

failed haiku

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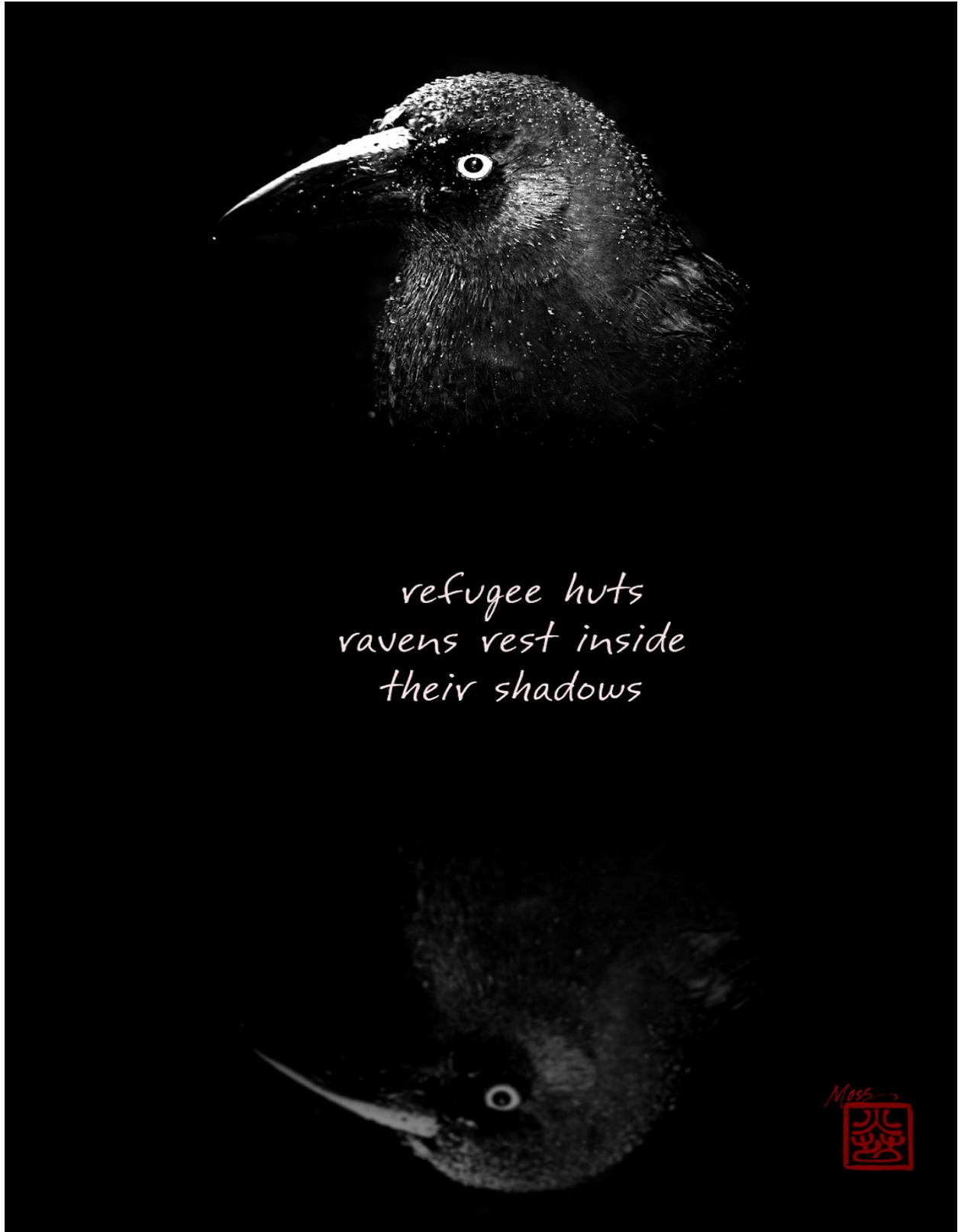
michael rehling

'Failed' Editor

www.failedhaiku.com

[@SenryuJournal](#) on Twitter

[Facebook Page](#)



Cover haiga by: Ron C. Moss

Haiga is a wonderful piece of the haiku/senryu puzzle and Ron C. Moss loves both creating and solving these puzzles. He also fully develops the layers of meaning and interpretation that are essential to the perfection of the form.

This haiga has a wonderful image behind the poem. But without a strong poem the best image is actually spoiled by having weak words put on it. We do not have that problem with this fine example!

First, the poem is chocked full of questions for the reader to answer. The poem has 'refugees', 'huts', 'ravens', and 'shadows'. Whose shadows???

1. Refugees cast shadows, but also live in the 'shadows' of our busy world. Hidden away from the open and out of day to day society whether physically or by their own design, hiding in plain sight.
2. The huts that are hastily erected and meant to be temporary (although they often stay for years) are placed one after the other closely together and so cast their shadows on each other.
3. Ravens are the feature of the image in this haiga and the single raven has a less clear reflection. These images effectively frame the poem. The ravens are obviously their own shadows as well. Flying they are seen by us as moving shadows.
4. Lastly all of the above constituents of this poem have or cast shadows on one another. Is the poet pointing us to pay more attention to all of the unifying 'shadows' in our lives?

The image is almost eerily perfect in this one. The stern unmoving eyes of the raven are doubled in the reflection and pose a dilemma for the reader. We shouldn't fear the ravens, or for that matter any of the 'shadows' in our lives. They deserve all the more our attentiveness if we are truly to be in touch with the world around us. Open YOUR eyes the raven seems to be saying.

It is interesting that Ron has chosen to place the poem between the raven and the raven's reflection. The words are centered in the 'shadow' of the image. So perfectly wonderful that you are drawn to the words that seem to appear 'over' the image itself. Is the poem a shadow too? It serves as a reminder that the poem is the 'thing' in haiga!

This one is framed on my wall, and I am long time fan of Ron's work. Every time I glance at those raven's eyes looking back at me I vow to keep my eyes on the shadows of both the things and the living who reside in this world. This is a haiga that is a true eye opener! BRAVO!

Cast List

In order of appearance

(all work copyrighted by the authors)

Ivan Gaćina

Angela Terry

Bryan Rickert

Kala Ramesh

Eufemia Griffo

David He Zhuanglang

Sravani Singampalli

Joanna M. Weston

Richard Grahm

Richard L Ratliff

Paula Dawn Lietz

Elmedin Kadric

Rachel Sutcliffe

Agus M. Sunjaya

Nancy Shires

Debbie Strange

William Scott Galasso

Chen-ou Liu

Ben Moeller-Gaa

Jackie Maugh Robinson

Marilyn Ashbaugh

Pitt Buerken
LeAnne Hunt
Eric A. Lohman
Rehn Kovacic
Bruce Jewett
Blessed Ayeyame
Julie Warther
Angela Terry and *Julie Warther*
Jack Galmitz
Angela Giordano
Valentina Ranaldi-Adams
Mike Schoenburg
Iqra Raza
Ingrid Baluch
Marilyn Humbert
Madhuri a Pillai
Claire Rosslyn Wilson
Valorie Broadhurst Woerdehoff
Elizabeth Alford
Daniel Birnbaum
Eva Limbach
Christina Martin
Praniti Gulyani
Gail Oare
Anna Cates
Mark Meyer

Elizabeth Crocket
Craig Kittner
Michael H. Lester
Kathabela Wilson
Nancy Rapp
Gautam Nadkarni
James Chessing
Marion Alice Poirier
Jay Friedenber
Tia Haynes
Tim Gardiner
Connie R Meester
Lew Watts
Ron Campbell
Robert Epstein
Ben Taylor
Robert Witmer
Robin Smith
Tsanka Shishkova
David J Kelly
Nancy Brady
Oscar Luparia
Meera Rehm
Jan Benson
Stefano d'Andrea
Cynthia Rowe

Nina Kovačić
D.V.Rozic
Srinivasa Rao Sambangi
Paul Clement
John J. Han
Gautam Nadkarni
Veronika Zora Novak
Indra Neil Mekala
Terrie Jacks
Jill Lange
Frank J. Tassone
Martha Magenta
Billy Tuggle
Adjei Agyei-Baah
Lucia Fontana
Maeve O'Sullivan
Carol Raisfeld
Paul Beech

Labor Day . . .
in the hotel basement
poker is played

Ivan Gaćina

plastic shark --
the little boy hugs
its mouth

addendum
to the accord --
the bribe

used car lot --
the balloons buffeted
by all that hot air

recycled laughter --
my brother telling
my father's jokes

Angela Terry

deep winter
whispering “come on baby”
while starting the car

dandelions
the neighbors blow wishes
into my yard

the work it took
to find myself
online journal

Bryan Rickert

ashram fields
losing my way I follow
the rabbits home

finally
in sirsasana, I shoo a fly
off my nose

Kala Ramesh

old bazaar
she picks
a book of love poems

Pizza margherita
in the kitchen her scent
of lavender

Shinto temple
a kami knows
my wishes

Eufemia Griffo

<https://ilfiumescorreancora.wordpress.com/>

<https://eueufemia.wordpress.com/>

empty schoolyard
even a single bell ring
breaks the silence

David He Zhuanglang

Memories...
an old flower vase
in their backyard

Sravani Singampalli

the silver tray
we never use . . .
Grandmother's party

road sign
blurred by rain
Save Our Water

the blank stare
of a school bus
early morning

the slow driver
moves over
unplugged drain

Joanna M. Weston

<http://www.1960willowtree.wordpress.com>

Sequence

he put her down . . .
she picked up his
dry cleaning

missing sandwich—
my dog
sniffs her crotch

he paid fifty bucks
for that moldy crust
of bread

romantic blunder . . .
pulling taffy
with a tow truck

I threw gasoline
on our campfire—
she threw water

our time together . . .
measurements taken
with a broken watch


shared memories . . .
grist from the mill
diamonds cutting glass

memories of you . . .
a door ajar
the cat is out

Richard Grahn

Left right left right left
Exercise is good I think while
Sitting on the treadmill

Richard L Ratliff



the note read
meet me at the fence
dust devils twirled
at my feet
drawn in I waited

Paula Lietz 写作

d

r i f

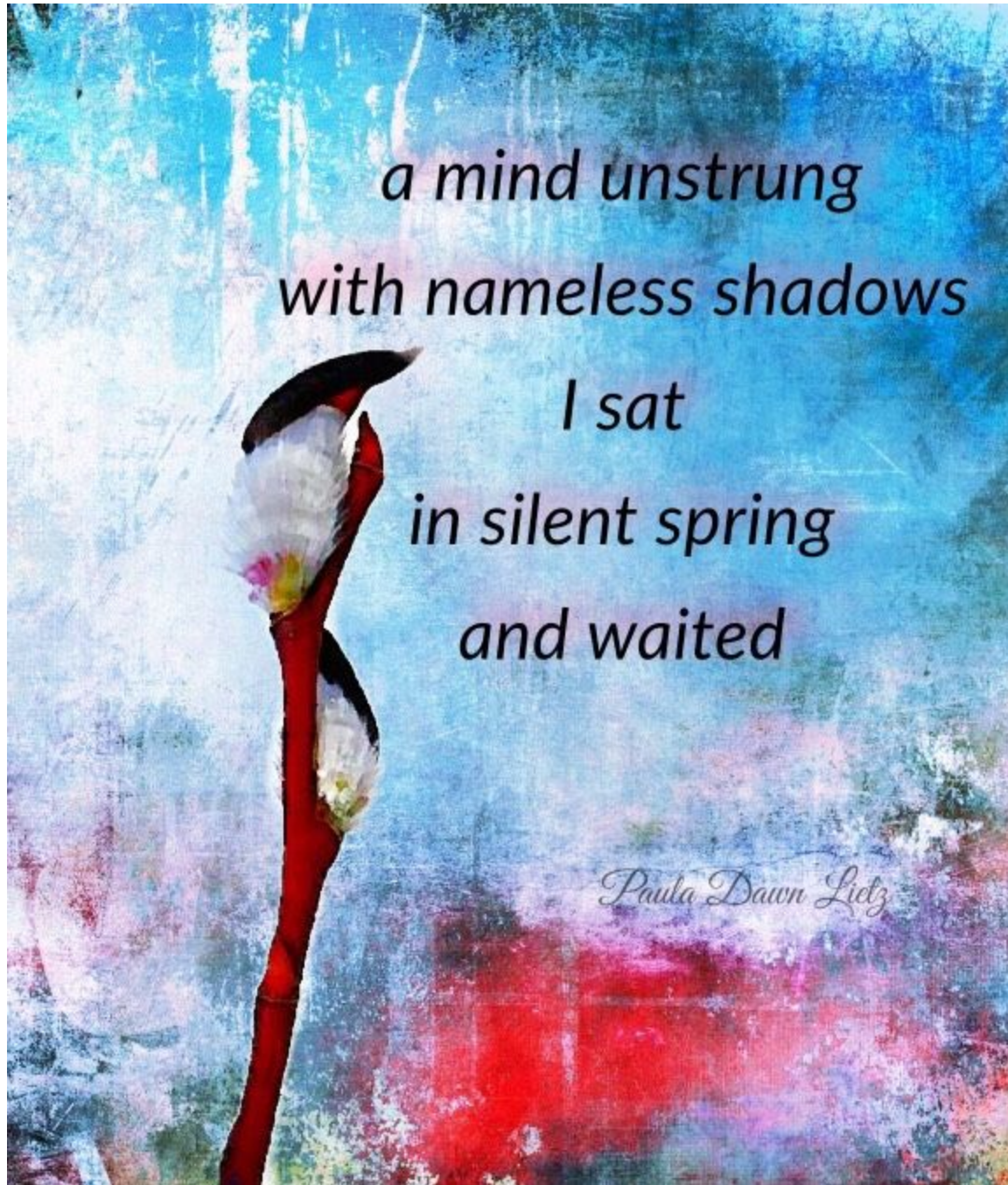
ter

s



the moon the clouds and I

Paula Lietz



a mind unstrung
with nameless shadows
I sat
in silent spring
and waited

Paula Dawn Lietz

Paula Dawn Lietz

football
she tries
her hand

learning yoga
he cracks the spine
of the book

a reflection in the glass half full of myself

Elmedin Kadric

www.elmedinkadric.com

in spite
of everything
your smile

old news
the reunion
full of it

gust of wind
the old man pauses
to let it pass

early start
I stir my face
through strong coffee

Rachel Sutcliffe

carnation bloom
my daughter
visits me

broken window
the grin of
my toothless nanny

the walk home
from his funeral
another winter

winter breeze
he's trying to
blow out 72 candles

Agus M. Sunjaya

art gallery music:
“in the key of rainwater
from nirvana”

fake news story
I get out
my red pen

heartbeat rhythm
of the kitchen clock
old couple

a tee-shirt's take
on the trend--
drink local

Nancy Shires

A pointillist painting of a blue heron standing in water. The heron is depicted with vibrant blue, white, and yellow dots, giving it a textured, mosaic-like appearance. It has a long, sharp beak and is looking towards the left. The background consists of horizontal bands of blue and white dots, suggesting water and sky. The entire image is framed by a thick black border.

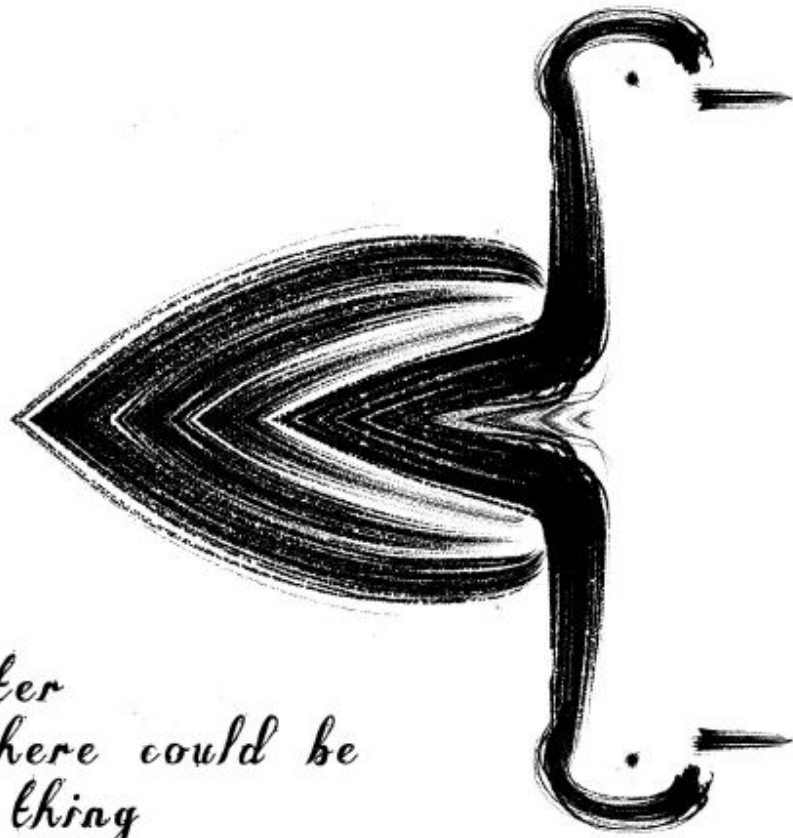
art
exhibition
he
finally
sees
my
pointillism

words/image © DStrange



plastic soup . . .
our children inherit
the recipe

words/image©DStrange



half-sister
as if there could be
such a thing

clouds settle

among cooling towers



this uneasy truce

words/image©DStrange

Debbie Strange
debbiemstrange.blogspot.ca
[@Debbie Strange](https://www.instagram.com/DebbieStrange)

full mailbox...
the birthday wishes
she'll never receive

Easter Sunday
her hand clasps mine
...resurrection

willow's shade
the painter with her brush,
the poet with his pen

William Scott Galasso

starling murmuration
her mother's view of me,
being a poet

crows squawking White House news

blind date
his attempt to say more
with less

Pride Parade
s/he is winking
at me

election night
alone with a crowd
of crows

Chen-ou Liu

[http://chenouliu.blogspot.ca/](http://chenouliu.blogspot.ca/@ericcoliu)
[@ericcoliu](#) and [@storyhaikutanka](#)

restless night
lost in the eye of
her storm

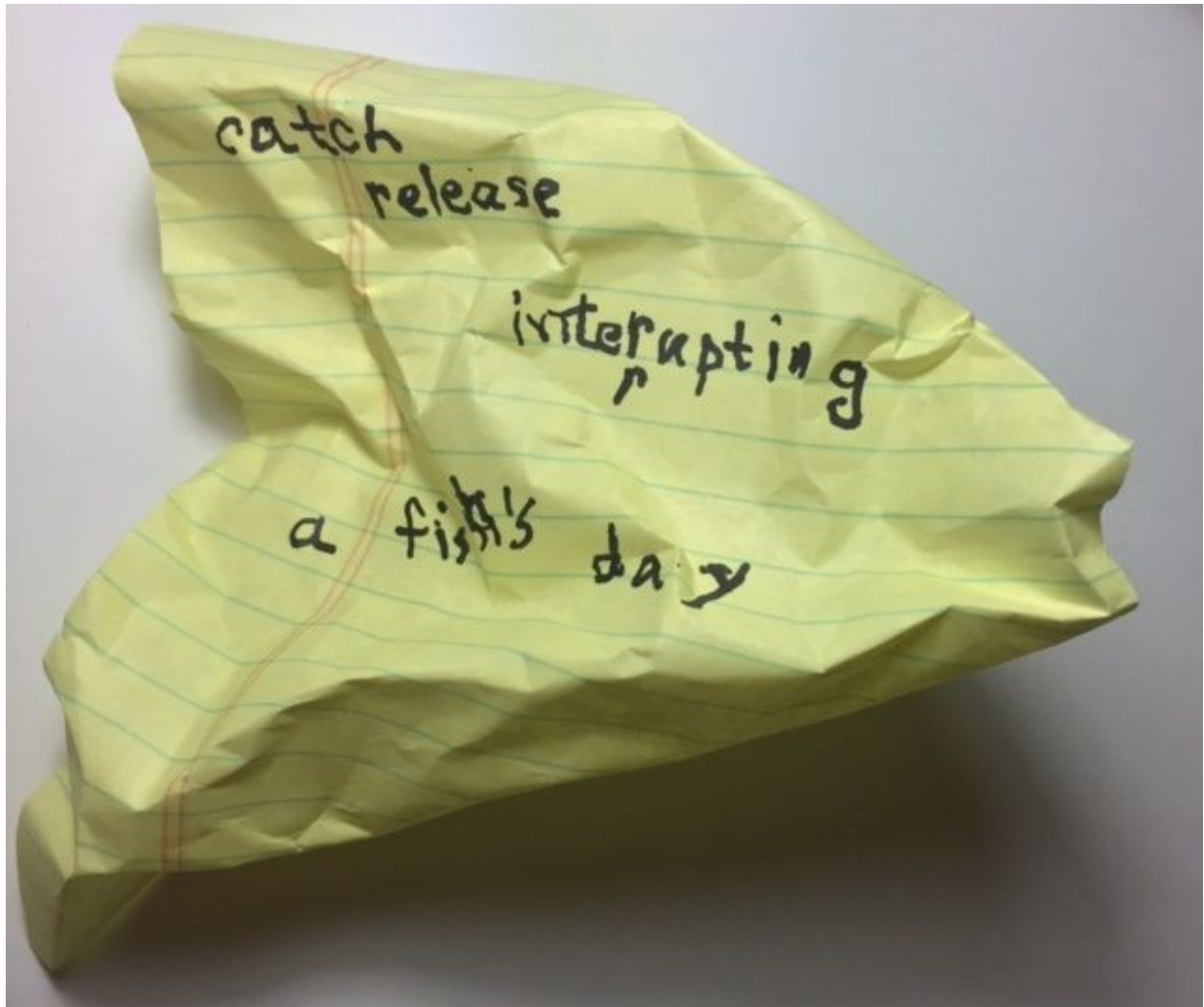
sunset
the record needle finds
my groove

20,000 feet
the roar of a
snoring man

winter loneliness
asking my phone
for a joke

reading basho aloud
the frog
in my throat

Ben Moeller-Gaa
@benmoellergaa
www.benmoellergaa.com



how like the rain
to fall on mourners' tears
Taps

worn track shoes
with the rest of his things—
gaining on my loss

film noir
everyone dead
still so alive

Jackie Maugh Robinson



*500 year flood
i forget to water
the houseplants*

marilyn ashbaugh

*spring rain
the feral kitty shrinks
into the garden*



marilyn esthough



Marilyn Ashbaugh

office autumn
a sheet of paper flutters
from the desk

what a surprise!
Mona Lisa is still
smiling

Pitt Buerken

No Child Left Behind, or Feeding
Breadcrumbs to Birds

LeAnne Hunt

<https://leannehunt.com/>



lightening sky

until I can almost

carry it

THE DEBATE OVER POSSIBLE ENDINGS STORYBOARDS



last waltz -
this roach I'm flushing

welfare office -
on the waiting room walls
trickle down lights

poetry class I sit on my assonance

smell of trench foot losing another war

far apart —
it's still the same
moon

Eric A. Lohman
[@ealcsw](https://twitter.com/ealcsw)

no need
for music
mountain pass

our song
she slow dances
with the cat

cat rushes
to the window
blue moon rising

she sleeps
hugging her catnip toy
last rays of sun

Rehn Kovacic

infidelity
her dog cuddles up
with me and the cats

I walk in circles
the school track-- pom-pom
girls cheering me on

Bruce Jewett

old photograph
unlike the image
in my mind

a village soccer game
hoping I could see
the goal's replay

Blessed Ayeyame

overthrown . . .
what could have been
a double play

reading poetry
the blank page
in my periphery

Julie Warther

Morning Mist

promises made
in the tunnel of love...
morning mist

*a gift receipt
tucked into the card*

the silver
monogrammed
with her initials

*matching tattoos...
he looks for
a blank spot*

footprints heading
in different directions

*trail map
no indicator that
You Are Here*

Angela Terry and *Julie Warther*

My Valentine
is 75

For the girl
holding her mother's hand
it's the moon

Jack Galmitz

in my hands
the petals of the plum-
winter goes away

wrinkled hands-
the dazzling smile
of a girl

Angela Giordano

solar eclipse -
the face
behind the mask

daybreak -
the sun is
my copilot

ping-pong match . . .
hail versus
the car hood

untitled sequence #1

sunrise
on a crisp uniform
a flag insignia

midday
on a muddy uniform
a blood stain

sunset
on a worn uniform
a paper poppy

Valentina Ranaldi-Adams

cold spell

iguanas

falling from trees

Mike Schoenburg

stretching-
an inch taller now
my shadow

midlife crisis-
the way my mother frets
over a broken glass

Iqra Raza

refugee crisis —
the brisk trade
in bicycles

time for new knees
no longer possible
the Asian loo

mixed marriage
it's pointed out that
laughter has no accent

ladies lunch
bagging those seats with backs
to the sunlight — wrinkles

Ingrid Baluch

Fracture

Dappled light from the solitary eucalypt makes checker-patterns
across the path. My feet follow your prints towards the swamp. Flies
like clinging limpets seek beads of sweat on my face. The swarm
rises, buzzing away from flailing arms. Shimmering black trees, a line
on the horizon behind me.

from bulrushes
two plovers break cover –
cloudless sky

I watch the birds dwindle westward, black dots against the sun. One
circles back to land nearby as last rays of gold flash on white wings.
The other bird disappears beyond sunset.

wire cage
packed tight with rocks –
all those unsaid words

Marilyn Humbert

late night...
the dog's sigh
sums it all

new owners...
the preloved garden
fills the green bin

Madhuri a Pillai

in the metro I remain unplugged,
people walk
in two worlds

Claire Rosslyn Wilson

www.clairerosslynwilson.com

<https://twitter.com/clairerosslyn>

Road Trip

Florida springs give way
to Georgia peanuts
and tall cotton

leaving Valdosta ...
sun in my eyes

Georgia highway signs
promote adult superstore
radio streams “Lay Lady Lay”

Atlanta traffic
summer heat
hits mid-90s

Smokey Mountains
in blinding rain I learn trust

leaving an orphaned robin
to the rest stop gardener’s care
the last miles home

Late Season

on a blanket
at the playground
she plays guitar to August

uphill climb
pulse of cicada

worm on the basil
almost
pesto

house on the corner
nearly given over
to vines

hummingbirds
fill up for the trip

lilies and me
make a late season attempt
at blooming

The Path Ahead

retirement
all that is
undone

they keep asking
what I will do

too young for this
except
the mirror

things they really don't want to know
I leave
the erasers

last day of work
the path ahead snow covered

even at this age
learning something new
rose geranium

Valorie Broadhurst Woerdehoff

1-hour dry clean
the bridesmaid's dress
next in line

joy in the little things bubble wrap

UFO sighting
the doctor prescribes
new glasses

one photo
on a broken
cell phone
the only proof
i've seen snow

Trinity

The cracker is less cracker-y even than I expected. Dry, bland, definitely the wrong shape. Perhaps not worth all the curiosity and courage it took to lift myself from the middle row of gym bleachers and line up with the other students at the bottom, where balding Father Hayes dispenses gray discs from a paper plate, and the volunteer beside him bears a white towel and a long-stemmed glass filled with some sort of red wine—probably cheap. My suspicion is confirmed when I raise the glass.

I have been told of all this already by my mother, who was raised on these rituals. But somehow I am still surprised when I allow the dark red liquid to wash over my tongue that the quality of ingestible religious paraphernalia would be so lacking. One would think the Church would use good wine, something to transport the individual accepting the so-called "blood of Christ" into a state of smooth, heady, spiritual bliss.

I am not what I seem either: a pretty, sweet Catholic girl devoted to the practices and beliefs of the Holy Father and Mother Church. I am pretty enough and sweet enough, even baptized in infancy to appease my Italian grandmother's orthodoxy. But I am not confirmed. I am not a churchgoer. I do not believe in their god. I am a fraud, a trickster. This is the first time I have taken Communion and somehow I've managed to blend in—a heathen gone unnoticed by the flocking faithful.

sunset on the rails
the train and i
just passing through

Where to Begin

I'd been looking for a way out for a long time when I found the ad on Craigslist.

Six cities away & all the freedom of living alone. A private bed & bath to call my own. That I might not leave my sanctuary unless I chose to—cocooned in my fleecy butterfly quilt bought secondhand for seven dollars, content to stream TV shows from decades past & tap out my silly cell phone poetry. The shared microwave & stove would become dear & familiar friends, along with the single roommate & dedicated parking space. In a nice neighborhood, and all within walking distance of my lover.

The first step towards change. A whitewashed wall whereby I might hang my poster of the Goddess Venus riding her clamshell deliverance, an oversized acrylic of 3 shadowy figures following the evening star, & an antique rose mirror that always tells me I'm beautiful, even when he can't.

Pet-friendly, internet & utilities included. First month, last month, security deposit. I had that much in my savings & more. Only \$680/month thereafter. Could I make that much from a job? I didn't know. I hadn't been looking.

But I did know, as I settled into sleep that night, that by the time I found one, the room-for-rent ad would be gone. So would the room. So would the dream.

It's been days now. It's probably gone already.

wearing out
the promise of a new year
my help wanted sign

Elizabeth Alford

in the crowd
always this feeling
not to be part of it

your shadow
sometimes a color
sometimes a brush

Daniel Birnbaum

never-ending night
when wind rattles
at my windows
restless like he knows
how long I've been waiting

blown out candle
our Gods
have grown old now

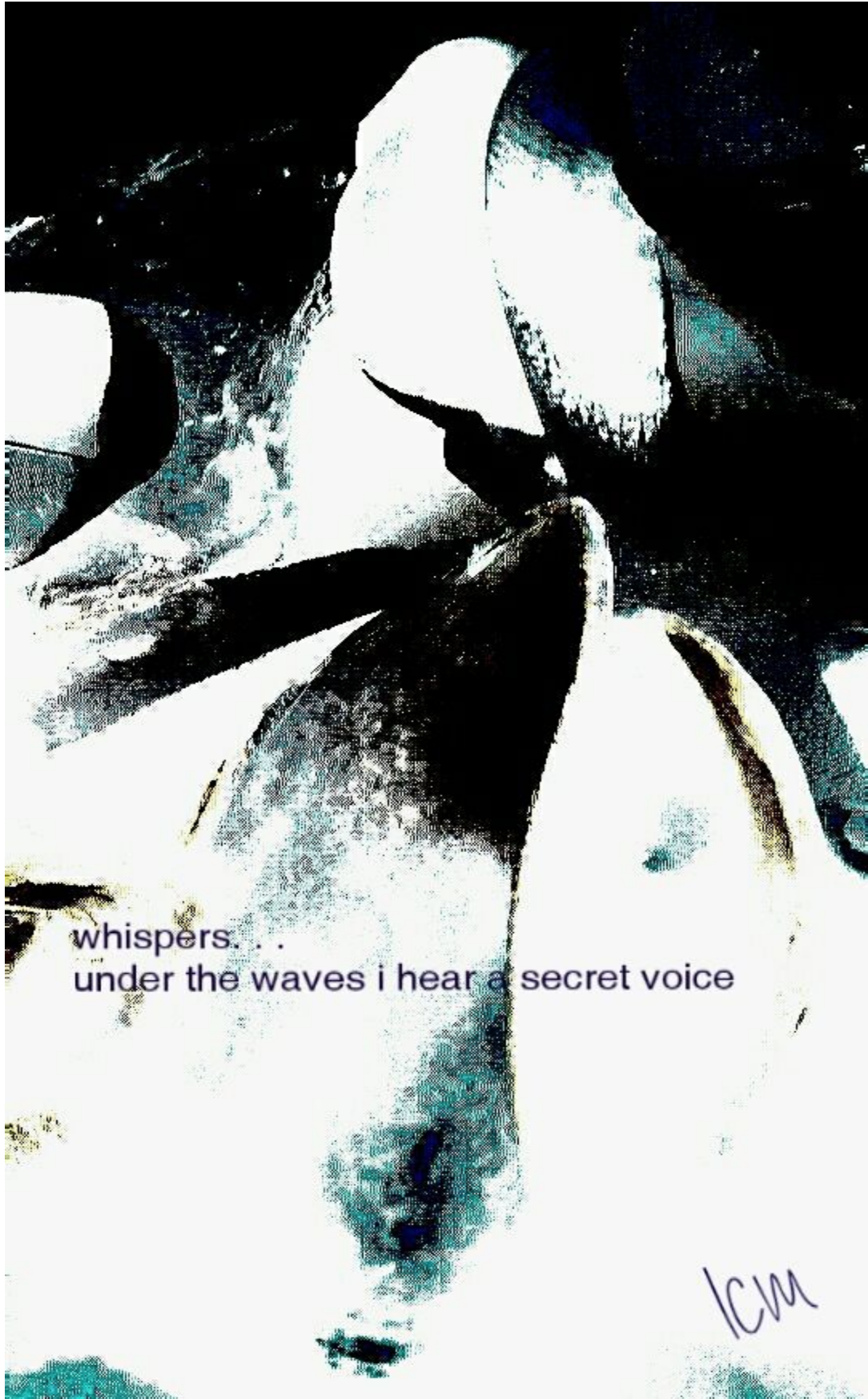
nothing to lose I call it spring

late frost -
putting some salt
on the red wine stain

Eva Limbach

air in my lungs
how will i breathe you out

your name
carrying all the hymns of the sea



whispers. . .
under the waves i hear a secret voice

ICM



Christina Martin

changing season...
my daughter dots her doll
with fairness cream

paper boats...
the bit of moon I saved
for father

gunshot...
she adjusts the ends
of her headscarf

winter night...
for dad, my new mother
competes with the moon

blooming jasmine...
the refugee talks of
anti-dandruff shampoo

Praniti Gulyani

Series:

overcast sky
walking amid a rainbow
of pigeons

encrypted message
sagging socks on the thin ankles
of the beggar

hidden faces
recognizing the bag lady
by the holes in her coat

new year's day
snowflakes weighing down
a blade of grass

winter sun
the heads of thistles swaying
golden in the gutter

broken pavement
the heavy lifting
of a returning dandelion

her 90th birthday
another slice of bread at lunch
to sop up the gravy

withering rose
the bee beside me
doesn't give up

Gail Oare

“ . . . just friends . . . ” the cold kiss of rain

lakeside goodbye—
the frigid silence
of a dead fish

sleepless night . . .
Richard Dawkins
on Youtube

checking a mole
for cancer—
April birthday

day of rest
mowing the lawn
with sciatica

Anna Cates

her tweed suitcase...
just a baby's rattle
and mothballs

have I learned nothing?
only conflicting answers
and sensei's laughter

winter sojourn
I bundle up in layers
of melancholy

a sour bowl of noodles
the broth reflects
my grumpy face

twelve minute zazen —
breaking the silence
for a break

Mark Meyer

grabbing the camera

snap decision

it's art



Elizabeth Crocket

new chapter
the last word
of my book

Elizabeth Crocket

she gets up
I watch clouds fill
an empty piece of sky

rain sounds – I dwell on our differences

near the pond
a perfect tree for hugging
so I do

Craig Kittner

<https://twitter.com/CarolinaKittner>

my place
I casually suggest
she shave

I tiptoe
into the guest bedroom
restless leg syndrome

the pictures are gone!
I meant to use snapchat
not instagram!

he quits smoking as soon as they put the fire out

Michael H. Lester

morning walk
mumble of news
from the gardener's headset

riced cauliflower
what we have yet
to talk about

look-- a kaba here
my nickname means hippo
in japanese

the hippo jar
I keep
my lipstick in

out in the hall
waiting for me while I submit
failed haiku

Kathabela Wilson

helium balloons
wrestle in the back seat
spring break

after the holidays
inflatable Santa
completely exhales

Vespa parade
with matching helmets
Heck's Angels

the walker
a new part
of my old Dad

35,000 feet---
the baby kicks
in the womb

walking past
my childhood
at the History Museum

Nancy Rapp

Into The Drink

I once attended a cocktail party. No, wait! Don't sound the trumpets yet. Actually I was visiting an old college friend and dropped in unannounced. The blister had thrown open his house and bar to a drove of thirsty journalists and was in the middle of his fourth scotch when I knocked. Of course he was glad to see me and insisted on my staying on. He could have been a little more discreet however.

"Oh, it's you!" he said thickly. "It's about time." Glad to see me as I said earlier. Then he looked at me closely through the haze and blinked twice. "Good God! I thought it was the help." He looked disappointed. "Very well," he continued, "Now that you're here make yourself useful." And that's how I ended up serving the whiskies and pink gins at the do.

Halfway through the evening I spotted my old crèche nanny standing by herself. We chatted animatedly about the good old days for fifteen minutes before I realized she was someone else. I must say I frowned on Fate overdoing things a bit. It was becoming a habit. Events are a little foggy after that but I am told that after the dust had settled I staggered home in the wee hours singing a ribald old ditty.

packed tavern...
the bartender pouring out
tales of woe

Gautam Nadkarni

The Twitter King

the Twitter King vows
to make America great again
Laffing Sal
in the Fun House window
knows a good joke when she hears it

the Twitter King says,
"There's only room in the Fun House
for me, myself and I."
inside the front door, the maze
of distorting mirrors

deep inside the cave
a single match illuminates
an entire chamber...
the Twitter King is a blind fish
that doesn't cast a shadow

yet another
Twitter King missive
a nervous skunk
has left its scent
on my quiet street

the Twitter King
barks like a dog
once he starts
the whole neighborhood explodes
in one cacophonous howl

James Chessing

wake-up call —
an ER nurse shouts
my name

I delete
all his texts ...
foghorn

Marion Alice Poirier

vowing to quit
a sparrow picks
at my cigarette butt

\$3,499 down
the fake new car smell
for free

Jay Friedenber

parenting book
not the only one
without a climax

a night away
we forget to miss
the children

formula vouchers
she reminds me that
breast is best

spring cleaning
what once was
an apple slice

Tia Haynes

<https://adaliahaiku.wordpress.com/>

snowperson
we argue over
their name

wire walker
a strong gust
scratches his itch

spring bonfire I burn our relationship

Tim Gardiner

lounge elevator up and down many stories

redeeming myself

I serve him fine wine

left on another table

Connie R Meester

schoolyard elm
a knot
where the heart was

third night alone
the part of the moon
I'm missing

this may hurt...
my new dentist wears
Chanel N°5

Lew Watts

Hello how are you
And other forms of polite
Interrogation.

Yakuza write haiku
Using their fingers to count
Five, seven, four.

I was listening to silence
Wondering if silence was listening to me
When we were both interrupted
By the crash
Of a snowflake.

Ron Campbell
www.soarfeat.org

late winter walk
my fantasy-minded friend
tells me we're old

denying
death is morbid
desiccated pumpkin

leukemia?
lymphoma?
menopause

she also grows
her own vegetables
streetwalker

Halloween night
Dylan sings Satan might come
as a man of peace

Robert Epstein

BLING!

What's this Facebook
event I'm not going to?

Ben Taylor

acting lesson
you are a pigeon
saying no

the emperor's new clothes
Armani
our money

corporations take
a more aggressive stand
glaciers back off

earthquake
the old cathedral
waves a finger at the sky

Robert Witmer

subway tunnel deepening into my depression

painted bunting the drag queen singer defends her
title

two across--
a girl and her grandpa
work the crossword

pre-op prep--
my surgeon asks
to pray with me

the cat kills a snake...
she kills it again

Robin Smith

<https://chokeberrychai.weebly.com/>

the carnival -
her office window
wide open



Tsanka Shishkova

sunroof
my daughter asks
for a moonroof

Tsanka Shishkova

kintsugi ...
the eulogist's voice
between pauses

lonely journey
across a cornfield
befriending the sky

troutswirl
at the corner of your mouth
a sense of humour

castaway

On your travels there are images that stay with you. Memory just latches on. I remember an old woman on an Indonesian island. I never saw her with anyone, so I assume she looked after herself. I don't know how. She appeared to be well over 70. Frail and desperately thin. Slow on her feet. As far as I could tell, she had a single piece of clothing. A ragged tube of fabric with an elasticated top. Surely she had a house, but I only ever saw her at the beach. It must have served as her living room and bathroom. She certainly spent a long time squatting at the sandy river bank, where it joined the sea. She might have been fishing, but the pole she held seemed to be for support. From what I saw, she was untroubled by the local children. There are some rules that don't need writing.

autonomy
every mistake is yours
for the making



David J Kelly
[@motto sakura](#)

solar array
turned to face the sun
lotus leaves

all hallow's eve
his costume
an invisibility cloak

yoga class
unexpected twist--
pretzel pose

Nancy Brady

april bride
and a baby in womb
three springs

Oscar Luparia

family room
each alive
on the internet

Meera Rehm

a whisper of lipstick speaking tomes

a clown's wig
and batman underwear
the secrets I keep

rimed forest
a nightingale
busks me home

Jan Benson

shut up, bell !
to your answers
I have no more questions

insomnia ...
my long list of unread books

Stefano d'Andrea

another blossom
in the manager's hair
spring meeting

new flame . . .
and still I pursue
the tumbleweed

Saturday clinic my son lines up behind a row of
crutches



Cynthia Rowe
Editor: Haiku Xpressions
www.cynthiarowe.com.au

Indian summer
this rain betrays
my rheumatism

Nina Kovačić

New Year's Day
dusting our
bath scale

sunny day
he offers her a ride
to the cemetery

for no reason
a fly did not pass
my patience test

D.V.Rozic

all the words
i can't speak...
to stone buddha

hangs in air
the last breath of
a balloon vendor

Srinivasa Rao Sambangi

I take out rubbish.

There are three bins, but there's none
for my mental crap.

Paul Clement

in-office exam
he says I'm not young
but age-appropriate

a senior party
under his breath he mentions
regularity

critique meeting
after reading his poem
he says he likes it

camp fire
roasting marshmallows
and his ex

John J. Han

BOOKSHELF —
TERMITES FINISH THE CLASSICS
BEFORE (DO



Gautam Nadkarni

the eye in the drain bl(th)inking

RICOCHET

Such a fool I was not to pursue him. His warm touch, down-to-earth nature. The brightness in his eyes that always left me mesmerized. I felt inadequate, inferior, unworthy of good love. I was fighting demons I did not understand, so how could he possibly?

So, to protect him, I walked away.

entwined in
each other's breath –
winter stars

Veronika Zora Novak

summer wind
not knowing which way to go
the train smoke

dandelions . . .
I let go
of myself

surprise test
I write too many
etc

anniversary --
through the wine glass
an empty chair

Indra Neil Mekala

painting
myself into a corner
with words

New Year's Day
in a cup of coffee
indecisions

Terrie Jacks

the woman
buying apples
pays with liberty dimes

Jill Lange

Coffee-making Mayhem

“Did you pour water?”

As gasping sounds emerge from the coffee maker...

“Why wouldn’t I?”

a quick check of the machine anyway...

Reveals a coffee-maker filled with coffee.

But not water.

“Fool of a man! Less poetry, more coffee-making!”

As a hastily-added caraf of water pours into a thirsty machine!

WordPress alert ...

occupational hazzards

of a poet

Frank J. Tassone

Alzheimer's—
a balloon on a stick
says get well soon

lost voice –
the doctor searches
with a camera

silver slipper moon—
I fail to fit
his image of me

#shithole
my neighbour builds
a higher fence

Martha Magenta

A "skip," once a flaw
in the record has become
a history lesson

Charged with possession:
one poem, with 17
syllable cartridge

Billy Tuggle

[Facebook.com/haikubattleroyal](https://www.facebook.com/haikubattleroyal)

opening the office window
a resting butterfly leaps
into sunshine

open polish
the intermittent sneeze
of the shoeshine boy

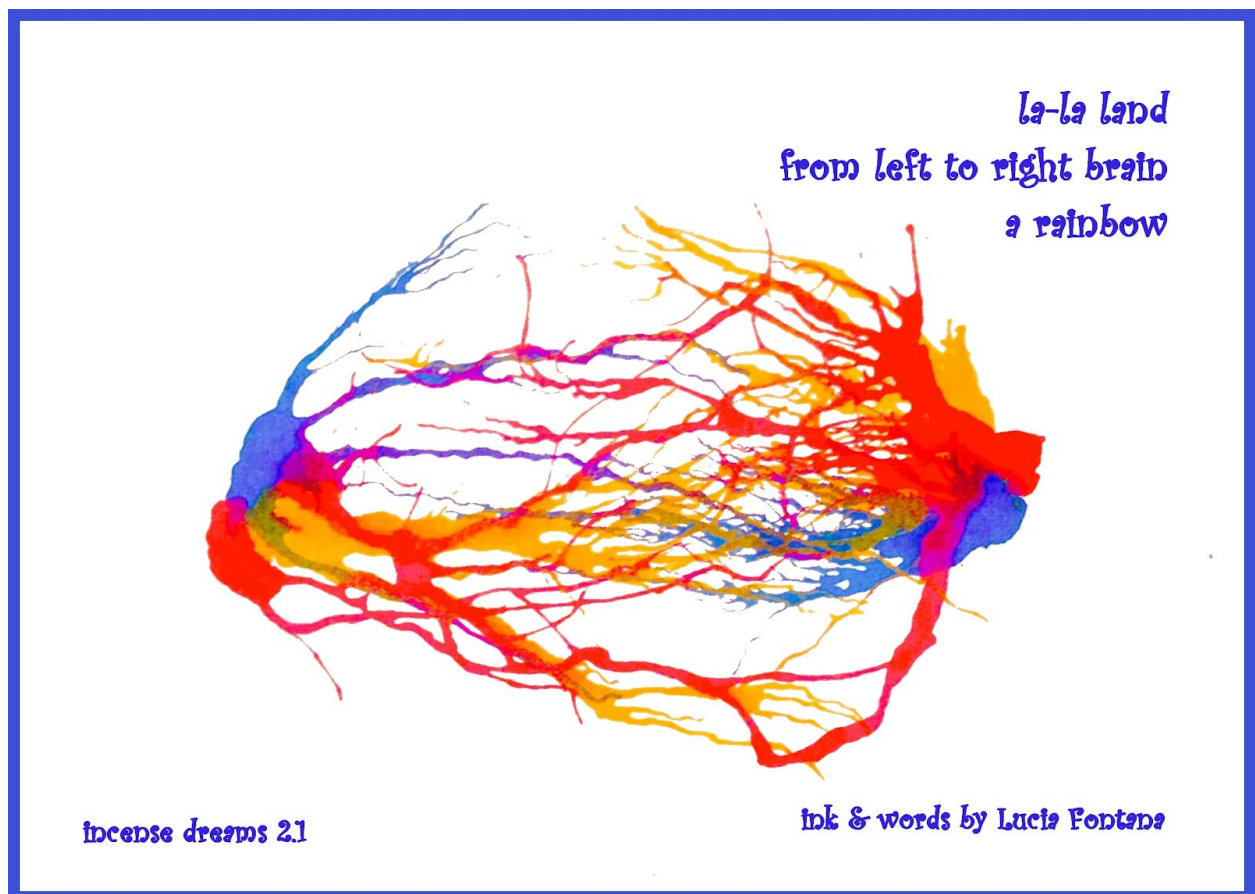
his shoulder
pad of snow
Stone Buddha

old girlfriend-
she examines my wife
for her missing part

Adjei Agyei-Baah

Palm Sunday
to her manipulations
namasté

celebrity . . .
from my shady corner
i tell my silences



Lucia Fontana

unpacking boxes –
gifts from my late sister
reappearing

evening walk:
my friend's shadow mimics
the incoming tide

Maeve O'Sullivan

after he nipped the clown
the dog couldn't stop
laughing

dude ranch sign --
we mount beginners
bring a friend

in the ER
with a stiff neck ...
viagra gone wrong

writing class ...
proofread carefully to see
if you words out

Carol Raisfeld

he locks his car
at the graveyard
the sole living soul

SHADES

(for Joseph Thomas Sheridan Le Fanu, the father of the English ghost story)

A wintry dusk in Dublin, January 1868. Here in this cobbled alley the gloom is relieved only by a waxy light from the grimy panes of an old bookshop. Within, a gentleman of aristocratic bearing pours over an antique tome on the subject of demonology.

Turning the yellowing pages of this arcane volume, he is known as “The Invisible Prince,” being a virtual recluse now, since the death of his darling wife a decade ago. Deep in his pocket nestles the silver crucifix that hung at her breast.

Poor Susanna; she was visited at her bedside by the ghost of her father: ‘There is room for you in the vault, my little Sue.’ Some months later she suffered an attack of hysteria and died mysteriously the next day.

Inconsolable, he was racked with guilt because unable to assuage her torment. Henceforth he would seek, as he put it, ‘the equilibrium between the natural and the supernatural.’

Nearly midnight now, the upper drapes of an elegant Georgian house in Merrion Square glow with the light of two candles. Within, Le Fanu lies abed, writing in pencil, scrawled sheets slipping to the floor.

a wraith yourself now
your genius yet chills
this digital age

Paul Beech

bye ya

when i as a young man i had an old car and drove crazily through the streets of milwaukee wisconsin. a friend put a bumper sticker on my car that read DON'T MISTAKE ME FOR SOMEONE WHO CARES. at first i was offended but then i realized he was only warning the other folks on the road to stay out of my way. that seemed very humane. so i left it on.

chewing gum comics
the stuff
that brings us together

ginsberg/burroughs and the facebook algorithm

two old beats smoking cigarettes eating watermelon and talking about philosophy and societal ills. i wonder if they had a phone that could do a live video if they would have made more sense. nope i figure. they made all the sense i needed then or now. car salesman could not have 'sold' me quicker than they did with their words. when you become just a little open to openness you are like that watermelon on their table. eatable but at the same time capable of spreading the seeds of a peculiar religion. like a perverse johnny appleseed apostle.

spitting rocks
the heat of words
at a book burning

Mike Rehling
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