

*Simon Fletcher***Ring***For Natasha Kaur*

While washing dishes after tea
your ring slipped off my soapy finger.

It happened once before.

We laughed.

So, what goes on when those we love,
quite unaccountably,

depart

for stations not on any guide?

Your disappearance knocked me side-
ways,

breathless,

through a fiery hoop

and left me grieving,

dumb,

bereft.

It's hard to name it,

fix the pain,

I know my empty hands miss yours,
my damaged heart now nurses hurt.

You battled with poor health for years,

then angels came,

to lead you off.

I dry the ring,

it slips back on.

Simon Fletcher is a widely-published poet and writer who lives in Shropshire, England. He's manager of the ACE - supported Offa's Press: www.offaspres.co.uk. He's won various prizes and awards and read his poetry on BBC Radio Shropshire and the BBC Asian Network. He MCs the monthly online literature event *Virtual Voices*. Simon's read his poetry in Britain and abroad, including in Pakistan, Norway and Germany. Since 1994 four full collections of poetry have been published. He's also collaborated with Debjani Chatterjee and Basir Sultan Kazmi, as *Mini Mushaira*, on two joint anthologies. He was a literature development officer from 2001-2013, in Wolverhampton Libraries, and set up Offa's Press in 2010 to promote and publish poetry in the West Midlands. His most recent collection, *Close to Home*, Headland, 2015, was described as "beautiful, poignant, joyful poetry." He's recently been a 'poet on loan' in West Midland libraries.