

# failed haiku

*A Journal of English Senryu*  
*Volume 1, Issue 4*

**michael rehling**  
*'Failed' Editor*

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

[@SenryuJournal](#) on Twitter

[Facebook Page](#)

# Cast List

*In order of appearance*

*(all work copyrighted by the authors)*

**Reka Jellema**

**John Johnson**

**Joann Grisetti**

**Jerry Dreesen**

**Maeve O'Sullivan**

**Carol Raisfeld**

**Kala Ramesh**

**Amy Losak**

**Rob Scott**

**Gail Oare**

**Emmanuel Jessie Kalusian**

**Dave Read**

**Elmedin Kadric**

**Jesus Chameleon**

**Alexis Rotella**

**Chen-ou Liu**

**Barbara Tate**

**Rachel Sutcliffe**

**Janet Patton**

**Mark Gilbert**

**Agnes Eva Savich**  
**Valentina Ranaldi-Adams**  
**Julie Warther**  
**Pravat Kumar Padhy**  
**Pris Campbell**  
**Susan Beall Summers**  
**Tim Gardiner**  
**Bruce Jewett**  
**Meik Blöttenberger**  
**Terri L. French & Susan Burch**  
**Garry Eaton**  
**Bhat Naieem**  
**Brad Bennett**  
**Francis W. Alexander**  
**Joseph Salvatore Aversano**  
**Jade Pisani**  
**Mohammad Azim Khan**  
**Yesha Shah**  
**Michael O'Brien**  
**Roman Lyakhovetsky**  
**Olivier Schopfer**  
**Sharon Rhutasel-Jones**  
**Ian Willey**  
**Eva Limbach**  
**Keith Woodruff**  
**Jan Benson**

**Bob Lucky**  
**Elizabeth Alford & Chase Gagnon**  
**Christina Martin**  
**Frank Dietrich**  
**Debbie Strange**  
**Ola Lindberg**  
**Myron Lysenko**  
**Jayashree Maniyil**  
**Nina Kovacic**  
**Helen Buckingham**  
**Nicholas Klacsanzky**  
**Steve Hodge**  
**Judit Katalin Hollós**  
**Ken Sawitri**  
**Chase Gagnon**  
**Terri L. French**  
**Shloka Shankar**  
**David J Kelly**  
**Sondra J. Byrnes**  
**Madhuri Pillai**  
**Duncan Richardson**  
**Bryan Rickert**  
**Paresh Tiwari**  
**Vibeke Laier**  
**Malintha Perera**  
**Brent Goodman**

**Hansha Teki**  
**Marietta Jane McGregor**  
**Robyn Cairns**  
**Roberta Beary**  
**Mary Kendall**  
**Francis James Franklin**  
**Radka Mindova**  
**Marianne Paul**  
**Jill Lange**  
**Shrikaanth Krishnamurthy**  
**Christine L. Villa**  
**Edwin Lomere**  
**Alegria Imperial**

how do you like me now  
black eye

when I thought I'd never bleed again  
milkweed

hornets nest  
all my nightmares  
learn how to fly

the stones we skipped over  
to get to the skipping stones

**Reka Jellema**

two bodies  
one soul  
they dance

**John Johnson**

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

## **GETA AND TABI**

I am hopping. I hop up the stairs, then down. I cannot stop hopping, I am so excited. Kusan is taking me to her house today. Mother has warned me, at least three time, to behave myself. I always do, but still she worries. She seems to worry a lot this year, living in Sasebo. I worry, too, but she says I am too young to worry. Just go play. I need a nap. So Kusan is taking me to visit her mother. I can be good. I can try.

new shoes -  
a malady of rain  
knocks down the day

**Joann Grisetti**



the moon dims  
behind the clouds - things  
I mustn't tell

obituary -  
the sadness of seeing  
only one line

my 79<sup>th</sup> year  
the recycling bin  
nearly full

meditating  
troubles whisper  
in my ear

mushroom hunting  
telling no one  
where we've been

**Jerry Dreesen**

## **SALE AGREED:**

new buttercups thriving  
in the front lawn

\* \* \*

house-clearing  
at the bottom of the last box -  
my rock sample collection

\* \* \*

old kitchen drawer full of unlit birthday candles

\* \* \*

final placement on the skip:  
a box of dishes  
some unwashed

\* \* \*

anniversary weekend  
we drive by the old home –  
shiny new windows

**Maeve O'Sullivan**

just married -  
a friendship of many years  
begins to end

feng shui -  
his feet face south  
hers face north

nude beach  
about size  
and sighs

laundromat . . .  
"remove all your clothes  
for the cleaning girl"

**Carol Raisfeld**  
[@carol\\_red](#)

a snake at the water's edge slicing moonlight

slow cycling

I thought I could always

do

it

don't call her 'it'

she says firmly

stroking the street dog

he balances

a tea mug on his knees -

my yawn stops midway

**Kala Ramesh**

diminished dreams  
the still-green Xmas tree  
dumped in the street

Tibetan bowls  
I unleash my inner  
-- serenity!

**Amy Losak**

morning drizzle ~  
I lose myself  
in my Twitter feed

murky dawn ~  
last night's leftovers  
float in the sink

third slug of whisky  
they're bombing  
somewhere

apology bouquet ~  
a couple of roses  
past their peak

wind gust ~  
out of nowhere  
we start an argument

**Rob Scott**  
[@haikubobb](https://twitter.com/haikubobb)

spring thaw  
sprouting with the crocus  
a yellow frisbee

such a bluebird--  
still I seek  
another

**Gail Oare**  
**[@gailor1](#)**

marriage vows  
i swear on buddha's  
testis

police station...  
on the visitor's pew  
i fan myself

**Emmanuel Jessie Kalusian**



milk carton  
the smiling child missing  
a tooth

batting practice  
his adult son  
crowds home plate

dark roast  
the barista calls  
me sir

a dying branch  
the gardener files  
for divorce

**Dave Read**

[daveareadpoetry.blogspot.ca](http://daveareadpoetry.blogspot.ca)

outside the zoo  
a family of refugees  
feed the pigeons

i start  
the day-  
dreaming

**Elmedin Kadric**



**Jesus Chameleon**  
[@JesusChameleon](https://twitter.com/JesusChameleon)

His new wife  
speaking  
for two

**Alexis Rotella**

love sermon  
the silver cross hangs  
between her breasts

talk of war --  
my neighbor's cat returns  
with a bird in its mouth

a fork in the trail  
the wind  
takes our old map

**Chen-ou Liu**  
[chenouliu.blogspot.ca/](http://chenouliu.blogspot.ca/)

la-z-boy  
dad disappears  
and the chair snores

birthday card  
my mother-in-law misspells  
my name

deer crossing  
six points on my license

run for the roses  
my husband forgets  
valentine's day

**Barbara Tate**

separated  
trying to be both parents  
to the dog

the remission  
only temporary  
false spring

icy wind  
the sharp edge  
of your words

**Rachel Sutcliffe**

morning yoga--  
graceful,  
for forty minutes

Patio wine  
with my granddaughters,  
we stop time.

dirndls dance  
to the clink of beer steins:  
Octoberfest

The bride wore white  
her grandmother wore gray:  
generational osmosis.

**Janet Patton**





*‘Found Haiku’*

Hooters restaurant & bar  
we are now recruiting  
in the kitchen

**Mark Gilbert**  
[@MarkgZero](https://twitter.com/MarkgZero)

open casket  
hovering over her face  
her last smile

rainy afternoon  
the flute player tackles  
arpeggios

daylight savings  
an hour lost  
to Facebook

pharmacy lecture  
an audience member's  
persistent cough

**Agnes Eva Savich**  
**[@agnesevasavich](#)**

My Life  
now playing  
in 1D

**Valentina Ranaldi-Adams**

herstory - *history*

losing  
my balance --  
market crash

leap day --  
sitting on my suitcase  
I make it fit

**Julie Warther**

crossword puzzle  
I rearrange words  
in her nick name

long night  
the grass grows  
with ease

**Pravat Kumar Padhy**

*dream bound back to tucked away kisses*

*pris campbell*



**Pris Campbell**

tea kettle whistles  
the sleeping dog  
lies

**Susan Beall Summers**

**[@tidalpoolpoet](#)**

**[www.tidalpoolpoet.com](http://www.tidalpoolpoet.com)**



year of the monkey  
oh great  
more disorder

**Tim Gardiner**  
[Webpage](#)

bull frogs blink  
a drunken poet  
falls in their pond

Chinese chef  
on death row  
dead man woking

**Bruce Jewett**

year of the monkey keeping my dreams celibate

Neptune's many moons  
the times I moved  
as a boy

hearing the side-effects a siren's song

wild violets  
my visual  
Prozac

Pisces moon pressing the plus time button

**Meik Blöttenberger**

## **Not my monkey**

Up since 4 -- my brain is like a 3-ring circus. The lions ate the lion tamer, the trapeze artists have no net, the elephants have run amok (which they are entitled to do) and the ringmaster was run over by a tiny fire engine full of clowns who have never put out a single blaze in their lives!

zen garden  
I rake the sand  
into circles

prose by **Terri L. French**  
haiku by **Susan Burch**

escort service  
the grimy edges  
of the ceiling fan

cocktails at the Empress  
the glassy eyes  
of the stuffed tiger

refugees  
in donated clothes  
a run on identity banks

**Garry Eaton**

illuminating  
dark room-  
memories

Dark night  
Her face in flashbacks-  
the candle burns

**Bhat Naieem**

talking politics--  
or at least  
my dentist is

a yard sale  
late in the day--  
sparrows cheep

New Year's Eve  
the waitress asks  
if we want change

dry cleaners  
she carries her clothes  
like her cat

**Brad Bennett**

funeral --  
the train's horn  
as it leaves the station

**Francis W. Alexander**



god natured dog

R

E

d

W

O

O

D

**Joseph Salvatore Aversano**

midlife crisis  
and finally the smallest  
pony tail ever

dark pond  
a raven's caw  
deeper

hemlock i am the barbed wire fence

**Jade Pisani**

narrow lane..  
shadows fall  
on each other

dark winter night  
out of the rigged election  
hatched a dinosaur

forever gone..  
the distant whistle  
of the train

**Mohammad Azim Khan**

## Unburdened

Often her kids were late at the school bus stop. Since they were unescorted, one of the other parents rushed them to the next bus stop. At the pick-up time too, generally, no one came to collect the boys. Again, someone took them across the busy street and dropped them off home. There were never any *thank-yous*. When she did turn up to drop off or pick-up her kids she chose to stay aloof. We, the other mums became quite pally. In the evenings the boys were seen playing with their dog in the campus of our housing complex.

Soon they shifted, a couple of blocks away. Her younger son was in the same grade as my daughter and I occasionally saw her at the school Parent-Teacher Meeting. One day my daughter told me that the boy had come to school after a long absence. His head was tonsured. Kids in the class said his mum had passed away.

*noose knots*  
*what the obituary*  
*doesn't say*

**Yesha Shah**

temple cat  
without precepts  
eating off the floor

preparing to leave  
in sorrow  
the birds fall silent

night song  
the lost drunk  
finds the right key

**Michael O'Brien**

once in a while  
i get to use my phone  
as a phone

nightclubbing  
the sparkle of lip gloss  
off a cigarette butt

Zika seminar  
back rows infested  
by yawns

**Roman Lyakhovetsky**

one-sided relationship  
a stray dog gnaws  
at a meatless bone

bitter dispute  
the washer goes into  
its spin-dry cycle

dreaming I wrote  
a perfect poem  
morning fog

**Olivier Schopfer**

heat wave—  
even the grasshoppers  
knock off early

in the mirror  
the cost of living

Groucho Marx eyebrows  
what's on your mind

we  
reach  
an  
agreement  
Jericho's  
walls

**Sharon Rhutasel-Jones**  
[rhutasel-write.com](http://rhutasel-write.com)  
[@srhutasel](https://www.instagram.com/srhutasel)



hotel near the airport  
the new year begins  
with a wake-up call

a rough day  
good thing I have  
a chia pet

expecting a robocall  
she answers  
in a monotone

a productive meeting  
no one showed up  
but me

**Ian Willey**

abandoned cobweb  
once again not knowing  
who I am

another glass of wine  
my shadow tries to leave  
without me

soap from Aleppo  
the scent of  
a strange spring

children of war  
a new spring  
passing by

**Eva Limbach**

**[evamaria-limbach2.blogspot.de/](http://evamaria-limbach2.blogspot.de/)**

I take a page  
out of his book  
... it's the last one

small blood smear  
inside the library book  
... it's a mystery

**Keith Woodruff**

home late --  
the kiss you wanted,  
the one you got

post election --  
    tell-all books  
        discounted

**Jan Benson**

job interview  
same suit I wore  
to dad's funeral

deciding to never die I finally fall asleep

yoga widower      twisted      in her      logic

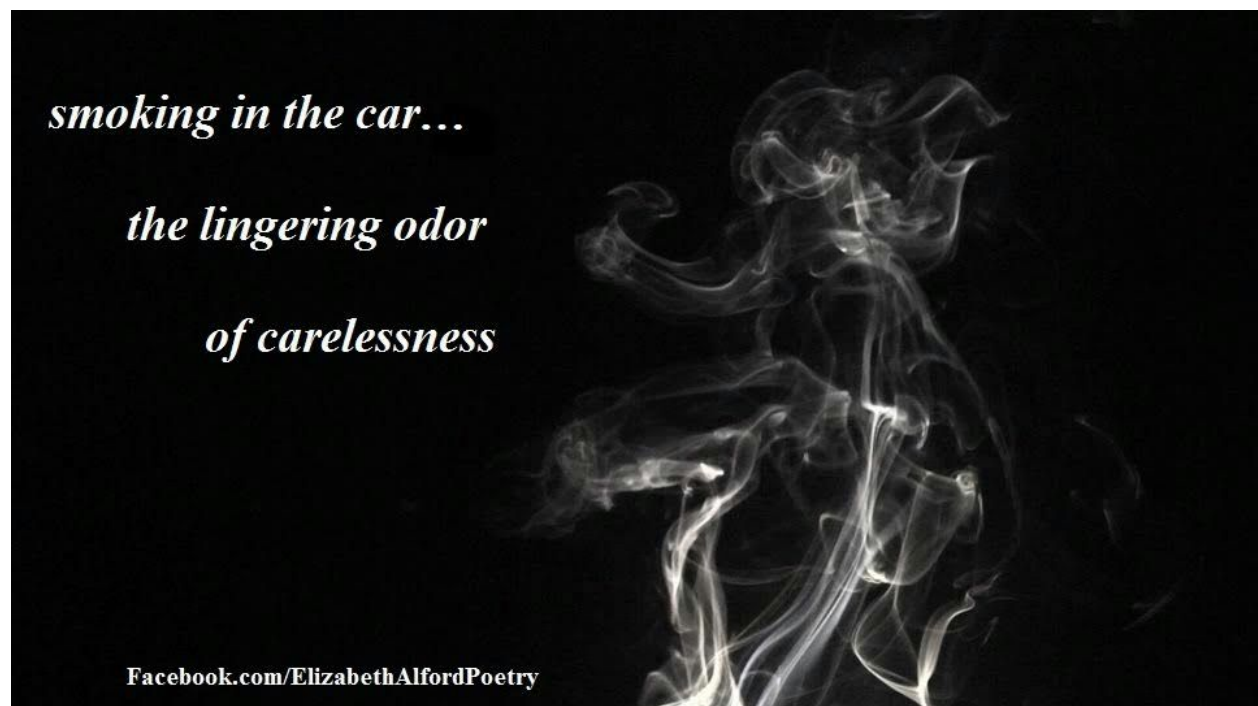
mother tells me  
she has something to tell me –  
next time we meet

Facebook friends I've never met Like me more than  
my wife

**Bob Lucky**

Cosmo quizzes  
tell me who I really am:  
a subscriber

across the street  
another cigarette's glow—  
fireflies in the night



**Elizabeth Alford**

[www.facebook.com/ElizabethAlfordPoetry](http://www.facebook.com/ElizabethAlfordPoetry)



Poem: **Elizabeth Alford**  
Photography: **Chase Gagnon**





consolation  
of an old bridge  
slow footsteps



**Christina Martin**

a man walks  
into a bar:  
ouch!

burned pancake —  
icing over the dark side  
of the moon

vanishing trick  
the magician  
after being paid

**Frank Dietrich**

aurora  
the strings of her harp  
shimmer

words & image  
DStrange







moonshine in mason jars firefly constellations

downed trees  
a different view after  
the argument

**Debbie Strange**  
[debbiemstrange.blogspot.ca](http://debbiemstrange.blogspot.ca)

successful date  
outside her door she brushes  
the snow off me

long winter  
same dream  
as yesterday

I ask the homeless man  
for directions

**Ola Lindberg**

Detention Centre  
all their names replaced  
by numbers

a wave  
crashes into the cliff  
cunnilingus

**Myron Lysenko**

tea leaves  
I uncurl slowly  
in your arms

washed sea shells  
all that was left  
after the divorce

## **ONE DIRECTION**

He tells me that it is the right thing to do. In fact, every time I have a conversation on this, he tries his best to convince me to agree with him. He says that I will be just fine, and that everything is going to be alright. But everything is alright!

He adds, that it is not uncommon to have such thoughts. Nature has her way to prepare everyone for this. And one is never ready completely. Really? What would he know? Why has motherhood suddenly become an everyday topic at home?

morning walk ...  
all that space  
for a cloud to drift



**Jayashree Maniyil**



on the pitch  
hopping crows and sparrows  
after the match

muddy puddle  
- a cawing baritone  
washing its feathers

**Nina Kovacic**

World Mental Health Day  
a trickle  
from the well

cyclepath  
...lost  
in translation

**Helen Buckingham**

sufi music . . .  
I set the washer  
on another cycle

fast vibrato--  
I can't make up my mind  
where to live

she sleeps  
mouth open on the flight--  
the dust we all breathe

duty free shop  
I come out smelling  
like all the colognes

**Nicholas Klacsanzky**

no stars in her window  
her last night in hospice  
ice in a wishing well

failed diplomacy  
one by one  
fighter jets inhale

our bickering forgotten  
snowfall

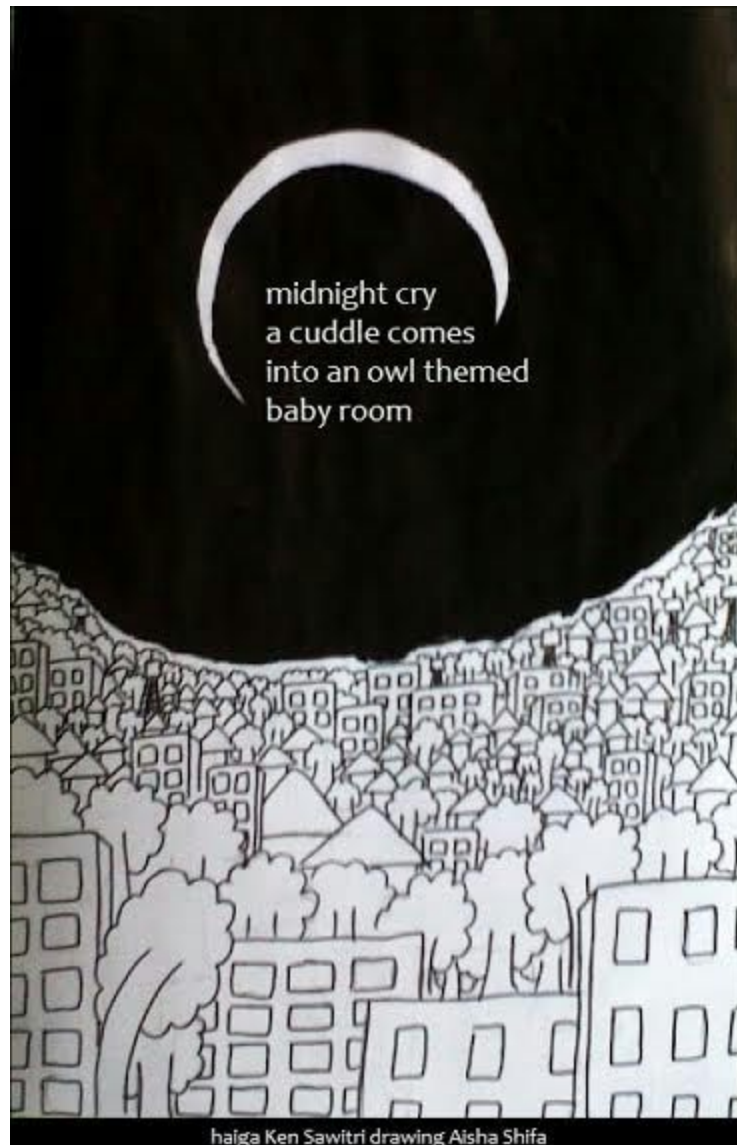
Chamber Music 101  
the professor puts Bartok  
on a shelf

**Steve Hodge**  
**[Prunejuice Journal](#)**

cave rivulet -  
in our relationship  
hidden dragons

rice moon -  
learning to read  
between his lines

**Judit Katalin Hollós**



summer rain —  
socks on the clothesline  
still try to escape on tiptoe

reunion  
the old knots  
untied

**Ken Sawitri**

**[Listen, The Spice Whispers](#)**

## Chase Gagnon

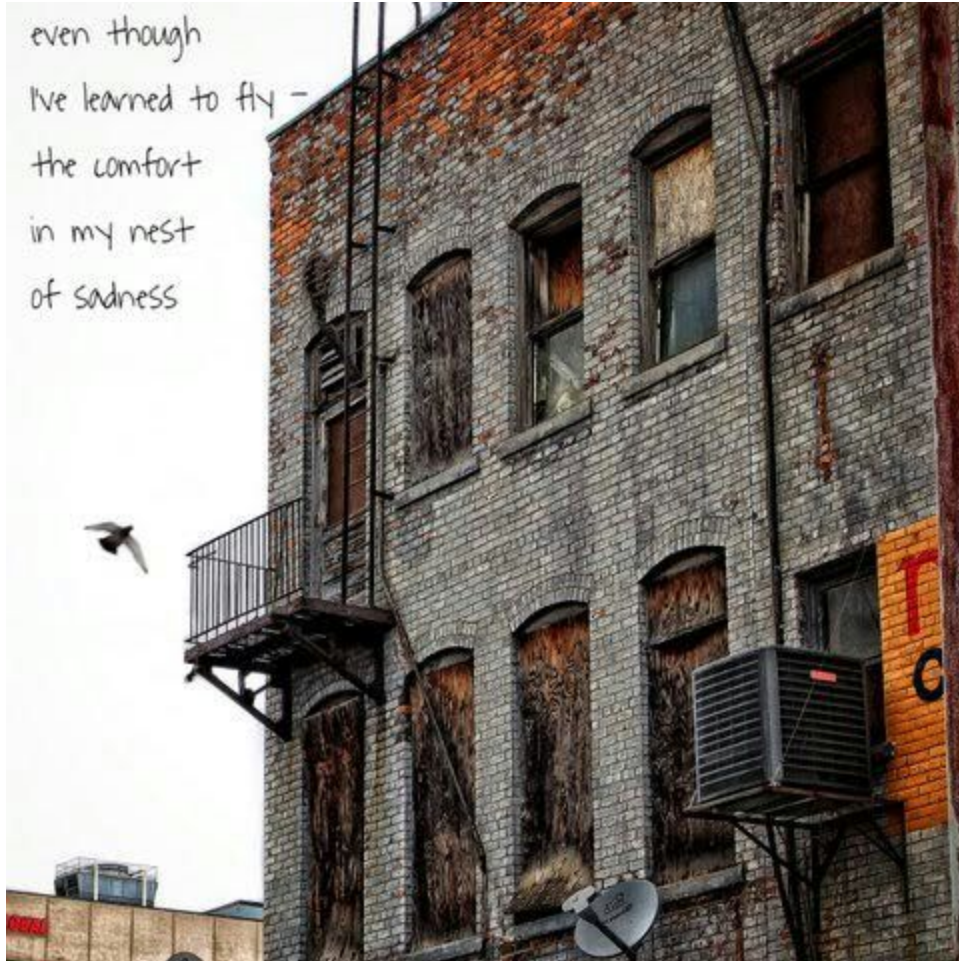






on the steps  
of our demolished  
home...  
nothing left  
to blame on my father

even though  
I've learned to fly -  
the comfort  
in my nest  
of sadness



despite all the things  
I never had...  
a birdsong from the wires





NIGHT ON THE TOWN  
THE PREACHER'S DAUGHTER  
CALLS ME TEMPTATION

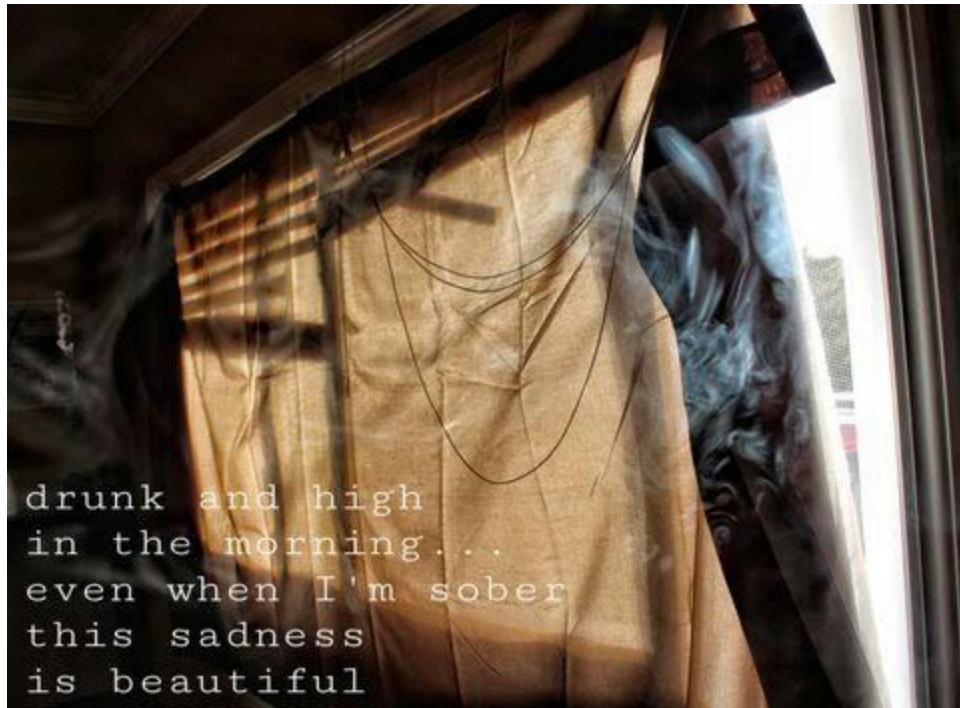




DRUG CORNER...

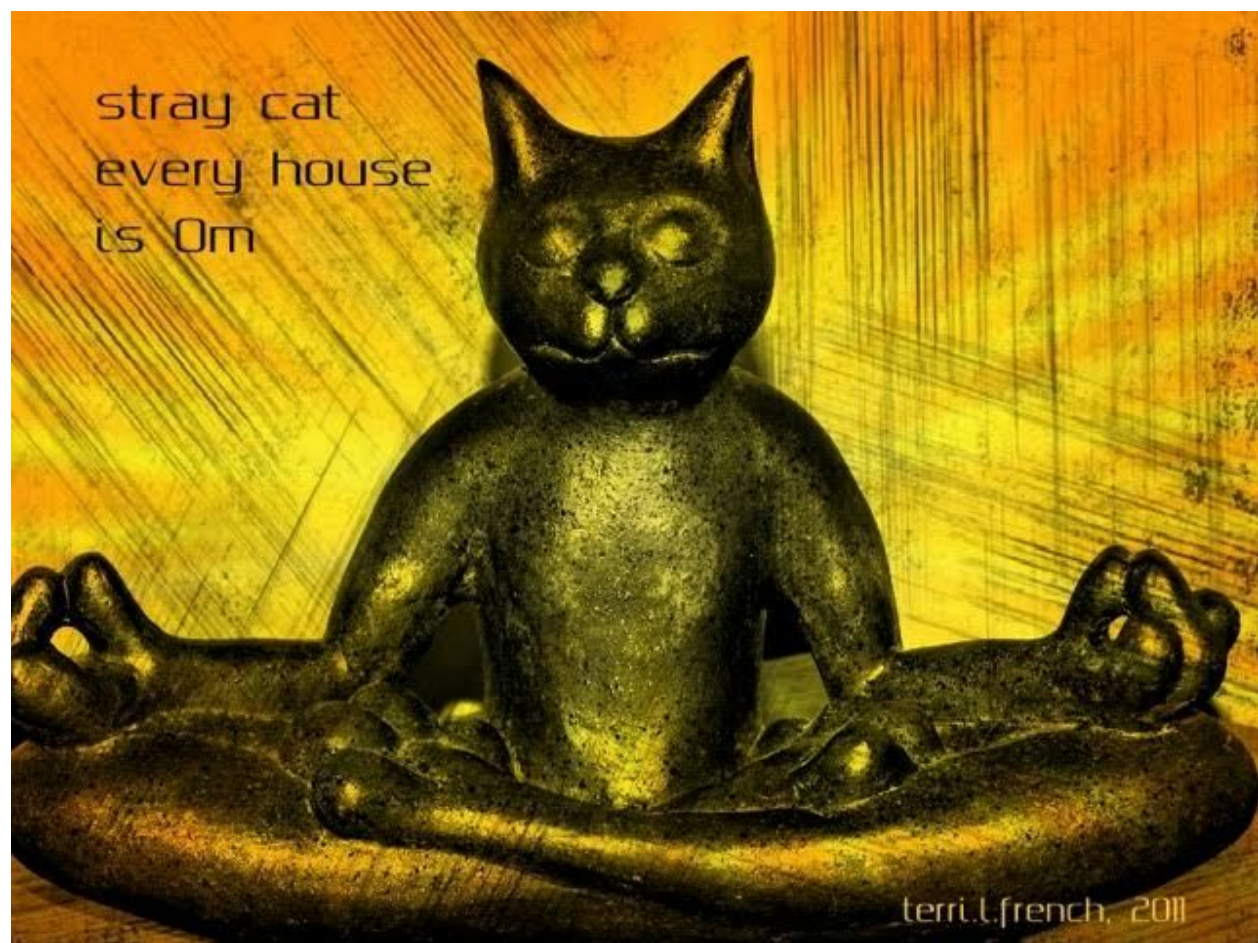
A BURNED-OUT ROCKSTAR

STARES INTO THE SUN



**Chase Gagnon**







**Terri L. French**



Oxford comma –  
the attention  
you pay me

abacus  
losing count of saying  
I'm over you

meaning what you mean spring rain

**Shloka Shankar**  
[@shloks89](#)

goldilocks planet  
thanking my  
lucky star

knocking pipes  
the whole of the room enters  
consciousness

dismembered  
but not forgotten  
zombie-in-laws

desperate  
for a way out  
exit wound

**David J Kelly**  
[@motto\\_sakura](#)

zazen--  
on a latecomer's shoes  
rip of velcro

my neighbor's  
blooming apricot tree  
secondhand love

mad at myself  
all the feedback  
i get

i find myself  
sitting in the darkness  
in me

unexpected love  
he knows the latin names  
of flowers

**Sondra J. Byrnes**

staring at me  
a wary stray's  
weary eyes

terror news  
on all channels  
I hug the dog's warmth

poet's birthday  
we fumble with our words

**Madhuri Pillai**

left to itself  
my computer flicks through  
old photos

in the fitting room  
but                nothing is

leaping into ripples  
that turtle i'd thought  
was a statue

**Duncan Richardson**

moon viewing–  
the mosquito and I  
drink red

middle aged  
a few more wrinkles  
in the suit

cabin fever–  
eying the potato  
eying me

**Bryan Rickert**

## Shards of Desire

The girl is pale and has a face dotted with freckles. Her soft hands are almost too slight for a massage. Rubbing in the hot oil over my sagging muscles, she uses her fingers, palms and then presses into the stress-knots with her thin bony arms.

Each time she leans in, putting the weight of her slender body behind the slow upward strokes of her palms, I can smell the strange absence of perfume on her skin.

*back home  
I measure the shadow  
of past regrets*

What if what we had, is all we were ever meant to be? She had asked me the night we parted ways. That was the night, I realized that each day of life is a box, neatly labeled and sealed away. You live the day, place the remnants in a box and then tuck it out of sight in some dark corner. Those boxes are never meant to be opened again.

*lark hatchlings . . .  
the single line on her  
pregnancy test*

**Paresh Tiwari**

school bus  
a child with her first  
painted yellow sun

gentle night rain  
folding myself  
into silence

childhood dandelions  
a desire suddenly  
out of range

**Vibeke Laier**



beggar  
skyscrapers blocking  
the light

orphanage  
an artificial tree  
for Christmas

full moon  
we barely make it  
to the bedroom

after the funeral.....  
her scent  
on the pillow

**Malintha Perera**  
[@Malintha\\_Perera](#)

beyond  
the buddha  
no shadow

her inner thigh	the first time
reflecting	his voice touches
moonlight	the ocean

white piano  
the great hall  
fills with silence

horseradish cheddar  
sweet white grapes  
after his funeral

**Brent Goodman**

an old oak  
turns in its own way  
I in mine

snapped  
in a selfie  
me no more

autumn rain . . .  
I write myself out  
of my haiku

until her smile  
just a universe  
becoming

on edge  
my pen tip at odds  
with my words

**Hansha Teki**

tai chi class—  
two lovers turning it  
horizontal

diner mirror myself ordering second coffees

skipping along a storm drain my childhood fears

### **Living it**

In the deeper dark after daylight saving ends it comes to me there are no answers, no blueprint. The experts counsel life planning. No framework and we'll drift. Get organised, write a schedule, save, invest, tick boxes annually - well done! But I ask, how to plan around a random quotidian of washing up, inconsolable children, dust mite, dead pets, needy friends, grocery bags, ageing parents, weedy gardens, car servicing, El Niño, tax returns, skin scans, pension schemes and the bucket list obscuring the shadows of a life lived slowly at first, then faster and faster and faster and faster in the run-up to the finish?

fireball season--  
stumbling in the night  
past the equinox

**Marietta Jane McGregor**

sun on my back--  
Monday  
full of renewables

cooler mornings--  
the honey slows down  
from the spoon

**Robyn Cairns**

# The Three Stages of Grief

generic sunlight  
the embryo's broken  
apostrophe

reading huck finn  
i imagine a raft  
of runaway wives

everyone's taken  
i chacha  
with myself

-----



**Roberta Beary**



morning fog—  
I pour one more  
cup of coffee

audiology exam—  
the receptionist speaks  
so softly

**Mary Kendall**

laundry list of differences ironed out

do-si-do

the moon also turns its back  
on the earth

a tree falls

her hands remember  
the acorn

**Francis James Franklin**

**[@AlinaMeridon](#)**

**[Website](#)**



class reunion  
we all read the menu  
through glasses

broken mirror...  
I look for the piece  
with the smile

**Radka Mindova**



**Marianne Paul,**  
[www.mariannepaul.com](http://www.mariannepaul.com)

spider in my room  
winter eviction  
moratorium

they rent the beach house  
fully furnished  
... including fleas

primary day--  
the importance of inking  
within the lines

**Jill Lange**

silence at her end...  
the cord around my finger  
coiling uncoiling

deserted car park...  
the fast and furious creaks  
of our car seat

**Shrikaanth Krishnamurthy**  
[@ShrikaanthK](#)

quicksand  
he wiggles out of a lie  
he can't remember

citrus peel  
how to sugar coat  
his parting

ink stains  
when can I start  
trusting you?

uno dos tres  
the way I count the stars  
after eating paella

**Christine L. Villa**

**<http://blossomrain.blogspot.com>**

comprehension  
    never full . . .  
of rivers holding rain

**Edwin Lomere**

creme brûlée □  
his mouth □  
gaping at me

baptismal rites  
the conical waves □  
of godfather-burps

ring finger  
a baby girl sucks□  
on her future tense

**Alegria Imperial**

at the end  
we put blue tape on the sky  
lost puzzle piece

haiku lecture  
the formula  
for disaster

when i die  
who will get the blue ribbon  
from your hair

**Mike Rehling**  
**'Failed' Editor**  
[editor@failedhaiku.com](mailto:editor@failedhaiku.com)

***(all work copyrighted by the authors)***