*, *Canary Literary Magazine*, *Poet's Choice Global Warming Anthology*, *Whistling Shade Literary Magazine*, *Flash Fiction Magazine*, and others. She is a teacher of

Kyudo (Zen archery) and the author of *Tanya's Collection of Zen Stories* (2018). www.tanyaswriting.com

Finding July

Short Story by Tanya E. E. Schmid

Lying on the beach, Tim felt July under his skin for the first time in years. The magma rising from this two-week vacation had melted that drive in his gut which had propelled him through life. His tectonic plates had shifted, and new continents had formed. He would not go back to his old life: the dripping kitchen sink, the turnpike traffic, and old Mrs. Daugherty who never followed his advice and continually reinjured her back. No more patients to pamper. Forget mowing the lawn. Forever July.

A bell went off somewhere in the back of his head, and Tim got up from his towel, sand shifting underneath it. As his eyes adjusted to the sparkles dancing on the lake, he stood like a firewalker in meditation, listening to the water burp and gurgle as it lapped against the wooden dock that led up to his rented cabin. Then he high-kneed it across the hot beach, swept up his tractor-sized black inner tube, and plunged in.

Keeping one arm on the hot tube, he let the rest of himself go underwater, felt the cold hit his scalp like an ice-cream brain freeze, his entire skin prickling. Then he tipped his head back, broke the lake's surface, and pulled himself directly onto the inner tube which was already drifting towards the creek.

It was his daily ritual. After the breakfast buffet at the main lodge, the sun baked him into a half-sleep, his muscles reaching a relaxed state that no amount of exercise or stretching could achieve back in the city. Then came the exhilarating dive and the drift down to the main lake. The two-mile walk back pumped youth into Tim.

The first few days, he'd navigated down the creek and laughed at the mini-rapids like a child playing in the bathtub. After a week, he lay his head back on the curve of the inner tube, his butt hanging through its wet center, and watched the oak canopy ruffling overhead as he passed. Eventually, his lids closed like pulling up a blanket, and he listened to the



Photo by Thomas Zsebok

countryside jungle. No place he had to be, no one to answer to. Thoughts of going back to the tumult of the city tried to disrupt his Eden, but he saved them for August. July was his.

Should he return to his chiropractic practice? Tim had a good reputation, but in the end, he was a name in a search engine. Why work all hours until age crept in to eat him whole in one gulp of retirement? No, this was the life. An ease of the body and mind that he'd forgotten. Vacation. To vacate. *Good-bye responsibilities. Hello me.*

He had left his cell at home and already dreaded the first phone call in August, the one that would break the spell and toss him back into the tedious mechanics of the day-to-



day. Somewhere was a world that needed him, that appealed to his practicality and sense of duty. But this time he had ventured too far from his real life. He would sell everything and live in this tiny cabin, eating every meal at the lodge. He could hold out for years. Then he would hitch-hike cross-country, odd-jobbing his way, rolling with whatever Fate brought him. Totally free.

In the second week, Tim slept later and later, often missing breakfast. He

noticed a shelf of books in the cabin and started a spy novel, amazed at how long it had been since he had read just for the hell of it. After days of books, his eyes ached, so he borrowed five movies from the main lodge, made an enormous amount of popcorn with melted butter, and binge-watched through the night. Tim awoke late afternoon the next day to six empty beer cans and a head full of insulation. *I'm losing it. Losing July.*

He had already tried everything on the dinner buffet, so that evening Tim hovered with his tray clamped under one arm and found that he longed for falafel from the dive on the corner where he lived. When night came, his dreams echoed with tiny voices.

The next morning, Tim returned to his beach protocol, but while drifting down the creek, his hungry mind asked, “What is the meaning of all this?” He had been floating so long that he felt stiff and cold in the inner tube. Something felt off. It was as if he’d poured too much sugar into his lemonade.

The office schedule, knowing what the day would bring, had provided comfort. He missed his pillow, his TV chair, that 6 p.m. inner nod at the day’s accomplishments. He liked that feeling he got when he pulled into his driveway. Home.

When Tim returned to his rental cabin, the wind shifted, and he dashed to close the windows before a sudden gale rattled the door and threw rain against the panes. He remembered sitting on his porch back home with two smiling but apprehensive little girls, one under each arm, huddling close to him as they watched for lightning and counted down to the thunder. He went outside and sat on the cabin’s porch.

The kitchen phone rang and he leapt up, nearly ripping the cabin door from its hinges.

“Hello?”

“Hi Honey!” Her voice was like aloe on sunburn. “Just wanted to let you know we’re back home.”

“Great! How’d it go?”

“The girls had fun swimming in Grandma’s pool.”

A child’s voice shouted, “Daddy! We made pancakes!”

The emptiness he had longed for and finally found was filling again. July returning. “Sure miss my three girls!”

“We miss you, too, Honey. You feeling better? Ready to come home?”

“Absolutely. It’s been great after all that overtime at work, but it’s boring here without you gals.”

“Well, you can always take a time-out again next year.”

“I won’t need one. Next year we can all come here for July.”



About us

Quillkeepers Press, LLC is a small indie press and indie author resource group. We publish themed anthologies on a variety of topics, as well as provide resources and services to indie authors. We pride ourselves on reasonably priced services that include book cover design, book cover formatting, interior design, interior formatting, marketing design, publishing consulting, and an array of editing services. It is a deep passion of ours to help as many writer's voices be heard as possible. As indie artists ourselves we understand most creatives operate within a strict budget. Therefore, it has always been a priority of ours to keep our rates reasonable. Our corporate climate is not one of profit but one of helping bring dreams to fruition. Our motto sums it up best "Reading between the lines, to make your words take flight".

We produce between 3 and 6 anthologies annually. We never charge for artists to be published in our anthologies, although a small reader fee may be associated with our ad space on submittable.com to cover the cost of the ad space, ISBN number registration, copyright fees, as well as other overhead costs. As writers ourselves, we understand how hard the market can be. How challenging it becomes to get work into the hands of a larger audience. Therefore, we accept and encourage our contributors to submit both new and previously published compositions (as long as the previous publisher allows it). Too often, we find publishers who want exclusive rights to the work being published. This is counterproductive if the artist wants their message to be received by as many people as possible. Having been in and studied the industry for years, our founder has concluded that many writers take great pride in their work and produce it for their own healing. Furthermore, they share said work hoping it helps others heal. For all the aforementioned reasons, it is our current policy to ask for non-exclusive rights to our contributors' work versus exclusive rights. In essence, our artists are allowing us to borrow their prized writing, and we are incredibly grateful.

It is also for those same reasons we consider ourselves an indie publishing services company, rather than a traditional publisher. Traditional publishing usually requires an extensive contract and exclusive rights to work and royalties. We rather help wrap

Tan Lines

artist's products into a beautiful package and allow them to set their own parameters, price points, and keep all their royalties from sales.

On a final note, whether you have employed our services or lent us your voice in an anthology, thank you for entrusting us with your craft. If you would like to participate in a forthcoming anthology, please check out our Submittable page at www.submittable.com. For more information on our services, please visit our website www.quillkeeperspress.com

Keep the quill moving,

Stephanie Lamb, Founder, EIC
Quillkeepers Press, LLC

Other Books Produced by Quillkeepers Press, LLC

Soon, A New Day

A rise of the Phoenix themed anthology of essays, memoirs, short stories, and poetry by various artist

Turning Dark into Light and Other Magic Tricks of the Mind

A mental health themed anthology of essays, memoirs, short stories, and poetry by various artists

Rearing in the Rearview

A parenting themed anthology of essays, memoirs, short stories, and poetry by various artists

Verbal Vomit and Other Poetry and Prose

A poetry and prose collection by Stephanie Lamb

Tan Lines