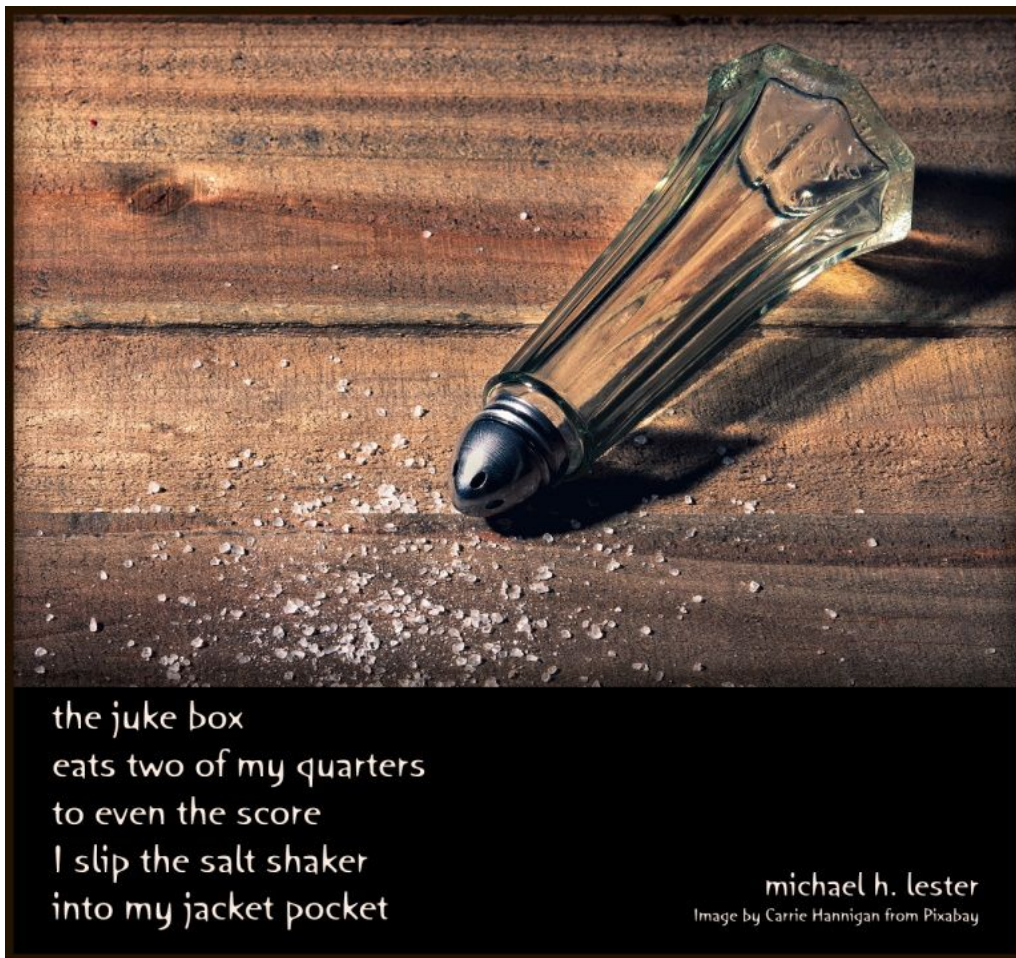


# failed **haiku**

*A Journal of English Senryu*  
*Volume 6, Issue 63*

**susan burch** Guest 'Failed' Editor  
[www.failedhaiku.com](http://www.failedhaiku.com)  
[@SenryuJournal](https://twitter.com/SenryuJournal) on Twitter  
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the juke box  
eats two of my quarters  
to even the score  
I slip the salt shaker  
into my jacket pocket

michael h. lester  
Image by Carrie Hannigan from Pixabay

by michael h. lester

# Cast List

*In order of appearance*  
*(all work copyrighted by the authors)*

**David Gale**

**Taofeek Ayeyemi**

**Michael Henry Lee**

**Anne Curran**

**Sherry Grant**

**Christina Chin**

**Teiichi Suzuki**

**Teji Sethi**

**Subir Ningthouja**

**Vandana Parashar**

**Vincenzo Adamo Paceco**

**Jackie Chou**

**Steve Black**

**Mark Ward**

**Lakshmi Iyer**

**John Hawkhead**

**Patricia Hawkhead**

**Hemapriya Chellappan**

**Maxianne Berger**

**Bryan Rickert**

**Wilbert Salgado**

**Ed Higgins**  
**Roberta Beach Jacobson**  
**Neena Singh**  
**Anna Maria Domburg-Sancristoforo**  
**Mike Keville**  
**Ingrid Baluchi**  
**Oscar Luparia**  
**Anna Goluba**  
**Anna Cates**  
**Christopher Costabile**  
**Peggy Hale Bilbro**  
**Cynthia Anderson**  
**Helen Ogden**  
**Pitt Buerken**  
**John J. Dunphy**  
**Mark Meyer**  
**Margherita Petriccione**  
**Adjei Agyei-Baah**  
**Michael H. Lester**  
**Lavana Kray**  
**Jenny Fraser**  
**Keitha Keyes**  
**Elizabeth Crocket**  
**Mirela Brăilean**  
**Hifsa Ashraf**  
**Roberta Beary**

**Michele L. Harvey**  
**Paul Beech**  
**Grix**  
**Milan Rajkumar**  
**Andrew Riutta**  
**Mary Cresswell**  
**Lucia Fontana**  
**Richard Tice**  
**Kat Lehmann**  
**Pat Davis**  
**Robert B McNeill**  
**Charles Harmon**  
**Mike Gallagher**  
**Kavitha Sreeraj**  
**Dave Read**  
**Ron Moss**  
**Franjo Ordanić**  
**B.A. France**  
**Mark Gilbert**  
**John Zheng**  
**Tia Haynes**  
**Robert Erlandson**  
**Lorraine A. Padden**  
**David He**  
**Terrie Jacks**  
**David Oates**

**Corine Timmer**  
**Irina Guliaeva**  
**Kath Abela Wilson**  
**Arvinder Kaur**  
**Bruce H. Feingold**  
**Tim Cremin**  
**James Chessing**  
**Carol Raisfeld**  
**Tracy Davidson**  
**Natalia Kuznetsova**  
**Chen-ou Liu**  
**LeRoy Gorman**  
**Agus Maulana Sunjaya**  
**Tzetzka Ilieva**  
**Debbie Strange**  
**Cynthia Rowe**  
**Lucky Triana**  
**Valentina Ranaldi-Adams**  
**Rick Jackofsky**  
**Surashree Joshi**  
**Duncan Richardson**  
**Julie Bloss Kelsey**  
**Alexis Rotella**  
**Madhuri Pillai**  
**Tom Bierovic**  
**Sushama Kapur**

**Jackie Maugh Robinson**

**Tomislav Maretic**

**Jill Lange**

**Dan Burt**

**Lori A Minor**

**Jeffrey McMullen**

**Nadejda Kostadinova**

**Richard L Matta**

**Priti Aisola**

**Peter Jastermsky**

**Paul Geiger**

**Marilyn Ashbaugh**

**Ken Hay**

**Bob Lucky**

**Susan Burch**

picking blackberries  
and for my every action  
a bird with an equal  
and opposite  
reaction

lockdown  
and a fine weekend ahead  
ebay invites me  
to buy  
garden golf

through the window  
of the lift door  
the intimate embrace  
of a man  
and doublebase

**David Gale**

the evening sun  
on a pond's surface . . .  
the sparkle  
and the roundness  
of grandpa's head

**Taofeek Ayeyemi**



each generation  
inscrutable as the stars  
to the one before it  
like tea leaves swirling  
in some gypsy woman's cup

**Michael Henry Lee**

a cockatiel  
swings on its perch  
squawks a profanity -  
my free spirit  
also feeling stymied

**Anne Curran**

shared by  
boys and girls  
equally pink  
a brighter future  
not colour-coded

**Sherry Grant**

dim light  
I spared a mosquito  
thinking its a spider  
then spent the whole night  
hitting myself

**Christina Chin**

in the cold  
swelling with clothes  
more and more  
I resemble  
a sumo wrestler

to tweet  
or not to tweet  
it matters  
in the coal mine  
innocent canary

**Teiichi Suzuki**

he loves me

he loves me

not

living this dilemma

I miss another spring

**Teji Sethi**

i jump  
off the Kiyomizu stage  
for nirvana  
after a blissful freefall  
i get broken legs

**Subir Ningthouja**

seven-year itch...  
I now know that love  
doesn't always last  
however  
a diamond is forever

**Vandana Parashar**



visit to the cemetery  
my mother always speaks  
my father listens  
he was of few words  
even when alive

**Vincenzo Adamo Paceco**

picked last  
for team sport  
my lone shadow  
stretches out  
on the playground

homeschooled  
until the sixth grade  
I sign  
my own yearbook  
with my dolls' names

**Jackie Chou**

early autumn  
past their prime  
low hanging fruit  
i burn my balls  
in the bath water

eclipse  
in the lido  
a solitary turd  
drifts  
past the sun

pissing away the stains  
in a public lavatory  
is it too much to ask  
at my age  
one clean shit

**Steve Black**

The Martian dust road  
widens like a gumless smile  
as the town recedes,  
drowned out by the hyperbole  
of a sky wishing to be teeth.

**Mark Ward**

if I had  
to open my day  
with a password  
I would say  
FORGET YESTERDAY'

**Lakshmi Iyer**

down the street  
curtains billow  
with whispered rumour  
following me around  
the painting's eyes

**John Hawkhead**

remembering  
my French boyfriend  
how he would wrap  
les bras  
about my breasts

**Patricia Hawkhead**

I take shelter  
in the cavernous mouth  
of an ancient cave . . .  
it's cloudy with a chance  
of nanobots

gone too soon  
a boy who dared  
to dream  
a fish out of water  
a fish out of its mind

**Hemapriya Chellappan**



coffee spills  
all over the rug  
I shrug  
what is, is  
what was, was

**Maxianne Berger**

after  
the last shot's burn  
goes down  
the numbness I need  
to start forgetting you

my love  
for women with  
simple beauty  
yet this constant desire  
for fancy sprinkled donuts

visiting  
the capital  
a phallus  
made of stone  
says it all

**Bryan Rickert**

*Dos piernas  
te pueden llevar  
a muchos lugares  
a ella la llevaron  
a doce maridos*

Two legs  
can take you  
places  
hers took her  
to twelve husbands

*Yoga mental  
me posiciono  
para aguantar  
50 minutos  
de reunión*

Mental yoga  
I position myself  
to stand  
A 50-minute  
Reunion

**Wilbert Salgado**

too rapidly  
life's rushing conveyor belt  
carrying me  
relentlessly toward an ashy end  
into a cremation urn

**Ed Higgins**

overnight  
our tulip patch mysteriously  
weeded  
why do the garden gnomes  
appear repositioned

**Roberta Beach Jacobson**

evening walk  
in the public park  
azure sky  
a stray mongrel sleeps  
on election leaflets

**Neena Singh**

Covid time  
my neighbour wears  
a new mask  
trying again and again  
to smile with his eyes

**Anna Maria Domburg-Sancristoforo**

only a cough  
to greet the sun  
will it all matter  
when I'm dust  
on the wind

I've known  
some cows in my time  
but not enough  
to end this virus  
herd immoomoounity

for everyone  
the same treatment  
in all the gloom  
our tap-dancing dog's  
welcome

**Mike Keville**



baggage carousel  
waiting to be claimed  
the trophy hunter's fixed snarl  
splendid on its wooden mount  
circles once again

**Ingrid Baluchi**

high society  
at the garden tea party  
elegance and bon ton –  
with supreme disregard  
a cat is licking its balls

**Oscar Luparia**

As I click on them  
For a moment  
They become alive...  
Fashion models  
On a website

Looooooooong  
Winter evening...  
I feed  
The fishes  
On someone's blog

I write down  
My nightmares  
I light up  
All the dark interiors  
I can find

**Anna Goluba**

dirty bottles  
tangled in honeysuckle  
throwaway culture  
politicians come and go  
but plastic is permanent

chocolate  
and a good romance  
new divorcee  
more compelling than truth  
all our believable fictions

**Anna Cates**

she hates the way it looks  
but that decision  
is too far gone  
to change it now—  
her hyphenated last name

endless arguments  
about the dishwasher  
i leave  
all of the forks and knives  
pointed up

**Christopher Costabile**

spring cleaning  
turns up  
my son's stash  
shall I toss it  
or give it a try

**Peggy Hale Bilbro**

social distancing—  
the relief  
of not running into  
my own  
limitations

**Cynthia Anderson**

today's horoscope:  
travel and attend gatherings—  
she read the stars  
but forgot  
to read the news

foraging ants—  
catastrophic end  
to an epic journey  
on the vast plains  
of the kitchen counter

the art of solo  
conversation—  
talking to myself  
and answering  
my own questions

**Helen Ogden**



choral singing  
my croaking gets lost  
in the crowd  
only the new choirmaster  
despairs of my vocals

**Pitt Buerken**

golf course  
into the water trap  
ball  
followed by  
club

"brake!"  
woman awakened by  
her partner's nightmare cry  
after his first day of teaching  
driver's ed

21st birthday  
in a bar  
newly-legal drinker  
uses his fake ID  
for a coaster

**John J. Dunphy**

we enjoy long walks  
love sleeping together  
and eating well  
we're so sympatico  
too bad you're my dog

New Years Day  
facing the same ugly mug  
in the damn mirror  
today I hereby resolve  
to buy a new mirror

lighting a bonfire  
of faded love letters  
I watch the smoke rise  
the smoldering embers  
to warm my cold heart

**Mark Meyer**

Always here  
from retirement.  
My shadow  
and that of the bench  
the same blue.

**Margherita Petriccione**

red light traffic  
a junky washes  
my windscreen  
with dirty water  
then asks for money

her birthday  
falling on valentine's  
her disapproval  
to see me kill two birds  
with one stone

teasing a friend  
for his taste  
for plump women  
he tells me  
"a big tree gives better shade"

**Adjei Agyei-Baah**

the juke box  
eats two of my quarters  
to even the score  
I slip the salt shaker  
into my jacket pocket

I complain about  
the thick wad of steel wool  
on my hamburger  
the short-order cook  
shrugs his beefy shoulders

briefly blond  
I suppose mother  
knew then  
she would leave father  
for a more adventurous man

**Michael H. Lester**  
[@mhlester](https://twitter.com/mhlester)



**Lavana Kray**

joint replacement  
advice—  
passing the prosthesis  
the tutor says  
make friends with this

post hip operation  
I penny whistle  
my way there  
and back  
playing an Irish jig

**Jenny Fraser**



Aussies  
call a man's suit  
a bag of fruit —  
just one example  
of our larrikin soul

they say  
men can only do  
one thing  
at a time —  
how convenient

**Keitha Keyes**

pandemic  
second birthday  
in lockdown  
more wishes  
blown away

Broadway play  
no one mentions where  
until asked  
disability washrooms  
across the street

**Elizabeth Crocket**

vigil -  
long enough  
to unearth  
a shred of humanity  
on the dead guy's face

**Mirela Brăilean**

cawing aloud  
a murder of crows  
outside the office  
when I overstep the shadow  
of my boss

**Hifsa Ashraf**

the in-laws visit  
brings muted thunderstorms  
inside our bedroom  
every morning the same dig  
about no extra bathroom

for lent i vow  
to be more patient  
as i fume  
on this cold street  
waiting for a friend

my sister in pearls  
at our family reunion  
i wear them too  
replacing mother's gift  
with strands twice the size

**Roberta Beary**  
[@shortpoemz](https://twitter.com/shortpoemz)

mother insists  
it's my job to have  
white babies...  
again I question being  
someone else's child

it's as much  
as anyone needs to know  
the headstone  
with stark routine brevity  
of the man who stalked my life

**Michele L. Harvey**  
[@MicheleLHarvey](#)

dust gathering  
digitally  
notes for the novel  
he'll write someday  
an epic fantasy

**Paul Beech**

prissy-faced,  
you sit beside the table  
and wait  
tail tucked, with perfect posture . . .  
the high-pitched farter

finally  
in a big dog's body—  
the little dog  
reincarnated  
now scared of everything!

the mist  
from a nuclear  
cooling tower . . .  
is it aliens boiling  
bodies they've snatched?

**Grix**



her beauty  
on the other side of world  
video calling  
my several screenshots  
whenever she bends

**Milan Rajkumar**

50 years old:  
a hard climb it's been  
from drunk to janitor . . .  
I add clean snot rags  
to my portfolio

a crop-circle heart  
in the ugly brown weeds  
on Valentine's Day . . .  
how come I  
didn't think of that?

a snowdrift  
the length of eternity  
to soften my sorrows---  
I go my way  
stray cats go theirs

**Andrew Riutta**

Monarchs have sticky legs –  
sticky wings – they come unglued slowly  
and take to the air.

Two weeks to live –  
all the time in the world.

A seal! Wow! I grab  
the binoculars. It's Trev  
from next door in his wetsuit.  
Beauty is in  
the eye of the beholder.

**Mary Cresswell**

reconciling  
between you and me  
a competition on  
who says more times  
I Love You

**Lucia Fontana**

Shoo, fly,  
don't bother me—  
nevertheless,  
my first visitor in weeks,  
*Musca domestica*

**Richard Tice**

suddenly the age  
of Basho's death  
the years  
of sweetness left  
on the narrowing road

one tiny star  
becomes a sun  
the song  
of a lone pianist  
in the hospital atrium

upstairs  
with the hippos  
my son and I  
splash in wild rivers  
and eavesdrop on grown-ups

**Kat Lehmann**  
[@SongsOfKat](#)

mosquitoes  
uncle joe explains  
the doppler effect  
which one  
to swat first

**Pat Davis**

fighting  
the reflections  
in the window  
hummingbird  
and I

golf lesson --  
my ball skipping  
across the pond  
it would have made it  
except for that big bass

**Robert B McNeill**



reached out my hand  
to the lady of the lake  
got my sword back  
now if I can just find  
my horse

rolled up my sleeves  
grabbed a shovel and pitchfork  
it's a messy job  
but someone's got to do it  
buffet table

foul mouthed parrots  
evicted from aviaries  
for cussing patrons  
wonder where they learned that?  
#%@\$?&!!!

**Charles Harmon**

nineteen-sixty-one  
Hollyhead to Euston train  
small cardboard cases  
holding our everything  
economic migrants

politicians  
rushing to claim  
expenses  
clambering over children  
begging on their streets

a barometer  
forecasting snow  
in summer  
nothing broken  
but the climate

**Mike Gallagher**

squeezing himself  
into the uniform  
he sighs  
a button pops out  
from the shirt

**Kavitha Sreeraj**

after a long day  
of working  
from home,  
I make my commute  
to the fridge

his goal  
of improving his fitness  
goes nowhere...  
the trail  
of an exercise bike

the neighbour's dog peeks  
through a gap  
in our fence...  
I feed him  
a little attention

**Dave Read**



*moving house  
someone forget  
to cancel  
the fresh milk  
delivery*

*Ron C. Moss*

**Ron Moss**

crowded train  
surrounded by punkers  
a fidgeting nun  
two Hail Mary's  
to the next stop

**Franjo Ordanić**

warm evening  
rearranging furniture  
the chest moved  
then moved back  
again

**B.A. France**

[@b a france](#)

of course  
the intern  
is the niece  
of the boss  
of my boss

**Mark Gilbert**



I tell Tigger  
to stay six feet away  
for physical distance  
and the cat jumps  
onto my lap

summer night  
louder and louder  
from the neighbor's pool  
the toads' croak  
puffs up the moon

**John Zheng**

another check  
on the homeschool  
lists  
forgetting I have  
a husband

interrupted  
by the linger of  
I love you  
the good-bye  
I never gave

fixing the smile  
on the jack-o-lantern  
I carve  
a piece out of  
my depression

**Tia Haynes**



**Robert Erlandson**

feeding the cat-  
the size of a meal  
I would make  
if our sizes  
were reversed

awake in post-op  
wondering where  
to hide that fear  
if not tucked  
under my breast

**Lorraine A. Padden**

Grandpa  
changes shape  
as the sun rises  
he and his shadow  
bend to the ground

**David He**

a sieve  
my brain  
senior moment  
my brain  
a sieve

**Terrie Jacks**

nursing home  
she never mentioned her pain  
asked how I was  
and did I get  
something to eat

**David Oates**

the bubble gum  
explodes in the girl's face—  
I remember a time  
when I too  
pushed the limits

a water reservoir  
inside an icy moon—  
one day, I too  
will thaw and  
flow freely

**Corine Timmer**



the third divorce  
going  
to the children`s library  
to borrow  
fairytales

**Irina Guliaeva**

full length mirror  
of the bus door  
what an outfit  
good thing I don't  
see myself all the time

squid appendages  
from biology class  
dissections  
for my butcher boyfriend  
love at first sight

**Kath Abela Wilson**

Alzheimer's  
the day  
mama forgot my name  
and yet  
the warmth of her hug

death anniversary  
the rhythmic rock  
of grandma's chair  
her steady gaze at the sky  
her smile at a star

**Arvinder Kaur**

at the retreat  
the Buddhist monk pulls out  
his Santa Claus hat  
and rubs his tummy laughing  
ho ho ho

**Bruce H. Feingold**

the thrill  
of driving around  
in a car  
without duct tape  
or jumper cables

the early workouts  
of my upstairs neighbor  
that started on New Year's  
thankfully didn't last  
to Ground Hog Day

**Tim Cremin**

her children gave her  
a genetic testing kit...  
how to tell them  
their grandfather  
isn't who they think he is

a first date  
in this chic cafe  
I couldn't feel more exposed  
if I were a pomegranate  
split in two

roses may impress  
those other girls--not me  
I'm a beef jerky  
double-barrel all night long  
no doubt about it woman

**James Chessing**

depressed  
always on the outside  
looking in  
the window washer  
his face to the glass

the proctologist  
roundly faces his wife  
in divorce court  
she hisses,  
“you’re a pain in the ass!”

she gave him  
the skinniest years  
of her life...  
at the gym, his new wife  
all hips and pillowed breasts

**Carol Raisfeld**

the hula-hoop  
from my long ago childhood  
still in the loft  
used once and abandoned...  
I know how it feels

a lingering kiss  
on our neighbour's doorstep  
the milkman  
delivers more than milk  
while her husband's away

another day  
another troll turns up  
in my timeline  
how I wish our brains  
had block buttons too

**Tracy Davidson**



vanity  
in men and women ...  
in this  
we have truly achieved  
gender equality

in the horse race crowd  
catching sight of my ex  
with his new filly  
my heart breaks  
into a gallop

**Natalia Kuznetsova**

a woman in red  
on the street corner  
in dim light  
we sing Lonely Hearts  
eye to eye

the voice  
of a wrong number  
this winter night  
I feel less cold  
and less lonely

**Chen-ou Liu**

one astronomer  
outshines the rest  
proving some stars  
are brighter  
than others

**LeRoy Gorman**

joining  
this heavy rain  
on green leaves  
I pee  
outside my door

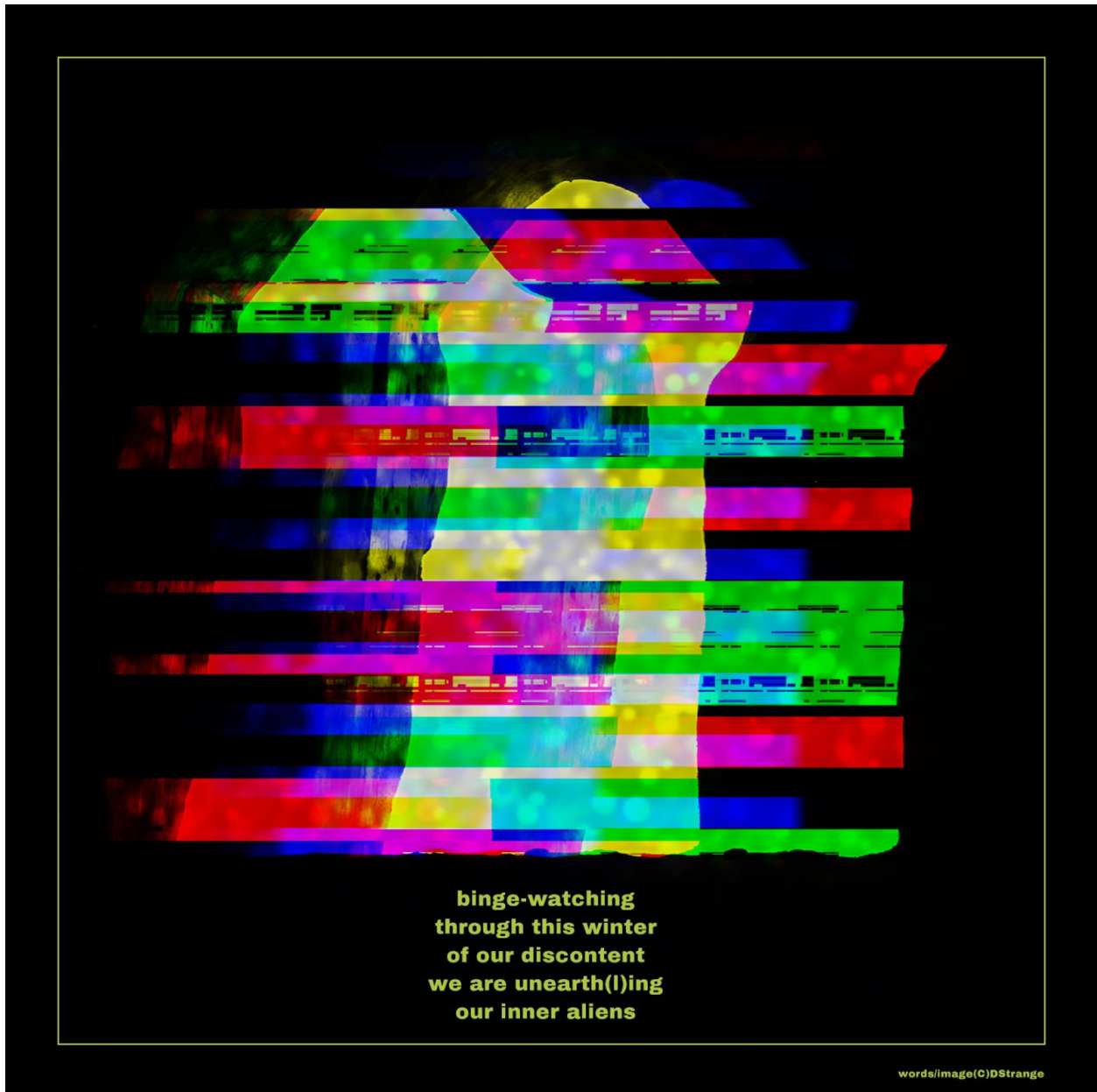
**Agus Maulana Sunjaya**

new fence finished  
I miss the hole  
a neighbor's dog  
was using  
to sneak in

steep hillside -  
the place  
where everyone stops  
and pretends  
to enjoy the view

just looking  
at the membership  
stickers  
on my windshield  
I feel healthier already

**Tzetzka Ilieva**



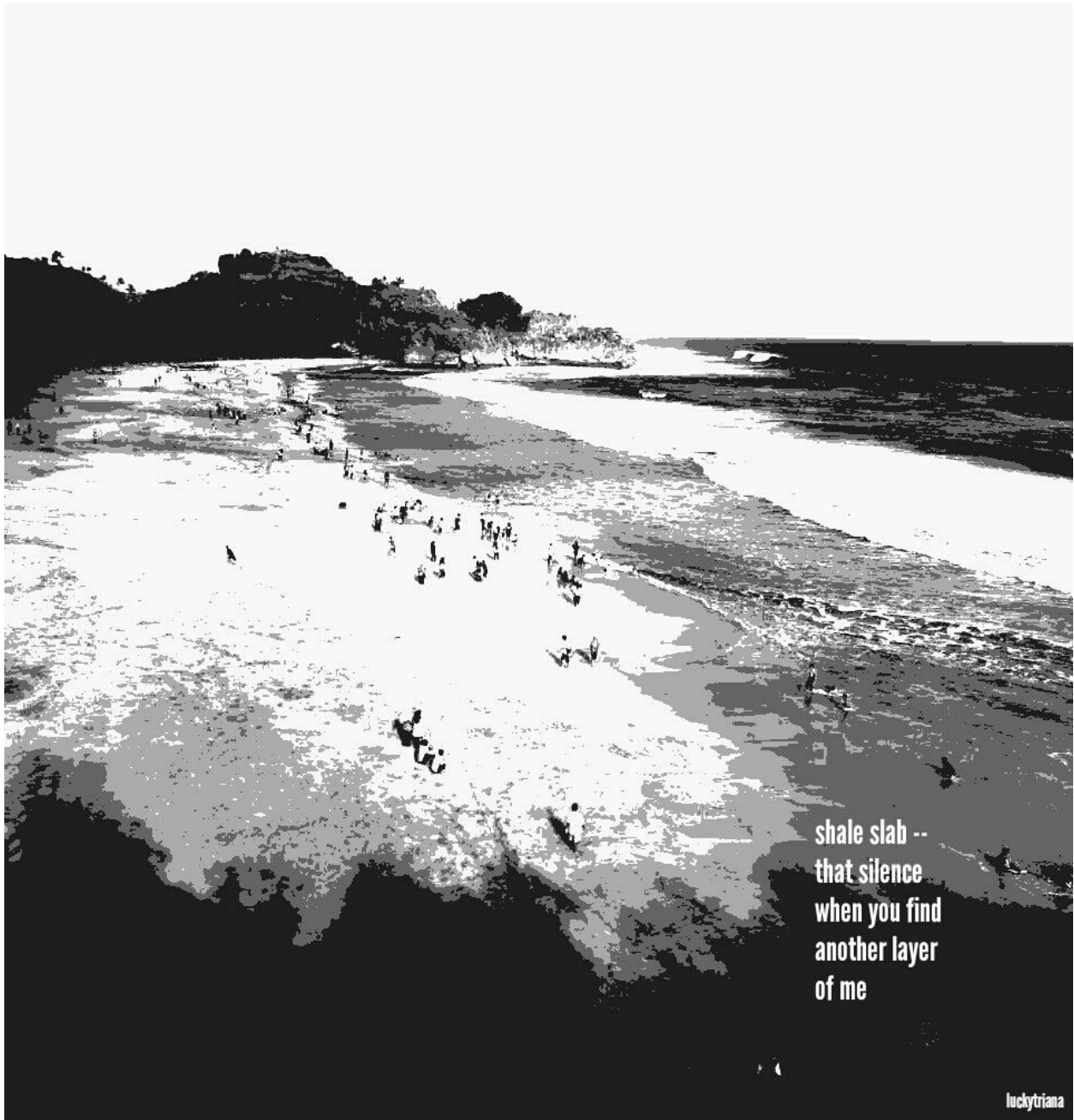
**Debbie Strange**

bath time . . .  
your tears turn to shrieks  
of glee  
always this ability  
to opt for the positives

in the fun park  
a gorilla steadfast  
on the poster  
while I lose my cool  
on the roller-coaster ride

on check-up days  
my white-coated dad  
gives his grand-kids  
ice-cream ... afraid they  
will be afraid of him

**Cynthia Rowe**



**Lucky Triana**



a loving heart  
is easy to draw  
on Valentine's Day  
a loving heart  
is hard to find

**Valentina Ranaldi-Adams**

rain-soaked  
pint-sized captains  
in yellow boots  
racing paper boats  
the dixie cup regatta

a steady diet  
of coffee grounds  
and banana peels  
the bittersweet life  
of a compost worm

**Rick Jackofsky**

jupiter and saturn  
together on winter solstice  
after centuries -  
yet my family fails  
to gather at dinner time

I howl back  
to the dog next door -  
I wonder  
how many errors  
I made in his language

**Surashree Joshi**

stretching  
among the soft toys  
- my cat  
waiting for a flash  
of life

outside the gallery  
finely tapered, gleaming  
- dog turd  
beyond critique  
or explanation

**Duncan Richardson**

if i can't even  
control my own body  
how can i hope  
to change the world...  
chronic migraine

too much  
of a blob  
to write today...  
ink pooling  
on the sofa

what if my mind  
drifts away like a coffin  
in a New Orleans flood..  
nothing left of me  
but gibbering debris

**Julie Bloss Kelsey**

Aliens are coming  
to get me,  
call the authorities  
my aunt warns me  
from her hospital bed

Lockdown  
I don't just  
talk to  
I answer  
myself

The worms  
that eat at  
his corpse  
were they inside him  
all along?

**Alexis Rotella**

unwilling  
to fly  
the coop  
children remain  
like perennials

playing muse...  
a frequent guest  
to the balcony  
a raven's  
raucous ditties

**Madhuri Pillai**

waiting  
two days to delete  
Friend Requests  
maybe they will have  
forgotten by then

**Tom Bierovic**



a butterfly perches  
on our dog's nose  
in a split second  
    Sheldon runs  
cross-country as Flash

**Sushama Kapur**

lockdown  
cell photos  
from different angles  
cat in dog bed  
dog miffed

**Jackie Maugh Robinson**

brushing flies  
away  
I am not  
like Issa –  
a banquet for one

fashionistas –  
moths  
in the closet  
chose  
my best suit

**Tomislav Maretic**

the butterfly  
in yesterday's photo  
please not—  
that flash of yellow  
striking my windshield

**Jill Lange**

knocks and bumps  
in the attic at night  
a trunk full of hiccups  
I creep up the stairs  
to scare them away

**Dan Burt**

showering  
for the first time  
in weeks  
I scrub off what's left  
of my depression

uprooting  
the last orchid  
from its pot  
I accept  
my infertility

going to church  
with a handprint  
across my face  
my mother tells me  
to be more like Christ

**Lori A Minor**

pacing the road  
 a biker whose Harley  
 ran out of gas  
 a puff of cigarette smoke  
 obscuring his face

**Jeffrey McMullen**

the variety of  
colors in the national flags  
so many people  
in my Facebook friend list  
I will never meet

first it was  
the motherly groups  
now I too am  
taking millions of pictures  
of my pet

**Nadejda Kostadinova**



imitating owl  
I glued on talon-nails  
wore costume, moonwalk shoes  
floor-hitched, forward-perched  
fell flat on my face

**Richard L Matta**

she kneads  
the chapati dough  
and punches it  
holding back a retort  
within sealed lips

all those books  
crammed into a bookshelf -  
at least  
they have spines  
and each other to lean on

**Priti Aisola**

red water glasses  
from the decade of his birth  
the nose cones  
and bullet bras  
sure to outlive him

**Peter Jastermsky**

I cannot listen  
to political diatribes  
even in poetry,  
no matter how clever  
the Clerihew

**Paul Geiger**

spandex  
a blur of bicycles  
across Sunday  
while i sip jasmine tea  
before my nap

**Marilyn Ashbaugh**

I walk among trees  
It's true  
But how would I know  
How they arrange themselves  
After?

**Ken Hay**

I know not  
these hands kneading my thighs  
massage parlor —  
what I really need  
is a happy ending

**Bob Lucky**

fat Buddha –  
I rub my own belly  
for good luck...  
as big as it is,  
I should win Lotto

revenge fantasies  
instead of daydreams –  
how do I stop  
the thought crimes  
I keep committing

playing  
Dungeons & Dragons –  
how the choices  
we make  
define us

**Susan Burch**



**Susan Burch Guest** 'Failed' Editor  
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