

Under the Bashō

2018

Maretić, Tomislav

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HOKKU](#)

- [Croatia](#)

summer dusk –
passing through the gnats
by the brook

Strange, Debbie

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HOKKU](#)

- [Canada](#)

early thaw
the morning chimes
of waxwings

hoodoo spires . . .
a buck's antlers tinged
with sunset

shell fragments
the chirps of otters
in the dark

Petriccione, Margherita

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HOKKU](#)

- [Italy](#)

deleted spaces
of an ancient fresco --
winter fields

Gatalica, Goran

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HOKKU](#)

- [Croatia](#)

late autumn -
in a flurry of haze
harvest moon

blossoming...
a marble banister
gathers sunlight

Fractled

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HOKKU](#)

late October —
a few leaves scatter
the sun

Kelly, David J

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HOKKU](#)

autumn leaves
here, there, everywhere
colder colours

Hanson, Jeffrey

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HOKKU](#)

- [USA](#)

sunyata...
the year's first leaves
three weeks late

Collins, Lysa

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HOKKU](#)

- [Canada](#)

upland gloom -
the darkness becomes
an elephant

swallows
sweep the leadwood tree -
silence falls

Gulyani, Praniti

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HOKKU](#)

- [India](#)

crack of dawn...
the moon slides off
a fish's fin

shades of dusk...
the darkening orange
of birdsong

dragonfly wings...
just enough space
for a cloud

Webb, Diana

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HOKKU](#)

ground frost —
the distance shimmers
with wings

Murphy, Timothy

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HOKKU](#)

spring lake —
the shimmer of sunlight
in a magpie's blue

yellow aspens . . .
the river water bites
into silence

Joan, Eva

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HOKKU](#)

- [Germany](#)

summerdream -
wingbeat of a butterfly
changes the world

Novak, Veronika Zora

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HOKKU](#)

- [Canada](#)

frozen butterfly . . .
i too know the touch
of winter

deep within —
the melody of a
fallen tree

lending
a coyote its voice —
river of mist

Lohman, Eric

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 22 NOVEMBER 2018

- [USA](#)

sunlight on leaves -
whatever my worries
the trees don't care

Jacobson, Roberta Beach

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 17 NOVEMBER 2018

- [USA](#)

farmers market
at daybreak
- scent of fresh thyme

Hanrahan, Mary

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 17 NOVEMBER 2018

- [USA](#)

midnight ballet
a mule deer bounding
through the meadow

muddy thoughts
the day clings
to my boots

Umeda, Norie

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 17 NOVEMBER 2018

- [Japan](#)

large catch of herring —
the port cat
becomes a mother

sea lettuces
floating on the waves —
nowhere to go

mountain mist
a cicada shell
clings to the fallen tree

blood moon
from dune to dune
the wind

Greer, Laurie

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 17 NOVEMBER 2018

- [USA](#)

crickets
speaking up again—
All Souls' Day

streets
lined with stems...
middle of nowhere

Bialek, Wendy C.

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 17 NOVEMBER 2018

- [USA](#)

he's so controlling
he wants to pick out
her next husband

his temporary
blackout - her years
of terror flashbacks

Barry, Aaron

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 17 NOVEMBER 2018

- [Canada](#)

daisies folding
under their own weight
crescent moon

skipping stones...
the water's ripples
scatter the clouds

the cognac
you told me never to open
rainy day

serenity
an ant relives itself
upon my hand

watching another sunset
from bed...
fusarium wilt

the slitting
of the cat's eye—
lunar eclipse

Gilbert, Mark

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 16 NOVEMBER 2018

- [United Kingdom](#)

reading poetry
all that white space
in the clouds

funeral
the cries of polished shoes
on polished linoleum

April morning
in the dream
I had a daughter

Lange, Jill

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 16 NOVEMBER 2018

- [USA](#)

winter eve—
wind and snow
a slow tango

Kittner, Craig

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 16 NOVEMBER 2018

- [USA](#)

crossing the parking lot
the summer wind carries
a single brown leaf

dogwood blossoms
she rides a skateboard
in office clothes

light turns green
the goose stops
to shake its tail

awoken by wind
a longing to live
in the forest

aglow
in sun-soaked cobwebs
remnants of rain

Mathisen, Nicholas

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 15 NOVEMBER 2018

- [USA](#)

power lines
two old cleats
kick the moon

the deeper we go
the darker it gets
kelp forest

infinity of stars
somewhere a car alarm
starts and stops

bringing home
the bacon scraps
raccoon

McGregor, Marietta

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 15 NOVEMBER 2018

- [Australia](#)

remembering her...
a bowl of beets
left to cool

suitcase rummage
I begin to think about
death cleaning

autumn alone
the steel-grey whistle
of a night train

nautilus moon
along the night beach
cold sand

Domburg-Sancristoforo, Anna Maria

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 15 NOVEMBER 2018

- [The Netherlands](#)

updates -
do I still need
them or you?

golden morning
some leaves refuse
to fall

wandering clouds
my thoughts deep
in my pockets

between us
kisses not yet given -
november moon

a sweet embrace -
the strength
of the autumn sun

Kadric, Elmedin

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 15 NOVEMBER 2018

- [Sweden](#)

dandelion fluff
telling my long-lost sister
the story of us

nothing but
nothing but
spring wind

dawn lake
all it takes
is silence

newborn
the comfort
of warmth

born again
she sings the blues
in red

moonlight
we linger a while
in her private garden

Gorman, LeRoy

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 15 NOVEMBER 2018

- [Canada](#)

fallen leaves
right in & right out
the hospital's revolving door

westerly gusts
a lean boy pumps gas
into a muscle car

heavy fog
I take directions
from departing geese

Christmas coming
the snowmen have smiles
where my grandchildren live

Sondik, Sheila

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 15 NOVEMBER 2018

distant fires
the lurid glow
of our selfies

boulder sculpture
the polished facets
shine back at the sun

heavy-headed
lily stem
afternoon nap

contrapposti
tableaux vivants
airport walkway

Schlaht, Albert

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 15 NOVEMBER 2018

- [USA](#)

old man
snoring in his garden
thunder overhead

Strange, Debbie

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 15 NOVEMBER 2018

- [Canada](#)

soft rain
the lily and I with stars
in our throats

homeless
wet leaves seal the holes
in his boots

out-breath . . .
a sheet of glass falls
from my paddle

rush hour
the quiet helicopters
of maple seeds

rolling thunder
kiss-curls at the base
of your neck

office windows
the mountains will wait
for me

the blue eyes
of African daisies
how I miss you

pond ice
the things we lost
last summer

Stoyanova, Iliyana

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 15 NOVEMBER 2018

- [United Kingdom](#)

cicada songs
last vestiges of summer
on YouTube

autumnal sunset
fifty shades
of sorrow

where two seas meet
the broken V
of wild geese

Maretić, Tomislav

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 15 NOVEMBER 2018

- [Croatia](#)

security camera -
a secret kiss caught
at the grocery store

angler by the bank -
a kingfisher alights
on his rod

fox's voice —
as if the half-moon
burst out laughing

New Year's eve—
loud celebrations echo
among the stars

Cates, Anna

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 14 NOVEMBER 2018

- [USA](#)

hail storm
thrashing the white pine
hour of the monkey

pink lily pads
a stork beaks up
the splash

spring dawn
in a foal's eyes
milky clouds

warm stars
slipping through our fingers
sand and time

a great mountain
washed with rain—
I climb it

Derley, Marie

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 13 NOVEMBER 2018

- [Belgium](#)

end of holidays
in the laundry
socks again

under the magnets
brought back from travel
letters from the bank

doc's waiting room
between the hacking coughs
a dead silence

street cleaner
they don't lift their feet
the three statues

Pillai, Madhuri

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 13 NOVEMBER 2018

- [Australia](#)

pruning roses...
still holding his grin
old garden gnome

Kelly, David J

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 10 NOVEMBER 2018

- [Ireland](#)

crossroads
nothing left
looking anyway

. . . oh
the emptiness
as it filled your mouth

side by side
in a cheap hotel room
phone chargers

Lisica, Mile

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 10 NOVEMBER 2018

- [Bosnia and Herzegovina](#)

the old furniture
on it there are the marks
of dead pets

autumn morning
a nameless hill
in the haze

the round moon
from the evening to morning
look, it is melting

Adeleke, Barnabas I.

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 10 NOVEMBER 2018

- [Nigeria](#)

checking the label
for low saturated fats —
autumn trees

too small for meat . . .
the jogger leaves a snail
to cross the path

a bite
beyond my hand's reach . . .
these mosquitoes

All Saints' Eve —
the Hitler moustache
on a boy's face

Chin, Christina

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 10 NOVEMBER 2018

- [Sarawak](#)

temple alms
a thrush offers
its flute song

high waves
fish price climbs
higher

spring clean
an old box spills over
forgotten desires

Haynes, Tia

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 05 NOVEMBER 2018

wave crests
how he stumbles
through a memory

elderberry wine
the first firefly
in years

bird watching...
I never could remember
our song

setting sun
our conversation becomes
one-sided

butterfly wings
my daughter asks
if I can fly

brushstrokes
I hover
between seasons

Friedenberg, Jay

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 05 NOVEMBER 2018

- [USA](#)

after the fight
a deepening black
between stars

Riverside Park
the constant stream
of small dogs

morning hangover
crumpled party hats
fill the gutter

96th Street subway platform –
someone has stolen
my spot

rainy afternoon
my son plays
with his imaginary friend

Montignot, Marie-Louise

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 05 NOVEMBER 2018

- [France](#)

at the foot of the Eiffel Tower
baby
Eiffel Towers

lift trip
nobody knows what to do
with their eyes

coffee au café
all those lips
on the cup

Wilburt, Elaine

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 04 NOVEMBER 2018

- [USA](#)

an empty bottle --
little boys
smelling of Dad's cologne

Kolodji, Deborah P

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 04 NOVEMBER 2018

- [USA](#)

dried iris
a lie told
out of kindness

we agree
to a cooling off period
limestone cave

evening chill
I forage for a sweater
in Mom's boxed-up clothes

crackle
of beach bonfires
sea salt

hummingbird feeder
the boss bird
in his place

pumpkin smiles
the burning
inside

Laughing Waters

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 04 NOVEMBER 2018

- [USA](#)

the temple bell
counting my heartbeats
in the ripples of lake

winter moon
stays closer to the rooftop
homeless cat

Edden, Maureen

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 04 NOVEMBER 2018

- [USA](#)

eye to eye
with a blackbird
we discuss breakfast

moonlight
on their faces
soft focus

finger painting
on blue jeans
blackberry picking

sipping tea
in cupped hands
her bone china

contemplating
the tip of my nose
a state of zen

Spinelli, Joseph

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 04 NOVEMBER 2018

- [USA](#)

sidewalk ...
a plastic bag
floating in the wind

crowded train—
biting my cuticles
til' they bleed

another day done
sipping cold Whiskey
in worn out clothes

Mutlu, Guliz

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 04 NOVEMBER 2018

grandma's window
all the storms
and rainbows

breast feeding
under the tree
white magnolias

Limbach, Eva

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 03 NOVEMBER 2018

- [Germany](#)

on call duty
the far-away cooing
of wild doves

Moeller-Gaa, Ben

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 03 NOVEMBER 2018

- [USA](#)

noon
the church bell
from another time

sunrise
cream coloring
the coffee coloring the cream

sunrise
in the kitchen . . . the scent
of last night's coffee

twilight
the silence at the end
of the record

Watson, Roger

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 03 NOVEMBER 2018

- [United Kingdom](#)

free newspaper
fake news
comes cheap

war correspondent
anticipating battle
killing time

a crack
of broken twigs
the smell of sap

Nyitrai, Réka

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 03 NOVEMBER 2018

- [Romania](#)

rustling in the grass...
a pigeon becomes
the night

moonlit pond...
a fisherman catching ripples
of her laughter

stillness...
a blackbird joins
the sparrows' chorus

Hopewell, Louise

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 03 NOVEMBER 2018

- [Australia](#)

silver dew
the crisscrossing
of a spider's thread

Moth Creek
water trickles through
light and shadow

dappled sunlight
through the elms
monarch butterfly

skyscrapers vanish
into thick fog
corporate memory

Tanev, Minko

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 03 NOVEMBER 2018

- [Bulgaria](#)

Roman stadium
a procession of seagulls
in the night sky

night streets
shadows are flying
in tunnels of light

frozen horizon
silhouettes in the whirlwind
looking for a slit

Boianova, Stoianka

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 03 NOVEMBER 2018

- [Bulgaria](#)

morning sun ...
shadows of the cactus
sharpen their thorns

Kentikelenis, Panagiotis

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 10 SEPTEMBER 2018

- [Greece](#)

announcer's last call—
saying goodbye
with trembling legs

unsigned—
Santa Claus asked to bring
a mommy back

first bell—
school girls brag about
their summer loves

Dragostinova, Radostina

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 10 SEPTEMBER 2018

- [Bulgaria](#)

morning haze
old fisherman heaves the sun
from the sea

route to the peak
the alternatives
I always miss

Bood, Marshall

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 10 SEPTEMBER 2018

- [Canada](#)

summer afternoon ...
her kids chase jackrabbits
from the yard

hilltop —
lovers squinting
into the sunset

Guliaeva, Irina

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 10 SEPTEMBER 2018

- [Russia](#)

longing for New Year
a star on the top
of the maple-tree

Gallia, Al

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 10 SEPTEMBER 2018

- [USA](#)

a tumbleweed
bounces over the fence...
squealing windmill

a coyote's yipping
echoes in the canyon...
sage fills the night air

the old man
kisses her empty pillow...
tears add to the stain

Sunjaya, Agus Maulana

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 10 SEPTEMBER 2018

- [Indonesia](#)

the edge
of the Zen garden
wild peonies

spring drizzle
my neighbor's kid
running barefoot

sidewalk daffodil
I forget
to remember you

Theriana, Elisa

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 10 SEPTEMBER 2018

- [Indonesia](#)

cracked windows
the moon
we leave behind

collapsing stars
she clings onto
a piece of summer

Hernandez, Mariela

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 04 SEPTEMBER 2018

- [The Netherlands](#)

fishing day
the only catch
a sunburn

empty fish hook
I throw it again
to my floating shadow

Nanjo, Ayana

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 12 AUGUST 2018

- [Japan](#)

mirror reality
i want you to tell a lie
a little

Ibrahim, Nureni

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 12 AUGUST 2018

- [Nigeria](#)

heavy rain
on the road to the farm
the toad and I

village uproar
two stones hit
the flying blackbird

Gatalica, Goran

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 12 AUGUST 2018

- [Croatia](#)

validating solitude -
sudden birdsong vanishes
across the horizon

wisteria in bloom -
the strangers share
their relief

windy calligraphy -
my father's arable crops
follow his words

exhausted migrants -
through the pine trees
dusk passes

autumn burial -
toothed leaves encode
all our silences

purple dreams...
scratching of a pine twig
on my window

Takigawa, Yu

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 01 AUGUST 2018

- [Japan](#)

many times
that girl who has long hair
many times

humid day
because i
cried last night

Minoda, Nanako

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 01 AUGUST 2018

- [Japan](#)

the smell of
fragrant olive
my beautiful childhood

cloudy day —
a pigeon
sings something

Hernandez, Mariela Coromoto

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 14 JULY 2018

Summer rain
all the letters
without an author

Levy, Mark

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 13 JULY 2018

- [USA](#)

old pine
leafless
the distant mountain

farewell
kiss
the salt of her lips

endless
night
the stars have teeth

Pavlinović, Dejan

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 13 JULY 2018

- [Croatia](#)

old fountain
almost within reach of
a blossoming cherry

Bashō's statue
by the Sumida river . . .
the flow of words

in the morning
more numerous than people
Higashi Chaya lanterns

*Higashi Chaya is the historic geisha district of Kanazawa famous for its old tea houses, little streets, museums and restaurants.

up the narrow road
towards Bashō's hut
Buson's grave

*Konpuku-ji is a temple in Kyoto, where Matsuo Basho stayed in the original residence in the 17th century, which was subsequently lost and then later rebuilt in the 18th century by the great painter and haiku poet, Buson. Buson's tomb and the one of his three disciples can be found near the small cottage.

Taylor, Ben

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 13 JULY 2018

- [Australia](#)

summer dusk
a black dog stares
from behind the fence

Sutcliffe, Rachel

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 13 JULY 2018

- [United Kingdom](#)

nightfall
the snow
settling

summer dusk
reading by lamplight
this moth and I

sugar cubes
the scent of horse
in my hand

the steady creak
of the old garden fence
honeysuckle breeze

sudden rain
strangers
share the doorway

Place, Philmore

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 13 JULY 2018

- [Belarus](#)

a photo from home
emptiness in that place
where the cherry was

Shires, Nancy

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 13 JULY 2018

- [USA](#)

daybreak ...
gulls on the beach
still half asleep

Whitehead, Lucy

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 14 JUNE 2018

- [United Kingdom](#)

halfway up the stone steps
a toad and I meet
in the moonlight

old postcard
when our friendship
was young

family album
four variations
of the same smile

Gholami, Vali

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 14 JUNE 2018

- [Iran](#)

moving into the fog
the robin takes away
the little sun

a country road
under a leafless tree
two tramps

Fractled

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 14 JUNE 2018

- [USA](#)

Spring cleaning...
the stain of memories
I fail to remove

the struggle
of what blooms...
April snow

Winter moonset —
the light of day in full
just before dawn

more ripples —
a migration of fish
as the rain stops

young orphans
and human traffickers...
Mother's Day

record heat...
people wearing shorts
this late Winter

Bre

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 14 JUNE 2018

warm sun
the child in the grass
smiles at me

Benson, Jan

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 14 JUNE 2018

- [USA](#)

pulling corn silk
under starlight
a single firefly

first blossoms
float upon clouds
old pond

Singha, Sudebi

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 09 JUNE 2018

- [India](#)

candle march
each flicker carries
the dark

snowflakes
he seeks his
twin brother

clear sky
kite's threads hang
from a bare branch

Dodwell, Fiona Russell

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 09 JUNE 2018

glistening river
the children listen
for the trout

rain drops on water
my mother searches
for words

new leaves
still trying to please
my father

sleepless night
the flooded river
spills mist

Sunjaya, Agus Maulana

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 09 JUNE 2018

- [Indonesia](#)

between skyscrapers
under the slanted sunlight
cherry blossom

briefly briefly
the signs of spring
a yellow butterfly

solemn hours
my mom reciting
the holy verses

fungus
all over a decayed wood
circle of life

Joan, Eva

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 09 JUNE 2018

- [Germany](#)

only a thin thread
against the beeping silence -
his breath

all night long
fighting against dragons
no escape

another summer -
still waiting for you
to come around

Ganni, Gowtham

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 09 JUNE 2018

- [India](#)

tiring day –
i capture the whole fort
in my camera

mountain peak
i find
no moon

sunny day —
people busy
chasing shadows

between two hills
a cloud
turning into night

not spring yet
a cockerel crows
away my dream

Shea, Pegi Deitz

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 09 JUNE 2018

- [USA](#)

November rain
chipmunks sipping
acorn caps

catalpa pods clapping
thanks
to the wind

Naskova, Elena

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 01 JUNE 2018

missed exit...
rushing cars disappear
into the fallen cloud

this hope in me
a boat filling up
with rainwater

April fools day...
the war on lies lost
in translation

Rush-hour traffic
the homeless encampment
lit up by brake lights

Gilfillan, Mark

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 01 JUNE 2018

- [United Kingdom](#)

night train
the brief lives of others
come and gone

dark room
trapped in the camera
the five lost haiku

back home
the reassuring rumble
of the kettle

Das, Basant Kumar

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 31 MAY 2018

- [India](#)

wrong train
every passing station
my destination

children at play
paper birds slip through
the open door

Grankin, Nikolay

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 18 MAY 2018

- [Russia](#)

frosty morning
a piece of butter clings to
the hot toast

quiet melody
above a satellite antenna
the moon

Agyei-Baah, Adjei

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 28 APRIL 2018

- [Ghana](#)

morning mosaic
the splash droppings
of rafter birds

behind the beaver's bridge
a floating moon
b a r r e d

morning rush...
in the lead car's back window
a zoo of toys

village abattoir—
vultures arriving early
before the kill

noon heat
the blacksmith
making fireflies

Buddha
his shoulder pad
of snow

Davidson, Kari

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 08 APRIL 2018

- [USA](#)

rabbit tracks
through an old patch of snow-
spring moon

the wind
outside
inside
the teapot

border patrol siren—
a strand of rosary beads
falls into dust

passing travelers—
the evening sunlight
in their wine

Gardiner, Tim

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 08 APRIL 2018

- [United Kingdom](#)

empty tomb
the footprints of those
who came before

Murphy, Timothy

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 08 APRIL 2018

- [Spain](#)

putting stale bread
in the trash
winter deepens

metropolitan rain
a man starts dancing
in the café

melting snow
the fire temple
of the mind

heat haze
a piece of yellow chalk
falls to the floor

Narain, Ashish

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 08 APRIL 2018

- [India](#)

memories...
the sea bled
twice today

first prayer...
a cuckoo sings
in the dark

Darjeeling tea...
birdsong fills the garden
with quiet

jungle safari-
a pile of poo
excites the guide

Antonio, Billy

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 08 APRIL 2018

- [The Philippines](#)

village well
a chorus
of washboards

washing the car
with my kids
sudden rain

daffodils
my daughter's new dress
in the breeze

Espenmiller, Lisa

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 08 APRIL 2018

- [USA](#)

closing a window
against the neighbors -
sharp moon

Griffo, Eufemia

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 08 APRIL 2018

- [Italy](#)

moon eclipse
so brief
the life of a moth

spring equinox
the smell of snow
disappearing

knotted branches
the forgotten nest
of a heron

cold wind
the loneliness
of fallen leaves

Parashar, Vandana

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 08 APRIL 2018

- [India](#)

receding waves
I become shorter
inch by inch

blooming bud
the noiseless popping
of a dream

Wordsworth fan
daffodils flutter in breeze
on her grave

fading skyline...
the kite brings home
the night

rain falls
equally on everything
... wildflowers

dandelion
the time it takes for life
to turn around

Jay, Bee

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 28 MARCH 2018

- [Australia](#)

my bad temper—
wind rips blossoms
from the tree

cold shoulder
frost sparkles on a blade
of grass

hospice
a final leaf trembles
on the oak

bare trees
at the orphanage
dead end road

a shadow
slides into shadows
sudden chill

he cannot recall
his mother's face
tangled seaweed

Hanson, Jeffrey

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 28 MARCH 2018

- [USA](#)

morning moon
a skein of geese
rises higher

gentle rain
the lilac blooms
are gone

snowfall
becoming the sky
a distant hill

tree tops
her memory
never leaves

Geyer, Pat

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 27 MARCH 2018

- [USA](#)

now and then
thrush raises her head
winter rain

closer to the sun
the sound of dry leaves
crunches underfoot

ticks and tocks
resound through the night
dawn explodes

Mekala, Indra Neil

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 27 MARCH 2018

- [India](#)

old age home –
a pill for everything
but loneliness

old books sale
beating me to the top shelf
a silverfish

mourning –
the loudness
of a ticking clock

free period . . .
even the blackboard
screeches

Buddha's half-smile
for a moment I forget
the moment

Hiroshima Day –
flying across the globe
our paper cranes

home after holidays
the doorknob shimmers
with a cobweb

cumulus clouds
shimmering through the window
the airplane's wing

Hanson, Simon

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 27 MARCH 2018

- [Australia](#)

tinkles of ice
the things memory
attaches too

church visit
Mary's face brightens
to another candle

star gazing
deep space
looking back at us

Bongcaron, Willie R.

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 27 MARCH 2018

- [The Philippines](#)

brown grass
clinging to my bones
the heat of the sun

cool sunset...
voices that ride
the city breeze

coming out
of each bud...
spring

my heart
longs for home...
tumbleweed

open fire...
being homeless
in the freezing cold

mother's hug
forgetting my rough
and tumble days

Asprea, Pasquale

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 27 MARCH 2018

- [Italy](#)

rain at dusk
from the neighbor's flat
the sound of a blender

Bellini, Marina

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 27 MARCH 2018

- [Italy](#)

election results
the nearby church
sounds the death knell

news shared online
the abuse of
emoticon hearts

Flanagan, Michael

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 26 MARCH 2018

- [USA](#)

sometimes late at night...
I must pause to console
the child deep inside

October dawn
a prayer for skill and deer
sipping schnapps

evicted—homeless
three months, six days in a truck...
yet now we laugh

Collins, Lysa

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 26 MARCH 2018

broken pot
by the well
a scold of shrikes

clothes hang abandoned
winds through the wall
blow skeleton seed

desert night —
crosswind
and a creaking in the dunes

Cariello, Matthew M.

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 26 MARCH 2018

- [USA](#)

my winter family
stink bugs
in the rafters

this snow or the last?
my father forgets
my name

my hair half white
not even thick enough
for a louse

why don't pigeons
perch in trees?
bitter rain

McDonald, Connor

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 26 MARCH 2018

- [USA](#)

lunch reading
a tangerine
difficult to peel

an acorn husk
my breath
in front of me

cracked eggshells
morning pain
behind the eyes

the distance
between two daffodils
a cold spring

the thought
of thinking aloud
spring haircut

Petriccione, Margherita

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 23 MARCH 2018

- [Italy](#)

in each phrase
the name of her son-
cicada shell

plic ploc _
a tap drips
the infinity

salami sandwich -
the boar's footsteps
scented with moss

Davis, Pat

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 23 MARCH 2018

- [USA](#)

tower bell
only the kids look up
to hear it

slap of a beaver's tail
I wake into his
morning

catching words
in this windy day
a poem comes and goes

Polette, Keith

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 23 MARCH 2018

- [USA](#)

above the timberline—
callused hands
swinging the axe

december morning—
the church bell
shattering the cold

moonless night
too dark to read
my thoughts

Sambangi, Srinivasa Rao

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 23 MARCH 2018

- [India](#)

ancient temple
a fresco on the wall
stretching back

deep inhale
deep exhale
balloon vendor's yoga

retirement gift
the choice of
a pair of shoes

stray dog's bark
landlord and the beggar
respond the way they know

Cardillo, Lucia

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 22 MARCH 2018

- [Italy](#)

closed umbrella ...
a slice of moon
on the sidewalk

ombrello chiuso ...
una fetta di luna
sul marciapiede

mist...
her eyes look without
seeing me anymore

cala la nebbia ...
i suoi occhi mi fissano
senza vedermi

edge of day...
the stars light up
one by one

fine del giorno ...
s'accendono le stelle
ad una ad una

Rehling, Michael

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 22 MARCH 2018

running
high hurdles backwards
a day moon trips me up

reflecting
on itself
n o o n

a slow moving shadow
hawk
on a thermal

an old hippie
returns to his roots
the beat of an old drum

life lessons
the dizzying way
a cherry blossom flutters

fog
i leave myself behind
at the tall pine

winter storm
the stubborn leaves
on the oak

every symphony meets my ear
through
silence

Gunasekaran, Elancharan

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 22 MARCH 2018

- [Singapore](#)

at the machine
sewing pieces of her youth -
good old days

Gulyani, Praniti

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 15 MARCH 2018

- [India](#)

shifting house...
mother wraps Buddha
in my ragdoll's blanket

dolphin show...
dad tries putting a hoop
around my nose

winter pond...
a chameleon's tail curls
around a cloud

Albadrani, Abdulqadir

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 15 MARCH 2018

- [Iraq](#)

by the river
whats left of an old house
an open window

Domburg-Sancristoforo, Anna Maria

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 14 MARCH 2018

- [The Netherlands](#)

inside the night
the buzz of words
in my head

past midnight -
the silence
between two dreams

after the beep -
I listen to your voice
again and again

Giordano, Angela

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 14 MARCH 2018

- [Italy](#)

olive fields-
the tents of migrants
under the snow

cold polar-
blanket of cardboard
of the beggar

oriental spices-
inside the old bazaar
I find a bit of home

in the suitcase
the smells of the earth-
a long journey

Voicu, Steliana Cristina

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 14 MARCH 2018

- [Romania](#)

blue ball dress –
his eyes
a sky full of stars

insomnia –
in every falling sakura
a song about April

white tea –
the scent of your shirt
in the morning

long-lasting meteor...
the cappuccino taste
of your kiss

care ritual at the mirror –
the wind undresses
the chestnut tree

Taylor, Christine

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 14 MARCH 2018

- [USA](#)

rose petals
quiver through the storm
summer blood

freezing river
the water rolls right
off the duck's back

budding dogwood
the sun rises
a little earlier

frayed basketball net
in my neighbor's backyard
early sunset

black & white photograph:
my mother's smile
mine

Musunuri, Somayajulu

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 09 MARCH 2018

- [India](#)

heavy rains
streets drown the voyage
of paper boats

Ruitta, Andrew

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 09 MARCH 2018

- [USA](#)

village churchyard
she now wears the clouds
for a wig

lilacs on the breeze . . .
you just never see
a pigeon smile

crows
the dead suddenly
more dead

dandelion wine
this heart
and its orgies

new love
plum juice runs
into the cracks

Rabang, Anthony Q.

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 06 MARCH 2018

- [The Philippines](#)

this kid reminds me
of a childhood dream
old family photos

sparkling eyes
the inability of mine
to mirror yours

blinking lights
houseflies dance
over a ham

Edden, Maureen

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 06 MARCH 2018

- [United Kingdom](#)

war zone
dark consequences
of poison gas

garden bonfire
the scent of autumn
in my hair

beneath the hedge
under a primrose
a slug

wild garlic
scents the woodland path
dinnertime

midnight chimes—
snow erases
yesterday's footprints

(in collaboration with Suraja M Roychowdhury)

old year departs
on a tide of trouble—
Brexit rings in

Prah, Justice Joseph

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 06 MARCH 2018

- [Ghana](#)

moon trapping
my daughter widens
the puddle size

moonlight
in a sleeping child's palm
stolen coin

Golban, Florin

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - MODERN HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 06 MARCH 2018

- [Romania](#)

cer înnorat –
cocoșul îngână
același cântec

cloudy sky -
the cock crows
the same song

Bonsai Journal, Issue 1

înspre amurg -
umbra pădurii
traversând râul

towards dusk -
the forest's shade
crossing the river

rafale de vânt -
umbra salcâmului
lovind fereastra

gusts of wind -
a shadow of acacia
hits the window

(tr. from Romanian)

ziua recoltei -
hambarul
plin cu speranțe

harvest day -
a barn
full of hope

(tr. from Romanian)

Lange, Jill

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 16 NOVEMBER 2018

- [USA](#)

the fluffy cat who never talks freely sheds his fur everywhere

fire this time the devil denies

Imperial, Alegria

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 16 NOVEMBER 2018

- [USA](#)

my eyes on foliage-d sky withering at zenith

river-crossing a breeze wipes off my fate line

mom's nestled cheek in a boy's breast my lover's roost

a fissured boulder at sunset could be me

night's gritty breath a sky I can't find

Jacobson, Roberta Beach

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 15 NOVEMBER 2018

evening stars totally out of control

Stoyanova, Iliyana

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 14 NOVEMBER 2018

a howl of sirens in waves of snowflakes

shadows long upon your face winter moon

lakshmi v

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 14 NOVEMBER 2018

my umbrella seems to justify it's creation

Higgins, Ed

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 12 NOVEMBER 2018

years later ghosts enter the moonlight's slant

winter's crop of steady snow filling the garden

Whitley, Philip

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 07 NOVEMBER 2018

at her touch the river points upstream

the fencepost a function of its square root

Whitmire, Bob

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 07 NOVEMBER 2018

finding its way out of me my father's laugh

diner counter elbow room comes and goes

Klacsanzky, Nicholas

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 05 NOVEMBER 2018

- [Ukraine](#)

subway chill friends that become strangers

pitch dark imagining i'm the forest

dawn meditation the fridge and I hum

cursive sway of the falling camellia blossom

independence square piano music in the cracks

Nickels-Wisdom, Michael

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 04 NOVEMBER 2018

- [USA](#)

the dream forest at the bottom of the lake fading

felt thoughtfully felt veldt feelingly thought thought

guarded language testing the doorknobs of words

in reality an analogy that never breaks down

the more massive the number of bodies the deeper the gravity well

one neuron to another who can you talk to

a red crab eats everything and a blue crab eats its own

the search for the hydrant missing in the desert

a spiral staircase lying on its side where all the weirdness comes from

whale unaccompanied cello

Cygan, Amy

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 04 NOVEMBER 2018

trains zipping unzipping the landscape winter coats

Cates, Anna

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 04 NOVEMBER 2018

church pot luck devotees digest dogma

cloud patterns lacking purpose pigweed

Angel, Kelly Sauvage

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 03 NOVEMBER 2018

vanishing point my own shadow foreshortened

lake breeze no reason to resist the night chimes

Kelly, David J.

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 09 OCTOBER 2018

- [United Kingdom](#)

cheeky monkey fist not on your nelly

leap second the further sound of water

Buckingham, Helen

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 05 OCTOBER 2018

pre-dawn griffins morph into swans

fireflies before the mountain oranges at their peak

thunder for strawberries our bolting love

neolithic site speeds back into view

whose turn to change our perpetual calendar

Kentikelenis, Panagiotis

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 01 OCTOBER 2018

- [Greece](#)

park bench all his food already chewed by someone

smell of soup she waits in clothes just found

coldest night the brothel's door half-open

as if dreaming the cocoon shakes to give birth

unpacking some of her hair brought along

endless rain the few whores die for eye contact

Gilbert, Mark

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 27 SEPTEMBER 2018

- [United Kingdom](#)

on the window a housefly dreaming of dirt

bullet points counting on fingers and thumbs

muzak killing time

she talks on and on about the weather the beat of central heating in the background

Guliaeva, Irina

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 15 SEPTEMBER 2018

- [Russia](#)

leaf-fall I have no time to read all of you

sunset horizon stitch after surgery

crawls out of the frame silly moon

arithmetic my son always mentions infinity

Smith, Robin Anna

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 12 SEPTEMBER 2018

- [USA](#)

a field of daisies growing from my pain

the fisherman's line crossing the event horizon

Moffett, Matthew J.

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 23 AUGUST 2018

- [USA](#)

not the moon the insomniac's middle finger

trampoline body weight measured in birdsong

where the hummingbird was a snapshot of sky

dead leaves rustling all the old cliches awake

another school shooting the breeze barely sways a patch of narcissi

morning moon through the looking glass of vodka

leafless and ivy's still dream of tomorrow

white paint still tacky her last last cigarette

Scully, Ronald

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 21 AUGUST 2018

- [USA](#)

the last leaf leaves the tree the last time

Maris, Anna

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 06 AUGUST 2018

- [Sweden](#)

don't even go there wild blackberries

grey skkkies the weak liiinnnes conneccting us

he doesn't believe me ant-eater

between this searing heat and the sky my lifespan

drowning slowly the sound as we walk

Gatalica, Goran

CATEGORY: UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU

PUBLISHED: 02 AUGUST 2018

above us stormy sky glistening body of tea pickers

Igehara, Miki

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 26 JULY 2018

a firefly in your hand your future small

the head from the horizon starts new life

Kashiyama, Megumi

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 25 JULY 2018

a white rabbit eats our dark dream

Nyitrai, Réka

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 13 JULY 2018

- [Romania](#)

high noon the black dahlia leans toward the scissors

white wind new pet-name for a stranger

Tower of Babel quivering feather on her nipples

Kadric, Elmedin

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 20 JUNE 2018

- [Sweden](#)

oar history with an or

dug well articulated

a fire from now on now on

atone the day it caws to crows

morning after the lakeside foliage of a mother

planting one less star the sea lacks

not only the concept of an old man in the mirror

a lot of holding after a shadow flares into flesh

too late never is what it pretends to be

God not another staring contest

Padhy, Pravat Kumar

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 11 JUNE 2018

- [India](#)

what reasons for the trees aggressive wind

trash bag the remaining chapter of my war history book

McDonald, Connor

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 05 JUNE 2018

pain of bright in the dark white streetlight

Gershwin sounds the city skitters on pugnacious streets

she stares through her blues oil on canvas

Chopin / Mazurka no. 13 morning fluttering flesh bumps

Golban, Florin

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 29 MAY 2018

- [Romania](#)

shadow of acacia stamping the road

climbing on the roof the lilac branches punching the moon

Ganni, Gowtham

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 26 MAY 2018

- [India](#)

sunrise and I the curtain

Shires, Nancy

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 24 MAY 2018

face to face with the sunflower eyeful tower

Narain, Ashish

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 17 MAY 2018

- [India](#)

wind pines wet with mist speak

slowing down time in circles snow

ready to let go maple leaves tinsel town

Toft, Stephen

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 17 MAY 2018

- [United Kingdom](#)

winter my son sleeps in a bear suit

tonight she says my hair needs moonlight

full of milk my ghost brother

still half-asleep i thank the ATM

between the ribs a whale a winter star

old sailor carving songs from the wind

as my wife sleeps i wrestle a rainbow

Shankar, Shloka

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 16 MAY 2018

- [India](#)

erecting landmarks in the field of why

unsolving 'x' i kill my darlings

psychoanalyzing a comma on the dark side

magnum opus and yet and yet

heart sutra untying the fabric of my universe

only as a matter of fact winter sunrise

loopholes the steel in your spine

(Note: A found haiku remixed from Trump's State of the Union address)

Fractled

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 16 MAY 2018

stillness what's unnoticeable starts to thaw

focal point a microbe blocks my vision

acid test I pass through reality with flying colors

tree bend I suddenly straighten my posture

Szeglowski, Lech

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 14 MAY 2018

- [Poland](#)

moon slivered into a piece of language

Cooper, Bill

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 10 MAY 2018

- [USA](#)

pear blossom thawing to the beat of wrensong

young inmate reupholstering a library window seat

trombone smile in a hoarse voice *widdly roo de waz*

midnight dock wind the melody of lobster pots

Salzer, Jacob

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 08 MAY 2018

- [USA](#)

finding one in the many sunflowers

Benson, Jan

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 06 MAY 2018

- [USA](#)

milking honeysuckle downpour

Parashar, Vandana

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 01 MAY 2018

- [India](#)

blue moon for whom the waves roar

Antonio, Billy

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 30 APRIL 2018

- [The Philippines](#)

the tightness of her obi fixed marriage

Grankin, Nikolay

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 27 APRIL 2018

- [Russia](#)

a cloud flies through summer noon

from "C" to "B" the man's fingers on the cello

Webb, Diana

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 25 APRIL 2018

- [United Kingdom](#)

catch up one step back a snail's glisten

Murphy, Timothy

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 13 APRIL 2018

drift logic waxing city moon

slowly into the side of the cliff green stars

out of thin urban projection crossfire an old heteronym

first day of spring body halt

the divine within invisible inkwell seas

waning moon ghost of bluebells past

going wherever the free jazz takes the marshmallow moon

magnetic west getting into the ritual

fire writing automatically on fields of blue names

spring breeze the graffiti spreads to the south

Kolodji, Deborah P

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 13 APRIL 2018

cats in love we're complicated

our priorities mismatched Tupperware

last petal on the daisy coin toss

Petriccione, Margherita

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 12 APRIL 2018

crescent moon sharpened blade of a look

McGregor, Marietta

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 08 APRIL 2018

- [Australia](#)

full moon rising and your pallor still painful

boulders into thaw the worn-away ones/eons

beach pebbles a plover suddenly

another grey-weary day somewhere dogs growl

Gardiner, Tim

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 07 APRIL 2018

living in the past white dwarf

the one that got away snowdrift

Mary Rose we cannot recreate the past

Limbach, Eva

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 07 APRIL 2018

piercing cold yesterday's angels on sale

private way and yet snowfall

full contact the ruthlessness of spring

unfriended I switch into airplane mode

Sambangi, Srinivasa Rao

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 03 APRIL 2018

spring mist the rose he picks half rose

fills each step i leave full moon

in my name at eighty a piece of land

beachside business meet a sea of clouds

in the dying world a chickadee dee dee dee...

Singha, Sudebi

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 01 APRIL 2018

- [India](#)

dragonfly pauses on its shadow

nightfall the gull enters into

Kumar, Basanta Das

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 28 MARCH 2018

- [India](#)

midnight train tales never cease to emerge from

no clouds sky the moon in slow motion

Novak, Veronika Zora

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 28 MARCH 2018

- [Canada](#)

screaming in silence full moon

reinventing the sound of sky starlings

hung in a Jesus Christ pose scarecrow

Polette, Keith

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 24 MARCH 2018

- [USA](#)

the flower nourished on nothing but yes

starting to play in the key of see

i being the third person in your first person point of view

no ravens for weeks the porch light on

words ending white sounds the chrysanthemum

butterfly a quantum mechanic in flight

starlings wheeling straight out of the seventeenth century

sky blackening the crow on the tip of the tongue

barking with dogs all night horse in the morning

deaf leaf trees bark roots rot

Agyei-Baah, Adjei

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 20 MARCH 2018

- [Ghana](#)

shadows emerging out of silhouette summer shade

rain after rain the rhythm I locked myself in

the road not taken thin ice

Asprea, Pasquale

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 18 MARCH 2018

- [Italy](#)

leaflets on the wild rose sparrow

do not listen I speak, I speak, winter sunset

Bellini, Marina

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 18 MARCH 2018

- [Italy](#)

clouds gather the solitude of the lightning

Gulyani, Praniti

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 15 MARCH 2018

- [India](#)

long journey he promises two raindrops

Cariello, Matthew

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 11 MARCH 2018

- [USA](#)

blackbird lilac forgive my confusion

half-moon half-no-moon raspberry blossoms

noon whistle this is not my life

Hanson, Simon

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 09 MARCH 2018

- [Australia](#)

post op bright clatter of synaesthesia

starting to roll floor tiles edged in fluoro

hypnagogia jade statues veiled in mist

dew point black sky glitter domes

mattermindtimespace one two three or four words

Read, Dave

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 09 MARCH 2018

- [Canada](#)

swallowed by a river of ice ageing

fearing the space I can't maintain my breath

lights on all over the house fly

a river bends my thoughts in the woods

pausing a moment in traffic traffic

a shadow drifts into the dead headlight rabbit

Sutcliffe, Rachel

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - ONE-LINE HAIKU](#)

PUBLISHED: 08 MARCH 2018

- [United Kingdom](#)

sheeting rain the outstretched snail

rippling through ripple after ripple sun on the stream

still childless playtime in the park

Lohman, Eric

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - KU](#)

PUBLISHED: 22 NOVEMBER 2018

- [USA](#)

communion wafer
such a thin hope

packing for home
I leave room
for the last sunrise

Kelly, David J.

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - KU](#)

PUBLISHED: 17 OCTOBER 2018

- [United Kingdom](#)

Christmas pudding
flambéed to oblivion
the archangel's share

soft hair
for information loss
a conditioner

Gilbert, Mark

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - KU](#)

PUBLISHED: 09 OCTOBER 2018

- [United Kingdom](#)

dull fish eye on ice

wasp in circles every orifice

where the light can't reach the mandrill's rear

carefully removing the mackerel's backbone after death

today's tablets
the Thirty-Six Views
of Mount Fuji

Buckingham, Helen

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - KU](#)

PUBLISHED: 05 OCTOBER 2018

world
breaking
NSEW

Windrush
blood on
vellum

KEEP OFF HE ASS
...nettles ambush ours

cow shits crow
crow flees my organic
field of vision

shared frozen squat
Cottage Pie for One

cactus.
alone
again

para pe t
s

buttons
cinders
no panto

unblinking star
satellite
viewing

operating theatre
a hazy murmuration
from the wings

Kentikelenis, Panagiotis

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - KU](#)

PUBLISHED: 27 SEPTEMBER 2018

- [Greece](#)

alone at the park—
familiar magpie
faces

piss on the bed—
grandpa begs
to help him die

no photo—
searching for her son
in broken English

Sambangi, Srinivasa Rao

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - KU](#)

PUBLISHED: 10 SEPTEMBER 2018

- [India](#)

crown chakra
the surface begins
to open up

now
the voice
a moth in the fire

her shining red frock
till I see
the shadow

Copeland, Seth

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - KU](#)

PUBLISHED: 05 SEPTEMBER 2018

- [USA](#)

choked with stone
prairie verbena grips wind
chancing

a longspur licks a ladybug from the flowers

read rimbaud at last
violets filled my mouth
lush

bum wine pints mock the jesus on grandma's wall

plains dusk / water stargrass

wreathes dead fish
still

off bank a grasp of sneezeweed shudders & bows

thumb the gideon's
all hotels smell this way
weary

dogs rut on the hot chat, burn paws & stomachs

Nyitrai, Réka

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - KU](#)

PUBLISHED: 04 SEPTEMBER 2018

- [Romania](#)

accepting the scissors -
the sigh of the red rose

Read, Dave

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - KU](#)

PUBLISHED: 01 SEPTEMBER 2018

- [Canada](#)

the facts I alternate between satellites

spring dreams ...
last year's butterflies
sewn into her eyelids

ants tend
to the hole in the hill
with more ants!

she finds the light switch off my enemies

a distant galaxy ...
I gather my yardstick
and will to work late

shrinking space
the elevator drops
my call

McGregor, Marietta

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - KU](#)

PUBLISHED: 21 AUGUST 2018

- [Australia](#)

in the hill
the hill is
the hill

around an ant
a halo
of ants

not-village
where the earth
builds tombs

Shankar, Shloka

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - KU](#)

PUBLISHED: 18 AUGUST 2018

- [India](#)

old doorways —
the nerve palaces
of midnight

pulling sins out of a dreamer conscience

self-referential this late monsoon rain

Agyei-Baah, Adjei

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - KU](#)

PUBLISHED: 12 AUGUST 2018

- [Ghana](#)

waking up
from a beer booze —
this pee without end

my delight
in his drunken state
pocket coins for candy

the boldness
to dare God in his sanctuary
chewing gum & blasting balloons

McDonald, Connor

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - KU](#)

PUBLISHED: 01 AUGUST 2018

- [USA](#)

to a side street
bit of shade
infused / taste
of mint

and women rush past
emaciated & tanned
torsos of old men

high on Church street
a soul stares at Christ
on the boxing gym sign

Gatalica, Goran

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - KU](#)

PUBLISHED: 24 JULY 2018

end of career -
she lost her shoes
over night

Benson, Jan

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - KU](#)

PUBLISHED: 24 JULY 2018

- [USA](#)

defensive dating
unspooling avatars again
and again

Petriccione, Margherita

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - KU](#)

PUBLISHED: 31 MAY 2018

- [Italy](#)

rosemary...
the mechanical shovel
flattens the dunes

commuter's train -
awakening
of a dirty periphery

Nadkarni, Gautam

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - KU](#)

PUBLISHED: 22 MAY 2018

honeymoon
he decides not to mention
the dark side

divorce notice----
the astrologer checks
his math

Gulyani, Praniti

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - KU](#)

PUBLISHED: 22 MAY 2018

homecoming...
I check father's pockets
for raindrops

temple window...
an untouchable wonders if
he can touch the raindrops

Fractled

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - KU](#)

PUBLISHED: 20 MAY 2018

paper trail the name i carve on a tree

office window
the banging of heads
as swallows fall

oO ring clouds Oo
halos over the heads
at a vape shop

dark matter
more reasons to fund
the unseen

sandhill cranes
as if I was the cause
of the traffic

Joan, Eva

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - KU](#)

PUBLISHED: 08 MAY 2018

- [Germany](#)

far behind me
your stainless steel voice
rustproof

Christmas bakery -
the scales sighs devotedly
in advance

Grankin, Nikolay

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - KU](#)

PUBLISHED: 06 MAY 2018

flea market
a bunch of books and a sleeping cat
the same length

shutters
sunlight on the table
cutting into strips

Murphy, Timothy

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - KU](#)

PUBLISHED: 04 APRIL 2018

river argument hard to not tell the sky

hooded valley carving the beginning sound

flexible work stations of the cross

felt stone tip of the iceberg

somewhere on the princess continuum an explosion

Hemmings, Kyle

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - KU](#)

PUBLISHED: 25 MARCH 2018

- [USA](#)

a warhorse shadows my failing to wake up

the child princess pulls ruined leaves from shade

invisible monster i can't catch the sky w/ my mouth

sleight-of-hand you keep dying in my bed

which ringo can play with bound hands

the blind princess traps me in see-through palms

her arctic love tricks of failed porpoises

her diary a collage of upside down uncles

Polette, Keith

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - KU](#)

PUBLISHED: 25 MARCH 2018

- [USA](#)

one bowl empty a jowl just short of sartre

rabidly dogged frothing towards subtraction

a sinister pariah left a left handed drum beater

on trial
capital letter
stabbing joseph k
in the i

Bellini, Marina

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - KU](#)

PUBLISHED: 18 MARCH 2018

- [Italy](#)

dinner's ready
the call center guy offers
a worthless fab discount

gala dinner
the fight between etiquette
and chopsticks

Toft, Stephen

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - KU](#)

PUBLISHED: 14 MARCH 2018

- [United Kingdom](#)

dUSt

desert mathematician arms
outstretched

winter architect i buy his silence

after the frog
i dissect
an earthquake

Guliaeva, Irina

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - VISUAL HAIKU](#)

- [Russia](#)

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Bialek, Wendy C.

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - VISUAL HAIKU](#)

- [USA](#)

SHATTER / D!
- I / -
\ I
I I - I - /

Gorman, LeRoy

CATEGORY: **UTB 2018 - VISUAL HAIKU**

- Canada

my
side
of
the
bed
and
wanting
more

Kelly, David J

CATEGORY: **UTB 2018 - VISUAL HAIKU**

- Ireland

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wind^tshield
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Gargiulo, Marita

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - VISUAL HAIKU](#)

- **USA**

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things better left
unsaid

Fractled

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - VISUAL HAIKU](#)

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Allen, Diane

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - VISUAL HAIKU](#)

- [USA](#)

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my
desire
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w
n
i
n
g

Mekala, Indra Neil

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - VISUAL HAIKU](#)

- [India](#)

my breaths slowly taking shape
son's birthday

I lost and found

misspronouncing . . .
the gap in his milk teeth

Asprea, Pasquale

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - VISUAL HAIKU](#)

- Italy

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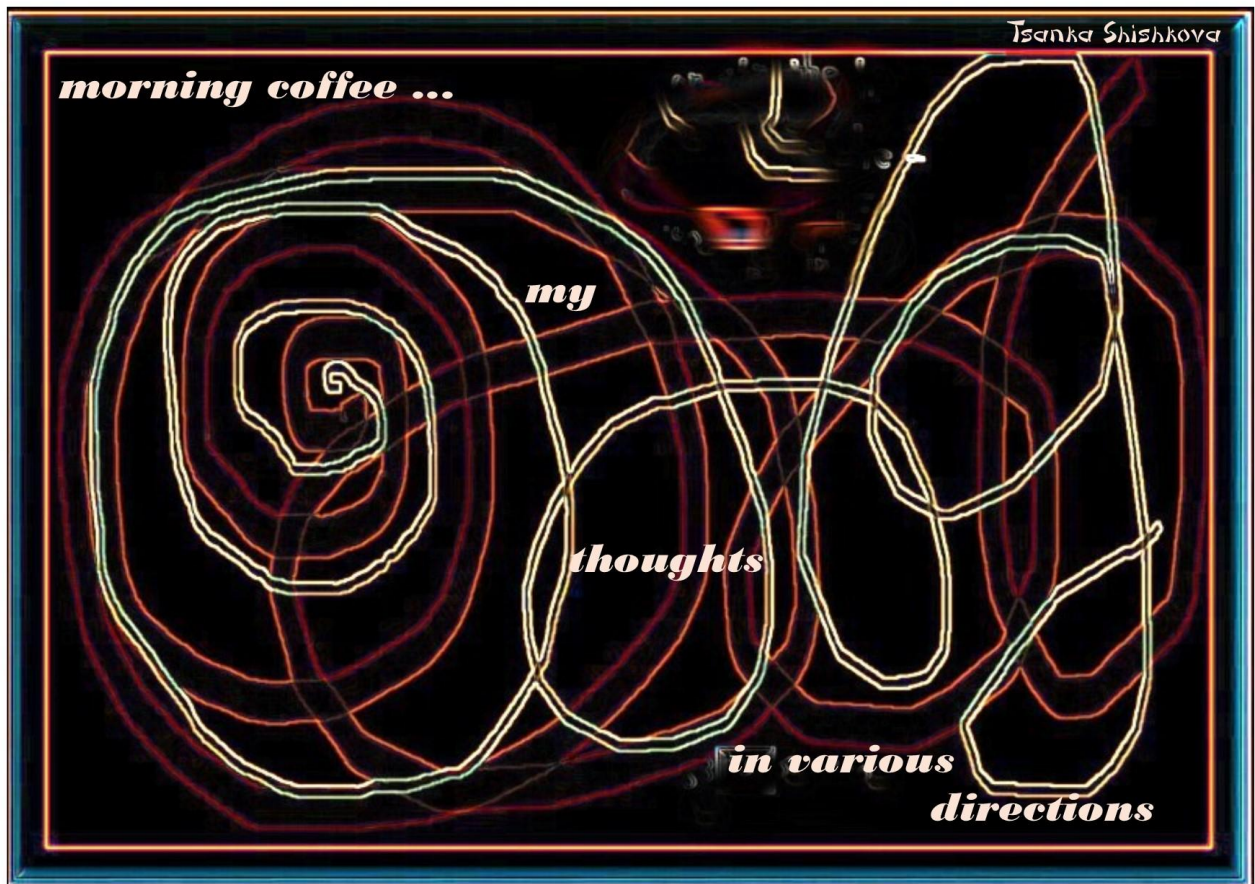
s
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s -

I walk in the volume
of the headphones

Shishkova, Tsanka

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIGA](#)

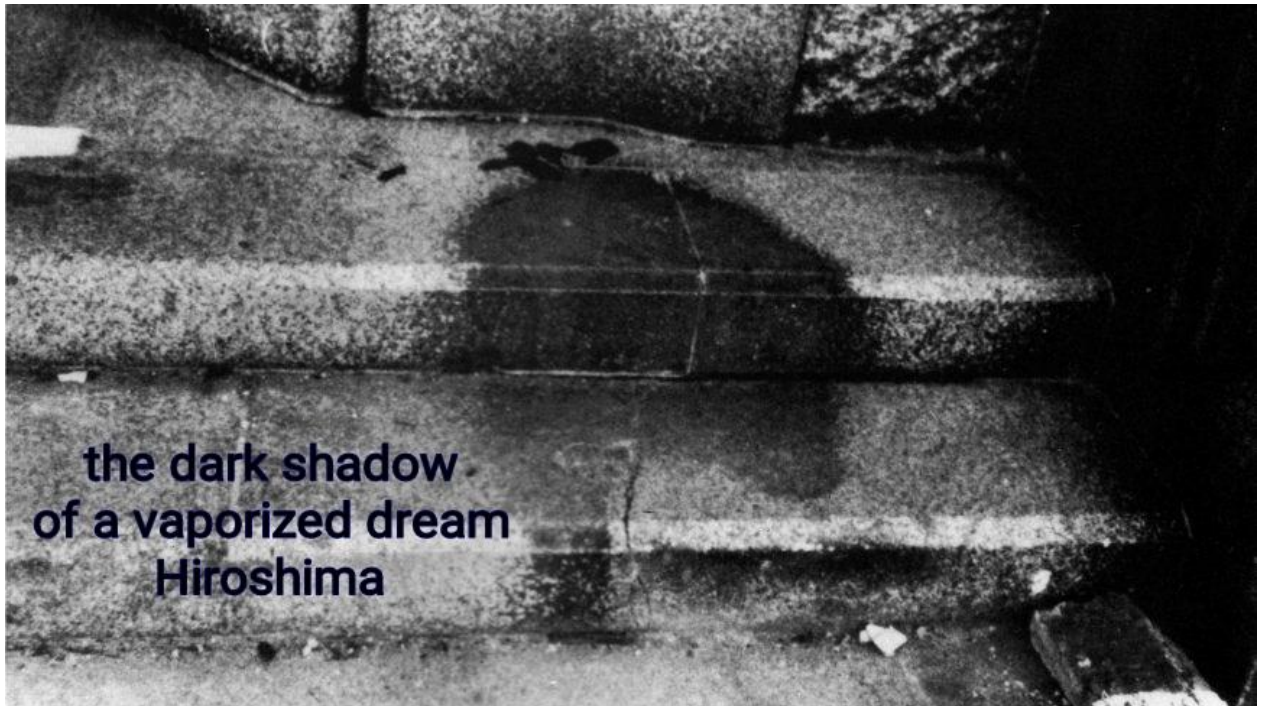
- [Bulgaria](#)



Kodial, Pranav

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIGA](#)

- [India](#)



Restuccia, Giovanna

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIGA](#)

- Italy

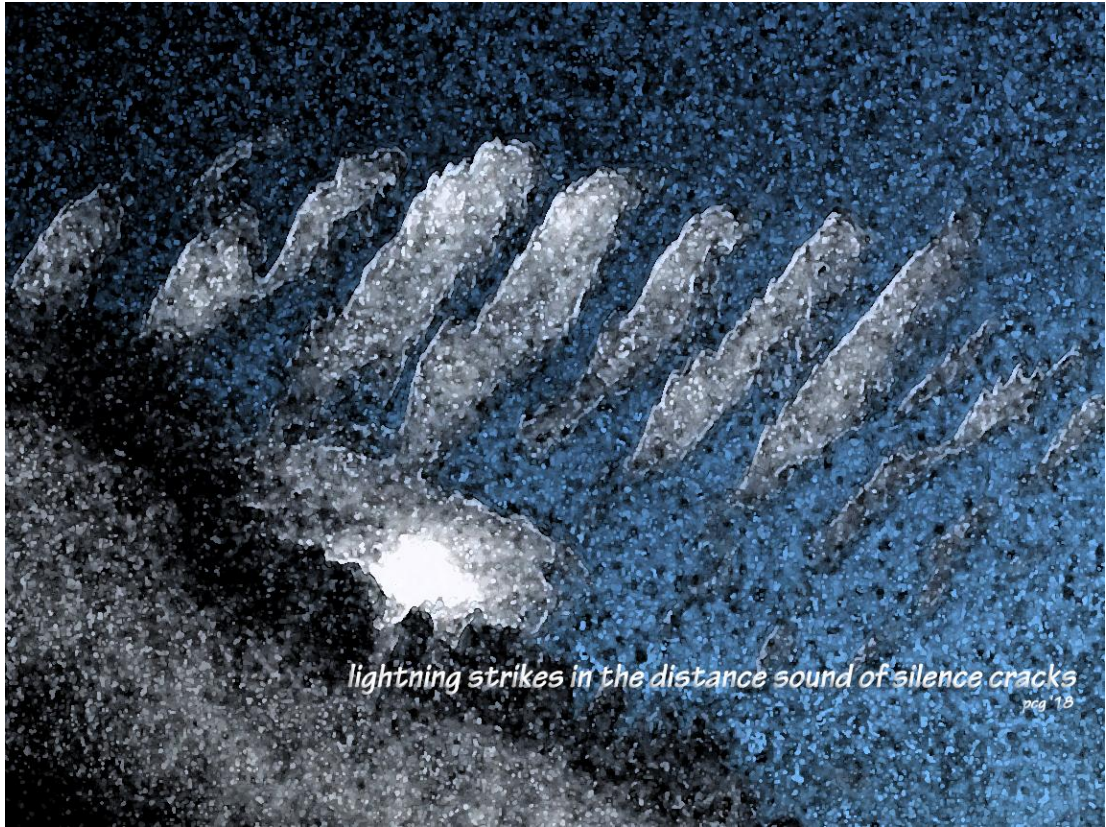


Geyer, Pat

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIGA](#)

- [USA](#)





Gatalica, Goran

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIGA](#)

- [Croatia](#)





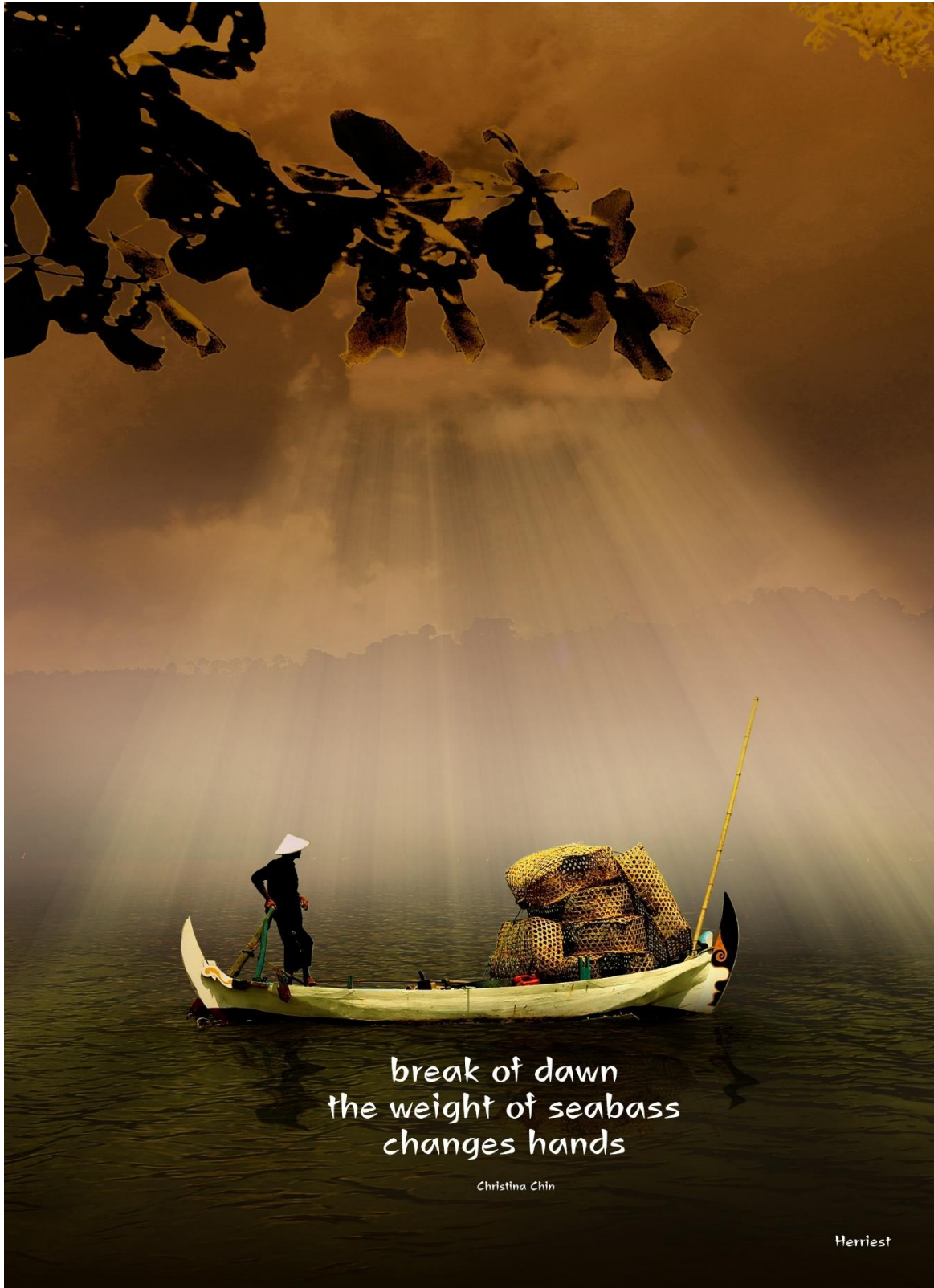
Goran Gatalica, haiku
Tomislav Veić, photography

long summer -
a fisherman's shadow
drips into twilight

Chin, Christina

CATEGORY: UTB 2018 - HAIGA

- Sarawak



Gambutti, Mary Ellen

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIGA](#)

- [USA](#)



Dragostinova, Radostina

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIGA](#)

- [Bulgaria](#)



Ashraf, Hifsa

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIGA](#)

- [Pakistan](#)



evening fog

a part of me

still glowing

© 1998 Ashraf

Joan, Eva

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIGA](#)

- [Germany](#)



Damir, Damir

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIGA](#)

- [Serbia](#)



autumn express
the dawn brings
second hand earth



my home is
a seashore morning...
summer gull

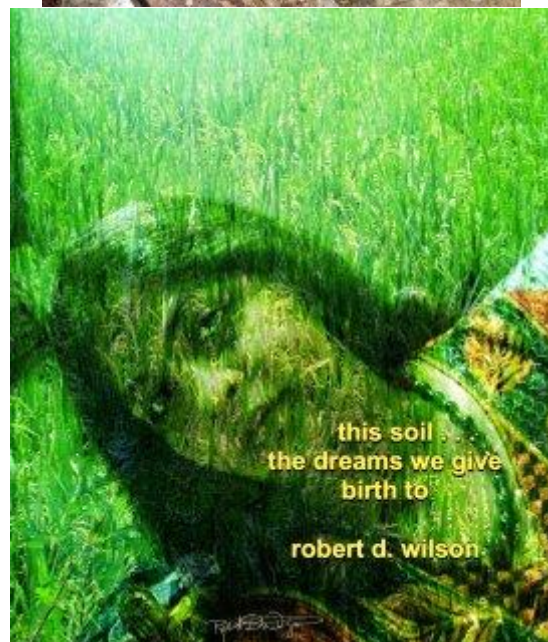
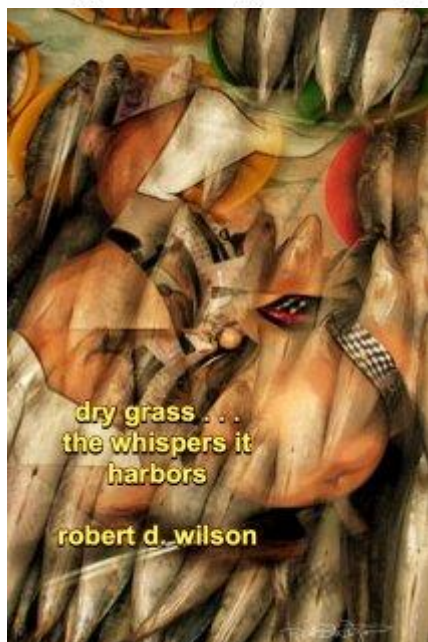
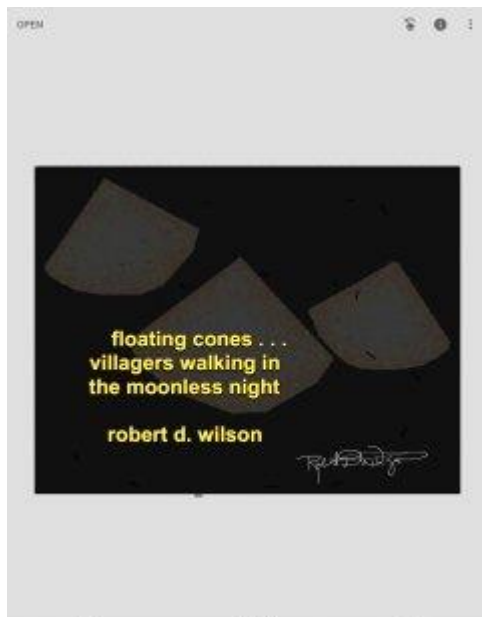


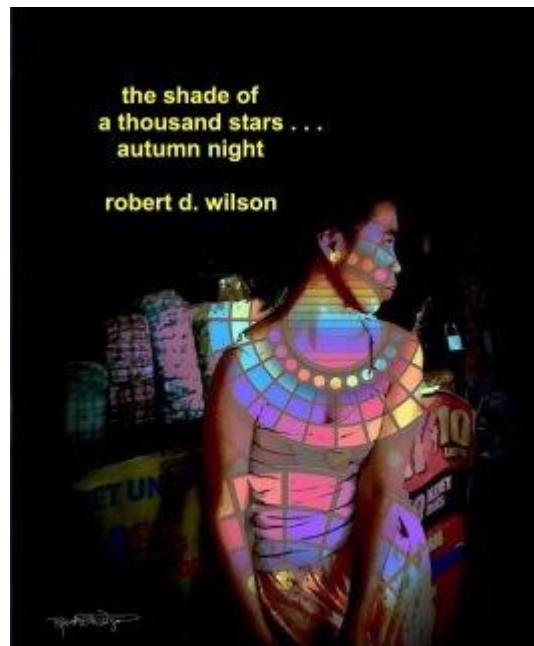
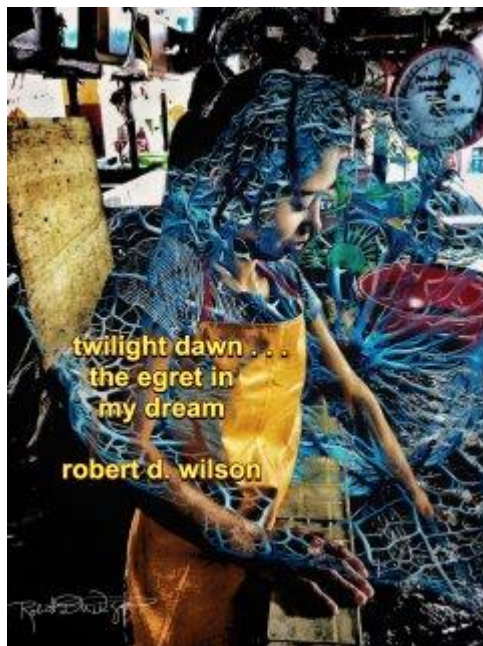
waning summer
cicada's mating song
in every pore

Wilson, Robert D.

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIGA](#)

- [The Philippines](#)



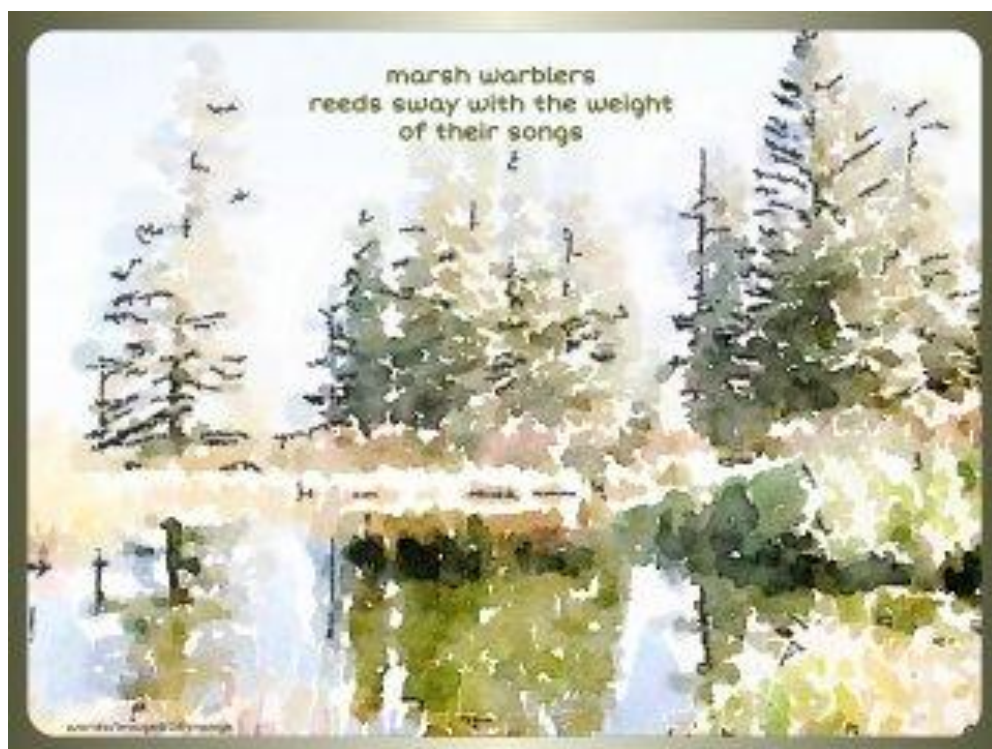


Strange, Debbie

CATEGORY: **UTB 2018 - HAIGA**

- Canada



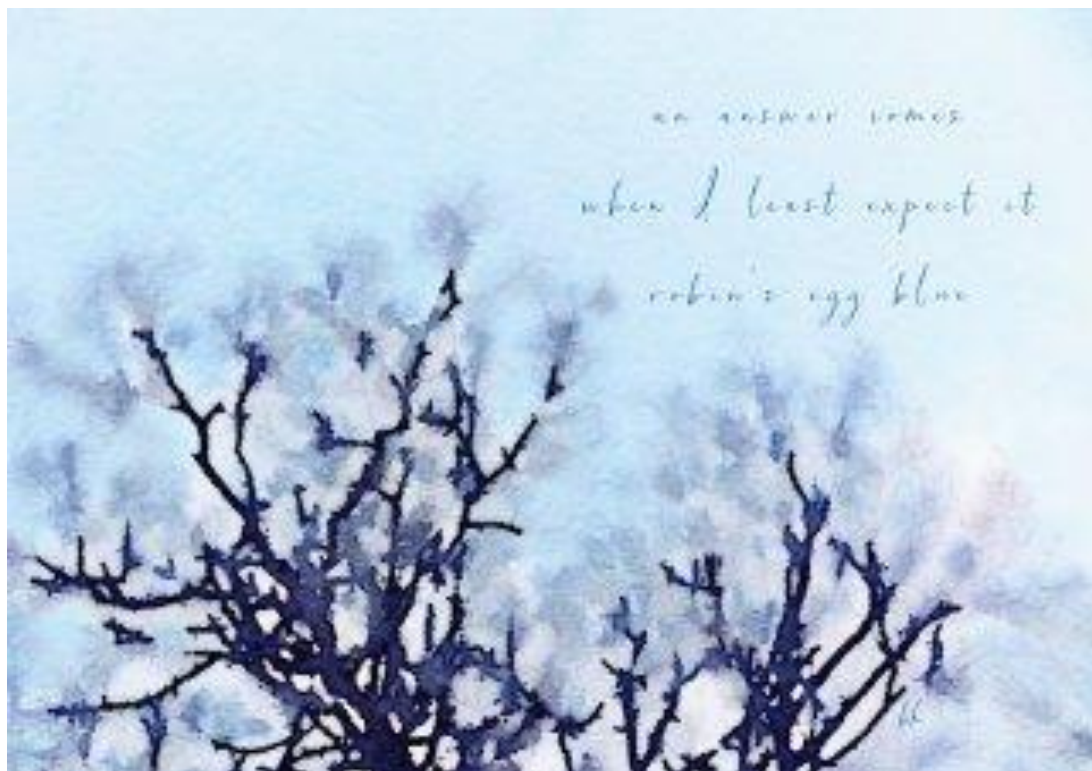




Kaufmann, Barbara

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIGA](#)

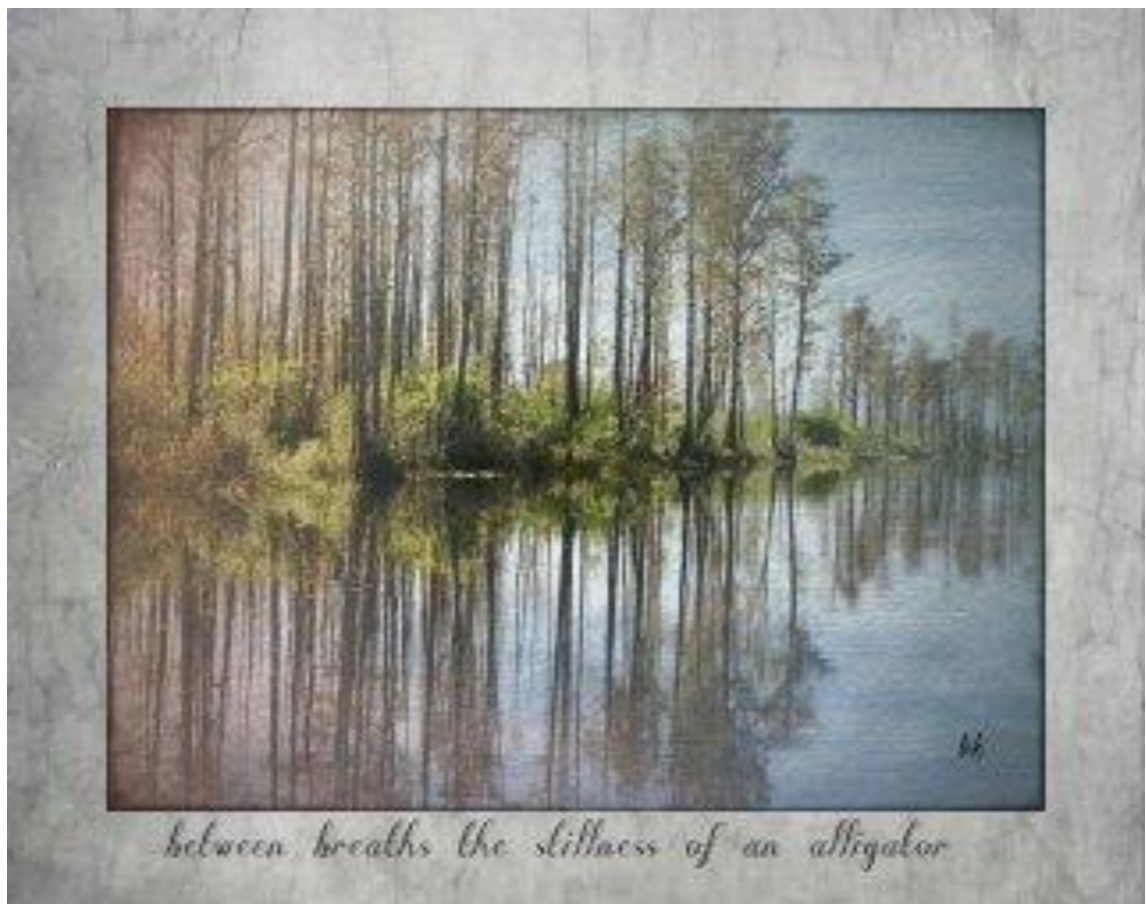
- [USA](#)





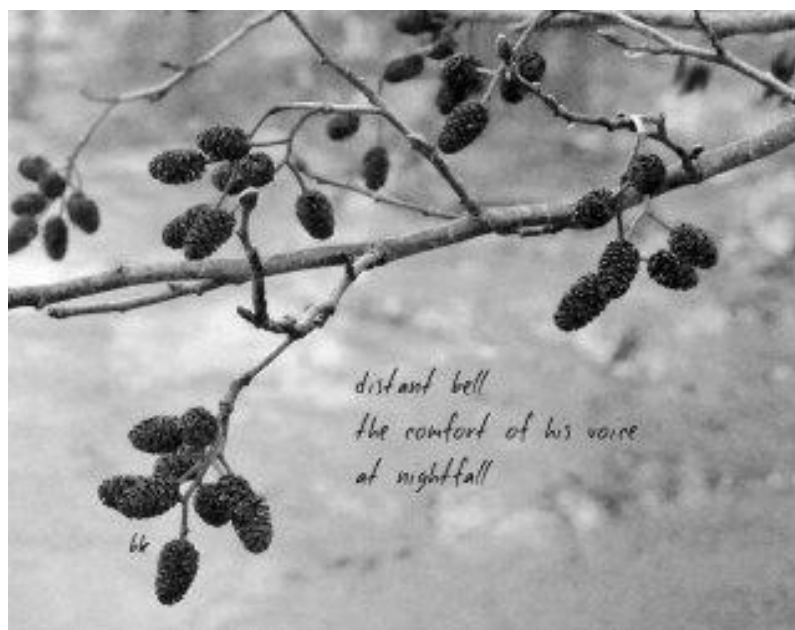
beneath
the snow
a dusting of silence

14



between breaths the stillness of an alligator

15







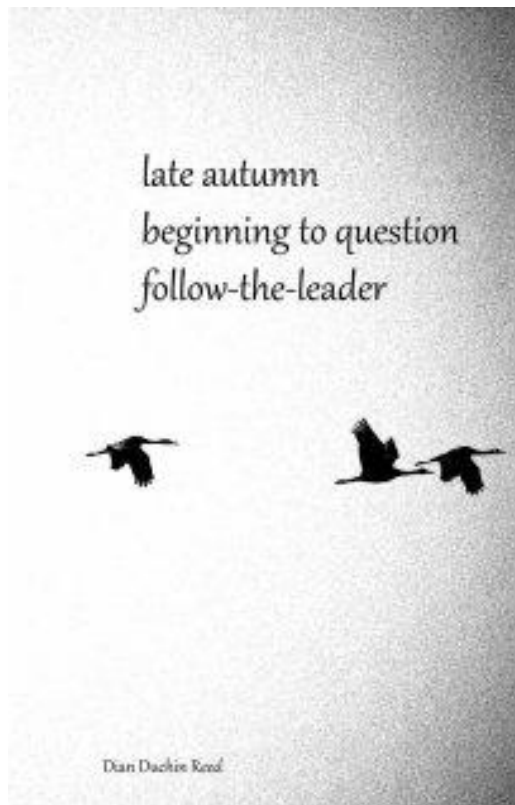
Reed, Dian Duchin

CATEGORY: UTB 2018 - HAIGA

at the lagoon
hanging my worries
out to dry



late autumn
beginning to question
follow-the-leader



McGregor, Marietta

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIGA](#)

- [Australia](#)



still afternoon
all those days we
miss old friends



nanetta mcgregor, 2018
after Birds on a Rock by
Gao Guan Pu

Kelly, David J

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIGA](#)





Shrode, Judt

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIGA](#)



Pray, Sandi

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIGA](#)

- [USA](#)



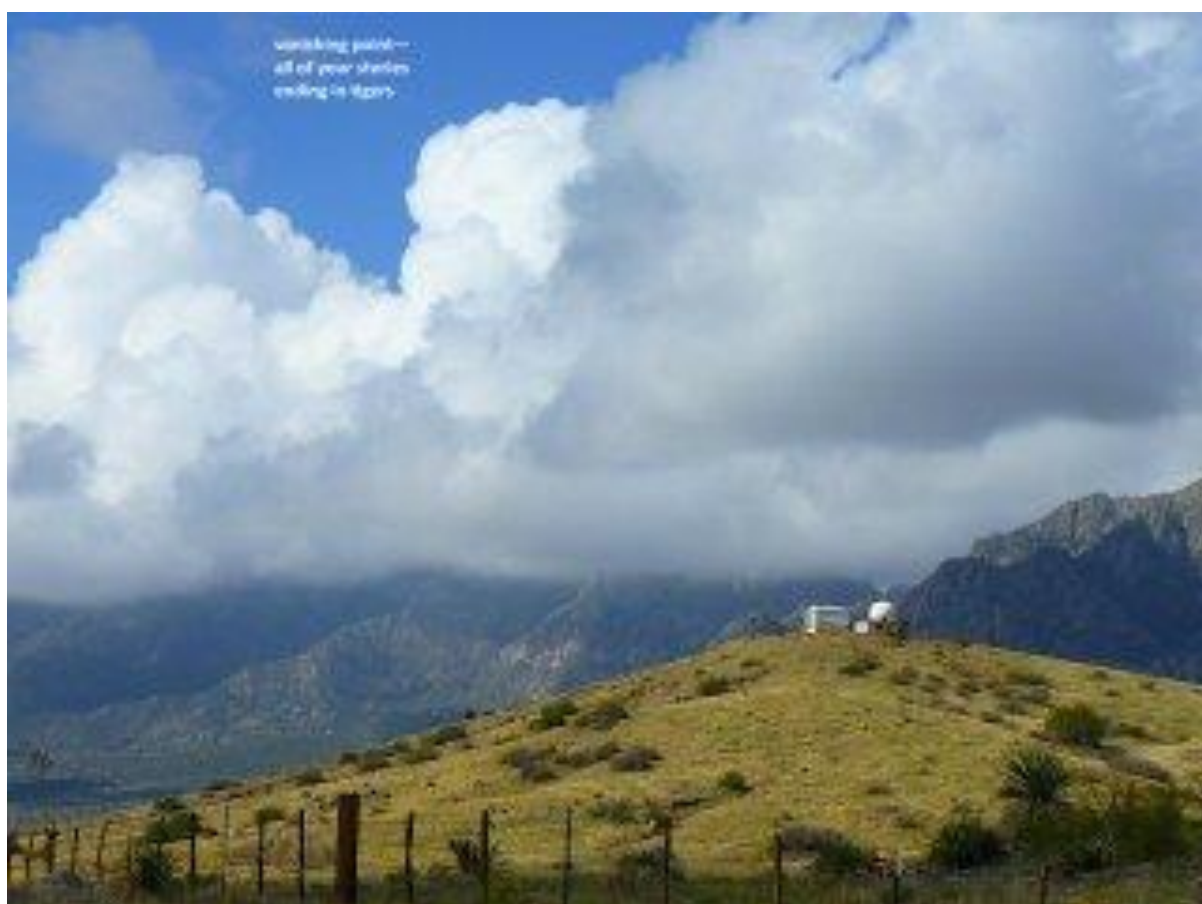
Polette, Keith

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIGA](#)





face up—
the static between
radio stations

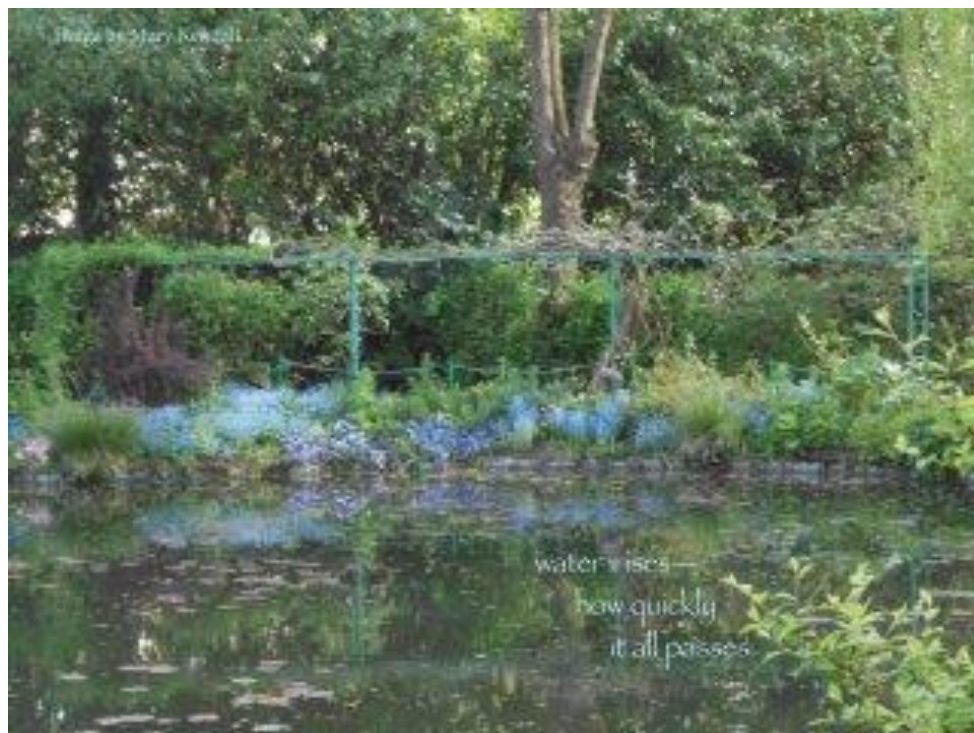
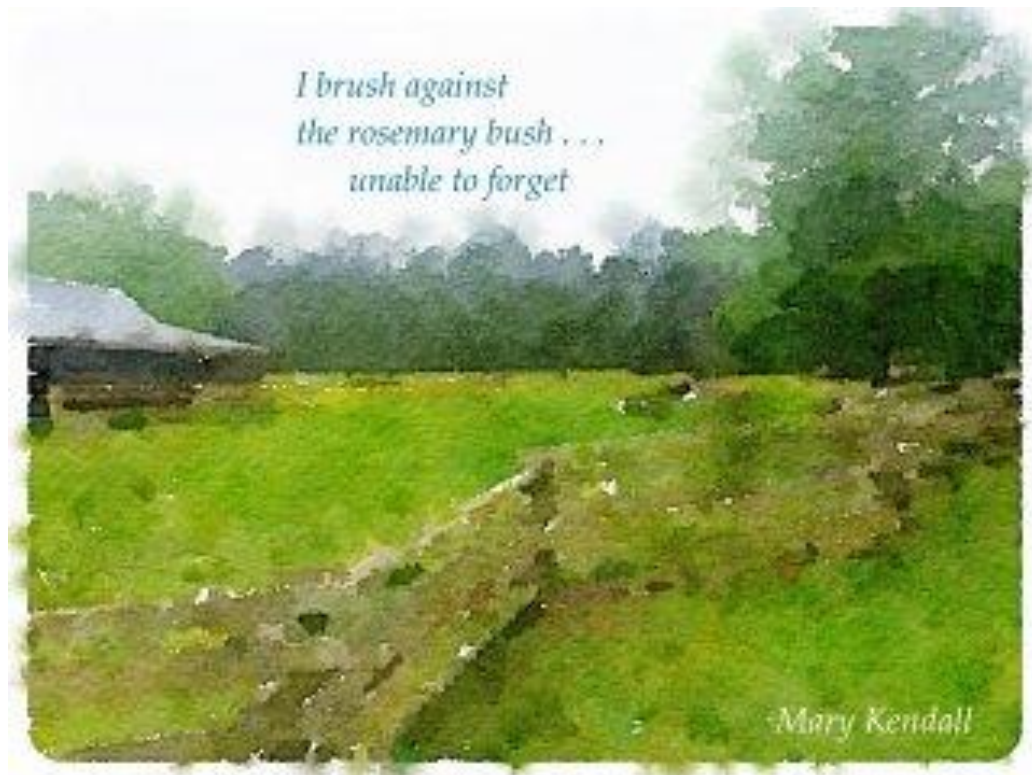


vanishing point—
all of your stories
ending in figures

Kendall, Mary

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIGA](#)

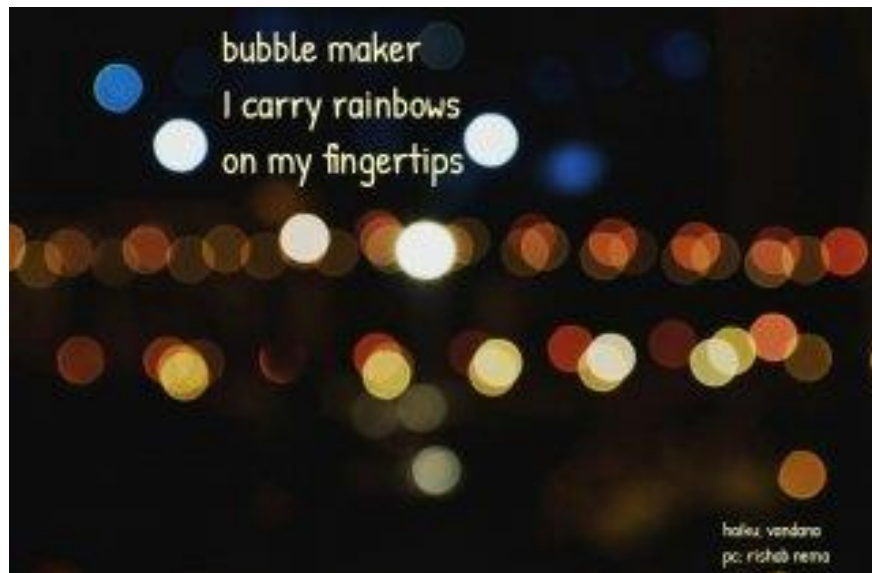
- [USA](#)



Parashar, Vandana

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIGA](#)

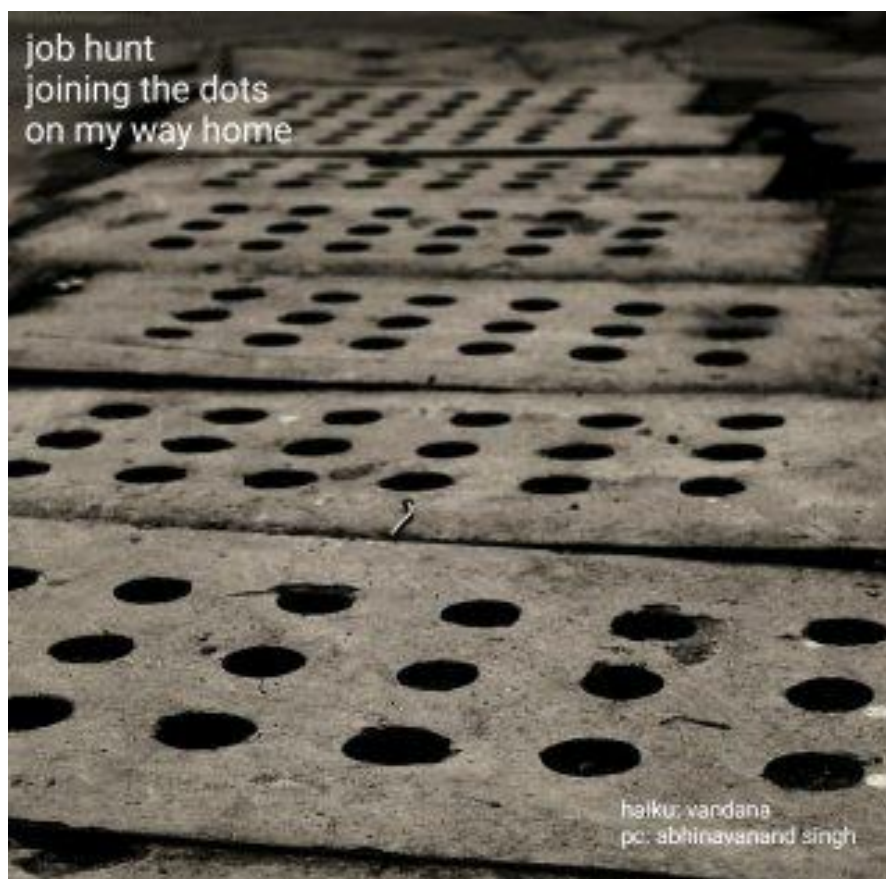
- India





dandelion in the wind a brief fling

haiku: vandana
pc: abhinavanand singh



job hunt
joining the dots
on my way home

haiku: vandana
pc: abhinavanand singh



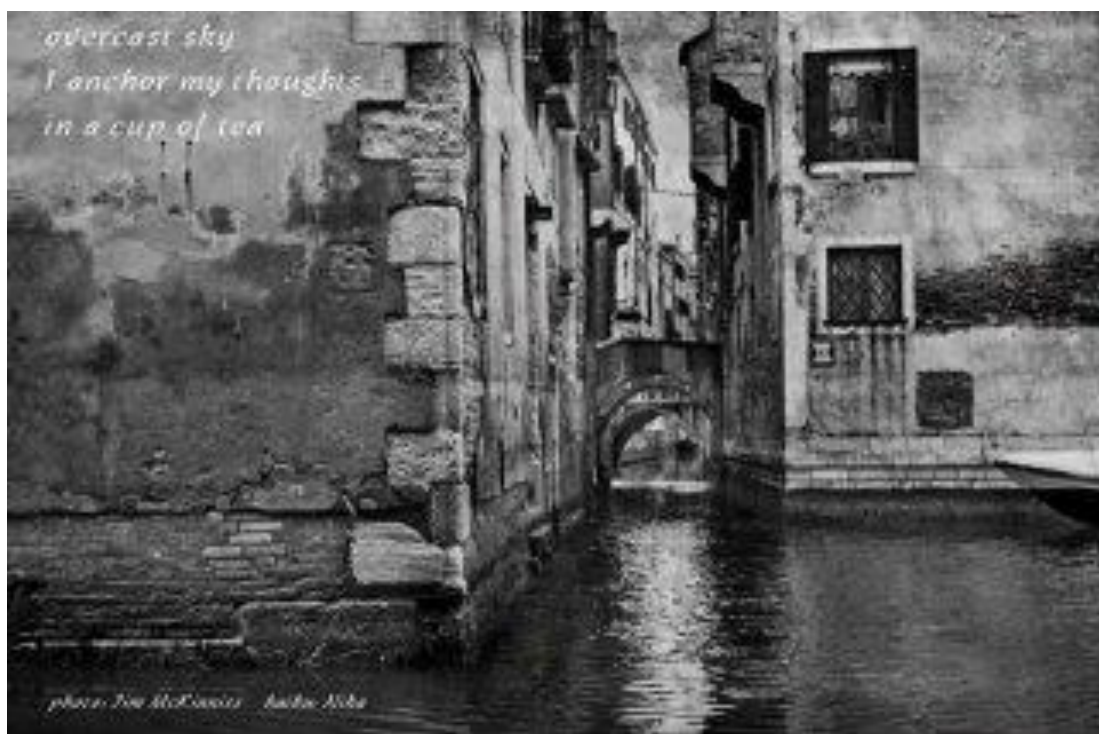
every drop
falling from her eyes...
swarovski

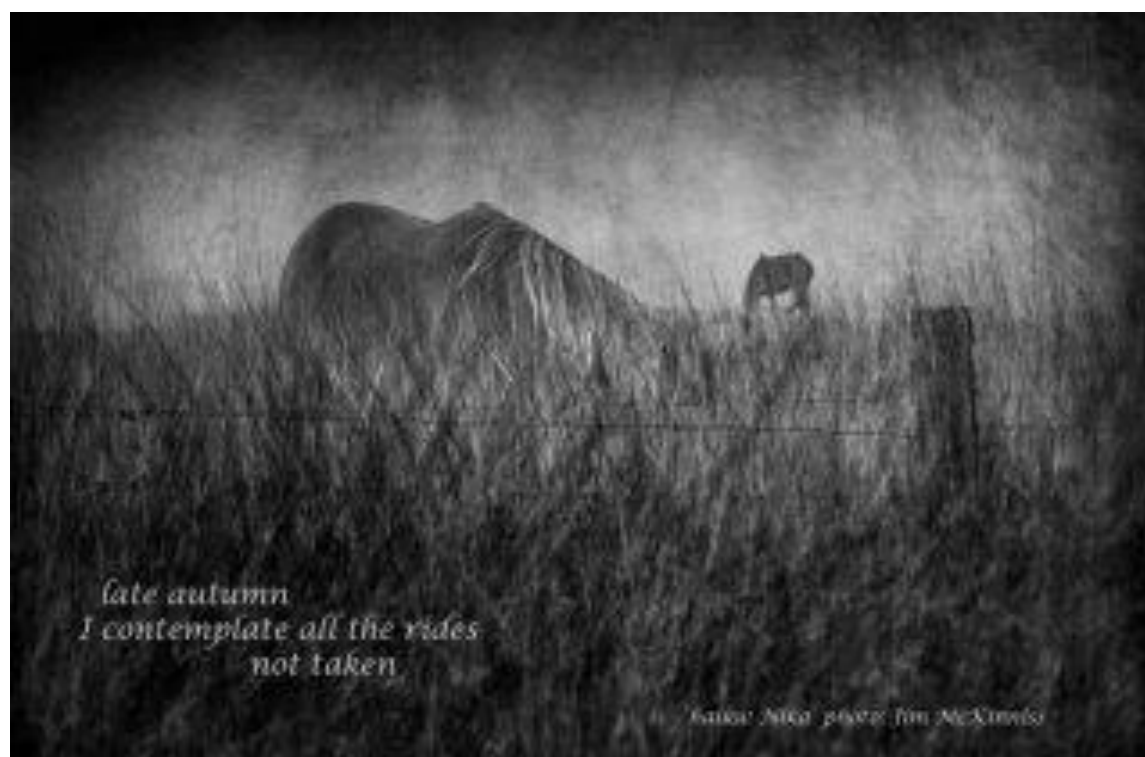
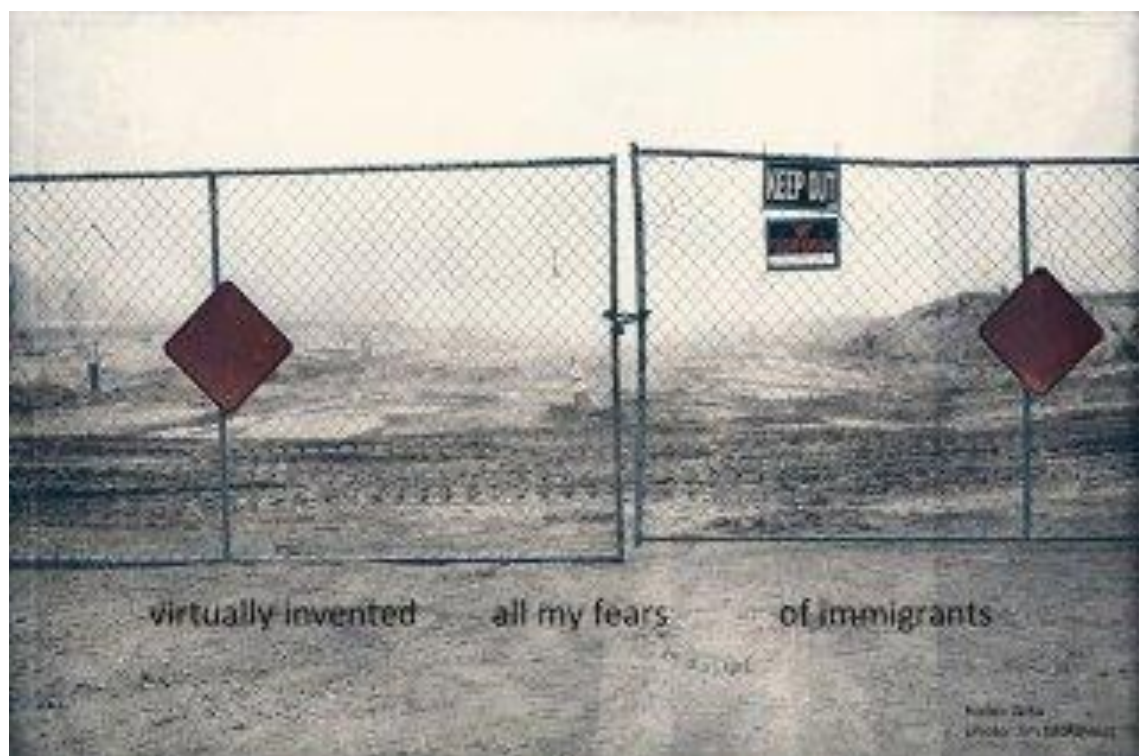
haiku: varidana
po: rishab nemo

Nika & Jim McKinniss

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIGA](#)

- [USA](#) [Canada](#)



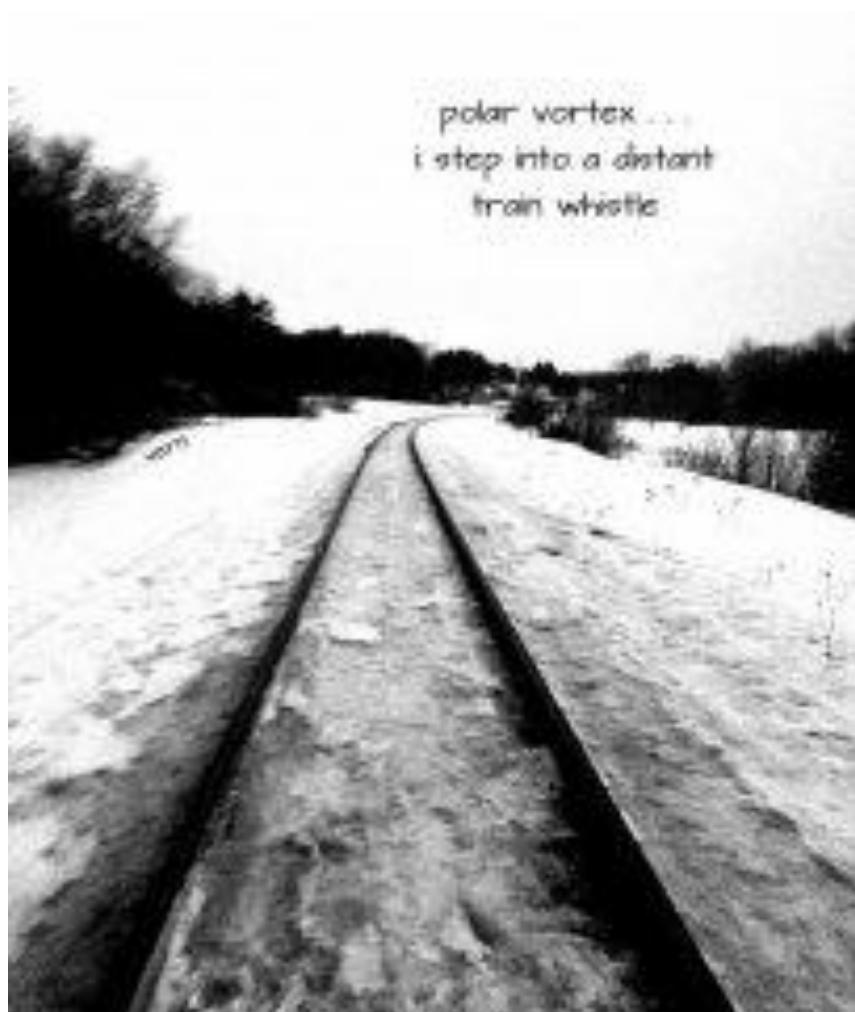


Novak, Veronika Zora

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIGA](#)

- [Canada](#)





polar vortex . . .
i step into a distant
train whistle



along this path
you become my eyes

autumn horse

awakening i let dreams dream



Sliding Doors

WRITTEN BY ILIYANA STOYANOVA

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)

PUBLISHED: 15 NOVEMBER 2018

- [United Kingdom](#)

Beep, beep, beep ... oh, what now?! Is it time already? Surely she can't be in labour now. It's been just under two hours.

Beep, beep, beep ... the beeper continues its disturbing melody.
It's so peaceful and quiet under the linden tree and the sweet nostalgic aroma of the slightly shrunk blossoms evokes almost a Zen like state of mind. Not urgency.
Definitely not that!
Beep, beep, beep ...!!!

baby's first cry
a silence in between
the angel wings' flutter

Count to 10 in reverse order. Ten, nine, eight ... Why just 10? I can start from 100. I'm not tired. I'm so full of excitement, I'm having my baby, I can climb mountains, Everest even ... What comes after eight? Her hands are so warm. They smell of linden blossoms ...

Locks and Keys

WRITTEN BY PRANAV KODIAL
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 15 NOVEMBER 2018

- [India](#)

Circa 1977

“Soul searching is best done whilst sitting on a wall overlooking a garbage dump,” says Guru, my new office colleague-cum-friend.
I nod in reply.

It is late evening. We are sitting on a dusty ledge looking down at a mountain of human refuse. The smell wafting up is nauseating and I fight the impulse to throw up.

My pal isn't a 'guru' in the classical sense of the word, meaning spiritual master. But once in a while, he lets loose profound statements that has earned him the nickname.

Guru is an eccentric introvert and I am his only close friend. For some reason, I find his thoughts attractive and like listening to him.

“This is Tamas,” he continues, pointing to the dump below us, “what we human beings are stuffed with. Darkness and filth.”

“Hmm,” I murmur. He has a point, in a strange, unexplainable way.

“And it is our duty to recognise this fact, shake off our delusion, and elevate ourselves from our despicable situation. Bye.” He hops off the ledge and walks off.

The next morning, I learn that Guru has left town and moved to somewhere in Guyana, South America. I feel a pang of regret on hearing that, wishing he had told me his new address. It would have been great to visit him and discuss spirituality.

I don't hear about Guru again until one year later.

smoke-screened...
the lingering stench of
bitter almonds

wrong map my Driver takes the right turn

Notes:

According to Hindu philosophy, 'Tamas' is one of the three qualities that constitute the world. It represents darkness, ignorance and destruction.

In 1978, the cult leader Jim Jones killed almost a thousand of his followers in Jonestown, Guyana. He is supposed to have convinced or forced them to consume potassium cyanide, a poison that smells like bitter almonds.

Desert Rat

WRITTEN BY MARIETTA MCGREGOR

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)

PUBLISHED: 15 NOVEMBER 2018

- [Australia](#)

In a drawer she keeps them, his chestful of medals. In a Schiaparelli nylons box faintly scented with Shocking, which looks as old as they are. Did he give her the stockings when he came home from leave? Or when he returned, a half-broken man?

sound of a bugle
the shine in the eyes
of my mother

.

Lest We Forget
ANZAC DAY, 2018

At the underwear counter

WRITTEN BY MARIETTA MCGREGOR

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)

PUBLISHED: 15 NOVEMBER 2018

- [Australia](#)

Ladies' lingerie in a large department store, next to the elevator. I'm buying a bra. Beside me stands a very old gentleman leaning on a wheeled walker. He is soft-faced, white-haired and drooping, like a tired bell flower. He's paying for something, I think his store account. He has cash in his wallet, which he lays out slowly and carefully, note by note. The salesperson says she won't keep me waiting long. I laugh and say 'No problem, I was in a sort of daze. I have to do battle with my health insurer next, so I don't mind waiting'.

I'm much taller than the old man, and covertly glance down at his profile, his fine pink skin flecked with age and sunspots, the vulnerability of his shiny scalp through baby-fluff hair. His voice is clear and well-modulated, with a dry, humorous edge. I think I would like to sit down with this man and talk about things we remember, things we

enjoy, things which make us happy, things which make us weep. The old man thanks the cashier, turns before he leaves to bid me good-day, and good luck with the health insurer. I say goodbye and think of age, and death, and loss, and pain, and sorrow.

wishing again
i could conjure up
all the loved faces
a news report listing
the ages of the dead

Somber Musings

WRITTEN BY ANNA CATES
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 15 NOVEMBER 2018

We err, so carelessly, and to such destruction.

white pines
sagging with snow
winter blues

By the time we learn better, it's often too late.

finally falling
the old barn
where the suicide hung

Martyrdom

WRITTEN BY ANNA CATES
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 15 NOVEMBER 2018

In the fifth grade, I first heard that the end of the world could be nigh. I needed to watch for the “signs of the times.” But the whole idea of the world going through such a terrible ordeal, the “tribulation,” horrified me. I dreamed about it. I was arrested. I was led up the wooden steps to the guillotine. To my surprise, nothing happened. For no reason I can explain, nobody beheaded me.

“I’m so disappointed in you,” my mother told me in the dream, her countenance a sour frown. She took it as a spiritual failure on my part that I wouldn’t be promptly executed.

an Egyptologist
with scarabs in her eyes
camel moon

Honkadori* Haibun

WRITTEN BY ANNA CATES
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 15 NOVEMBER 2018

it just
depends

like water does
or doesn't

have sound
or color

it just
depends
the red wheelbarrow
a bit rusted now . . .
autumn glaze

*A honkadori is a traditional Japanese form that alludes to and imitates a classic poem.

The Next Moment

WRITTEN BY RICHARD MILTON GRAHN
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 03 NOVEMBER 2018

- [USA](#)

He watched the leaf drop beneath the horizon and gently light on the ground. He watched as it became a memory, lingering there in the blooming sunrise.

one step closer
to revelation . . .
a cherry tree blossoms

The Offering

WRITTEN BY ELIZABETH CROCKET
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 03 NOVEMBER 2018

- [Canada](#)

I can hear someone moaning like a dog who has been hit by a car on the side of a highway. My pain has now overwhelmed me, and despite being in a fog, I can grasp that it is coming from me.

a nurse
carefully opening up
about mistakes

The Search

WRITTEN BY ELIZABETH CROCKET
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 03 NOVEMBER 2018

- [Canada](#)

Very seldom do I meet with a friend now, when at some point they don't ask how I remain positive, despite what I've been through. When I reply that no one can be all the time, still they persist.

under the moon
the fishermen
still digging for worms

The Wizard of Oz

WRITTEN BY ANTONIETTA LOSITO

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)

PUBLISHED: 03 NOVEMBER 2018

When I was ten years old, my dad's mom told me that my domestic competence were at an unacceptable level, and that, after homework, I would have to learn how to cook, knit and embroider the wedding trousseau, the one that I would have to show my future mother-in-law at the eve of my marriage.

For its part, my mother bought the first of twelve volumes of recipes and a book, "The art of governing house and family" with a red dust jacket on which a woman appeared in an apron ready for the housework.

I opened the book and in the index I started to read:

- how to remove stubborn stains;
- how to properly store clothes in the closet
- rearrange children's toys ...
- etc...etc..

"I'm only ten," I said.

"Do not be silly! For the girls, that's just how it is " replied in chorus my mother and my grandma .

I remained for days in absolute silence. I felt alone, an exception to the rule, a species belonging to an alien form.

My teacher insisted long before I told him that the world had something wrong. He told me that in life I could do what I wanted and go anywhere. He told me that in the world and in my own country too there were girls of my own "species". He gave me some books to read. I clung to the words. Since my grandma couldn't read and write, in case of her random searches, while I read books, I'd hide them under the with the red dust jacket .

sudden rain-
on the road of yellow stones
traces of rust

The Voice

WRITTEN BY HEMA RAVI

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)

PUBLISHED: 03 NOVEMBER 2018

- [India](#)

Most often, seminars and meets turn out with a motley gathering where individuals await with bated breath for their names to be announced. Once their poetry reading is done, a mental switch-off happens and the monotones continue until recess is announced.

soothing music...
the new comer
recites a verse

As I listen to the bespectacled gentleman, I feel a strange peace descend on me. I notice goosebumps on my hands. His rendition, poise, intonation and presentation is impeccably perfect.

sultry afternoon...
sudden wind
cools

Hansel and Gretel

WRITTEN BY DIAN DUCHIN REED

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)

PUBLISHED: 03 NOVEMBER 2018

- [USA](#)

come upon the witch's house. It's made of candy: gumdrops and peppermint sticks and chocolate chips. Hansel and Gretel are not exactly starving, having snacked on blackberries and almonds growing along the way. Besides, Gretel plans to be a dentist, and Hansel has a hankering for bacon and eggs at the moment.

To their surprise, the bright colors of the house change before their eyes. Gone, the sparkle of sugar on the roof, replaced by the sizzle of bacon shingles. The door is no

longer a chocolate bar, but an oblong of hash browns. Eggs, over easy and still steaming, fill the window boxes. The window shutters are buttered pieces of toast.

The witch watches. A master in the art of attraction, she knows how to harness the senses, direct the attention, rein in the brain. No longer wary, the siblings approach.

greengage plum
the sweet glow
of desire

Busy

WRITTEN BY MARY ELLEN GAMBUTTI
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 03 NOVEMBER 2018

She leans into glow of a 15-watt lightbulb, petite figure poised, the needle bobs, her fine fingers guide calico or corduroy.

Little granddaughter, mesmerized by hum of machine, warmed by soothing songs, spills treasures from a floral tin, frugal notions of past creations.

She sits amidst buttons on sisal beside the cabinet Singer, sifts and sorts delicate blue squares with thumb and forefinger, four-holed yellow rounds, elephant-shaped ivory from old silk shirt. Cool of dulled brass. Icy, sparkling glass diamonds. Whiff of Bakelite, tang of metal box. Lemon-scented oil-can wears a tiny red cap.

Together, time alone, quiet creativity.

Eastern light—
royal hue of
African violets

The Meek Shall Inherit The Mirth

WRITTEN BY GAUTAM NADKARNI
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 03 NOVEMBER 2018

- [India](#)

Some people excel at making cracks and some are eternal scapegoats. There appears to be a general consensus that I fall into the latter category.

It is a common sight, me grinning sheepishly as some devilishly clever fellow makes all the witty remarks and steals the thunder. I bring out the worst in people, or the best depending on whose side you're on. As you can well imagine it makes me very popular with wiseacres who are always on the lookout for punching bags. I once thought that a wiseacre was an excellent investment in real estate. Silly me! I guess that was never my area of expertise.

Parties are places where wits abound. Perhaps it has something to do with the spirit of the occasion. Particularly the type which comes in bottles. Once under the influence of a single malt I dared to try my hand at sarcasm. Or so I was told when I was sufficiently sober. I couldn't believe my ears. The victim of my razor sharp tongue apparently couldn't believe his either. Suffice it to say that whatever I did say to him, this bloke has been avoiding eye contact with me ever since.

psychology class...
the sedating effect
of a lecture

live your life

WRITTEN BY RAMLAWT DINPUIA
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 03 NOVEMBER 2018

- [India](#)

honesty is not always the best policy. sometimes you need to lie for your own good, sometimes you need to change your color and wear a mask. people may call you a traitor or laugh at you behind your back. but remember that your life is yours and yours alone. someday the one who calls you a coward will sing of your success.

transformation
no death warrant
for the caterpillar

My Dream

WRITTEN BY PRAVAT KUMAR PADHY

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)

PUBLISHED: 03 NOVEMBER 2018

- [India](#)

The dense spread of green sprinkles dews on my tired eyes. For a moment I imagine climbing up the hills and caressing the azure sky! The colorful birds fly kissing the tender breeze.

Suddenly my attention is skewed as the train enters the heavily squeezed city!

bright night--
I walk with the moon
in my dream

The Bird by the Castle

WRITTEN BY BEN TAYLOR

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)

PUBLISHED: 03 NOVEMBER 2018

It's early January, and I'm walking along the outskirts of a weather-worn castle high above an ancient European city. Hundreds of tourists walk in groups of two, three, four, snapping photos, walking with their phones. Laughing, smiling, staring out in awe. This morning there is a light fog pervading the air. Remnants of snow from previous days' falls line the pathway. Across the river can be seen the outlines of historic buildings, houses, churches, and museums. They penetrate vaguely through the thin grey veil. It is cold this morning. An icy chill grasps my bones as a loose gust of air finds its way into my jacket. I tighten the chords on my shoulders. Don't get a chest infection. Walking beside the spoiled sandstone, I spot a lone bird perched on the balcony. The bird stands silently, turning its head back and forth. The only one to be seen near the castle grounds. Its dull grey feathers and beady black eyes remain unnoticed by passers-by. I stop to snap a shot of the bird. An elderly couple follow suit. They smile at the bird, where others do not. They walk on, I walk on, and the bird flies away.

Mid winter
A lone bird perched
over the city

Returning back home

WRITTEN BY SHREYA NARANG
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 03 NOVEMBER 2018

- [India](#)

Today I got my first paycheck and I wanted to gift my dad something really valuable. So first I thought of gifting him a watch. But then I wondered, would it be able to return all his time that he spent worrying and waiting for me to come back home?

After that I thought of gifting him a cologne. But then I again wondered, would it be anything compared to the sweat he shed all his life to give us the best of everything?

May be a photo album? But would it be able to bring back his young, adventurous days, when he was busy being a perfect father?

Then what? How could I repay him?

But could I really ever?

So finally, I went home, hugged him tight, thanked him and told him that I loved him beyond everything else.

old pictures

I wave at the man
holding my hand

Shreya Narang
Age:- 17

As a Wind Seed

WRITTEN BY JOSEPH SALVATORE AVERSANO
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 03 NOVEMBER 2018

- [Turkey](#)

borne from no one knows which type of tree

unless you get a good look at it parachuting
or spinning w/ more of its weight to one side

& towards where you would think
it's going

the weathervane cock
blind as the
wind

The Sum of Me

WRITTEN BY TIA HAYNES
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 03 NOVEMBER 2018

Shunned and disqualified from the pastorate, I held my diagnosis like a disease. My moods, infected by the devil, were a treacherous battleground in need of salvation. However, I still choose medication over prayer, and my worth as a spiritual leader plummeted. Hope along with it. Nothing has paralleled that despair in my adult life. Not my divorce, not my postpartum ptsd, not even my hospitalization. So, for my safety, I hide my disbelief in a family full of believers.

coming out
I write a poem
for all to see

rose-tinted glasses

WRITTEN BY LORI A MINOR
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 03 NOVEMBER 2018

I am fat because I was told I am fat. I am ugly because society says that I am. I am fat and ugly because my beauty is less than the standard. I can't help but wonder how I would feel about myself if the world was taught free thinking instead of conditioning.

anorexia
I starve myself
of value

*** ku was published in issue 23 of Prune Juice*

Colours

WRITTEN BY ELISA THERIANA
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 03 NOVEMBER 2018

- [Indonesia](#)

I was an orphan growing up in several foster homes. They labeled me as 'troubled', I guess they're right.

I remember one foster mom, a very nice woman, my troubles began with her plastic flowers...

3 big yellow sunflowers with 5 red roses. She placed them all mixed in a crystal vase. It isn't right! The colours fight. So I put red roses aside. The first time I did that she was laughing but told me not to do that again. After a few times she was not amused and gave me a stern warning.

I really didn't want to upset her but at night while everybody's sleeping, I heard those red roses' screaming. I had no choice, I hid those red roses in my drawer, they're safe... and the next day I was sent to another foster home.

ugly duckling
one less curveball
to deal with

stops along the way

WRITTEN BY MARK MEYER
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 03 NOVEMBER 2018

- [USA](#)

I've a long-lasting love for Tokyo; I've been there many times. Ever since I took my first ride on the Arakawa Toden streetcar in 1993 I've remained fascinated by its allure.

streetcar window...
a different world
at every stop

standing room only...
multicolored umbrellas
and the smell of rain

One of Tokyo's last two remaining streetcars, the Toden travels a 12.2 km route back and forth through 30 stops that traverse some of the older parts of the city, areas overlooked by most tourists who search elsewhere for excitement. But, for me, each stop along the way presents a unique atmospheric microcosm of Tokyo life the way it was, is, and is constantly evolving to be.

as worn as the rails
he hums a sad melody...
end of the line

down the tracks
receding into the past
Tokyo trolley

general relativity

WRITTEN BY MARK MEYER
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 03 NOVEMBER 2018

- [USA](#)

Some prefer roses, others nettles — just two sides of the same coin. Truth and falsehood are simply shifting states of perspective, dependent on the observer. One's religion or philosophy is as logical or incoherent as the next; call it as you see it. Justice is not only blind, it is senselessly ambivalent. Positive or negative, matter or anti-matter, it's immaterial. And the paths of Right or Wrong are poorly marked; they're indeterminate and inconsequential. In any case, they intertwine along the way and converge at the fuzzy gray horizon of self-doubt.

north south east or west?
the compass needle just spins —
oh, whatever.....

A12

WRITTEN BY TIM GARDINER
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 15 AUGUST 2018

- [United Kingdom](#)

I never understood the change in name; the highway to my hometown 'upgraded' to the A47 for a few miles. Traffic signs have been modified though the potholes remain unfilled.

new road
behind the wheel
old thoughts

untitled

WRITTEN BY MICHAEL O'BRIEN
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 15 AUGUST 2018

A & I go to the bank on Victoria Rd. Most of the roads and paths are lightly frosted w/ the cold weather that has taken the past week. W/ the cold front the skies are especially beautiful and the birds are busy among the bare trees. Spot a goldcrest for the first time - it is w/ a group of long tailed tits which are always great to see.

On the way home we cut through Queens Park past the boat pond. The pond itself is frozen. Children are throwing objects on it and breaking bits of ice off. It feels good watching them. It sounds even better.

muddy paw prints
on the park bench
winter sky

We get home we take tea and eat some bread and fruit. As the day closes and night slowly moves in we watch Ikiru on the laptop. In some regards it's a heartbreaking movie but w/ the protagonists leap towards and grip of life, comes a warmth and a strong sense of comfort and joy.

waking in a dream last year's leaves

commuter

WRITTEN BY DAVID J. KELLY
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 15 AUGUST 2018

- [Ireland](#)

Early morning in early spring. The streets feel emptier than ever. No sunlight, no leaves, no people. Occasional cars pass, but there's no chance of encounter. Apparently, people have seen foxes in this area. Nothing yet. Not even a cat. In amongst the houses and offices are occasional shops. Mostly shuttered, but a few still dare to face the city with naked glass. Short on stimulus, I peer in.

everything must go
the urgent catalogue
of a song thrush

Slowly, ever so slowly, the light changes. Twilight teases. That's consolation of a sort, but I'll only see the sun today if I run an errand. There's a brutality to my timetable at this time of year. Perhaps I should take vitamin D supplements and adjust my Serotonin Transporter Protein with a light box. Even on a Goldilocks planet, not everything is "just right".

back and forth
between the equinoxes
striving for balance

Another Sunny Morning in California

WRITTEN BY MARK LEVY
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 14 AUGUST 2018

- [USA](#)

Blandness. Monotony. Boredom. Blue emptiness. Numbness. Lassitude.

zero in three lines
0
0

The World's Greatest

WRITTEN BY CHRISTINE TAYLOR
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 20 MAY 2018

for Reid Prichett, who shared his dream

When I was a kid, I wanted to be the world's greatest fisherman. Leave behind the dazzle of the modern world and row out to the middle of still water, hold a worm between my fingers, the ends of its body coiling around my thumb as I load it onto a barbed hook. Cast the line long, the plunk barely makes a splash.

Wait.

Wait.

Breathe.

Sense the tap on the line.

Reel.

Tug.

Reel.

Tug.

Pull the fish into my net, and yank it out of the water. Estimate its weight--impressive. Hold the firm flesh wriggling in my grip. Watch it struggle, the eye rotating in the socket. Count the seconds between the pulse of the gills. Know that I am the world's greatest fisherman.

Instead, I became a teacher.

exhale. . .

shifting beads

on the abacus

Tremble

WRITTEN BY CHRISTINE TAYLOR
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 20 MAY 2018

A charm of house finches gathers in the dead pine tree. A red-breasted male swoops onto the feeder and nabs a black-oil sunflower seed, breaks open the shell to feast. Next door, the screen bangs against the

frame, the elderly neighbor's house slippers scuff the brick steps. Again,
she's done something *stupid*, she's reminded she's a *fool*, asked *why*
can't you just. . .

The finches take flight and cloud the sky, scatter empty shells.

were you there. . .
on the wind
an evening song

Illuminations

WRITTEN BY DIANA WEBB
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 20 MAY 2018

The dark will be upon us soon as winter approaches so we make the most of the
daylight while it lasts.

stretched on a bench
how a dragonfly's wing
lets in the light

Afternoon sun shines down on the river where gaps between reflections of remaining
leaves show up the sky's intensity. Those below the water glow copper bronze.

up flies
the liquid light
a kingfisher

Too soon the air begins to grow chill so we make our way home across the bridge as
the sun starts sinking away.

almost candle light
the wake
of a swan

Winter guests

WRITTEN BY EVA LIMBACH
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 20 MAY 2018

- [Germany](#)

Tired and hungry after a long journey we decide to spend the evening in a well-known tapas bar.

The waitress serves us pepperoni stuffed with codfish and fried baby squids.

Almost heretical I order a burger and it is the best I can remember.

The veal is done to perfection. Big onion rings are roasted with honey and the smoky dip is just fantastic.

Even the sesame bun is warm and crispy

"Algo mas?"

another glass of wine
the old face
of our rose peddler

late-night news

WRITTEN BY EVA LIMBACH
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 20 MAY 2018

Did I get blunt? Oh, not really!

When the first refugees drowned in the Mediterranean there was an outcry in the media. We all were shocked.

Today, a casual mention following the day-to-day politics. Nothing has changed and it touches me more than ever. After a moment of hesitation I reach for the remote.

Yes I know, I know

foreign war
secured at his backpack
a toy soldier

Silence

WRITTEN BY ZELYKO FUNDA
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 20 MAY 2018

silence
on the empty vase
roses blooming

Silence is what follows hush.

silence
a petal on the keyboard
silence

My grannie can hear music even when it's quiet. Perhaps it's because she can hear bad.

a shell
full of
silence

Silence is when everybody plays mute.

Silver Lining

WRITTEN BY JOHANNES S. H. BJERG
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 20 MAY 2018

“but”
- Dhammapada

What's good about imaginary dogs is that they're cheap to feed and don't need to pee outside in snowstorms.

incense -
on granddad's birthday
it's a cheroot

Great Scheme

WRITTEN BY JOHANNES S. H. BJERG
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 20 MAY 2018

“the”
- Rig Veda

In the great scheme of things it's a minor annoyance licking the wrong side of cigarette paper.

to sum it up rain

The Olive Branch

WRITTEN BY TIFFANY SHAW-DIAZ
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 17 MARCH 2018

I struggle with telling people I am a Christian. And, quite frankly, because I am very liberal, many people assume I am not.

crown of thorns
the sting
of labels

Even though I am not interested in converting anyone, I do hope that, at some point, each person will seek out a source higher than themselves for comfort, love, and strength - whether it is the universe, nature or maybe God.

shadow of death
can you feel
my hand in yours?

But, how do I convey this to someone who has been kicked out of a church for coming out? Or someone who has been beaten to the tune of the Fifth Commandment?

I don't know.

So, I just love.

water to wine
the first sip
belongs to you

Dance, Monkey

WRITTEN BY TIFFANY SHAW-DIAZ
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 17 MARCH 2018

"I haven't seen a selfie from you in a while. Are you okay?"

I look at the message for a minute before sending a short but pleasant response, reassuring Random Male that in the past few months since my last selfie, I have not indeed become a leper who has misplaced my eyeballs and developed a cleft palate.

social media
the sweet sound
of nails on chalkboard

#moderation

WRITTEN BY TIFFANY SHAW-DIAZ
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 17 MARCH 2018

Sometimes, I have a salad for dinner. Other times, I eat a brownie the size of my head with frosting as deep as my foot.

daylight saving
I turn my scale back
fifteen pounds

when words fail

WRITTEN BY GAIL OARE
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 17 MARCH 2018

I watch the heavy drops form waves and slide down the car windshield. A spring rain is sopping the lawn and trees. Then it happens. The blades of grass begin to dance; the tree line beyond the morning haze undulates. All that was motionless a moment earlier now moves. I sit looking deep into a portal where every field and sunflower that Van Gogh's eyes captured lay pinned to his canvases, still damp with paint and wiggling.

new shoes
the toddler can't
stand still

Smart Boy

WRITTEN BY PETER JASTERMSKY
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 17 MARCH 2018

Perhaps you, too, had one: the teacher for whom you could do no right. The teacher whose goal in life was to find one thing about everyone and publicly shame them.

As the school year progresses, it becomes clearer how others will respond. Anxious and impulsive, I do the opposite of what I am supposed to. For other children, there are sudden trips to the bathroom, hands raised, of course. And then, there is Smart Boy. He seems to supernaturally know everything. One day, though, during history lesson, Smart Boy is revealed.

As the teacher explains a chapter, it's clear from Smart Boy's remarks that he has been reading ahead. His smack is swift, stinging. Robert, our teachers barks, you are not to read ahead. You are to stay even with everyone else.

So that's his secret . . . For a moment, I wonder if I can learn to read ahead, too, and be a smarter boy. Then, I see the mist settle over Smart Boy's eyes.

harsh light
another child's star
dims

Cleaning the Lens

WRITTEN BY PETER JASTERMSKY
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 17 MARCH 2018

When we point out our strengths, we should use as many fingers as possible. If we need four fingers to highlight one of our strengths, so be it. Not all buds will bloom; nature has taught us this.

And we often won't utilize our strengths even if we point five fingers at them. People are funny this way.

Rain, wind, or predators will knock some blossoms off, but a few tough ones always remain . . .

cleaning the lens
the finger prints
of multiple selves

Yellow

WRITTEN BY VESSISLAVA SAVOVA
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 17 MARCH 2018

According to a legend, boys and girls were sent by the Chinese emperor to an unknown land to bring back chrysanthemums to their country – the flower that could be picked only by people with pure hearts because it consisted of the elixir of life. Those children, however, stayed to live on the island that we know as Japan today.

old postcard -
the signature on its back
fades away

How's That?

WRITTEN BY VESSISLAVA SAVOVA
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 17 MARCH 2018

"Be a good girl and pass me the salt, please."

"But why, granny? Mom calls it "the white death". White or black, I don't want you to die."

“None has died of salt but think a little – how bland your favorite meals would be without it. Here, taste this.”

“Gross! Chicken soup with no salt is like a child with no Granny”

whirlwind
Shubert's Symphony №8
unfinished

How To Make Tea

WRITTEN BY PRANITI GULYANI
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 17 MARCH 2018

1. Put two glasses of water in a saucepan.

I look into the inside of the saucepan, how perfect the circle, so accurate and compassed, with such a tender centre.

I began trying to estimate the radius and the diameter.

2. Add 10 ml of milk

How beautiful and smooth flowing the milk!

I think of the ocean of milk and the amrit and the poison. I think of sapphire throated Shiva.

3. Put one spoon of tea leaves

I think of myself, a crumpled fistful of scattered flakes. I think of my stability crumpled by society and scattered like tea leaves, to be made into an elixir and eventually be sipped by the world.

5. Light the stove. Let the tea warm.

I look at the bubbles forming.

My mother bends over to see how the tea is. I see her elated smile reflected in the frothing bubbles....

ocean breeze...
her husband's footprint trembles
on her headscarf

Grace

WRITTEN BY SUSAN BETH FURST
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 17 MARCH 2018

White blossoms float languidly in the lily pond. Tadpoles and minnows teem underneath the dark surface, and frogs sit fat in the green rushes. We bring baskets of pink and purple flowers to decorate great grandma's grave. We climb the hill to the old water pipe, tiptoe, and turn the knob. It creaks and begins to shake. Water splashes our upturned faces, fills our shoes, spills over our pails, soaking the ground beneath us. We dance in the puddles and slosh through the mud, dragging our pails behind us.

evening rain—
that peculiar scent
of hyacinth

Fall from...

WRITTEN BY SUSAN BETH FURST
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 17 MARCH 2018

Naked—white branches reach up, full of ice the river moves slow clouds in the pewter sky.

midnight train—
smoke billows
on the far shore

The Key?

WRITTEN BY DON BAIRD
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 17 MARCH 2018

"One day I will find the right words, and they will be simple."
(Jack Kerouac)

I wonder if this isn't exactly "the thing" — say what's on your mind in the clearest, most direct way possible — with the immediacy of communication your principle

goal. Simplicity resonates more deeply with the human psyche than complexity; one would initially think it the other way around. Simplicity engages; complexity resists. Possibly, when simplicity is matched with simplicity well enough, deeper meanings appear but not all at once — the words remain simple but their aroma in conjunction with one another is rich and tasty.

ocean tide . . .
all other things
the moon

Kookaburra laughing

WRITTEN BY RICHARD GILBERT
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - HAIBUN](#)
PUBLISHED: 17 MARCH 2018

Earlier today, my friend, an Aussie, returned to her family home or her parents' after-the-kids-left-home home—they're in their 80s. A week earlier she's walking up a mountain road in Tassie almost daily, trying to keep up with the locals, somehow lames her foot, plantar fasciitis, pain as severe as piercing needles if at odd times. Can't risk walking around, or if you do you're limping all of a sudden.

Returned home having for some months imagined how she'd help out, cook, clean, shop, nurture her folks. Now she's lame, can't do much. In fact, her sick mom does the cooking. This morning she went outside into a summer full of life just limping around the block. She reports all this to me and writes,

“Kookaburra was laughing
At me personally”

A near-kangaroo-like image arises in mind, I'm ignorant of just about any Aussie wild or domestic life down to beer-drinking. I wiki this—bird—my, my, it's gorgeous and petite a “terrestrial tree kingfisher” and perhaps unsurprisingly there's a common variety known as Laughing kookaburra so my friend was punning, hadn't realized that. *Dacelo novaeguineae* looking at a photo in fact he seems to be laughing even in his gaze even silently.

Laughing at this wayward gypsy daughter with a lamed foot trying to walk a bit, take care of her familial duties and maybe her whole life for those blocks around the aging neighborhood chorused by a slew of smart-alec birds shaming her. But you know unlike Hamlet able to take a joke.

after love
from the unknown
kookaburra laughing

Maybe she'll like the way I told this story.

Razor's Edge

WRITTEN BY SHLOKA SHANKAR

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - LINKED FORMS](#)

PUBLISHED: 12 NOVEMBER 2018

- [India](#)

framing the moment :: a little logic, a little nonsense

better than the obvious the razor's edge of possibility

cut off from existence :: the subtlety of evening prayers

flour in the air :: dissertations on fate

double exposure :: the world rearranges itself

outlining where it should have been the moon

(erasures from *Beneath the Sugar Sky* by Seanan McGuire)

Catouse

WRITTEN BY RICHARD GILBERT
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - LINKED FORMS](#)
PUBLISHED: 30 JUNE 2018

- [Japan](#)

wayward lingua liminal c a t as trophe

nocat bears teeth nocall no si-lent catscream

mammalian alien attackat my -opia allmost

t-tastes carnalvore, almost-spreken

kontakt propeller reaper cubase, reason

tracking the sampled distance

at timeline rates of newsfeed cats

u puttogether picasso murderemotion

into scrolls like ancient ones in your facebook

there too the future only seems to unroll

A Shaft of Sunlight

WRITTEN BY APARNA PATHAK & FERRIS GILLI

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - LINKED FORMS](#)

PUBLISHED: 23 JUNE 2018

a spring nijuin renku
by Aparna Pathak and *Ferris Gilli*

emerging ants
scattered bread crusts
around the school bench

*this long day the sisters
begin a science project*

another leaf
in the collection
of a tea picker's son

*clean china cups
wait ready for use*

a heron
peaking the moon
in the clay bowl

lying on the terrace we watch stars
in each other's eyes

after the war
the celebrities' reluctance
to break their embrace

the injured soldier
gluing a hula doll

bed sheets
on a clothesline
billow in the wind

the ball rolls up
to the boundary and stops

with a loud sneeze
the flu season
begins

even the last ember
extinguishes

the king finally content
in the coziness
of his mistress's hideaway

a glimpse of her bosom
in the lightning

*as big as a car tire
the harvest moon
reveals their music notes*

*cricket, if you want to sing
I can play the guitar*

*I turn
to a familiar voice
in masquerade*

*who knows the man
in the spy shop?*

*everybody's head
dotted with
cherry blossoms*

*tadpoles move as one
into a shaft of sunlight*

broad arrow: my Tasmanian-ness

WRITTEN BY MARIETTA MCGREGOR
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - LINKED FORMS](#)
PUBLISHED: 23 JUNE 2018

- [Australia](#)

75,000

transported for life

first fleet crammed belowdecks

three-pennorth of sugar a stolen bonnet

women's factory the hard weight of a leg-iron

thumbprints in a brick the night-breathing of walls

morning prayer out of solitary arrowed shirts scuffing beeswax

pregnant on remand a vagrant boy in an unconsecrated church

sharks patrol Point Puer two last lost children hold hands jump

friendly warder a woman off latrine duty owes him big-time

iron maiden evening piano recital for the governor's lady

felling Huon pine logs cat-o'-nine tails superintends

convict songs chain gangs gone bush in the Tiers

stone clatter on tin throw out yer tea sugar missus

starving dog his dinner companions dead reckoning

today's hunt loosing the hound pack break-back broken

island-bound by an isthmus hanged by the neck until dead

isle death row after row of convict cairns all fallen crooked

remittance man a ration of grog for the manumitted couple
blanks in the family album we never talk about it dear
they declare the stain may prove indelible milord
proximal phalanges o the shame of it
sharp needles of
l.o.v.e.

Gone in the Morning

WRITTEN BY MICHAEL H. LESTER & AKANE
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - LINKED FORMS](#)
PUBLISHED: 15 JUNE 2018

- [USA](#)

in a sea of tattoos—I buy an eighth and slink out
he explains to hear ad nauseum how i wish i had a stiff drink
hearing only half of what he mutters, she is splitsville!
bending cosmos another basketball team checking in
as she sleeps, a spider spins gossamer across the hoops in her
earlobes
red blanket and cool sheets these bones carry much stress

*

I marry the milkmaid for her handiwork—she marries me for the practice
i fill my mouth with you the shadows now turning
it's a long walk back from the brothel—I decide to spin the night

spring thunder his hardon prominent when we speak
she swears she'd rather choke on a chicken bone
eating from Hibachi again lobby silence and our breathing
transfixed by the way she fills out her cashmere—goats will eat anything
aimless aimless these slate grey walls are depressing
he propositions me as I swish past the red lights
another question: you walk away with my smile
fake smile, false teeth, silicone breasts—my kind of guy
another noir film my computer reboots

*

rainbow flags on his toenails—Rock Hudson in Magnificent Obsession
today deciding to stay in bed no social media at all
fourteen galaxies merging in the distant universe we still can't get along
more messages still watching my movie
exchanging emails with a new friend bursting with enthusiasm
not sure if these are haiku bad things done in Nazarene's name
big hole in my sock I never throw anything away
shopping at the supermarket i deeply despise daddy
organic fruits and vegetables taking a bite out of my budget
early noon: one of those days i don't wanna talk
Facebook friend—she ups the ante with a Face Time call
enjoying chocolate another guest slides me his number

*

dominatrix goes off script—the many uses of a police baton

cabin fever: edge of her turquoise bikini

lipstick in hard to reach places—gone in the morning

crushed silk curtains practicing 'Autumn Leaves' in silence

cigarette burns on the hotel room carpet—a broken high heel shoe

witch of Endor who conjures up dead leaves?

Michael H. Lester, Los Angeles, California, USA

Akane, Dallas, Texas, USA

25 Years After the Freeze

WRITTEN BY JOHANNES S. H. BJERG

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - LINKED FORMS](#)

PUBLISHED: 24 MAY 2018

25 years on the wagon going nowhere I arrive

from a stale croissant the question of mortality

God©® to some to come to some peace peace

at the root of the mantra someone planted blackbirds

a thousand holy names not one containing an ø

from the question of exclusivity Elisa's chariot of fire

that year swans froze to the lake

Time and Memory Out of Sync

WRITTEN BY JOHANNES S. H. BJERG
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - LINKED FORMS](#)
PUBLISHED: 24 MAY 2018

peeling shadows off stones
Verðande becomes
her sisters

there's a pot to cook everything
even dusk

perhaps the mind
is a ball
in a pinball machine?

"tutto, tutto, tutto" he says
forgetting the names of fruits

*Verðande is one of the three nornes in Nordic mythology weaving men's fate. The name is usually translated as "present time," or "the now." Urð is "the past," Skuld is "the future."

It's Impossible to Find Your Place When Everything is Moving

WRITTEN BY JOHANNES S. H. BJERG
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - LINKED FORMS](#)
PUBLISHED: 24 MAY 2018

listening to Ravel
a sea god
moves to the city

where the wind ends
there's a no parking sign

not the “peeling an onion” allegory
more like a grape
in a maze

in a yellow eternity we hunt
for the bell in the butterfly

crepuscule with monk

WRITTEN BY CLAYTON BEACH
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - LINKED FORMS](#)
PUBLISHED: 22 MAY 2018

- [USA](#)

crepuscule with monk. autumn's raven settles into the bone

withered leaves cling in whispers from the oak

moonlight by proxy a streetlight stains the sleepless walls

only an hour left before rapture

another news cycle and still no closer to god

yes and no the question of consent

deeper than thought a light frost sublimates into the wind

running on empty nest syndrome

she tidies the cedar chest, a photo falls to the floor

smoke from the bonfire of letters

no paper trail and yet as guilty as any other

first stone is a glancing blow

ripples of sunlight on snowmelt a stonefly nymph

the delta of venus in furs

braiding a sense of self from snippets of folksong

into the grand fugue state of the union

doddling this way and that, he's forgotten the war

contrails fading high in the crosswinds

petal by petal by petal... the hours pour through me

off beat and slightly out of tune

Black Ice

WRITTEN BY JACOB SALZER

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - LINKED FORMS](#)

PUBLISHED: 11 MAY 2018

- [USA](#)

black ice
I drive over
the moon

vape smoke escapes
her pale white face

early morning
the prisoner's breath lingers
above barbed-wire

tire chains left behind
on the narrow highway

Christmas shopping
she tries on
another necklace

gold light shimmers
across the water

breaking news
in the old t.v.
drifting clouds

trying to sleep
in the hospital lobby

smell of coffee

I take another bite
of a salad

strangers walking briskly
through the garden

receding
deep into the night
sound of sirens

seagulls calling
above dim streetlamps

dementia . . .
waves washing away
footprints in the sand

migratory patterns
in the wings of a butterfly

check-mate
my neighbor gives me
another cookie

new cracks form
in the marble steps

heavy rain
sunlight pierces through
broken thoughts

solving the last word
of a crossword puzzle

early morning . . .

I light another journal
on fire

headlines trickle down
a vacant driveway

Winter Lullaby

WRITTEN BY RON C. MOSS & CAROLINE SKANNE
CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - LINKED FORMS](#)
PUBLISHED: 27 APRIL 2018

- [United Kingdom](#) [Australia](#)

after the storm
children make snow angels
that sparkle with grace

*left behind sledge . . .
a blackbird's footprints*

red mist
the solstice bonfire
sizzles with sleet

*trail of pines
their blue shadows
stretch into dusk*

native hens skid about
on the thick lake ice

*winter lullaby
a hush of wind
moves the flame*

Ron C. Moss (Aus) &
Caroline Skanne (UK)

We Rest Our Oars

WRITTEN BY RON C. MOSS & CAROLINE SKANNE

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - LINKED FORMS](#)

PUBLISHED: 27 APRIL 2018

- [United Kingdom](#) [Australia](#)

river's edge
starcluster blooms

in the moonlight

notes from a banjo

travel downstream

purple dusk

a rainbow of flowers

in her hair

picnic for two

a mysterious bird call

as we rest our oars

golden droplets sparkle

on the pussy willows

driftwood

a line of turtles

sun basking

Ron C. Moss (Aus) &
Caroline Skanne (UK)

Holi

WRITTEN BY KALA RAMESH'S STUDENTS

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - LINKED FORMS](#)

PUBLISHED: 23 MARCH 2018

festival of colours—
the family members
beyond recognition

across the table
they WhatsApp each other

playing fetch
the dog lands
on a sand castle

the building crumbles
over a homeless man

our noses
come in the way
as we kiss

wedding bells
like the sound of a fire alarm

during full moon night
a wolf's call
breaks the silence

crack of dawn
a lone star becomes the sky

**Holi is a festival of colours celebrated in India which symbolizes the win of the good over the evil. Its literal meaning is 'let bygones be bygones'.*

Form Used: [Rasika \(a renku in eight linked-verses\)](#)

Participants: This rasika renku 'Holi' was written by the students of the Symbiosis School for Liberal Arts Pune, during their 60-hour course on haiku and allied genres taught by Kala Ramesh. The students completed this renku trip in 4 hours divided into two hours each on 6th March and 7th March 2018.

Each student (whose verse was chosen) was the 'sabaki' for the new verse.

Shubhangi Anand -Verses 1 & 7

Azara Merchant - Verses 2 & 5

Unnati Agrawal - Verse 3

Rajath Nair - Verse 4

Kaavya Ranjith - Verses 6 & 8

Vasant Panchami

WRITTEN BY KALA RAMESH'S STUDENTS

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - LINKED FORMS](#)

PUBLISHED: 23 MARCH 2018

blue sky
coloured by kites...
the ground a chessboard

a wounded pigeon
at the doorstep

couple wrestles
on the bed
for a quilt

fading bruises
her only alimony

trampled jasmine blossoms
stay hidden
by the tall grass

the boy tries on makeup
for the first time

full moon
steals the light
from surrounding stars

lion's mane ripples
as it takes on the savannah

*Vasant Panchami is a cultural festival in India which marks the arrival of spring.

Form Used: [Rasika \(a renku in eight linked-verses\)](#)

Participants: This rasika renku '*Vasant Panchami*' was written by the students of the Symbiosis School for Liberal Arts Pune, during their 60-hour course on haiku and allied genres, taught by Kala Ramesh. The students completed this renku trip in 4 hours divided into two hours each on 6th March and 7th March 2018.

Each student (whose verse was chosen) was the 'sabaki' for the new verse.

Megha Nair, Jesita Limathwala and Yaeshona Sarkar – Verse 1

Jesita Limathwala – Verse 2

Megha Nair – Verse 3

Abhirami Ponnambalam – Verse 4

Yashvi Shah – Verse 5

Jesita Limathwala and Antara Dharane – Verse 6
Megha Nair – Verse 7
Yashvi Shah – Verse 8

Several Species of Small Furry Animals

WRITTEN BY COLIN STEWART JONES & MICHAEL DYLAN WELCH

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - LINKED FORMS](#)

PUBLISHED: 14 MARCH 2018

spring breeze—
the rabbit runs
ahead of its ears

*ferret stash
behind the couch*

old lady
still wearing her mink—
summer concert

*autumn chill—
a lap dog
in the fake masterpiece*

dad home from the pet shop
with Billy's "lost" hamster

*winter doldrums—
the toilet-paper tube
saved for the gerbil*

Colin Stewart Jones
Michael Dylan Welch

Novak, Veronika Zora

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [Canada](#)

lullaby ...
curling up in the sound
of rain

Chrysanthemum Issue 24

Bialek, Wendy C.

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [USA](#)

after the snap
family removed his arms
but not the ptsd

Failed Haiku September 2018

Lange, Jill

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [USA](#)

his goodbye—
the sun too
lost in fog

Mayfly, Issue 62, winter 2017,

McGregor, Marietta

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [Australia](#)

yellow eyes
the moon looks out
of a wolf

— Merit Award, International Section, 29th Ito En Oi Ocha Shinhaiku Contest, 2018, Japan

Mindova, Radka

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [Bulgaria](#)

blowing a kiss
the wind changes
its direction

European Kukai October 2017 - First Place

Dutt, Gurpreet

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [India](#)

dandelion
how far the wind rolls
each seed

Wales haiku journal - Spring issue 2018

Kadric, Elmedin

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [Sweden](#)

in puddles
stars coming up
for air

Acorn #39, Fall 2017

Kuznetsova, Natalia

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [Russia](#)

the storks' empty nest
on the roof of the closed church ...
my unborn child

World Haiku Review March 2018

Geyer, Pat

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [USA](#)

charting
the maps of age
spider veins

cattails January 2014 Premier Issue

Narang, Shreya

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [India](#)

kargil war...
some extra stars
in the sky

Cattails Youth Corner, 2018

Strange, Debbie

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [Canada](#)

transience . . .
petal by petal
we let go

Winning Haiku, Canada - 2017 VCBF Haiku Invitational

Jacobson, Roberta Beach

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [USA](#)

afternoon showers
steady rhythm of raindrops
- the scent of roses

Mused / Bellaonline.com (July 2018)

Lignori, Priscilla

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [USA](#)

Slipping off the branch—
the snow finally reaches
its destination

Honorable Mention - 72th Basho Memorial 2018 English Haiku Contest

Grahn, Richard

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [USA](#)

Make that a Double

Mom had a poodle named Martini. She did love that dog but may have loved the liquid indulgence even more. I mean, she always pampered that mutt but she could also outdrink a fish. The haircuts, ribbons, bows and extra olives certainly made for a colorful childhood no matter how you choose to look at it. Anyway, I'm just sitting here right now, idly sipping a memory of the two of them, enjoying a little hair of the dog and ambivalently wondering if pets are allowed on the furniture in heaven.

moonrise at sunset...
shadows of wildflowers
in his hand

Contemporary Haibun Online, Volume 14, Number 2, July 2018

Harizanova, Zornitza

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [Bulgaria](#)

end district
gipsy children make faces
at the passing train

Free Hugs to Strangers, Sofia Library 2016; *New Social Poetry Journal*, March 2017

Reese, Beki

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [USA](#)

Easter lilies
on his unmarked grave -
unkept promises

What The Wind Can't Touch - SCHSG Anthology 2016

Ashbaugh, Marilyn

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [USA](#)

small talk
the creek scampers
beyond its banks

Modern Haiku Volume 48:1 (2018)

Shankar, Shloka

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [India](#)

pulling sins out of a dreamer conscience

Under the Basho (ku section), 2018

Pillai, Madhuri

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [Australia](#)

siblings...
the different narratives
of our childhood

Tinywords Issue 17.2 Nov.23. 2017

Blackwell, Danny

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [Spain](#)

I
MOUNTAIN/REVEALED
YOU

IS/LET - April 14th, 2018

Dobb, Jan

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [Australia](#)

passing shower
just enough to wet
the wind

Autumn Moon 1:1, December 2017

Chin, Christina

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [Sarawak](#)

thousand sky lanterns
surf the autumn wind
mid-autumn festival

[The Asahi Shimbun \(朝日新聞\) Haikuist](#) ㊦

Buckingham, Helen

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [United Kingdom](#)

scorched field not a blade in sight

THF: A Sense of Place, 19th Sep. 2018

Kolodji, Deborah P

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [USA](#)

my day in slow motion koi

Acorn, Issue #40, Spring 2018

Derley, Marie

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [Belgium](#)

airport parking
a weeping willow's shadow
on the Kiss & Fly

Presence, issue 62, Oct. 2018

Cygan, Amy

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [USA](#)

Van Gogh pretending same sunflower painted

Bones – Journal for Contemporary Haiku. Issue No. 14

Stoyanova, Iliyana

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [United Kingdom](#)

misty walk
a magpie
shade of blue

Time Haiku #48

Guliaeva, Irina

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [Russia](#)

nose-to-nose
looking into each other's
single eye

Failed Haiku, issue 34, October 2018

Kentikelenis, Panagiotis

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [Greece](#)

closed brothels—
on his death notice two
possible birthyears

Chrysanthemum 24, 2018

Gilbert, Mark

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [United Kingdom](#)

Japanese garden my mother clings onto my arm

Blithe Spirit #17/4 (Dec-07), *Failed Haiku* #31 (Jul-18) and *Prune Juice* #25 (Jul-18).

Nyitrai, Réka

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [Romania](#)

twilight those words spoken by your hands

is/let September 17, 2018, edited by Scott Metz

Hopewell, Louise

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [Australia](#)

buttress roots
the myth
of family

Creatrix Haiku Issue 41

Camargo, Claire Vogel

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [USA](#)

bare branches
a raven weighing
moonlight

Butterfly Dream - 2018

Clarke, Marion

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [Northern Ireland](#)

autumn mist
we taste our way through
the orchard

The Heron's Nest Volume XX, Number 3 September 2018

Smith, Robin Anna

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [USA](#)

a church steeple harpoons the moon forced childbirth

Sonic Boom Annual Senryu Contest 2018 - Second Place

Golban, Florin

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [Romania](#)

shadow of the fisherman
around the moon -
rocking the boat

Bonsai Journal, Issue 1

Agyei-Baah, Adjei

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [Ghana](#)

a party
before the farmer's party –
locusts

Cattails April 2018

Dragostinova, Radostina

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [Bulgaria](#)

my daughter
teaching paper angels
how to spread wings

Haiku Masters (runner-up) March 2018

Gatalica, Goran

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [Croatia](#)

spring pilgrimage -
first cherry blossoms
in mother's sandals

The Haiku Moment Award: Best of Volume 1 (issues 1:1 and 1:2) *Autumn Moon Haiku Journal*

Ilić, Nataša

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [Croatia](#)

time is paused
neither dead nor alive
a frozen embryo

IAFOR Vladimir Devidé HAIKU AWARD 2018, Kobe, Japan (Runner up);

Chaturvedi, Salil

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

tiny fish
in a roadside stream
the world's edge

Chrysanthemum 20, October 2016

Aversano, Joseph Salvatore

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [Turkey](#)

blue throated
bird's sky
voice

Acorn 35, Fall 2015
(with help from Freddy Ben-Arroyo)

Hawkhead, John

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [United Kingdom](#)

evening breeze
winding through war graves
the scent of mown grass

The Heron's Nest, Volume XIX, Number 2, June 2017

Petriccione, Margherita

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [Italy](#)

sixth of June
the rancid aftertaste
of my ice cream

MHP Academy – June 6th, Quickie Writing Challenge -first place

Taylor, Christine

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [USA](#)

a look, a
touch, a breath--
summer heat

Modern Haiku, Volume 37.1, Winter/Spring 2006

Doderovic, Zoran

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [Serbia](#)

fallen magnolia petals
the little girl makes
a new flower

A Vast Sky: An Anthology of Contemporary World Haiku (edited by Bruce Ross and others), Tancho Press 2015

Minor, Lori A

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [USA](#)

dementia
I lose the lily
petal by petal

short list, 2017 H. Gene Murtha Senryu Contest
short list, 2017 Touchstone Award

Ganni, Gowtham

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [India](#)

spring predawn—
the janitor sweeps
the night away

Heron's Nest Vol XX, # 2: June 2018

Singha, Sudebi

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [India](#)

book fair
dad engrossed
in e-book

failed haiku vol-2 issue 20

Timenova, Zlatka

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [Portugal](#)

two glasses on the table
in one of them
that eternity...

Otata #24 December 2017

Fractled

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

fall leaves –
the thoughts I rake
as they pile up

Blithe Spirit February 2018

Limbach, Eva

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [Germany](#)

all that remains
to write about -
winter moon

Mainichi Jan. 26, 2018

Klacsanzky, Nicholas

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [Ukraine](#)

whale vertebrae
drifting from one god
to another

[Touchstone Individual Poem Award, Haiku Foundation, 2016](#)
A Hundred Gourds, 5.3

Joan, Eva

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [Germany](#)

full moon -
in the eyes of the tiger
iron bars

Vollmond -
in den Augen des Tigers
Gitterstäbe

Chrysanthemum (April 2018)

Domburg-Sancristoforo, Anna Maria

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

The old crow
How many winters left
in his flight

Haikuniverse, December 15th, 2016

Benson, Jan

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [USA](#)

green barley
a slack tide
of turfan silk

Akitsu, Spring 2018

Bellini, Marina

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [Italy](#)

grandma's silk fan
her slow-paced
tales

NHK Haiku Masters website, runner-up on September 2017

•

Gardiner, Tim

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [United Kingdom](#)

for dad
the smaller cairn
on the summit

Frogpond #39.3

Parashar, Vandana

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [India](#)

one-way street
the fragrance of jasmine
everywhere

Cattails, Jan 2016

Novak, Veronika Zora

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [Canada](#)

cupped hands—
i drink the rhythm
of rain

Chrysanthemum Issue 20

Voicu, Steliana Cristina

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [Romania](#)

the way home...
a cow's bell drips
the evening glow

Honorable Mention - 71st Bashō Memorial English Haiku Contest, October 2017
Japan

Bremson, Ed

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [USA](#)

perfect storm...
sounds of relief
the day after

NHK Haiku Masters website, and presented on their TV. November 2017

Antonio, Billy

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [The Philippines](#)

daybreak
the sound
of a cocoon

Honorable Mention - 5th Annual Golden Haiku Competition

Bongcaron, Willie R.

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [The Philippines](#)

the secret
i share with the cicadas
wedding vow

21st Mainichi Haiku Contest, International Section. 2nd Prize

Sambangi, Srinivasa Rao

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [India](#)

stone buddha—
all the blows
that made him

Cattails October 2017

Mekala, Indra Neil

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [India](#)

geography class . . .
is it just the equator
dividing this world?

9th Yamadera Basho Memorial Museum English Haiku Contest

Rudychhev, Natalia L

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [USA](#)

tears of joy
rain drops run up the window
of home bound plane

[21st Kusamakura Taisho Winner \(Grand Prize\)](#)

Inglese, Angiola

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [Italy](#)

far thunder-
how long without hearing
a reproach

tinywords 29.11.2017

Schopfer, Olivier

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [Switzerland](#)

day moon
out of the subway entrance
a saxophone solo

Robert Spiess Memorial Haiku Award Competition for 2017 - Honorable Mention
Modern Haiku 48.2, Summer 2017

Sutcliffe, Rachel

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [United Kingdom](#)

filling our silence
the heavy scent
of lilies

wild voices, vol 2: an anthology of short poetry & art by women
(Edited by Caroline Skanne) wildflower poetry press 2018

Grankin, Nikolay

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [Russia](#)

her last diary
so many
blank pages

NHK "Haiku Masters" Yufuin, Oita, February 2018

Gulyani, Praniti

CATEGORY: [UTB 2018 - POET'S PERSONAL BEST](#)

- [India](#)

my first hijab...
a shadow
on the flower

Red Moon Anthology 2017

Praniti Gulyani — Her life, poetry, and heart.

by Don Baird

"I am Praniti Gulyani, a 14 year old girl from New Delhi." This concise introduction is part of the first correspondence I had with Praniti. She offered her submission to Under the Basho. I was surprised by her raw talent and pleased to read her haiku — and to immediately accept a few. She has now become a regular contributor to UtB for several different styles/divisions.

Then, to my surprise, I received an interesting, creative tribute to Under the Basho of which I enjoyed reading very much:

daybreak...
the shadow of
her uncurling toes

I stumbled onto the first platform, the darkness of the stage wings colliding with the rectilinear beams of light. My eyelashes blinked as my vision struggled to stabilize itself. My first few haiku were clasped between my palms and I held onto them because they were everything I had.

wall hanging...
my scribbles catch
a star

Getting published was a vague possibility. The mirrors of my mind were clouded and I felt as though I had taken a step way ahead of what I once was.

sailor's daughter...
the sea through a
cookie cutter

A trail of thought stumbled through the twilight clouds of my mind. I watched the haze hobble away, leaving a mere raindrop. I gazed at the raindrop, as it settled into the fog-- till it cling to the wispy clouds. And then-- I thought of my first haiku.

automated globe...
I watch Syria slip
from between my fingers

I don't know what intrigued me so much after that. Seeing that solitary crystal of a raindrop, I began to look deeper into it, till I noticed how easily and beautifully it held the moon.

old lullaby...
my thoughts lean on
arcs of stars

Stringing my moonlit raindrops together, I began to discover haiku. A month later, I felt as though my toes which had curled in reluctance had begun to uncurl.

rainy afternoon...
how scattered the sky
in all those puddles

I had three published haiku in the Modern Haiku category of *Under The Basho*. They say that success on the first platform propels you towards the second platform. I was young, uncertain and immature--yet my dreams were frothing restlessly on the shores of my mind. Putting it poetically, I'd say that *Under The Basho* was the energy that converted the restless white foam of my dreams, to soft, serene, yet fast flowing ripples.

Truly, the moon that had rested in my raindrops had started to glow brighter.

lifting fog...
the shadow of
a woman's whisper

I was overwhelmed with Praniti's talent and desire to produce such an open composition about her journey as a young poet. I immediately contacted her, after a few discussions with my partner, Stephen (Hansha). Her mother granted us permission to interview her in regards to her haiku aspirations and journey into the world of poetry.

The following is our brief, yet enthralling collection of exchanges:

Question 1

I understand that you live in India? Tell us a bit about yourself and your life there.

Praniti —

My life in India is colourful. I mean, 'colourful', is a word, which is synonymous with our Indian identity. I'm a regular school--going ninth grader with lovely teachers and great friends. My teachers and friends make my life colourful, so to say. It's a warm, cozy world here--where snowflakes do fall, but these snowflakes are wrapped in sunlight. My teachers at school are synonymous with the sunlight I've spoken about. My role models-- Sanya ma'am and Kavita ma'am, have always read and appreciated my haiku. Kavita ma'am taught me in class five, and yet she's one of the first readers of almost every haiku I write.

Question 2

At what age did you start writing haiku? How did you discover haiku as a poetry style and what attracted you to write it?

Praniti —

I started haiku when I was thirteen years old. It was a beautiful morning, the day of 25th June 2017, when I first stepped into this wonderland. Kala Ramesh ma'am, an amazing person and such a good teacher took me into this wonderland. What attracted me to haiku was the direct images. As in, when you read a haiku, the direct image that strikes you is stunning. I remember the haiku, which I read on the first day of the workshop, works by Matsuo Basho. "A whitefish with an inch of whiteness..." and "A wild duck's call faintly white".

I wanted to be an observer and creator of the zoka, of this creative force of nature — the principle of zooming in, telling the extraordinary and yet being immensely truthful; it was zoka, which pulled me in.

After all, before haiku, I would just stroke the tree branches. Now, I feel the sap thumping within. They're two more people who deserve credit for my journey getting successful. Ashish Narain---a very encouraging person who attended the workshop with me, and Gautam Nandkarni---a very generous person who is constantly knocking my haibun into shape.

Question 3

Do you follow any particular format or set of "rules" when writing haiku? Otherwise, do you believe that it has form or is it, to you, a free form poetic art?

Praniti —

When I write haiku, I feel as though I am writing bits of my surroundings and attempting to encapsulate small situations and events which seem so ordinary, yet are extraordinary. These "small situations" and "events" are a part of me, and make up the person I am. They form my perspectives and perceptions, and maybe the haiku I write, are my interpretations on them. When I write haiku, I present my interpretations on truth without actually changing the truth. Like, for instance, when I look into flowing waters, I see a 'cloud sliding off a fish's fin'. When we look into the water, it seems as though the clouds are moving, because the water is flowing and this is, after all, the ultimate truth. Speaking of a 'cloud sliding off a fish's fin' is just my interpretation.

I do adhere to the basic rules of writing haiku, like keeping it within 12 words and not exceeding a certain syllabic count because I believe that these basic rules make haiku the "beautiful poetic breath" it is known as today.

I do go by the kigo words list, and work on the apt line break as well. I believe that a line break needs to be chosen carefully, because it is a line break which ultimately decides the pause, the small halt which strongly supports the moment in haiku and which eventually casts the magic on the reader. Haiku is a free form of poetic art, which at the same time has form, and it is this form which makes it so beautiful. It is the many ways we can write haiku—traditionally, and even as a one line ku which adds to the lovely art form.

Question 4

What is/are your favorite haiku that you did not write yourself?

Praniti —

I have had many, many haiku, which are my favorite, but if I had to choose the best, they would be—

(A Senryu)

feminist's talk...
the men in the audience
discuss her figure

-Gautam Nadkarni

(Haiku)

dense fog...
the train evaporates into
a distant horn

-Kala Ramesh

(Haiku)

after the storm...
a boy wiping the sky
from the tables

-Darko Plazanin Sambo

(Haiku)

an eagle shadows a wheat field's yellow whisper

-Kala Ramesh

Question 5

If you were going to teach a student who is new to haiku, what would your first lesson be?

Praniti —

I'd consider myself to be immensely privileged if I got a chance to teach someone haiku. I believe that for haiku to be learnt in the way it should be learnt, it is essential for the student to feel a oneness with herself. All of us are scattered, or rather, all of

our thoughts are scattered, and haiku is spirituality, which needs us to be felt within us. Haiku requires immense presence of mind.

My first "lesson" would be a session where the student feels a presence within herself. When I say "presence", I am talking about a fusion of the active involvement of all the five senses which helps us emotionally connect with our surroundings, and feel a oneness with something as insignificant as the dew on the grass.....

So, I think, this could consist of walk in a natural surroundings, or even in a local area, such as a market place and I hope that this "student of mine" manages to combine all what she smells, hears, tastes, sees and touches and comes down to the conclusion of a presence within her....

Next in our journey . . .

In time, Praniti also offered an interesting view of Basho's old pond haiku. I immediately decided to flow with the natural, eclectic nature of my encounter with this terrific, young poet — chasing Praniti's thoughts from a poem about *Under the Basho* to her thoughts on haiku to a wonderful piece about Basho's frog hokku:

Essay on Basho's Old Pond Haiku by Praniti Gulyani

old pond...
a frog jumps into
the sound of water

When I read this haiku aloud, in a silent room, I hear a splash. This splash isn't the ordinary kind of splash. It is the impactful kind of splash, which lingers in the ears, and trickles to dwell in the soul.

And, every splash that I heard from that moment onwards was a comparison against this splash. This incident coaxes me to dabble in the art of nomenclature and give this splash a unique name, which is a strong portrayal of its unique identity. "The Old Pond Ku" splash.

But, how is it that I hear the frog sound? How is it that I hear words gurgle?

It's beautiful, and breathtaking. All this while I've pondered over the intrigue element in this haiku. I've analyzed the image that these ten words weave.

Coming to the point, what is the intrigue element in here? Is it the breathtaking sound of water, or is it the resounding gurgle of words?

I feel intrigue in the mere thought of something disappearing into itself. Maybe a moon beam disappears into a moonbeam which disappears into another moonbeam and it all comes together and commences at the fixed constant of one solitary moonbeam? Or is the process of peeling off the decorative layers of free verse to see the core--which is, as they say, a well said metaphor? To me, I feel that this ku

highlights the element of disappearing into one's self to see where one actually started.

I think beyond.

The frog did begin his life as a mere ripple of water in a tadpole egg. He rippled along his life as well, and totally dwelt in that sound of water. He lived in that sound of water. In this haiku, while stumbling on the conclusion, I somehow see lifelessness. I don't think the frog is alive. The frog is like a frail autumn cloud, having dwelt in twilight all his life, it prefers to fade into twilight to become a part of the twilight.

I see the 'sound of water' as something which has been split into many parts. The sound of water is made up of many frogs who thrived in the sound of water, and preferred to make their final jump into the sound of water to become a vibration of presence in this ethereal sound.

I see how beautifully Basho split up a mere sound of water, to presumably show how much emotion supposedly "insignificant" things hold within them. Jawahar Lal Nehru, a prominent Indian leader writes describes a journey of a pebble to a grain of sand by talking about the emotion in nature, about how the pebble rubs off, to gradually crumble into a cluster of sand. There's so much in that solitary pebble as well!

It is essential us to see beyond the literal meaning of the sound of water. The frog has dwelt in the sound of water, and gradually becomes a part of this sound of water as well. I believe that the frog is lifeless.

It is almost as though every word in this haiku, or rather, every syllable holds a specific sound. All those sounds, which come together to make this gurgle. The sight of an old pond with rusted waters, and yet, as the frog jumps into it, the gurgle or rather the "splash" portrays youth in nature. This youth is present as the movement, the central force in nature which represents constant motion, a direct opposition to stagnation. After all, nature is never stagnant. And, every haiku written supports the youthfulness of nature. Every haiku is the crimson breath of the autumn breeze, which ruffles a stationary pile of leaves, and guides them towards the still waters, and then, just as though heralding the completion of a fairy tale, both the leaves and the water move...

Likewise, the Old Pond Ku moves on. The "splash" isn't abstraction, but it is a direct transfer of inference from soul to soul. It's something like those old grandmother fairy tales. Even the poetic soul doesn't support stagnation.

Most importantly, a frog becomes so much more than just a frog.

In closing . . .

I offer my thanks to Praniti for her offerings, ideas, and sincerity. She is a new and exciting haiku poet that has splashed into our tight-knit scene just as Basho's frog did 400 years ago!

Monoku: An Experiment with Minimalism in Haiku Literature

by Pravat Kumar Padhy

Abstract

In the present article the poetic cadence of minimalistic expression of the art of haiku in one-line (monoku), its historical perspective and literary architecture have been dealt. During onset of human civilization, the kernel of nature had been expressed with the language of silence. Man tries to honour the tiny dust particle to the mightiest entity. The essence of poetry lies in the diligence of fragrance of flower, simplicity of flow of river, gentleness of the trees and calmness of the shadow. Brevity is the beauty of expression. In this sense, haiku, a minimalistic art, is a way of thinking to assimilate self with the divine nature and its blissful beauty. It amalgamates the spiritual romanticism and intellectual cadence of human beings in the perennial journey along the corridor of nature. Classical haiku has been composed with 5/7/5 syllabic schemata. Writing of haiku in English has been broadly put in practice in three-line style with s//s format. Some adopt two-line and even four-line style. In contrast to the traditional way of writing, the one-line or monostich paints the word-images in one breath with syntactical variations and unveils the surrealistic beauty of multiple image landscapes of the haiku expression.

Haiku and Historical Perspective:

The Japanese literature is largely inspired by Chinese literature during the Tang Dynasty (618-907) in China. *Kojiki* (712) and *Nihonshoki* (720) are the books of the earliest Japanese mythology, history and poems. Initially the song (*Uta*) were written in Chinese. Later on, the Japanese created their own style and embedded the beauty of Japanese culture in literature. The classical Japanese poems were referred as *waka* (Japanese song) in 7th century AD during the Heian era. Later it is known as *tanka* (short song) named by Shiki in 19th century. The most ancient waka were recorded in the historical record the *Kojiki* and the 20 volumes of the *Man'yōshū* are the oldest surviving waka anthology.

The word haiku is a combination of two different words haikai and hokku. Haikai is a linked-verse (collaborative) in *haikai no renga* poetry style developed during the Edo period (1602–1869). Haikai, a type of renga poetry, consists of at least 100 verses in 5-7-5-7-7 pattern. Hokku is the name given to the opening verse (5-7-5, *go schichi go*) and the last two-line is known as wakiku. Matsuo Basho (1644-1694) is the pioneer of writing Hokku. Haiku poetry came into existence from hokku of haikai and Masaoka Shiki named hokku as haiku (ha-i-ku, 3-sound in Japanese) in 1892 and subsequently, it became popular in the western world in the form three horizontal lines in s//s format. Haiku consists of 17 'on' or 'morae' (sound), written in a vertical single line (top to bottom). A Japanese haiku comprises of three sections separated by *kireji*.
kami go (the top five section)

naka shichi (the middle seven section)

shimo go (the lower five section)

Matsuo Basho (1644-1694) , Yosa Buson (1716-1783), Kobayashi Issa (1763-1827) and Masaoka Shiki (1867-1902) are the Masters of the Haiku literature, including Chiyo-ni (1703-1775), a great women haikuist. In 1877, W G Aston, first translated haiku in English. Writing of 3-line haiku may date back to 1600s in the western language in Dutch. The first successful haiku written in English was "[*In a Station of the Metro*](#)" by [Ezra Pound](#) in 1913. Initially haiku is written with 5-7-5 format (with 17 'on' or '*morae*'). In Japanese literature, there is no such syllabic concept as in English. These formats are indeed the phonic or sound expression. Hence it is not possible to translate the Japanese haiku into English in the same format. For example 'akai' in Japanese has three sounds (a/ka/i). The word 'akai' means red and it is one syllable in the English. Later on, in English language, the schemata is widely kept as s//s form in haiku writings.

Art of haiku writing is a way of imaging around nature (*kocho-fuei*), behavioural sense of man, animal and non-being entities and exploring the human feeling and relationship. Haiku is unique in its form and simplistic expression with reference to season or nature as a whole. The tiniest object of nature has its genuine worth in this world and it is associated with us in different forms. I feel it is the realisation of this truth that has given rise to the genesis of Haiku poem. The haiku discovers the meaning of each entity through the aesthetic (*wabi-sabi*) way. This makes it a distinct style from other poetry forms. It reflects simplicity and honesty in expression without any artificiality, complexity or pretention. The image created through haiku in its brevity is undoubtedly is the spark of self-realization. The ethical self-realization (*zen* feeling) emblems a contemplation of spiritualism and the realization of self being a part of nature. The basic elements (*teikei*) of haiku such as seasonal reference (*kigo*), the surrealistic silence in the form of pause (*kireji*), depth and mystery (*yugen*), contained space (*ma*), becomingness (*kokora*), lightness (*karumi*) and creativeness (*zoko*) are the aesthetic assimilation of cognitive reflection of human being. The pause of silence imbued in haiku writing focuses a psychological imprint in emergent behavior. The cultural reference along with seasonal context (*Kida*) is more of anthropological assemblage of human existence through time and place and is well embedded in poetry, more specifically in classical haiku writings.

The art of juxtaposition (*renso*) is an exploration of reasoning and a poetical logic which reside in one's imagism sensibility processes. Precisely so, haiku writings have obvious limitation or restriction on poetic exuberance of use of similes, metaphors etc. However, subtle metaphoric expression with logical credence continues to explore the enlightened (*satori*) nature. Indeed it is an expression of poetic elegance (*miyabi*) in simplicity (*iki*) style.

The haiku contains two images, the "fragment" and the "phrase" while writing in English with a causer or pause in between (*Kireji*). It is not a sentence, hence there is no capital letter or punctuation in haiku writing. In Japanese, the *Kireji* (*ya, kana, keri, nari*) is expressed by syllables, but in English, it is denoted by punctuation. The "*Kireji*" sharpens the diamond edge of the haiku feeling in the form of juxtaposition or disjunction of the two images. If the poet thinks that the expression is explicit for the reader to understand the images without difficulty, the natural pause itself takes care

of the cutting word. Haiku is an objective based expression in contrast to tanka (s//s//l) which is subjective with use of similes, metaphors and personification. Japanese haiku, without a cut and only one idea, is called *ichibutsu jitate*.

The fragment is written in the first line and the phrase is expressed in the remaining two lines. The fragment image could also be expressed in the third line. One can put “dash” or “dots” (ellipsis) to separate the distinct images. Personally I believe to respect the traditional rules of s//s schemata for haiku writing with a seasonal reference and having a fair degree of juxtaposition (syntactic pivot). Minimum use of adjective, articles, gerund, refraining from use of simile, metaphor (with exception of implied poetic predicament), adverbs and conditional clauses are some of the essential characteristics of writing haiku. In general the haiku should not be personified and it is non-rhymic. The poem should be written in the present sense. It is better to refrain from incorporating ordinary cause and effect while writing haiku. At no point should it be a sentence broken into three lines.

Monoku and its Journey:

Monoku is an one-liner poem in brevity and clarity in expression and its hybridity in origins: a Greek prefix wedded to a Japanese suffix to create a new English term as put forth by Jim Kacian. Different people named monoku or monostich as an one-line ku, one-liner, one sentence ku etc. Monoku could have been derived from, ‘Epigram’, a Greek poetry style. Besides, in English, examples of monostich were historically attempted in Russian by Bryusov and French by Apollinaire.

The Definition of one-line haiku given in e-journal ‘Under the Basho’ is as follows:

“A one-line haiku is intended to be read as an unbroken line with no specified pause indicators. While they may often be able to be broken up into a classic three-line form, they nevertheless allow for different readings depending on how the reader chooses to follow the poem’s movement through its possible syntactical variations that would be lost if not retained in its one-line form. Others embody a singular headlong movement along the line through the images it contains bridging no pause or break to carry its effect.”

Lafcadio Hearn, working in the 1890s is one of the first translators of Japanese haiku. [Valery Bryusov](#) published his translations into Russian in a single line in 1894:

О закрой свои бледные ноги.

Oh, cover thy pale feet!, as translated by [Babette Deutsch](#) and [Avrahm Yarmolinsky](#)

Guillaume Apollinaire, known as the first poet to write a one-line poem in his 1913 book *Alcools : Poems 1898-1913 in French*.

Et l'unique cordeau des trompettes marines

And the single string of the sea trumpets (English translation by William Meridith)

[Walt Whitman](#), [Edith Thomas](#), [Guillaume Apollinaire](#), [Bill Zavatsky](#), Emmanuel Lochac, Matsuo Allard are the pioneers of early monoku writers.

Emmanuel Lochac published in 1920 'one-liners' under the title 'Monostiches'. William Higginson's 'Characteristics of monostichs' has enumerated the historical perspective of one-line haiku. Later [Yvor Winters](#), [Edwin Ford Piper](#), [Charles Reznikoff](#), [John Ashbery](#), [Ian McBryde](#)'s have pioneered the concept through their literary pursuits in composing monoku. Hirosaki Sato translated Japanese haiku into one-line in English.

Emmanuel Lochac published one-liners in French under the title *Monostiches* in a literary magazine in 1929 and included some in his collection with that title in 1936.

Voilier emportant le soleil dans les vergues

Schooner bearing away the sun in its arms (*translated by Breunig in Roy Rogers*)

Jack Kerouac, was the first to experiment with a single line format in the 1950s. Poets such as John Wills, M. Kettner, Jim Kacian, Janice Bostok, Chris Gordon, Scott Metz, Stuart Quine, John Barlow, and many others popularized the art of writing of monoku.

Some of the impeccable examples of one-line haiku are as follows:

A dandelion seed floats above the marsh grass with the mosquitos. *By Allen Ginsberg, Following haiku in White Shroud: Poems 1980–1985, 1986*

in the eggshell after the chick has hatched *By Michael Segers, one-line haiku in Haiku Magazine in 1971*

a dixie cup floats down the Nile. *By Cor Van den Heuvel, one –line haiku in Small letterpress chapbook, EO7, 1964*

old woodcutter rests on the rings of the oak *By Marlene Mountain (Marlene Morelock Wills), the old tin roof, no place, 1976*

an icicle the moon drifting through it *By Matsuo Allard, Bird Day Afternoon, High/Coo Press, 1978*

cry of the peacock widens the crack in the adobe wall *By Elizabeth Searle Lamb's haiku in Harold G. Henderson Haiku Awards 1981*

my head in the clouds in the lake *By Ruby Spriggs, Frogpond 6:2, 14.*

Kind of Blue the smell of rain *By Allan Burns, Acorn 20, 2008.*

stone before stone Buddha *By Karma Tenzing Wangchuk, Stone Buddha, 2009, 54.*

Schooner bearing away the sun in its arms *By Breunig, From the Country of Eight Islands, first published in 1981*

pig and i spring rain *By Marlene Mountain, Frogpond 2.3-4, 1979*

the thyme-scented morning lizard's tongue flicking out *By Martin Lucas, Presence 39, 2009*

i hope i'm right where the river ice ends *By Jim Kacian, Frogpond 35.2, 2012*

Monoku sometimes contains pause like *kireji* of traditional Japanese haiku. Monoku represents one image, but there are more to visualise in the poetry. When the poem is short, the reader must be able to understand the silence (Edgar Allen Poe).

It is interesting to observe the wordplay in writing monoku. The one-liner can be arranged in such a way, it depicts more than one sections or multiple ways of reading with syntactical variations. Sometimes, the multi images can be expressed forthwith in a single flow. The monoku, at times, appear a bit complex and the reader is to correlate the images to bring out the essence in the realm of the poetic puzzle. One has to link the silence in between to visualize the narration of word-image. There is an element of subtle juxtaposition and poetic shift to create a literary vibration amongst readers to search the composite interpretation by jigsaw puzzling the words.

Techniques and Style:

Techniques are often laid down in literature to differentiate the different genres. However, a strict rule in any art or literature form suppresses the intent of creativeness. A broad viewpoint of different style needs to be respected with the evolution of poetic excellence. There can be some general techniques for writing one-line poems as a broad guidance. **William J. Higginson, Jim Kacian, Alan Summers, Jacob Salzer and others broadly dealt the techniques and styles of monoku expression.** Two fragments or part of sentence can be artfully merged to resonate into a single line. In monoku, the concept of juxtaposition as in case of 3-line, appears to be soft or non-requirement. Artfully placement of words, creating multi options by use of the word as verb and noun, avoiding use of verb and expressing in condensed form, resonating multi meaning are some of the quite essential techniques and uniqueness for monoku composition.

The followings depict some of the examples of technique or style of monoku writing
The followings depict some of the examples of technique or style of monoku writing
(first three adopted from **William J. Higginson, 2003-04**):

Haiku in One-breath: This is indeed the real one-line haiku style. The poem starts and finishes on one stroke without any pause or break in between. It has to have a vivid interplay of image and poetic sense. Otherwise it would appear more of sentence or prosaic expression.

crow caw shatters the silence between composers By Janice M. Bostok
in Amongst the Graffiti, 2003

too many bones to sing a young song by Aalix Roake, *Wild Plum Haiku* contest,
2018

Abruptive Techniques, as suggested by Alan Summers, is a term for sharp changes in directing the reader. It is one method for breaking up normal syntax/semantics.

Alan says, “Whether the author wants these monoku read rapidly or a little slower, we touch on just some of those where velocity with quality of language as sound, not just meaning and content, can play its part, and produce from velocity and quality something I will call **veloquality**. Does one-line haiku echo the one line image of the fragment/section and phrasal (two line imagery) sections that creates sparks, bringing together an altogether different and extra overall image? Or does it do something different to the technique of juxtaposing imagery? Above all it’s the invisible text that counts as much as the visible text, as a catalyst for everything, including the vertical layers of alternative, additional, and complementary meanings from the horizontal surface meaning”.

I wish to cite some of the following brilliant examples of Alan Summers's composition.

blues change the colour rain, *brass bell: a haiku journal* (Monday, September 1, 2014)

I once was this stone home for another, *Bones - journal for contemporary haiku*
no. 7 July 15th 2015

meadow borders the river clouds, *Presence* #56 October 2016

snow on the sun navigating childhoods By, Yanty’s *Butterfly Haiku Nook:*
An Anthology, 2016

Classic Style of One-line Haiku: Here the expression follows the classic internal rhythm pattern with three phrases. It allows, unlike three-line pattern, to be expressed all in one-breath.

i open the door darkness letting in a strange moth By Matsuo-Allard, *Bird Day Afternoon*, 1978

One-line Haiku with Classic Multiple Meanings: Probably this style embodies the surrealistic beauty of monoku writing. It is written in such an artistic way, it exhibits different meanings when read in different ways. This is perhaps the unique in one-line writing with liberty of white space a reader can put more than once to evolve different interpretations by switching the different syntactic elements. Here the poetic flow follows in such a way, it appears a one-go sparkle of poetic sentence. If we

systematically follow the syntactic elements, the poem depicts different meanings and it is the real beauty of this style of monoku writing.

According to Jim Kacian , *"Multiple stops yield subtle, rich, often ambiguous texts which generate alternative readings, and subsequent variable meanings. Each poem can be several poems, and the more the different readings cohere and reinforce each other, the larger the field occupied by the poem, the greater its weight in the mind."*

Alan Summers opines, *"I appreciate how one-line haiku can often be read differently, despite its condensed form. Double-meaning, and double-interpretation is a frequent discovery with gaps and space in between."*

The followings are some classical examples:

mallards leaving in the water rippled sky By Penny Harter, *The Monkey's Face*, 1987

The haiku can be expressed and interpreted in the following ways to evolve different meanings:

**mallards leaving
in the water
rippled sky**

**mallards
leaving in the water
rippled sky** (*Harter's workshop handout, "Writing Nature Poetry", 2004*)

no moon last night I remembered you are gone By Jim Wilson
The above haiku can be divided into two sections:

no moon last night

last night I remembered you are gone

The phrase 'last night' functions as a kind of pivot, shared by two phrases. Some more examples are enumerated below:

shadows darkening three-sevenths of her face in sunlight By Elizabeth Searle Lamb, *in this blaze of sun*, 1975

envelope my thumb slips open the seal of his tongue By Janice M. Bostok, *Amongst the Graffiti: Collected Haiku and Senryu 1972-2002* (2005)

in the dark of the kitchen with the fridge door open winter solstice By Oliver Schopfer, *Under the Basho*, 2015

writing orange she peels away layers of the bitter unknown from each moon By Ken Sawitri, *Under the Basho*, 2015

Words Arrangements: This is a technique of writing the one-line haiku, more with mere close flow of writing of words (appears as if a single word by way of overlapping the words) embodying the poetic spell.

t w i l i g h t b l u e & p a l e g r e e n l e a v e s e v e r y w h e r e s c e n t o f w a t e r m e l o n s By Anita Virgil, *A 2nd Flake*, 1974

Trying to make head or tail of an earthworm by Rafal Zabratynski, 16th International Kusamakura Haiku competition

'morningloriesky' by Le Roy Gorman, *Otata* 19, July 2017

Broken Monoku: Ichthys has composed haiku, essentially, in two lines and is referred as 'Broken monoku'. The monoku is expressed in two lines with a break or caesura in between. The following is a line expression with a single pause with characteristic juxtaposition.

footsteps in the street -

echos of a distant youth

My Experience:

As far as technique is concerned, I feel different authors coin the one line haiku differently. A simple sentence consists of SVO (Subject, Verb and Object). The play of the words with sublime juxtaposition and if accompanies layered meanings, justifies an effective monoku. At the same time, the poetic effectiveness of the one-liner will be diluted if the haiku is expressed in conventional s/l/s format. Based on the observations, I try to classify the following additional techniques of writing monoku.

1. **Art of the link word:** The link word acts as a media to create subtle images.

a tornado spiraling thoughts to the sky By Kala Ramesh, *Under the Basho*, 2013

Here, if we take out 'thoughts', it would be a simple prosaic sentence. The word 'thoughts' drives the inner urge of the reader to look up the sky and action based spiraling of tornado for detail logical deliberation. Moreover, it can be classified as a classical monoku with multiple meanings.

2. **Parts of speech and the link word:** This is a beautiful technique to create multilayered meaning by using the word either as noun or as verb.

a cold moon secrets of the gallows *By Yanty Tjiam, Yanty's Butterfly Haiku Nook: An Anthology, 2016*

Here 'secrets' can be used as noun or verb to portray different images.

3. **Fragment without verb:** Interestingly, the verb can be avoided to bring out one – breath expression. However, the beauty of juxtaposition has to be present, notwithstanding in subtle form pivoting around inquisitiveness in the reader's mind. There has to be a deep space for the readers to explore monoku.

kind of Blue the smell of rain *By Allan Burn, Acorn 20 Spring 2008*

crows until the world is silhouettes *By Polona Oblak, Yanty's Butterfly Haiku Anthology, 2016.*

width of a leaf between us and autumn *By John Stevenson, 12th International Kusamakura Haiku Competition*

between statues the rest history *By Jim Kacian, 13th International Kusamakura Haiku Competition*

the scent of dawn in the bouquet of lilacs *By Madhuri Pillai, Chrysanthemum #21, 2016*

4. **Mono fragment with a gerund: Gerund**, a non-finite verb, is used with an internal juxtaposition in writing monoku:

lilac buds growing into their scent *By Adelaide B. Shaw, Under the Basho, 2014*

a lone tree conducting the wind *By Adjei Agyei-Baah, Under the Basho, 2014*

5. **Fragments with subtle expression of relative clauses:** Here the relative clauses such as who, whom, whose etc. are used in such a subtle way, it exhibits a single sentence with the element of juxtaposition.

full moon night the side we do not know *By Eva Limbach, Tanty's Butterfly Haiku Anthology, 2016.*

Here, it means full moon night 'whose' side we do not know. By silencing the relative clause, 'whose', the one-line expression portrays a beautiful haiku.

6. **Two fragments with juxtaposition:** Here the monoku is written with a subtle soft pause. This white pause inks the characteristics of juxtaposition. The composite subject followed by a noun or verb can make an effective monoku.

mountain without a name child gazing *By Jacob Salzer, Tanty's Butterfly Haiku Anthology, 2016.*

In the above example, two fragments are 'mountain without a name' and 'a child gazing'. Both merge into a monoku style with a sense of juxtaposition. Other examples such as:

where roads end the Milky Way *By Sonam Chhoki, Under the Basho, 2013*

pieces of me everywhere broken mirror *By Pris Campbell, Under the Basho, 2013.*

7. **Image within image:** This is a technique to create the image within the same image by portraying or repeating the words and the haiku can be written in a single-line.

my head in the clouds in the lake *By Ruby Spriggs, Frogpond 6:2, 1983*

I and I and I ripples on the river *By Lorin Ford, Under the Basho, 2013*

every ripple a river in the river *By Aparna Pathak, Under the Basho, 2016*

in and out of a cloud another cloud *By Archana Kapoor Nagpal, Under the Basho, 2015*

I still remember, during my school days while writing essay in my mother tongue, Odiya, I used to write a single line proverbial poem in Odiya or in English at the end of the essay juxtaposing the essence of the essay. Later on, I composed a few one-liners with metamorphic credence (titled as 'Flying Words') which were published in Poet Bay, 2010 though I was not aware of monoku.

The shadow speaks the value of the trees, *Poetbay, 2010*

Gradually I experimented writing one-liners and read scholarly articles by **William J. Higginson**, Alan Summers, Jim Kacian, Jim Wilson and others. Broadly my monoku falls in two categories, classic one-line haiku with a single subtle pause, is in dominance. Some of my haiku fall in the Classic one-line haiku with multiple meanings having characterized by fragments with juxtaposition. The followings are some of my published monoku :

melting away my pain-- garden dew, *The Heron's Nest, Vol. XV, No. 4, December 2013, tinywords, 18.1 2018*

in front of the mirror I repeat myself, *A Hundred Gourds, 3:1 December 2013*

snow fall he hardens his words, *Gems : An Anthology of Haiku, Senryu and Sedoka, The Bamboo Hut Press, 2014*

floating clouds birds fly the other way, *brass bell: a haiku journal, July 2014*

tilted mirror I repose upright, *A Hundred Gourds, 3:4 September Issue, 2014*

crowing cocks reach the morning sun, *EarthRise 2015: Years of Light*, Haiku Foundation

for all your denials the smiling Buddha, *Under The Basho*, 2015

Shadows swim across a floating migrant, *Asahi Shimbun*, 30th Nov 2015

the moon behind the shyness your crescent smile, *A Hundred Gourds*, December 2015

granddaughter with office bag my half-way smile, *Haiku Foundation, WorkPlace: Retirement*, 18.1.2017

ink spots the colour of cleanliness , *Otata 14*, February 2017

googled for a word full of twinkling stars, *Haiku Foundation, Workplace, Theme: Lost in Translation*, 8.3.2017

autumn solitude my footprints on the desert sand, *Presence, Issue # 58*, 2017

obituary column messaging silence into the sky, *Under the Basho*, 28.8. 2017

coins our ancestors exchanged a great length of time, *Under the Basho*, 28.8.2017

the sound of silence into Shinto shrines, *Akitsu Quarterly, Winter Issue*, 2017

dune after dune the migrating songs , *Presence #60*, 2018

a piece of chalk in my pocket first day of retirement, *Frogpond, 41:2 Spring – Summer Issue*, 2018

moonrise the sky from the oncology wing, *Presence #61*, 2018

what reasons for the trees aggressive wind, *Under the Basho*, 2018

trash bag the remaining chapter of my war history book, *Under the Basho*, 2018

Conclusions

Discussion on syllable count, whether to express in one, two, or three lines or as long as four lines Haiku (four lines sometimes known as *haïqua* or celtic haiku) , poetic sincerity and honesty (*fuga no makota*) as aspired by Basho need to be prevailed even in the neo-literary revolution of writings style. Monoku needs to be stand out as an independent sub-genre of haiku expression compressing the essential haiku elements and thematic illumination of aesthetic haiku sublimity. Monoku is perhaps one of the best examples of blazing of the poetic spell in its brevity and engaging the readers to celebrate the rainbow of multiple meanings. This

can sprout the new literary art in ever minimalistic expression, as rightly Jacob Salzer states:

"I find that haiku reminds us to use caution with our words, and also helps us realize the value of a single word. In terms of "economy of language", one-line haiku makes full use of very few words, even more so than three-line haiku. The depth, and layers of a single word often really comes alive in one-line haiku, as it's presented in a refined format, making familiar words both fresh and insightful....."

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Stream of Consciousness . . .

by Kala Ramesh

beyond
the horizon
beyond

Presence Haiku Journal # 53 Jan 2016

This three-line poem suggests both conclusion and continuity. A few years ago, I attended a one-month course on film appreciation at the Film and Television Institute of India, to study how directors use the ‘cut,’ called ‘kire,’ which is the essential element that makes the haiku art form different. While reading about ‘Noh’ drama, I came across the term ‘kire-tsuzuki’ or ‘cut-continuity.’ The commonest example of this is the pause between every exhalation of air from the lungs and the next inhalation. Another lovely example is our walk - we move one leg, cut the movement and move the other leg - the two actions together get us moving; there is both a cut and a continuation. My haiku embodies and exemplifies this idea of both conclusion and continuity. The continuation leads one to ‘Zoka,’ the creative force of nature, a Japanese concept used in haiku. In Sanskrit, we call this ‘Prakriti.’ Prakriti is described in the *Bhagavad Gita* as the ‘primal motive force.’

My haiku ‘*beyond the horizon beyond*,’ also embodies the void around things, an uncluttered feeling in our minds and our surroundings. The nearer you get to a horizon the farther it moves away. Once you go ‘beyond’ there is no ‘beyond.’ Beyond the horizon there is only ‘Śhūnyatā’ — the space, the void that resonates with the sound of positive energy — ‘Omkaara.’

In the silence between notes, between words, between lines, the emotional quotient that arises is ‘rasa,’ as we say in India — that which gives poetry, music, dance or any other art form greater depth and resonance. It is something that cannot be described in words, because it has taken us to a sublime plane where all sounds have dropped away.

How closely these thoughts connect with my understanding of haiku, for haiku revolves around the Japanese aesthetic concept known as ‘ma’ (pronounced as ‘mah’). I can’t do better than quote from an interview with Hasegawa Kai in the Spring 2009 issue of *Simply Haiku*.

“In other words, juxtaposition is a technique for creating ‘ma’ in haiku. A more realistic problem for discussion is that of ma. This Japanese word can have a spatial meaning, as in ‘empty space’ or ‘blank space,’ a temporal meaning (silence), a psychological meaning, and so on. Ma is at work in various areas of life and culture in Japan. Without doubt, Japanese culture is a culture of ma. This is the case with haiku as well. The “cutting” (kire) of haiku is there to create ma, and that ma is more

eloquent than words. That is because even though a superior haiku may appear to be simply describing a 'thing,' the working of ma conveys feeling (kokoro)."

It is amazing to see the reach of human thought and cultures, over hills and seas, as our quest to understand the 'unknown' continues ... beyond the horizon beyond.

a falling leaf
twirls the silence ...
who am I

Presence Haiku Journal # 46 Summer 2012

Kala Ramesh
Pune, India

Notes:

This part of the essay is taken from the preface the author wrote for her book '*beyond the horizon beyond*'. Vishwakarma Publications 2017.

who am I

– a famous quote by Saint Ramana Maharshi Yogi (1918 – 2008), who based his entire philosophical teaching on this question.

Stream of Consciousness - a person's thoughts and conscious reactions to events, perceived as a continuous flow. The term was introduced by William James in his *Principles of Psychology* (1890).

On Rasika

by Kala Ramesh

When teaching renku to beginners in schools and colleges or during Haiku Utsavs that we have in India, I felt the shortest renku, junicho was a wee bit too long, for all we can spare for renku is around 2 hours and John Carley's Yotsumono [of just 4 verses] is surely not for beginners who need to learn the nuances when going on a renku trip.

Necessity is the mother of inventions—and 'Rasika' happened in November 2014. It is created without sacrificing on the aesthetics of this 400 year-old art form that has come to us from Master Basho's time—the shofu-style of renku which is essentially anti-thematic. "Rasa" means the emotional essence in Indian aesthetics. "Rasika" is one who enjoys the rasa. So I wish to call this short renku "Rasika".

Rasika has 8 verses set as in traditional junicho style. The jo-ha-kyu are not clearly demarcated. The number of *kaishi* (writing sheets) is just one. I'm keeping this renku very flexible regarding the inclusion of the usual 4 seasons in renku, meaning spring, summer, autumn and winter. Since we do not have the space and the number of verses to include all the four seasons, we can pick and choose just 2 or 3. It has the conventional moon and blossom verse and of course the "love verses" without which a renku seems incomplete.

Important to note: The link and shift is strong, and the shifts can be wide, since it is not a 36 verse structure of Kasen, which can afford to have small shifts. So shall we say, to coin a new phrase, we'll be following – link and leap!

Fuji Over the Clouds: The Dangers of Travel Haiku

by Michael Dylan Welch

“The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes.”

—*Marcel Proust*

“Wherever you go becomes a part of you somehow.”

—*Anita Desai*

“The traveler sees what he sees. The tourist sees what he has come to see.”

—*G. K. Chesterton*

When you write haiku poems while travelling, you face inherent aesthetic risks. No small children will die as a result of your poetic reportage, but the poems might not measure up to your usual standards. Because of the novelty of many travel experiences, the chief danger of travel haiku written about these experiences amounts to recording impressions rather than writing effectively resonant poems. Such poems risk the shallowness of surface observation rather than deeper understanding, and too often succumb to the unearned emotion that comes with cultural borrowing. This does not mean that all your poems written in Timbuktu or Vanuatu will be trivial (they will at least remind you of your experiences, much like snapshot photos, and thus have personal value), but they may be unlikely to rise above common weaknesses, even if you have gained a great deal of experience as a haiku poet. Remember that Bashō wrote his book *Oku no hosomichi* (Narrow Road to the Interior) chiefly in the four or so years *after* the trip itself, frequently revising poems—and even the facts of experience—to suit his literary needs. You should still write as much as possible, of course, but it might be worthwhile to set your expectations lower, being content with accumulating impressions or seeds for haiku rather than necessarily writing excellent haiku at every temple, cathedral, or natural wonder. More importantly, if you recognize that your attempts at writing haiku while travelling are likely to produce mere impressions rather than polished poems, that recognition may well free you to relax more and notice more. I once read that those who take lots of photographs while travelling are actually likely to remember *less* of their trip rather than more, and I suspect the same is true for those who try too hard to write haiku. In short, it's okay to recognize the limits of travel haiku. Yet, by being aware of such limitations, perhaps you can occasionally rise above them, or give yourself the discernment to see beyond the novelty of travel experiences to recognize poems of deeper insight.

To illustrate these contentions, I'd like to share a set of haiku and senryu written on my first trip to Japan, in December of 2000 and January of 2001, presented in the order of composition. Twenty-six of the following forty-eight poems were published in a different order in *Clover: A Literary Rag* #9, in June of 2015, in the sequence, [“The Mended Shōji”](#), but might have been less likely to receive publication in a haiku

journal, although as a sequence perhaps they are able to convey a sense of place in ways that each individual poem might not. I've indented the poems from this sequence further to the right, so you can tell them from the other poems, which I'm pretty sure are all unpublished. I'm omitting all tanka I also wrote on this trip to give this discussion focus, and also omit two haiku I wrote that were essentially drafts, but I include everything else to show the highs and lows of my first experience of haiku's homeland. The poems are by no means a complete record of my experiences, but my focus here is not to present a record of my trip. Rather, I use these poems to illustrate the typical successes and failures of travel haiku. Perhaps others don't have the writing challenges I've had, on this trip and others, but perhaps others will see their own writing experience in these poems.

descending plane—
my sudden reflection
in the video screen

You know that moment when they turn off the in-flight entertainment, no matter where you are in the movie? That was my moment, and the video screen on the back of the seat in front of me went blank, letting me see my own reflection. And of course I mean not just the visual reflection but also a contemplative "reflection" about having embarked on such a trip. Poems about one's reflection (including the double meaning) in a train window, computer screen, or other glass surface are common in haiku, to the point of becoming old hat—being "used and reused," as Cummings once wrote, "to the mystical moment of dullness." Such a poem as this may set the context in a sequence, but does little on its own that hasn't been done a hundred times before.

second in-flight meal—
this time served
with chopsticks

I wrote this poem after the preceding poem, but the event it describes took place earlier. There's some novelty in the shift from knives and forks to chopsticks, but what else would you expect on a flight from the United States to Japan? On its own, the poem suggests a trip to the Orient without actually naming the destination, so it has that going for it, but little more.

bending for a drink
at Narita airport—
cigarette butt in the ficus

Here's an example of a poem that achieves little more than being an impression. It's a so-what poem, and the fact that it happens to be at a Japanese airport does not rescue it. We should not delude ourselves that a foreign location itself will elevate any of our poems.

futons over the railing—
the clacking of the train
splitting winter air

My wife is Japanese, and we flew from Narita to Nagoya, where her family picked us up. We hadn't yet married, but would get married a few months later. On later trips her family met us by car, but this first time (since I no longer remember for certain) I presume they had come by train, and we all took the train back to their home in Minokamo, north of Nagoya. It must have been morning, when many Japanese households hang out their futons on balcony railings to air them out, even in the winter. This was a novel impression for me, and definitely something to be written down. But what of it? I see this image from a train in winter, and that's it. It's ultimately a shallow impression, a record of what was seen, with no further resonance.

approaching the station,
the uniformed train driver
raises a white glove

Again, so what? Yes, the train drivers wear white gloves. This was a small enough train that I could see the driving compartment in the front carriage. The act of raising the glove indicates formality and routine, but what of it? This is just a minor novelty to me as a wide-eyed traveller, a first-time visitor to Japan, but nothing more than that.

warm December sun—
the commuter train's empty hand rings
sway around the corner

It's okay that this poem doesn't proclaim any image peculiar to Japan. At least these travel poems aren't limited to the exotic. Where this poem excels slightly is the implication of time. If this is a commuter train, where are all the commuters? The hand rings are empty, so it must be a time after the busy commute is over, as indeed it was. This was written on my first morning in Japan as I travelled with my girlfriend into Nagoya for a day of sightseeing. The first line feels arbitrary to me, though, and while the image of the empty hand rings swaying around the corner is interesting enough, I don't think the poem quite found enough of a juxtaposition to go anywhere memorable.

futons airing
from every balcony—
December sun

Really, just a so-what poem. Not only do I repeat the sentiment in my previous poem about futons over a railing, airing out on a winter morning, I am certainly repeating what so many millions of people have seen for centuries. It's beyond dull. But of course one should still write such a poem, and be content to toss it aside when it fails to rise above dullness.

leafless trees
at Nagoya Castle—
I choose a Western toilet

I do a better job here of implying the season. The season may also seem incidental to the rest of the poem, rather than deeply integrated, but I do think there's more to it

than that. Perhaps the nakedness of the trees has something in common to how naked I feel—not the temporary nakedness when using a toilet, but the cultural nakedness of encountering a Japanese squat toilet instead of Western toilet on which one can be seated. Western toilets have replaced the majority of Japanese toilets, in both private homes and in businesses, but one can still regularly encounter Japanese toilets. Some hotels or public parks provide both, for example. In any event, this poem may be motivated by the novelty of a particular travel experience, but I do think it does a slightly better job than my other poems thus far in rising above mere novelty. I think it does this by presenting the vulnerable plight of a foreigner. In this case I had a choice to make, but the implication is also present that at other times I did not.

Kyoto station—
a woman mops the restroom floor
while I pee

If you have ever been able to visit Kyoto, you will know that Kyoto Station is very modern, in deliberate contrast to the oldness of all its temples and shrines. Here is a poem of novelty, where I'm aware of someone of the opposite gender in a public bathroom, ignoring me and my business while she goes about hers. It's another impression, but little more than that—although not without possible humour. On other trips to Japan, I've had the occasion to visit a *sentō* (銭湯), or a communal bath house. One takes a towel, soap, and a wash basin into the shower area, where one is expected to clean oneself thoroughly. The shower heads are only about three or so feet high, and one sits on a small stool while washing yourself, perhaps not even using the shower head at all but by dipping one's washcloth into the plastic washbasin. Only when one is clean do you dip into the hot baths, much like hot tubs. In these bath houses, although segregated by gender, the staff of opposite genders might routinely walk in and out to collect wet towels or tend to other necessities. Prudishness at nakedness is strong in North American culture, and I was first reminded of this at Kyoto station, but again, is the poem more than a superficial impression?

a break in winter clouds—
gas station attendants
bow to the departing car

I know in Oregon and New Jersey it's against the law to pump your own gas, but throughout most of the rest of North America nearly everyone pumps gas into their cars themselves, unless one is handicapped or perhaps feeling extravagant. When I first visited Japan, however, gas was always (or often) pumped for you, or at least that was my impression. Self-serve stations are now more common, but even those differ greatly from Western self-serve gas stations. Japan is a country dedicated to honourable service, where a typical gas station visit struck me, at least fifteen or so years ago, as being more like a pit-stop at a Nascar race. A team jumps to your service, tending to your car by pumping the gas, checking the tires, washing the windshield, emptying any trash you may have collected in your car, and perhaps even checking your oil. That's the way American service stations used to be in decades past, but now on this trip to Japan, such service was a novelty, topped off, if you'll pardon that pun, with all the attendants bowing to each car as it left the service

station. Another novelty. And yes, the service station attendants all wore white gloves.

This poem and the one before it were the only poems I wrote on my very first visit to Kyoto, a city of intense cultural and historical impressions. I wish I had written down more impressions and images, if not attempts at haiku, as a way to have better memories of my time there. My girlfriend and I stayed in a *ryokan* (旅館, traditional Japanese inn). A couple of months later, after returning home, I would write poems such as “the charcoal fire / in the traditional Japanese inn, / lit just for tourists.” In Kyoto we visited Nijo Castle, Kiyomizu Temple, the Golden and Silver Pavilions, the Heian Shrine, and many other sites—all of it overwhelming to the point that no haiku came at all. It seems that travel haiku may well be a sort of feast or famine—you can write nothing at all, or so much that what you write is too superficial.

yuzu peelings
placed in a bowl—
New Year’s morning

I wrote this poem on December 27, in anticipation of New Year, and in anticipation of a haiku meeting I planned to attend on January 6, for which we had an assigned season word to write about—*yuzu* or *citrus*. Before leaving for Japan, I had also written another poem for this haiku meeting: “half-finished painting— / shadows in the citrus / left in a bowl,” such as it may be. The haiku meeting was with Ikuyo Yoshimura’s English-language haiku group, Evergreen, which met monthly at Asahi University in Gifu City, not far from where my girlfriend’s parents lived in Minokamo, in Gifu prefecture. I had met Ikuyo in April of 2000 at the Global Haiku Festival held at Millikin University in Decatur, Illinois. When she was introduced there, my ears perked up when I heard that she was from Gifu, barely half an hour from my girlfriend’s home. I was glad to make her acquaintance in Illinois, and I have since visited her several times in Japan—on one trip we even wrote a *rengay* together, called “Hilltop Castle,” in the Gifu City train station after she had spent the day showing me Gifu’s sights. Ikuyo has also written a biography of R. H. Blyth, in Japanese, a book that I would hope might someday be translated into English. In any event, my “yuzu” haiku is less of a tourist poem, but perhaps it still suffers from tourist problems. Yuzu are common at New Year, just as mandarin oranges are common in the West at Christmas. But what of my poem? Peelings in a bowl on New Year’s morning. So what? No wonder the poem wasn’t selected when I entered it into the Evergreen *kukai* on January 6. On January 1 I would also write “at the shrine / on New Year’s Day, / a taste of yuzu,” another so-what poem.

New Year’s Eve—
a Japanese kite unfolded
in the hotel lobby

This poem was written at the Shinagawa Prince Hotel back in Tokyo. I’ve forgotten now what significance the kite might have had for New Year. Perhaps none at all. The poem is an accurate record of what I saw, but that is not enough to make it a haiku. That’s because it lacks emotion, a problem with being yet another so-what poem. The word “unfolded” shows a slight bit of promise, in that it’s ambiguous whether the kite *is* unfolded, or is *being* unfolded. But either way, what of it? On its

own, we have no sense that this is taking place *in* Japan (the Japanese kite could be in a London hotel, after all). It's more commonly known that New Year is the most important event of the year in the Japanese calendar, so the connection between New Year and the fact that this is a *Japanese* kite carries some significance, albeit very slight. But any further significance eludes me now, writing about this poem more than a dozen years later. Perhaps the significance, if any, also eluded me then. This was also the only poem I wrote on my first visit to Tokyo, again overwhelmed with the sights of so many tourist attractions and the activities of meeting friends.

first dream of the year—
a reflection of Mt. Fuji
in the just-melted lake

first dream of the year—
an eggplant rolls off
the pinewood cutting board

the year's first dream—
a hawk's eye
in a martini glass

trees without leaves—
first sight of Fuji
from the bullet train

These poems were all written in response to learning that classical subjects for New Year haiku include the first dream of the year, Mt. Fuji, hawks, and eggplants, each with various associations and overtones of meaning, which I have probably run over in a roughshod manner. Indeed, I'm afraid that most of these poems come across as manufactured rather than felt, as wooden and stiff rather than more supple and organic. These poems seem forced rather than insightful. Here I am being a tourist with the culture, if not particular tourist destinations. My girlfriend had a cousin who lived in Fuji City, near Mt. Fuji, so we had the good fortune to visit her there, and she took us to a few shrines and temples, to Shiraito Falls, and to one of the famous five lakes near the mountain's base. A large dragon boat was docked at the shore for the winter, and the clear sky made for marvelous reflections of the famous mountain. But the only poems that came were these. I have not earned these references to Fuji, and even less so the references to eggplants and hawks. Perhaps only the fourth poem exhibits any kind of authenticity, but still it does not rise above being merely an impression. It tells without showing, and fails to convey the emotions I was feeling on seeing Japan's iconic mountain for the first time.

bending to stroke
the cold Nadi Botokesan Buddha—
my reflection in its forehead

We know Wordsworth for defining poetry as presenting powerful emotion recollected in tranquility. Well, there was some recollection and tranquility here, but I can't be sure about any powerful emotion. This was written back in Nagoya, after my first visit to Tokyo, about Senso-ji temple at Asakusa in Tokyo. You're supposed to rub this

particular Buddha statue to ease your aches and pains. I rather suspect that rubbing the same spot that thousands of other people rubbed probably *creates* more aches and pains from shared germs than it prevents, but still one does it anyway. It's a small outdoor metal statue, about lifesize, and I have many charming photographs of people touching it. At touching it myself, I was struck by seeing my own reflection (again, that double meaning rears its wordful head), so there you have this impression. The poem serves a useful purpose for me in bringing back memories, and reminds me of my girlfriend explaining the traditional purpose of the statue—not that she necessarily knew this herself, but was able to read the Japanese signage explaining this statue in Tokyo's most famous and spectacular temple complex, Asakusa Kannon (where Bashō also wrote a number of famous poems). While this poem is useful to me, what use does it serve to anyone else? The reference to a specific Buddha (also “Nade” rather than “Nadi”) could easily alienate many readers, especially if this poem were to appear on its own rather than in a sequence or haibun. That's a common problem with place names in travel haiku. They can feel like showing off—“I went to this exotic place, and aren't you jealous?” Or they can seem arrogant—“I know what this means and you probably don't.” To avoid these problems, the poem could be rendered simply as “bending to stroke / the bronze Buddha— / my reflection in its forehead” but the poem would then lose the overtones of this Buddha's usefulness in curing aches and pains, for those who happen to know, or choose to research “Nadi Botokesan Buddha.” Even without that specific reference, the poem may still suffer from being Japanesey—a sort of “cheesy” Japaneseness that I've decried before (there are too many imitative haiku out there about bamboo and cherry blossoms and beguiling Buddhas—and some of these poems are mine). I would hope the problem here could be redeemed by the presentation of this poem in the context of a set of travel poems. It is just what it is, a truthful record of what I saw at Senso-ji. There's no real arrogance or bragging, except what the *reader* might assume. Yet still these are problems that travel haiku encounter.

a little before midnight,
a bowl full of soba
warm in my hands

I like the tactile emphasis in this poem. Perhaps this poem is more subtle than others, in that it helps to know that this is not any midnight, but New Year's Eve. And it helps to know that one traditionally eats soba noodles on New Year's Eve to help ensure long life. But much of that context is not in the poem itself, and I can hardly expect readers to know all this. In the context of new year poems, it might work better, but not so much on its own. On the other hand, a great majority of haiku in Japan made exactly these sorts of demands on its readers—to know the cultural significance of the slightest of references. What works in the geographically and even culturally limited scope of haiku in Japan may not work beyond its shores, however, and this poem, while striving for some degree of cultural acknowledgment, may simply fall short for non-Japanese readers. And for Japanese readers, it may simply be a common-thought poem (they have a word for this sort of poem). So perhaps this remains as just another impression that doesn't quite rise into any literary resonance.

a walk up the dark hill
to the small-town shrine
stones crunching underfoot

Just a few minutes' walk from where my girlfriend's parents live, in Minokamo, is Japan's largest tengu statue. The statue is about 40 feet tall, and is perched atop Mt. Atago (more of a hill than a mountain). Tengu (天狗) have very long noses, and are said to be guardians of mountains and forests (Minokamo lies in mostly flat terrain by the southern foothills of the Japanese Alps). This poem brings to mind, at least for me, not just the hill's distinctive statue, but also the mundane detail of the walk up the hill to get there. So again the poem has personal value but little universal import. The haiku might provide narrative detail in a sequence, but fails to work well on its own. This could be any shrine in Japan (and not necessarily even in Japan), and it could be any hill, and any crunching gravel. What's also lost in the poem is that this was written on New Year's Eve, as we were ascending the hill to witness the ringing of the temple bells 108 times to welcome the new year, each ring of the bell representing the 108 earthly temptations one must overcome to reach nirvana. The word "dark" gives the poem some mystery, perhaps, and alludes to a midnight ritual, but perhaps that is all.

waiting in line
to ring the new year bell—
breath fogs the air

Minokamo is a small town of about 50,000 people. Like any town in Japan, it has many temples and shrines. All temples and shrines are mobbed on New Year's Day, the biggest holiday of the year, as everyone, even those without Buddhist or Shinto beliefs, goes through the rituals of ending one year and beginning another. This involves buying new good-luck charms or fortunes on wooden plaques, and taking the old ones to be burned, or buying new bright-red Daruma dolls, on which you paint one eye when you make a wish, and paint the second eye when the wish comes true. But at midnight, when the new year begins, there are fewer people thronging these religious sites. So the line to ring the bell was not that long, and it was a great treat for a gaijin like me to have a chance to ring the bell at Tengu-san on Mt. Atago. I also got to ring bells at other nearby temples on New Year's Day. This description may sound exotic, but it's utterly common—one of tens of thousands of shrines and temples in Japan that all do the same thing every New Year's Eve. As for the poem, it risks being yet another haiku in imitation of Japanese subjects, unless part of a sequence or travel diary, as it was for me. The breath fogging the air gives a tactile sense to the time of year. And obviously the poem carries rich memories for me—at a place I've been back to at New Year in subsequent years, and have also visited at other times of year. But what does it do on its own? To me, it shows that, with travel haiku, context is everything.

the new year's bell
louder than I expected—
its lingering quiver

This is the sort of poem that one enters in one's journal or notebook and then moves on from. The bell was louder than I expected, but then I failed to find an adequate

juxtaposition in the rest of the poem to give this moment any significance. It was, nevertheless, my first poem of the new year.

disused high school—
still a few shoes
left in the lockers

My memory fails me in trying to recall where this poem came from, or why I was moved to write it on New Year's Day. I vaguely recall my girlfriend and I taking a walk from her parents' home to an elementary school she had attended, but it's not a high school, and not abandoned. I just asked her (she's now my wife) about this poem, and if there was any abandoned school near her childhood home, and she gave me a completely puzzled look. The poem itself is best abandoned. But I mention it here because the energy of whatever prompted the poem in the first place has not survived in the poem itself. It's when the energy does survive, and still rings freshly even after many years, that you know you have a good poem. There's some pathos here, if the poem is to be believed (and even I have my doubts), but the poem doesn't really earn its emotion.

about to ring
the new year bell—
the smoothness of the temple rope

To my mind this is a draft, an unfinished impression. I like the image of the rope's smoothness, indicating that the bell has been rung many times by many people, but the crafting in the rest of the poem leaves a little to be desired. It's really a *bell* rope, not a temple rope, and the grammatical relationship of the first and second parts of the poem is awkward, suggesting, grammatically at least, that the rope's smoothness is about the ring the bell. This poem has good seeds for haiku in it, and I'm glad I planted them by writing them down, but they have failed to germinate.

the old rope
smooth in my hand—
new year's bell fading

This was my immediate revision to the preceding poem. A little better, I think. The Japanese context lies outside the poem itself, but the image and crafting are sharper. I like the mix of sensory experience—touch and sound.

a shell dropped
into a wooden box—
new year bell fading

To keep track of the 108 times one rings a temple bell at the new year, many shrines use boxes of shells. They bring out the box every New Year's Eve, and each time the bell is rung, a shell is moved from one box to another. I vaguely recall that the shells I saw were cowries, small and nearly round, about the size of peanuts. Here the practical detail of keeping track of all the rings is made real and personal. It would be so easy to miscount all those rings if you were counting in your head, especially when each ring might be interspersed with brief conversations with the

people coming to ring the bell. But ultimately, despite the novelty of the story here—novel, at least, to many Westerners—this remains a common poem, somewhat flat and ordinary.

just before midnight—
a box full of shells
to count the bell rings

The moments in these poems tumble around a bit, but I'm presenting them here in the order I wrote them. Although I composed this poem on January 1 (in Japan, they say that one "composes" haiku rather than "writing" them), I was trying to preserve the moment of the night before—just a few minutes before, in actual fact—of being prepared to ring the bells, and keeping track of counting them. The same problems apply to this poem as to the previous one. If one doesn't know the context of ringing the bell 108 times, or the challenge of keeping track of the number of times the bell has been rung, then the poem might easily confuse or exclude its readers. It may work in a very generic sense (and not even with a Japanese context), but doesn't provide much more. So much is lost that I've been unable to capture.

New Year's Eve—
an earthquake trembles
the temple bell

I no longer remember if there really was an earthquake strong enough to make the bell tremble, let alone if I actually saw this. I suspect not. Thus I believe this poem to be manufactured. I do recall a few very light earthquakes on various trips to Japan, including Minokamo, but I have a feeling I was just making this up. I have nothing against judiciously making things up in haiku, just as Bashō did for some of his haiku and prose in the *Oku no hosomichi*, but the end result still has to *seem* authentic, and come across as *if* it really happened. Is that the case here? If it's easy for me, as the author, to be skeptical, it would be even easier for readers, even if the possibility is not entirely implausible. These topics—New Year's Eve, earthquakes, and temple bells—are such quintessential Japanese topics, however, that they lose all freshness and begin to stink of being overly Japanesey. If there's any redemption to the poem, it might be that, by writing it, I got it out of my system—I hope.

old good-luck charms
piled by the shrine's bonfire—
the new year bell rings

The problem here is once again novelty. It's an interesting cultural detail to an outsider to see that this is done in Japan, but to the Japanese this is surely boring. It's just too common. So bloody what. Thus the question may be raised: Who am I writing for? Not the Japanese, obviously, since I'm writing in English, so what does it matter if the Japanese would find this poem to be commonplace? I think the problem that remains, in English, is the problem of borrowedness. This is perhaps one of the chief issues with travel haiku. As outsiders, we don't really earn the right to write about everything we experience. There's a stock emotion in writing about what's foreign, in that we assume the foreignness, the novelty, can carry the day. But it doesn't, not really—or usually not. If haiku are about the ordinary and everyday

(being “as simple as porridge” as Kerouac said), then they may be doomed to failure when they veer into focusing on the exotic, as they seeming must when written about one’s travels. This issue is not limited to the exotic and foreign, mind you. A poem about a homeless person living on the streets in your own hometown can also fail to work because of the problem of unearned, holier-than-thou emotion, of borrowing someone else’s experience, of expecting what amounts to a stock reaction rather than presenting or generating genuine empathy. This problem can happen with haiku (or photographs) about puppies and kittens and babies, too. But it’s also evident in poems about foreign subjects. It’s very difficult to get truly *inside* these subjects, to really earn the emotions that go with them, in the sense that the emotion comes from something *other* than exoticism or novelty.

first light—
a poem written in bed
about fireworks

I don’t recall any fireworks going off in Minokamo at New Year’s, but I understand that this is a tradition in other Japanese locations. So this poem is made up. But what really flattens it is its self-consciousness. Ray Bradbury, in his book *Zen and the Art of Writing* (Santa Barbara, California: Capra Press, 1989), has said that “Self-consciousness is the enemy of all art” (108). Exceptions exist, to be sure, but in haiku, poems *about* haiku are mostly tedious, and often produced by beginners (Marlene Mountain is about the only exception to this rule, with her many short poems that critique haiku and all its sacred cows). You start off, as I do with this poem, with a workable image, and find you aren’t going anywhere with it, so you resort to writing about the writing itself. Or, for many haiku beginners, the word “haiku” itself is a novelty, and they feel compelled to write about “high coup” and “lowku” and endless variations thereof. Haiku about haiku do occasionally work, but for the most part they are tiresome, part of a stage that most haiku poets go through, and may even return to (as I did here). But hopefully one can get it out of one’s system. The first light here, of course, is New Year’s morning, although that wouldn’t be clear from the poem itself (Americans might easily interpret this as a July 5th poem), but the poem is doomed to failure by its self-consciousness.

between rings
of the temple bell,
the report of fireworks

There’s some amusement for me here in the word “report”—the bangs of guns or cannons or fireworks can be called “reports.” But my girlfriend and I had simply seen a news report on TV about New Year fireworks. Here I think the imagination I sought to employ didn’t entirely engage. I had a desire to write about new year fireworks, and threw in the temple bell reference, but had nothing else. And nothing really to start with.

New Year’s Day—
still a few persimmons
in the neighbour’s leafless tree

If you've had the small privilege of seeing persimmons in a tree after all the tree's leaves have fallen, you know what a distinctive image this can be—so many round circles punctuating the stark calligraphy of twigs and branches. But it's just an impression, something seen. What of it? It improves the poem to remove "leafless," so that detail can be implied by the fact that one can see all the persimmons. "Persimmon" is a late-autumn season word, and I'm deliberately writing of persimmons out of season (thus "persimmon" isn't *functioning* as a season word in this poem, since "New Year's Day" clearly trumps it). If the poem achieves anything, it might lie in the assertion that just as one year turns into the next, so too does the autumn season turn to winter. The persimmons grow and die, and the persimmon tree's leaves also grow and die. Can we avoid being aware that we too will grow and die?

fallen leaves
on the temple path—
new year's bell fades

This poem is not much different from the poem shared earlier: "a walk up the dark hill / to the small-town shrine / stones crunching underfoot." Perhaps I'm walking home this time, and instead of stones, I now hear fallen leaves. But that's all there is.

distant new year bells—
the sigh of winter wind
around the garden shed

sweet sake
on New Year's Day—
a stiff breeze

flags fluttering
along stairs to the shrine
withered grasses

red capes on the stone foxes—
the clack of bamboo
in the year's first wind

I tried too hard, didn't I? "Withered grasses" may bring Bashō to mind, but I'm not sure what that allusion actually accomplishes. Stone foxes and *jizō* (地藏; statues of children, sometimes representing unborn fetuses) are typically redressed in red capes at New Year, but what is achieved by pairing that image with the clack of bamboo?

warm futon—
the first sunrise
happens without me

I think this poem works better. The "futon" reference sets the poem in Japan, and "first sunrise" is a well-established seasonal reference for New Year's Day. The

poem gains some humanity, and humour, by trading the tradition of being up to witness the year's first sunrise with the comfort of staying warm on one's futon.

the year's first sleet
ticking at the window—
the calligrapher's flowing arm

Right after new year, my girlfriend and I went with her family to Kanazawa (home of haiku poet Chiyo-ni) to visit relatives—something commonly done at the start of the year. One of my girlfriend's uncles, as it turns out, is a master calligrapher, one of the top masters in Japan—who seemed impressed by my interest in haiku. It was a privilege to visit his studio in Tsuruga and to see him in action. He showed us many of his award-winning calligraphy pieces, some of which were of haiku by the Japanese masters. He very kindly gave us some of his calligraphy (we have one piece displayed inside the front door of our house), and also gave me two marble signature chops or *hanko* (判子), each one with a carved Japanese lion at the top. Perhaps the poem here succeeds better than others because it's not *trying* to be Japanese. This could be a calligrapher anywhere, writing in any language. Calligraphy in Japan is known as *shodō* (書道, or the way of the brush), and the flow of the arm shows in the flow of the ink. Just as flow is vital to the art of calligraphy, it is also central to the unfolding of the seasons. The "first sleet" can be taken as a traditional reference to the new year (as is the first anything in most Japanese haiku), but can also be read as the first sleet of the season, whether fall or winter. The staccato ticking of the sleet contrasts with the smooth flow of the calligrapher's arm. This was the only poem I wrote on our trip to Kanazawa, despite also visiting the city's famous Kenroko-en garden, one of the three great gardens of Japan.

new chopsticks
wrapped in bright ribbons
the year's first meal

Here I am again putting my haiku in a kimono. This was actually written on January 5, so hardly the first meal of the year, but still the various "firsts" linger in one's imagination, and "first meal" is an established season word. This was written in Kuwana, in Mie prefecture, where we went to visit another aunt and uncle after travelling to Kanazawa. This uncle was a passionate hiker and had explored Japan and Europe extensively on many arduous hikes. He told me, through my girlfriend's translation, about how the Japanese love their gardens, but not actual nature, and how so much of the Japanese wilderness was hardly wild at all, overrun by trash and disregard. My poem isn't about this, but I am reminded of this conversation by this poem. One typically uses new chopsticks at the start of the new year. Here I am recording a cultural event, but perhaps that is all.

year of the snake—
hole in the shoji
now mended

In Japan it's customary to mend one's *shōji* (障子) at the start of the new year—the thin paper screens that separate rooms in traditional Japanese houses. This happened to be the start of 2001—the year of the snake in the twelve-year cycle of

Chinese and Japanese zodiac calendars. This poem was also written in Kuwana, although I no longer remember the details of what inspired the poem, except that the house we were visiting did have a few *shōji* screens.

late for matins—
red paintball paint
at the boy's neck

I'm definitely not in Japan with this poem, even though it was written, on January 7, back in Minokamo. Something triggered the poem and I let myself go where the poem took me. Nothing is to say one must restrict one's self to the place where one is visiting in writing one's haiku! But even when you are writing poems about your hometown, you still have the challenge of looking for resonances deeper than mere novelty. In this sense, every poem, no matter where it's written, has the same challenges as travel haiku. The poem must earn its emotion, not rely on tired tropes with built-in tugs at emotional heart-strings, such as writing about puppies or beggars. There's much to be said for the ordinary in haiku, as we all know, and one reason for that is to get beyond novelty.

the Bashō bronze
silhouetted against bare branches—
the slow-moving river

This poem was written on January 7 about my visit to Ōgaki the day before, where Ikuyo Yoshimura took me to the Ōgaki Castle and the Bashō museum (Ōgaki was the last stop on Bashō's *Oku no hosomichi* trip). On January 6th I also attended the monthly *kukai* for the Evergreen haiku group at Asahi University in Gifu, conducted mostly in English (they are an English-language haiku group). There it was a privilege to meet many of the group's regular members, including Seifuh Iwakoshi, who later made beautiful haiga with his brush paintings combining my haiku and haiku by regular members for the *Evergreen Haiku Anthology* published in 2003 (for which I wrote a foreword). I also met Avery Fisher, who later took my girlfriend and me on a nighttime cormorant fishing excursion on the Nagara River in Gifu (you'd think this experience might produce some haiku, but no—too busy enjoying the experience). In November of 2004, I would return to Ōgaki to speak at the Haiku Pacific Rim conference, organized by Ikuyo and various Evergreen members. If I recall correctly, this poem about the Bashō statue is not about the Nagara River, but the Ibi River, which has been shaped into canals in Ōgaki. I have a picture of me standing in front of the Bashō bronze that I treasure. I recall that Bashō travelled from Ōgaki to his next destination by boat, probably on the Ibi River. What does this poem accomplish? It dishes out rich memories for me, as you can see. But on its own it's rather self-involved. Bashō statues are all over Japan, and there's nothing very particular about the location suggested here. Is it enough for the poem to pay attention to whatever was happening then and there, as Bashō himself would advise? I think there's more to haiku than that.

after the cold snap,
fewer persimmons
dotting the sky

Another persimmon poem—they were making an impression on me. My reference to “dots” suggests, of course, the round shapes of these last persimmons still in the trees. The cold temperatures have made more of them drop to ground, but a few persist in the trees, the last of their orangeness beginning to shrivel. But still, what of it? Another visual impression, which I was driven to record by novelty rather than any kind of deeper understanding. The challenge of travel haiku, indeed, lies in moving from impression to insight.

a day of sun, cloud, rain,
sleet, hail, and snow—
Kenroku-en Garden

This was written as a memory of the famous garden in Kanazawa, visited a few days previously. It helps to know that the name “Kenroku-en” (兼六園) refers to the “six attributes” or “six ideals” of a perfect garden: spaciousness, seclusion, artifice, antiquity, waterways, and panoramas. Kenroku-en has all of these, and has become famous for them in Japan. The character for six (六) is pronounced as *roku* or *loku*. I play on this number by describing six attributes of winter weather. I don’t recall if we had all of these on the day of my visit—I rather suspect not—but we probably had some of them. As Haruo Shirane has reminded us in *Traces of Dreams* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1998), Japanese haiku relies on both vertical and horizontal axes, coordinating both time and place in the moment of haiku, bringing together both cultural and spatial resonances. This meant haiku routinely included elaborate allusions to famous poems and other literature (Chinese and Japanese), to famous places, and to famous people. Readers would be expected to know these references. I can’t expect Western readers to know Kenroku-en (I hardly know the garden myself), let alone its associations with the number six. So what am I to do with such a poem? Who is it for? Perhaps just for me. One’s self is a perfectly fine audience for travel haiku, of course, but too many such poems are foisted on readers where the poems fail to move beyond the pitfalls and potentials for self-involvement.

Ryōan-ji temple’s
garden of raked sand—
the beginnings of hail

Here is a poem of imagination—hopefully reasonable, but perhaps not. I hadn’t visited Ryōan-ji on this trip, and wouldn’t make my first visit there for several years. But of course I had heard and read about Ryōan-ji’s famous sand garden and its fifteen famous stones. Hail was on my mind from the previous verse, and I wondered what effect hail might have on a raked sand garden. If one’s private journal or notebook is meant to be a true account of one’s travels, perhaps poems like this have no place therein, since I hadn’t visited Ryōan-ji. But perhaps, as I neared the end of my trip, it was an indication of desire, of a place I knew I wanted to explore of a future trip to Japan, a future trip to Kyoto. That’s a psychological ambiance to the poem that I doubt I was conscious of at the time, but see now, later, in retrospect.

Mt. Fuji’s shadow—
a dusting of snow
on the bullet-train tracks

My girlfriend and I had taken the shinkansen to and from Tokyo earlier on our trip to Japan, and this is a memory of a dusting of snow that fell in Fuji City. Or at least I think it is. With time's passing I am less sure of the details. To some extent that may not matter, because poetry, it seems to me, is best written from empathy, not just from experience. I can easily imagine snow falling on train tracks such as these. The snow high on Mt. Fuji had come down, all the way here, nearly to the coast, where the bullet-train speeds past many times each day. The gentle, delicate slowness of a light dusting of snow contrasts with the fast, efficient brusqueness of precisely timed bullet trains. These contrasts may find commonality in the chill of steel train tracks, where the falling snow has not yet melted. Does a poem like this rise above mere novelty? I'm not sure.

the year's first sunrise—
Fuji's triangular shadow
over low clouds

My girlfriend and I saw Mt. Fuji protruding through the clouds as we flew from Nagoya to Tokyo, on our way back to the United States, the mountain's long triangular shadow stretching over those clouds. It wasn't really the first sunrise, but I enjoyed projecting myself back to that first day of the year in combination with the auspicious subject of Mt. Fuji. But of course there's not much more to this poem. Fuji at first light—the first light of the new year. What of it? Another tourist impression rather than a poem with resonance. Yet still I would record such a poem, and advocate that others record in a similar vein. Out of such seeds—such records of experience—perhaps true poetry might arise, protruding above the clouds now and then, if we are lucky, like Fuji.

awaiting takeoff—
while he looks out the window
his fingers flip through a magazine

It is fitting, and predictable, that this journey should end in the airplane. Is the "he" in this poem me, or someone else? I don't remember. But whatever the case, the person in this poem is turning pages by rote, his thoughts elsewhere, somewhere out the window, already missing the country he has visited for the very first time—knowing, surely, as was the case for me, that he would be back. Along the way, maybe he too had written some haiku, poems that had suffered from the challenges of being travel haiku, succumbing to novelty over insight. But hopefully one or two poems did indeed rise above, like Fuji over the clouds, as a result of seeing with new eyes.

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A Cherry on Top

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CATEGORY: UTB 2018 - FEATURES

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