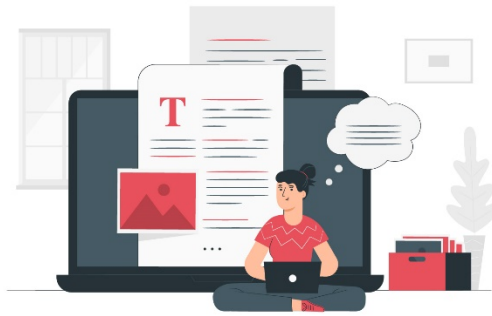


IMPACT FACTOR: 7.86

ISSN 0976 - 8165



# THE CRITERION

AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL IN ENGLISH

12<sup>th</sup> Year of Open Access

Bi-Monthly Refereed and Peer-Reviewed  
Open Access e-Journal

Vol. XII, Issue-2 (April 2021)

Editor-In-Chief : Dr. Vishwanath Bite  
Managing Editor : Dr. Madhuri Bite



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ISSN 2278-9529

Galaxy: International Multidisciplinary Research Journal

[www.galaxyimrj.com](http://www.galaxyimrj.com)

## Blood-Red Rose

John Grey

The blood-red rose  
takes root on the far side,  
where the stream glows  
through the stone arch of the bridge.

And the city boy,  
unseen by beauty,  
lies among the grass and leafage.

That blood-red rose  
seems to feed off its separateness,  
positions itself  
to be someday sacrificed  
but never corrupted.

I'm a mere ditch-flower,  
unlovely,  
opening to the bee's drone,  
not fit to flutter in your shadow,  
making of a buzzing nonentity,  
an accomplice in fealty.