

# failed ~~haiku~~

*A Journal of English Senryu*  
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**bryan rickert** 'Failed' Editor

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

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brocken spectre looming large the shadow of your absence



words/image@DStrange

*Photo by Debbie Strange*

# Cast List

*In order of appearance*  
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**Barth H. Ragatz**

**Teiichi Suzuki**

**Lavana Kray**

**Alan Peat**

**Wiesław Karliński**

**Ted Sherman**

**Thomas Tilton**

**Pat Davis**

**Simon Wilson**

**Vladislav Hristov**

**Marilyn Ashbaug**

**Ronald K. Craig**

**Kristen Lindquist**

**Kim Sosin**

**Rosa Maria Di Salvatore**

**Tony Williams**

**Roberta Beach Jacobson**

**John Zheng**

**Neena Singh**

**Christina Chin / Michael Hough**

**Pris Campbell**

**Vincenzo Adamo Paceco**  
**Ian Mullins**  
**Oscar Luparia**  
**Agus Maulana Sunjaya**  
**Richa Sharma**  
**Rick Jackofsky**  
**Gil Jackofsky**  
**Anna Maria Domburg-Sancristoforo**  
**Tracy Davidson**  
**Brad Bennett**  
**Tom Bierovic**  
**Marilyn Fleming**  
**William Scott Galasso**  
**Michael Hough / Christina Chin**  
**Susan Bonk Plumridge**  
**Chen-ou Liu**  
**Maxianne Berger**  
**Mark Forrester**  
**Sushama Kapur**  
**Antonio Mangiameli**  
**Laurie Greer**  
**Gautam Nadkarni**  
**Radostina Dragostinova**  
**Ingrid Baluchi**  
**Anna Cates**  
**Susan Burch**

**Charles Harmon**  
**Robert B McNeill**  
**Scott Wiggerman**  
**Rich Magahiz**  
**Alice Wanderer**  
**Carmela Marino**  
**Zoran Doderovic**  
**Dorna Hains**  
**Ron Tuohy**  
**Joanne van Helvoort**  
**Emily Kane**  
**Kathleen Vasek Trocmet**  
**Joanne Morcom**  
**P. H. Fischer**  
**Birk Andersson**  
**Jacob Blumner**  
**Dottie Piet**  
**Ben Gaa**  
**Marsh Muirhead**  
**Meera Rehm**  
**Tim Roberts**  
**Roger Watson / *Erin Castaldi***  
**Srinivasa Rao Sambangi**  
**B.A. France**  
**Jamie Wimberly**

**Jackie Maugh Robinson**  
**Kat Lehmann**  
**Hifsa Ashraf**  
**Surashree Joshi**  
**Eva Joan**  
**Vandana Parashar**  
**Ed Bremson**  
**David He**  
**Michael Henry Lee**  
**Natalia Kuznetsova**  
**Maya Daneva**  
**Isabella Kramer**  
**Cynthia Anderson**  
**Keiko Izawa**  
**Minal Sarosh**  
**Nick Hoffman**  
**Patricia Hawkhead**  
**John Hawkhead**  
**Paul Beech**  
**Olivier Schopfer**  
**Pitt Buerken**  
**Joseph P. Wechselberger**  
**Greg Schwartz**  
**Irina Guliaeva**  
**Lakshmi Iyer**  
**Louise Hopewell**

**DT Arcieri**  
**Colleen M. Farrelly**  
**Antonietta Losito**  
**R. J. Swanson**  
**Joanna Ashwell**  
**Veronika Zora Novak**  
**Tanya McDonald / *Lew Watts***  
**Lew Watts / *Tanya McDonald***  
**Lew Watts**  
**Benedict Grant**  
**Robert Witmer**  
**Cynthia Rowe**  
**Adjei Agyei-Baah**  
**Carol Raisfeld**  
**Ann Schechter**  
**Cristina Angelescu**  
**Ron Scully**  
**Steve Black**  
**Michael Baeyens**  
**Mark Gilbert**  
**Barrie Levine**  
**Bob Lucky**  
**Daniela Misso**  
**Tim Cremin**  
**Michael Kitchen**  
**Marianne Paul**

**Jackie Chou**  
**Joanna Delalande**  
**Francis W. Alexander**  
**John J. Dunphy**  
**Peter Jastermsky**  
**Valentina Ranaldi-Adams**  
**Nika**  
**Sarah Paris**  
**Eva Limbach**  
**Arvinder Kaur**  
**Adelaide B. Shaw**  
**Lucia Cardillo**  
**Sandra Šamec / Franjo Ordanić**  
**David Gale**  
**Robert Epstein**  
**Maureen Weldon**  
**Mike Gallagher**  
**Madhuri Pillai**  
**carmen duvalma**  
**Gabriela Popa**  
**Christine Wenk-Harrison**  
**David Kāwika Eyre**  
**Eric A. Lohman**  
**Susan Farner**  
**Kevin Valentine / Steve Valentine**  
**Mark Farrar**

**Marilyn Humbert**  
**Terrie Jacks**  
**Rp Verlaine**  
**Michael Rehling**  
**Tom Blessing / *Kristyn Blessing***  
**Terri L. French**  
**Tim Gardiner**  
**Sondra Byrnes**  
**Tsanka Shishkova**  
**Vijay Prasad**  
**Elisa Allo**  
**Kath Abela Wilson**  
**Nadejda Kostadinova**  
**Dorothy Burrows**  
**Wonja Brucker**  
**John S Green**  
**Hildegard Bachman**  
**Anna Eklund-Cheong**  
**Adam T. Arn**  
**Bruce Jewett**  
**Noel Méndez / Wilbert Salgado**  
**M. Shane Pruett**  
**Mona Iordan**  
**Jill Lange**  
**Waliyullah Tunde Abimbola**  
**Nancy Brady**

**Bee Jay**  
**Helen Ogden**  
**Geoff Pope**  
**Sindhoo Varkoor**  
**Sanjukta Asopa**  
**Pippa Phillips**  
**Mark Miller**  
**Tomislav Sjekloća**  
**Rehn Kovacic**  
**Curt Linderman**  
**Leanne Jaeger**  
**Sanela Pliško**  
**Kelly Sauvage**  
**David Oates**  
**Robert Moyer**  
**Peter Jastermsky / *Bryan Rickert***

you show me yours  
and I'll show you mine  
clotheslined underwear

small child's drawing  
recognize my big belly  
back to the gym

**Barth H. Ragatz**

yacht in a bottle  
small captain  
waiting for the wind

spring blues--  
a self-portrait  
abstractly

**Teiichi Suzuki**



**Lavana Kray**

breaking up -  
unexpected meteorite

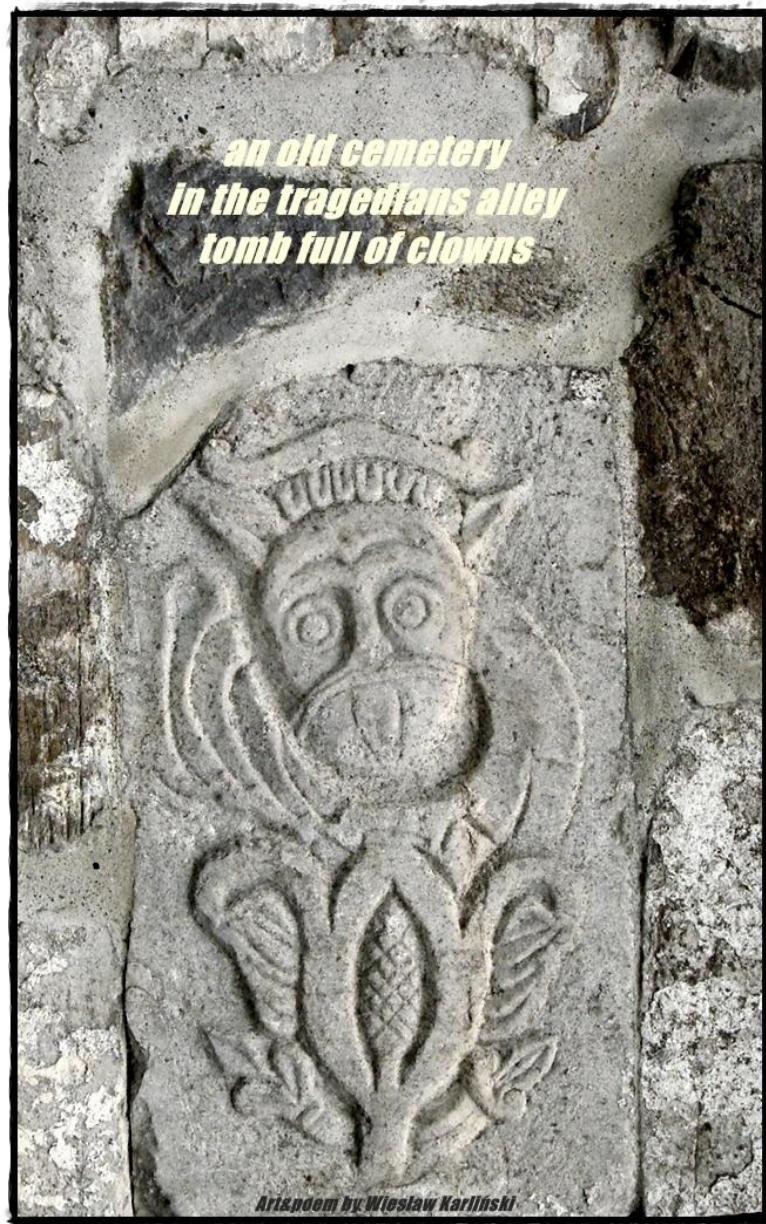
just the two of us      a piece of cake

forgotten potato:  
out of the cupboard  
out of itself

*with apologies to Nick Virgilio*

**Alan Peat**

linguist tombstone  
in a short epitaph  
two mistakes



**Wiesław Karliński**

a bike pump  
lost on the forest trail  
Pancake Day

**Ted Sherman**

cloud-covered moon  
delaying my transformation  
... dry county

quarreling  
she takes off  
the safety

**Thomas Tilton**

class reunion  
another door  
another guard

owning his look  
the office peacock  
late again

the push for STEM jobs  
the pull of the arts

dress code  
the leeway  
of age

**Pat Davis**

a pile of books  
the dust settles on my  
good intentions

### **In the Car Park**

Watching the darkening sky, I wait for my wife. A silver BMW parks in the space next to me, thumping with unfamiliar modern music. The driver gets out and pulls his hoodie closer as the freshening breeze grips him. My wife emerges from the shop as the first raindrops fall.

married thirty years  
she opens her own doors now  
—wet spots on her sleeve

**Simon Wilson**

moving out  
my life  
in three boxes

whirlwind  
two wigs  
meet in the air

**Vladislav Hristov**

bird poop  
on a clothesline sheet  
tax season

conspiracy theory super spreader

red or blue  
fresh manure  
on a furrowed field

winter hitching post  
steam rolls out  
both ends

post-breakup zoom  
our cats catch up

park lockdown  
crime tape rides  
the merry-go-round

**Marilyn Ashbaug**

buzzards swirl overhead  
my excuses  
down the drain

chameleon  
changes color  
blondes have more fun

first date  
he tucks in the tail of his  
wifebeater

first day of school  
my kids board the bus  
poem submissions

megalomaniacal personality event horizon

**Ronald K. Craig**

## **Annual Report**

snow accumulating...  
I scan the January  
balance sheet

quarterly report  
a crow wings past  
the office window

profit and loss  
a ladybug explores  
the adding machine

open door policy  
a stink bug drops by  
my office

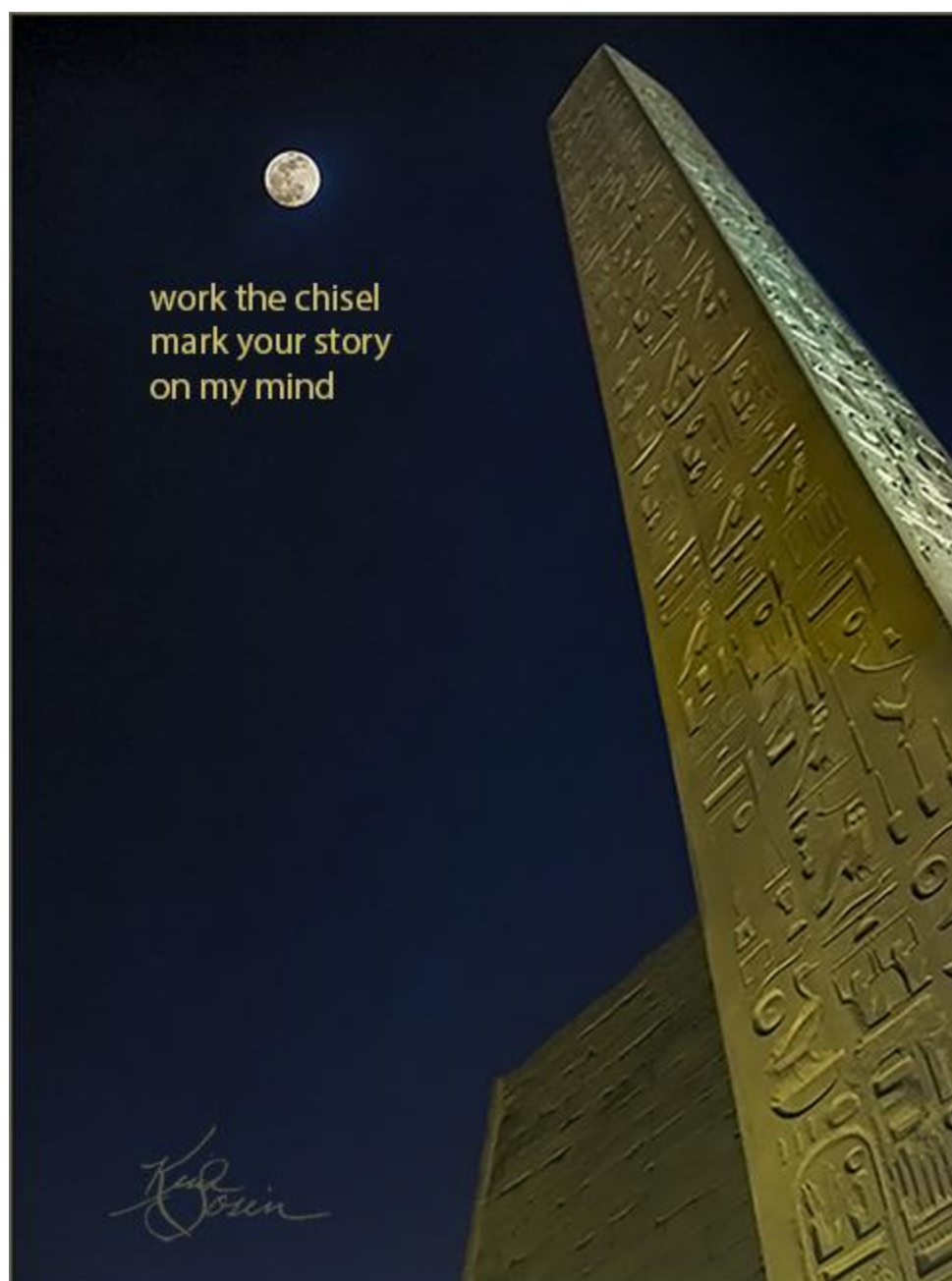
retained earnings  
a sliver of sunlight  
lands on my desk

beach souvenirs  
the high value  
of a perfect sand dollar

family phone call  
my niece interrupted  
by a rainbow

liquor aisle  
avoiding the stare  
of his skull tattoo

**Kristen Lindquist**



**Kim Sosin**

a whole year  
wearing masks...  
is it always carnival?

**Rosa Maria Di Salvatore**

in full view  
disinfecting the gift  
we gave them

too tired to play  
what's gone off  
in the fridge

raspberry jam  
the scent of the universe  
on my toast

**Tony Williams**

behind  
the curtain  
nervous ballerinas

first flush  
we sip our tea  
nude

exuberance of truck stop mimes

gnawing  
each cliché  
down to the bone

**Roberta Beach Jacobson**

tobacco-free campus  
whiffs of weed  
from the parking lot  
even autumn wind  
holds its breath

summer visit  
to Elvis' birth home  
a bronze boy  
carrying a guitar  
runs off his pedestal

hot noon  
at Graceland  
dressed like Elvis  
a fan sings with  
his sweaty passion

delta life ... either way is flat



**John Zheng**

on the evergreen  
a squirrel stretches out  
my noon siesta

three parrots  
on the overhead wire  
meeting online

tossing the newspaper  
with a perfect aim  
he whistles off-key

**Neena Singh**

## **Knock three times**

I have great neighbours, I'm sure you do too. Karna is my neighbour's maid, they're both over 80 years, generous and kind. She always drops in with portions of aromatic curry for lunch. Paer is a restless Army retiree who loves to cook and share his exotic food. Paer's wife Rani tells him to knock three times and leave it in my hanging basket. He knocks three times and another three, I know that's him. I can smell the garlic.

a little house  
among mushrooms  
music under the stars

prose **Christina Chin** / senryu **Michael Hough**

fogged mirror almost remembering thirty

internet down

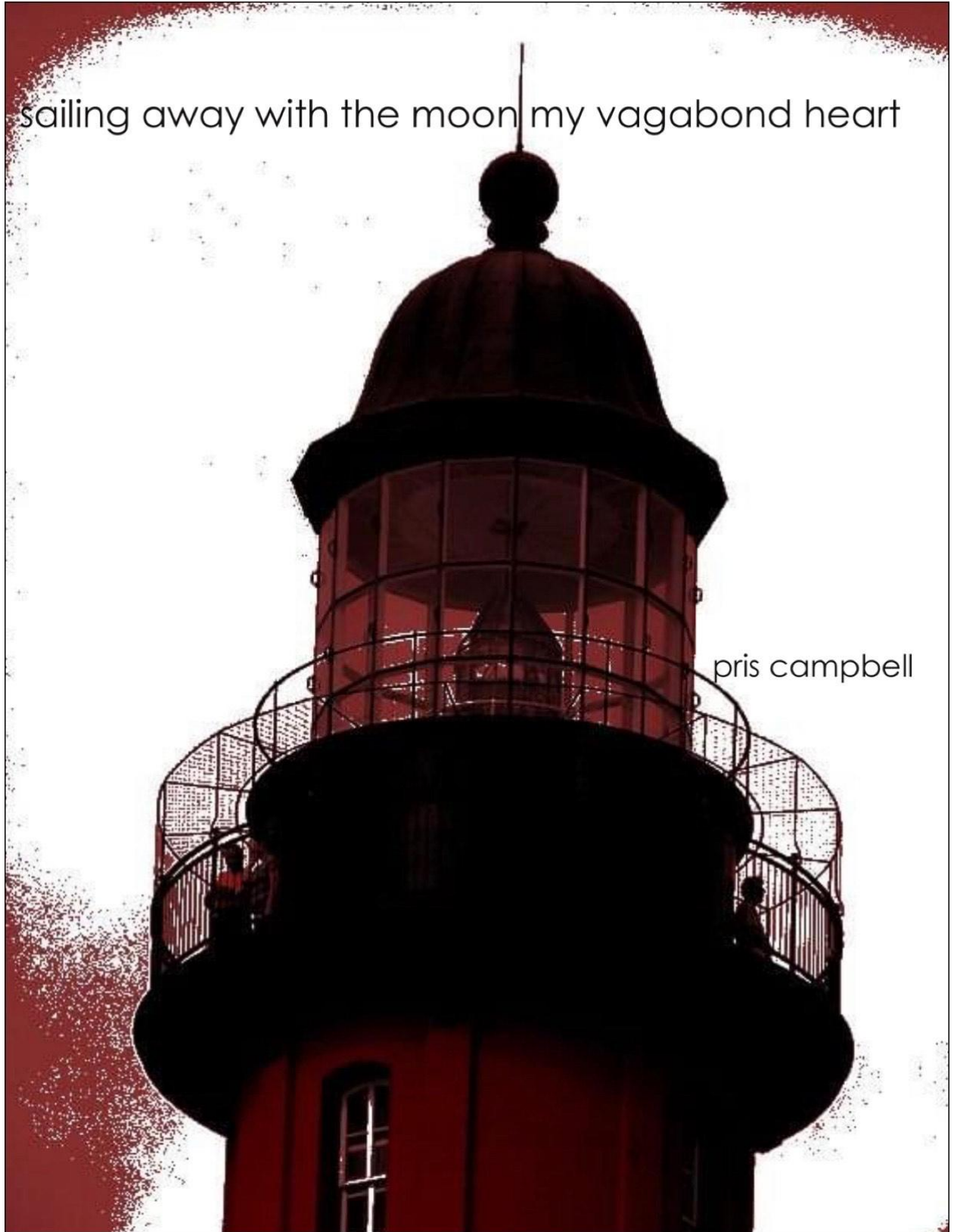
perhaps his proposal  
was missed by a glitch?

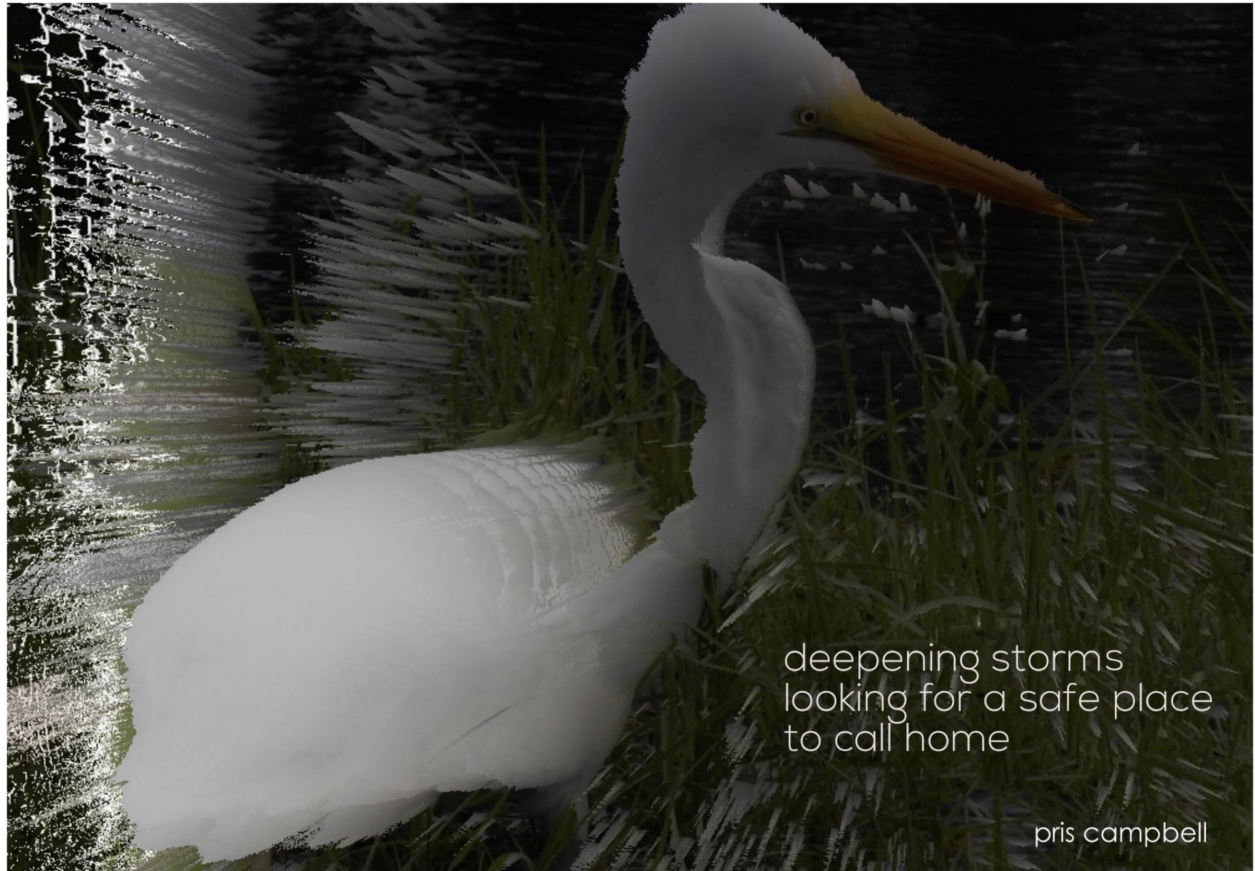
dead star

no surprise that my wish  
didn't come true

sailing away with the moon my vagabond heart

pris campbell





**Pris Campbell**

no vax...  
the shepherd points  
to herd immunity

**Vincenzo Adamo Paceco**

'plane door opens –  
a breath of real air  
I put on my mask

mall says keep left –  
from the speakers run dmc  
*walk this way*

ever the optimist –  
shorts and flip-flops  
on thin ice

three miles left –  
out running  
the last of the light

mental jigsaw –  
one piece of the puzzle  
always missing

**Ian Mullins**

lockdown  
the face mask doesn't hide  
me from myself

## **HAIKU STORIES**

“Like Circle”  
not enough time  
for reading haiku

haiku on the web  
the many poems  
I forget every day

PC off  
I keep my new haiku  
for me only

**Oscar Luparia**

bed of lichens  
on the park bench  
instead of us

hospice window  
mother's tears could go  
any other way

**Agus Maulana Sunjaya**

bowl of rice  
between the three of us  
a quiet spring night

funeral procession minus his shadow

lab test  
my marital status  
assumed

weary winds  
carving her freedom  
within his fist

**Richa Sharma**

the competition  
for best reggae band  
dreadlocked

bob white  
and the meadowlarks  
spring tour

a haiku moment  
Schrödinger's caterpillar  
becomes a butterfly

**Rick Jackofsky**

D.C. spring  
hoping for cherry blossoms  
without riots

ninety-one winters  
most of them spent  
in the frigid north  
now the California breeze  
makes me shiver

**Gil Jackofsky**

late at night

morning sea

my head filled

the waves, a mantra

with strange dreams

erasing thoughts

**Will the night**

so many lines  
in the sand  
will the night be gentle?

the grey wind  
curls the sea  
will the tide be kind?

a shower of stars  
in Antarctica  
will the dreams be sweet?

a frigid moon  
upon the dunes  
will the silence be deep?

**Anna Maria Domburg-Sancristoforo**

aftershocks  
the scale  
of the builder's quotes

statue of David  
how visitors have admired  
your chiselled features...  
the years of smudged fingerprints  
on your finely carved backside

**Tracy Davidson**

regrets...  
the longest fingernail  
is the one that breaks

shoveling out  
a Black Lives Matter sign  
before the next storm

spring fever  
the temperature finally  
reaches my age

my clouds  
cloud the sky's clouds  
new cataracts

writing haiku  
my ambivalence  
about everything

**Brad Bennett**

crescent moon  
she asks to see the ring  
in better light

spring hail  
a child paints  
her nails  
some green  
some white

the sign says  
narrow road ahead  
talk radio

ice cream jingle  
untangling her feet  
from a jump rope

definitely not  
like riding a bicycle  
high school reunion

**Tom Bierovic**

pressing noses—  
an awkward moment  
for a sneeze

lending  
my finger  
we tie the knot

the scent  
of pink bubblegum—  
puppy love

the hole  
in his thinking  
doubting Thomas

**Marilyn Fleming**

rounding bases  
the smallest player  
pumps his fist

moonlight mile  
cougar on cruise control,  
pink Cadillac

sculpting swirls  
of soft ice cream  
her tongue

cloister garden...  
once this silence  
was all we knew

**William Scott Galasso**

## **LXXII a bead**

While looking through some old forgotten things  
I found a piece you made by hand for me...  
A bead with a hole in it, on a string  
but bound with your knots. I look through to see  
what lies beyond a hole drilled in a bead:  
A path I should not take just yet, a world  
solid like stone or hollow like a reed  
now opens. What a tapestry unfurls:  
to explore and report of if I dare  
step through that hole and then return at will.  
I'll bring back the treasure, if I am spared...  
winter in harbor here ...but not stay still.  
Thou art gone, I know... but ever walk with me.  
What time I may have left, I share with thee.

gold  
the numismatist's  
five-yen coin

**Michael Hough**, prose / **Christina Chin**, senryu

butter chicken  
a visit to the buffet . . .  
someday

**Susan Bonk Plumridge**

I crawl through  
the maze in my mind ...  
Covidsomnia

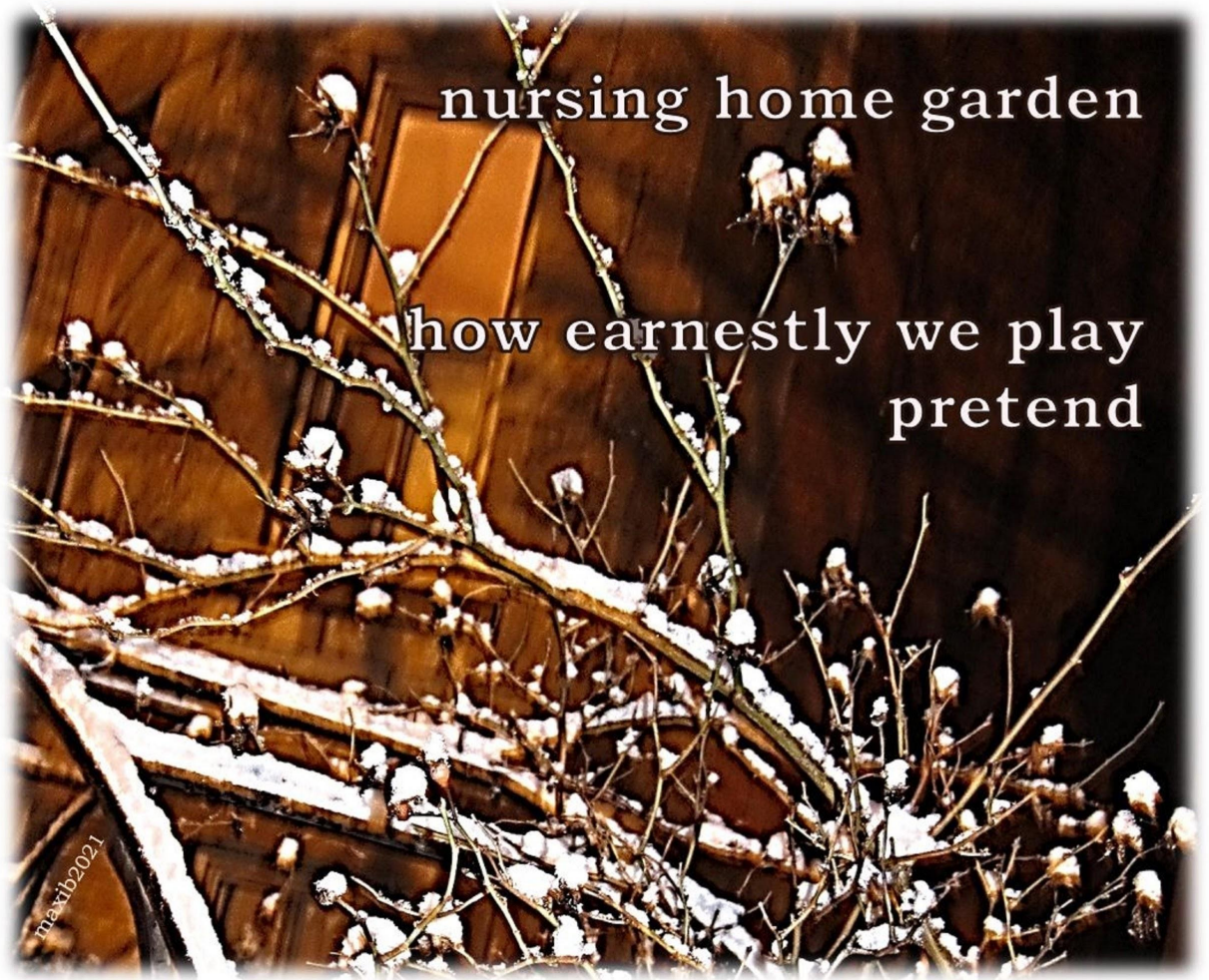
AA meeting done  
my drunken shadow leads  
the way home

bird droppings  
on a white man's MAGA hat  
the words illegible

daughters not home yet  
I turn off the porch light  
to give the moth a break

strawberry juice  
moistening her lips ...  
I resist  
this urge to tell her,  
I'll get married soon

**Chen-ou Liu**



**Maxianne Berger**

isolation  
the days long and grey  
my hair also

searching everywhere  
for his straw hat—  
spring planting

she is waiting  
at the Dew Drop Inn—  
and yet, and yet—

*with apologies to Issa*

**Mark Forrester**

hurricane roar  
holding my breath  
on the yoga mat

walk at dawn  
my dog sniffs out  
a narrative

decluttering  
bringing home  
a touch of sky

**Sushama Kapur**

my wife  
to hear gossip  
stops quarreling

**Antonio Mangiameli**

half-finished tea  
another morning  
down the drain

childhood illness  
model planes  
grounded

McDonald's  
golden arches of caution tape  
across the booths

**Laurie Greer**

## Uncensored

Last weekend, seeing the unpruned bush on my head, I decided the time was right for a haircut. I certainly didn't need to consult an astrologer. Except of course for the auspicious time. But running my fingers through the mop I felt that now was as auspicious a time as any. You know that feeling you get in your bones. Hunch, is the word methinks. And so I pulled on tees and jeans and shod in sandals I hightailed it to the salon at Mangalwadi.

money plant...  
the little boy still awaiting  
the harvest

The barbers looked suspiciously at me. They are not accustomed after all to overgrown flora walking in for a trim. I have been given to understand that most of their clients are from the animal kingdom. However, one of them came forward when I displayed the appropriate fluorescence. Currency notes.

I instructed the coiffeur to cut it short and as the man sprang to the task I closed my eyes and let slumber take over. I was positive he would take ages to trim the tangle. Besides, I didn't want to talk politics.

When I next opened my eyes it was half an hour later. I glanced idly in the general direction of the looking glass and observed a bald man, rather like Elmer Fudd of Bugs Bunny fame, gawping at me. I started. Not everyone gets stared at by curious baldies without starting. Take it from me.

Seeing my reaction the good hairdresser grinned and asked me how I liked my new avatar. I was aghast. I told the stout fellow that I had

asked for a trim, not for a shave. But it was clear that below the veneer of a barber the man was a gardener at heart. And upon seeing the hedge on my top deep had called to deep and the mask of civilization had slipped off.

Now I spend my days lurking in the shadows, glancing furtively about for unwelcome observers and generally behaving like a fugitive from justice. I have indeed applied a quick hair-growing lotion on my bare scalp, and they don't come any quicker, but these things still take their time.

Besides, I have already received a number of lucrative offers from film producers for the role of alien in their forthcoming celluloid ventures. I am seriously considering my options.

horror film shoot---  
the star trying to get her shriek  
just right

**Gautam Nadkarni**

so gorgeous and useless  
peonies  
in the vegetable garden

first date  
spirit of lavender  
on his old face

wedding dress...  
she draws herself  
another Phoenix tattoo

a painting  
for marriage anniversary  
the frames  
I feel myself  
tight in

**Radostina Dragostinova**

t-shirt logos  
... homing in  
with impunity

farmer's box trailer  
the pinkness  
of scrubbed pigs

his sing-song call  
trails through the village  
traveling knife sharpener

chandelier  
gauging the strength  
of the latest tremor

**Ingrid Baluchi**

victory garden  
full of smashed pumpkins—  
election year

“He’s a killer!  
He’ll take off a finger!”  
man with chihuahua

July 4<sup>th</sup> picnic  
an American flag  
made in China

**Anna Cates**

out of work  
I explore my options –  
Amazon fire stick

M&M's share bag -  
1 for my right hand  
1 for my left

siren call –  
my bed tempts me  
to get back in

pity party we have a Pupu platter

**Susan Burch**

she drops him  
like a hot potato  
small fry

psychotherapist's office  
even the couch  
covered in shrink wrap

making up for lost time  
last to the party  
first to get drunk

nothing on sale this week  
she saves  
a hundred bucks

if poetry  
only came in robocalls  
we'd never hear it

**Charles Harmon**

museum window  
to the Egyptian room  
spider wraps a fly

a killing frost dead battery

**Robert B McNeill**

rain and soil  
the political climate  
of germination

sand art  
the stories  
monsoons leave

white lies  
the hidden danger  
of black ice

the only pit  
in the whole cherry pie  
my slice of life

picking off the scab New Year's Day

**Scott Wiggerman**

at Heaven's gate -  
Hit any key  
to continue...

**Rich Magahiz**

bebopalula -  
how did we end up oldies  
with pool noodles

**Alice Wanderer**



**Carmela Marino**

autumn twilight  
the weight of an old man's  
wrinkled palm

street protest  
only the moon doesn't cry  
from the tear gas

**Zoran Doderovic**

lockdown -  
seems i lost myself while  
another grain of sand falls  
so easily  
in my life's hourglass

**Dorna Hains**

now that I'm limping  
the man who walks bent over  
waves hello to me

**Ron Tuohy**

just big enough  
to by her own ticket  
merry-go-round

high diving board  
the crowded stairs  
behind me

**Joanne van Helvoort**

temple typhoon shelter  
a hundred rafter monkeys  
eye my camera bag

**Emily Kane**

open mike ...  
she tells her friend  
she is having an affair

**Kathleen Vasek Trocmet**

yard sale  
the Venus de Milo  
marked “as is”

birthday cake  
a slice for everyone  
in the hospice

overcast sky  
the census taker asks  
if I live alone

pandemic  
the welcome mat  
removed

**Joanne Morcom**

before the game  
street hockey players practice passing —  
a joint

**P. H. Fischer**

sunset

I write a haiku  
and miss it

farmers market  
every colour, shape and size  
of the customers

white lies  
toothpaste  
ad

**Birk Andersson**

I read  
obituaries  
jealously

**Jacob Blumner**

evening shadows  
a great dane walks his man  
from tree to tree

traffic tie-up  
a wedge of geese  
honk overhead

**Dottie Piet**

it's always morning somewhere cinnamon rolls

walking alone with others walking alone

young cicada  
i, too, am looking  
for love

once again  
around the bend  
the couple's argument

forgetting everything...  
wind in the flowers  
of her sundress

looking up from my book  
the thwap-thwap-thwap  
of flip-flops

**Ben Gaa**

the bodybuilder  
watches her watch him  
watch her in the mirror

afterward  
the blow up doll and I  
share an e-cigarette

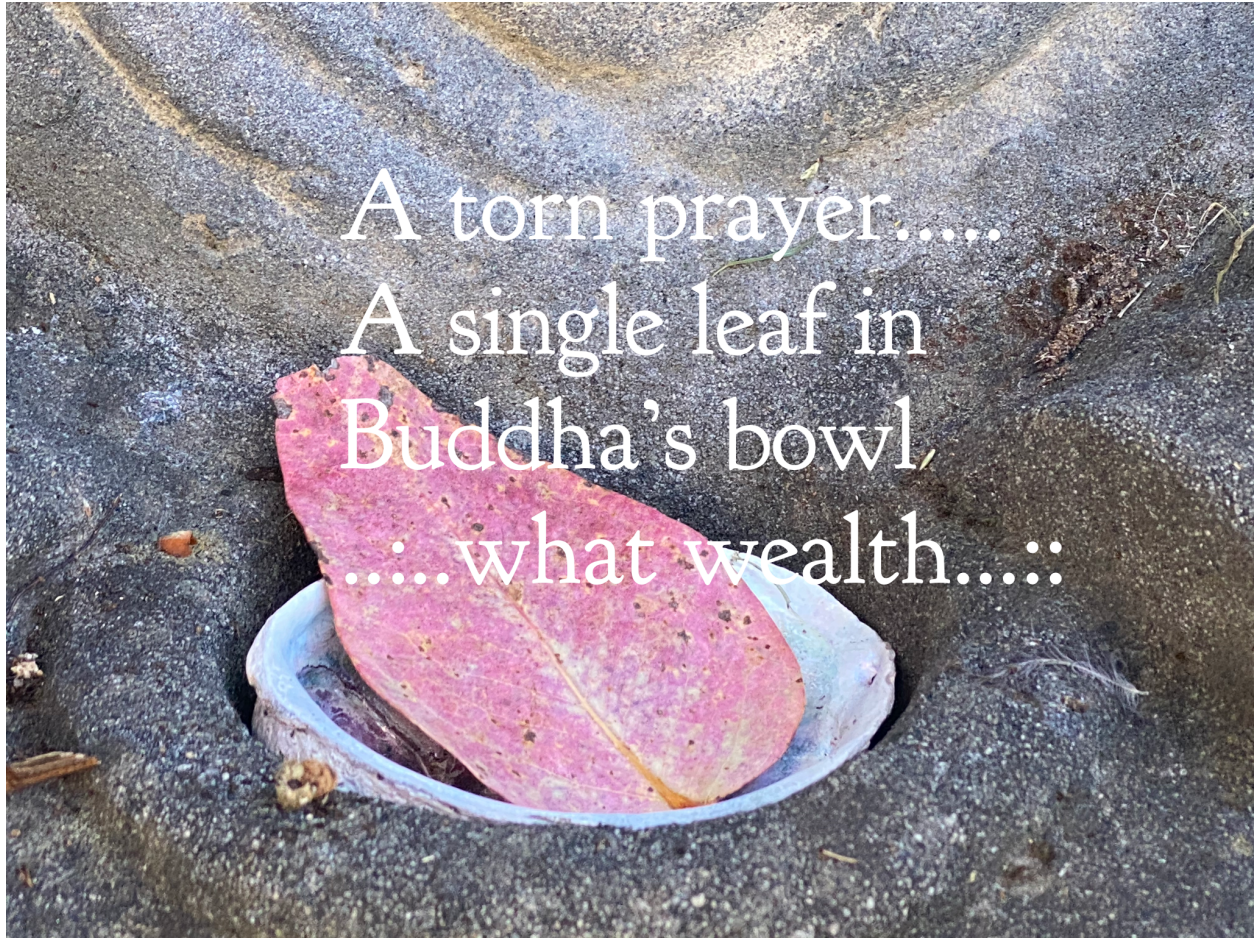
**Marsh Muirhead**

her absence  
he bites  
into a pink-lady

mom's pasmina shawl  
a moth loving it  
as i do

and the himalayas  
still to climb  
childhood dreams

**Meera Rehm**



**Tim Roberts**

the sour smell  
of a cork  
popping

*steam engine  
the thick smoke  
of tomorrow's wind*

the hissing smell  
of bacon  
frying

*rain washes away  
crows soaking wet  
with wonder*

the flickering smell  
of a candle  
burning

**Roger Watson**  
***Erin Castaldi***

honeymoon trip  
we wear  
see through masks

**Srinivasa Rao Sambangi**

deep breath ...  
rattle of the highway  
in a motel bed

confirmation bias ...  
squirrel in the flower box  
digging again

everything locked down  
still the boss calls  
asking where I am

cathedral ceilings  
cobwebs  
in the stillness

**B.A. France**

mother tells us  
no talking back --  
snapdragons

**Jamie Wimberly**

downpour  
tops my wine glass ...  
vintage complexity

push pins  
put new strains  
on the map

**Jackie Maugh Robinson**

skipping ahead  
my daughter rushes me through  
my haiku moment

memory loss  
the moon a different place  
than she left it

plague apocalypse  
she plants an extra row  
of salad greens

willow wind  
what they say about her  
since she's gone

## **Watercourse**

We scoop a tiny channel into the river's edge, and a rivulet oozes into it. My son and I train a trickle from the main flow, reinforcing its path with stones. My daughter joins us, not letting glittery shoes inhibit a good river stomping. She is our rock gatherer. Our morning mission progresses in silence, our movements synchronized and certain. At lunchtime, we rise and walk back to the house. How easily we release the river back to itself, our work quickly lost to a greater equilibrium. Soon all evidence of our time here will wash away.

light reflections  
the time it takes  
to do nothing

**Kat Lehmann**

mammogram—  
I encounter  
more shadows

before and after  
my self-isolation  
flickering fireflies

office email...  
the Eid greeting card  
in black and white

midsummer rain  
striking the front gate  
mom's memory

perceived to be a Muslim  
he avoids itching his beard  
on the night train

self-isolation  
the rain and I  
falling more

**Hifsa Ashraf**

date night...  
I order food  
for one

light bulb...  
the candles feel  
left out

mosquitoes...  
I hesitate to kill  
my blood kin

**Surashree Joshi**

quiet shore -  
i throw my wish well sealed  
into the sea

**Eva Joan**

shaved moustache  
he was never more thankful  
for the masks

single dad  
all the clips on her hair  
mismatched

his snores keeping  
me awake the whole night  
I finally find  
the right pair of all  
my mismatched socks

**Vandana Parashar**

American girl...  
the length of time she can go  
without saying 'like'

childhood home  
... an elephant  
in every room

in my dream  
what was I doing  
with the ax?

**Ed Bremson**

the old librarian  
irons some rolled pages  
of a love story

her baby reflection  
in the window shield  
washed with rain

**David He**

old crow-  
peering down the neck  
of the bottle

social distancing  
the guy in the ski mask earns  
an extra wide berth

class reunion  
signs of a seizure sprawled  
across the dance floor

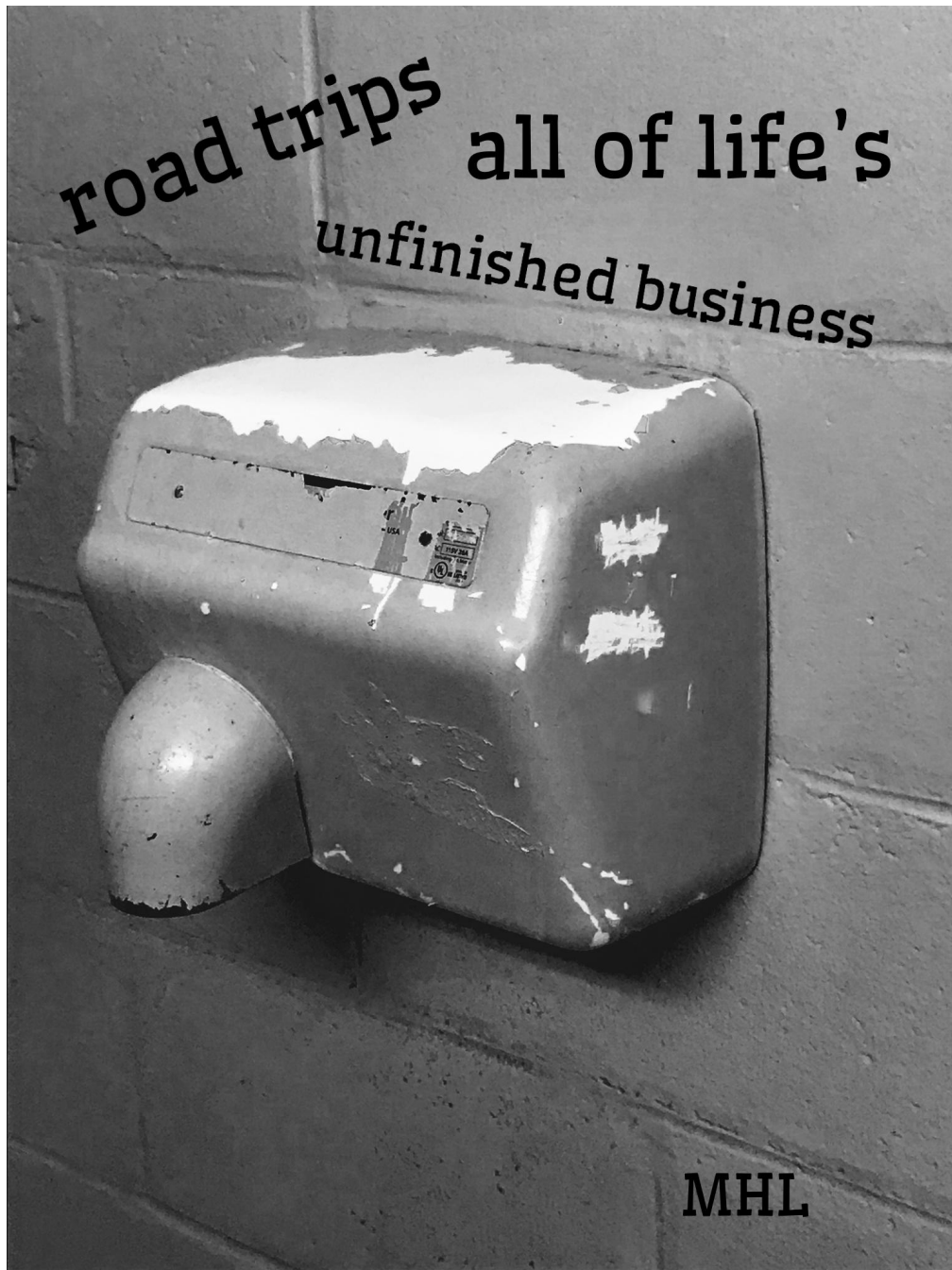
Zen zoom  
all the mics  
on mute

daylight savings  
the buskers dog still  
on Eastern Standard

dinner date  
our stomachs do  
all the talking

winter rest stops  
coming closer and closer  
together

in its first and last  
appearance anywhere  
this senryu



**Michael Henry Lee**

new life  
with the old self  
juxtaposition

beauty  
bears a burden ...  
peacock's flight

### **SELF-SEARCHING RAMBLE**

Is there such a thing as an individual's exceptionalism? Or is it all gibberish, unwillingness to call a spade its real name, cover up your failings and present your self in a better light at least for your own sake?

And if there are so many of us who are exceptional then indeed there is no exceptionalism at all and nothing about you or your life is extraordinary?!

my ex-husband,  
my ex-lover, my ex-friend ...  
my excellence

**Natalia Kuznetsova**

Chinese takeout  
my toddler asks for a portion  
of steam

the Year of the Ox  
perfecting her family's  
Bourgognon recipe

mom's last breath  
speechless after  
the falling star

forgetting her name  
at the first date  
snow flurries

autopsy  
his search for hints in the body  
of her emails

**Maya Daneva**

## **A Nightmare of Childhood**

the one-eyed doll opens her dark red lips for a scary smile — nearer  
and nearer — I can feel her breath at my cheeks and the only eye  
makes me wait like a rabbit for the badger

Zoomzeman's fiddle tones  
while our rocket  
flies past the moon

**Isabella Kramer**

Japanese maple  
in desert sand—  
someone's leafless dream

redecorating—  
my mental furniture  
gets an update

ice flute  
one note slides  
into another

unsolved—  
the murder  
in her eyes

shifting sands—  
the to-dos  
become to-don'ts

ringing in her ears a bottomless thirst

treasure hunter  
to the locals  
wherever he went  
he was the man  
people obeyed  
who saved a girl  
giving him more  
from drowning

**Cynthia Anderson**

recycling day  
my old fox fur  
becomes a cat toy

april 1st  
wishing this reality  
was a big lie

**Keiko Izawa**

insomnia  
a map on my  
creased pillow

lockdown laziness  
his beard grows longer  
than his neck

**Minal Sarosh**

in their bare house  
the newlyweds only have  
eyes for each other

Stairway to Heaven  
I join the queue  
for passport control

summer clouds . . .  
on the park bench  
a carved heart worn smooth

home office  
before the zoom meeting  
cleaning the litter box

**Nick Hoffman**

early to bed  
I put my light out  
and my man in

remembering childhood  
its life lessons  
wiping the slate clean

pincushion wind  
grains of whipped sand  
on my sunburn

despite preparing  
with all the right creams  
after moonbathing  
all my tan lines  
in black and white


**Patricia Hawkhead**

naturist beach  
the sheer embarrassment  
of my swimsuit

funeral service  
the organist  
pulls out the last stop

going nowhere fast  
empty beer bottles  
in a burnt out car

bat cave  
how much longer  
must we take this shit



obituary

how much she had loved

a good funeral

**John Hawkhead**

## TEMPUS FUGIT

Seven decades have flown since our trip north to meet Den. I was four years old; my kid bro a toddler, forever sucking a Virol-dipped dummy. Mum and Dad were both in their 20s still.

Den was an old pal of Dad's. Whether from the RAF or the pre-war aero-modelling club, I'm not sure. A sallow, wiry chap in a tank-top, he pumped Dad's hand and showed us in. The place was dingy, cramped and stank of cigarette smoke.

Mum wrinkling her nose, we boys sitting quietly, Dad and Den reminisced in a bantering, matey sort of way. It was a relief when Den's wife placed a pot of tea and plate of sandwiches on the table.

Afterwards we were led out through a ramshackle rear porch into a wilderness of foxgloves and hollyhocks. Upon a tree-stump, stood a cage. And peering through the mesh, a pair of brown-and-white ferrets.

I thought they looked cute but was stopped in my tracks by Den. I mustn't poke, he shouted. They were savage creatures and would have my fingers off in seconds.

Kid bro began to cry and Mum shot a look at Dad. He nodded. It was time to go.

wildlife  
an early fascination  
he sketches

**Paul Beech**

raw  
war

high heels  
to escape  
reality

perfect hosts  
who start to do the dishes  
while the party's in full swing

one of those days  
"best of luck  
placing your work elsewhere"

seasons change but caged birds

**Olivier Schopfer**

the magician  
sawing up a fair lady  
in a wooden box  
in the house a mother  
covers her daughter's ears

### **Daily News**

This night it had snowed more heavily than it had in years. Our entire neighborhood lies under a thick, white blanket of snow. I lift the lid of our mailbox to take out today's newspaper. Empty!

fresh snow  
there is no trace to see  
of the newsboy

**Pitt Buerken**

warm summer breeze  
dropping his pants  
in the laundry basket

chewing on the pencil  
the gap  
in his front teeth

closing time  
all urinals  
occupied

Christmas Eve  
Santa and two elves  
on the same bus

leaving the confessional  
a boy  
picking his nose

**Joseph P. Wechselberger**

in line to get my passport  
wishing I could be  
anywhere else

at the end  
    of the road  
        the cemetery

waited 20 minutes  
for the wrong order—  
fast food

sick day...  
in front of me at the theater  
my boss

**Greg Schwartz**

**<https://haiku-and-horror.blogspot.com/>**

little dipper  
how long since she last time  
said mum

spring cleaning  
granddad shows me a job ad  
in last year newspaper

game of shadows  
on the pregnancy test  
the second line

mother-in-law`s lifestory  
between two crises  
the same level  
of espresso  
into my cup

**Irina Guliaeva**

## **A New Sky**

Every morning is different. Wondering, how many times the sun must have risen from time immemorial. Hiding behind the clouds, peeking from in-between the mountains, rushing through the coconut leaves, cutting across millions of plants and animal kingdom.

The resplendent golden halo flowing and overflowing!

first light ...

the orange night lamp

dimming and dimming

**Lakshmi Iyer**

ripples in the sand  
you take a close-up  
of your finger

by second course  
there's nothing left to say  
slow dining

warm dusk  
enjoying the backyard barbie  
mozzies

**Louise Hopewell**

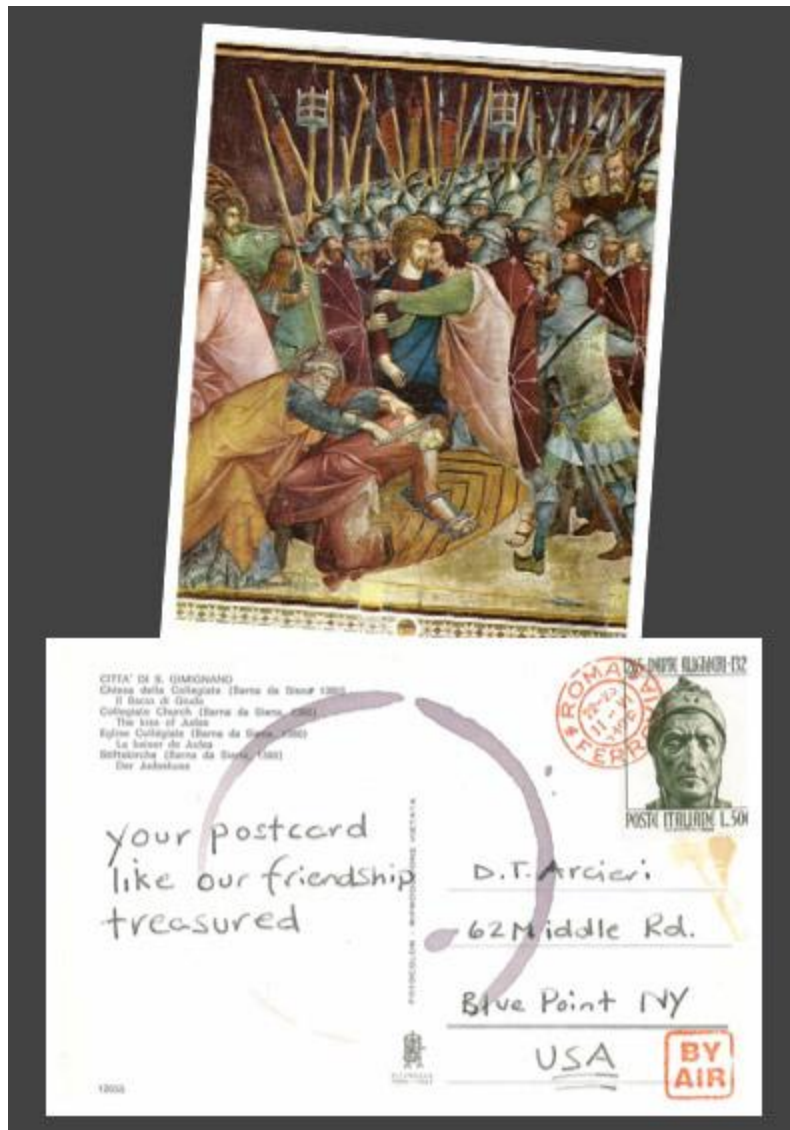
**<https://louisehopewellwriter.wordpress.com/>**

I see in your eyes  
the beautiful lake  
that got polluted

vodka:  
a shot of  
vengeance

that landmine  
in the daisy field  
of our bliss

don't do this  
don't do that  
sunny park



**DT Arcieri**

## **Chasing the Ghosts of Jim Crow**

We find him in a field where the grass grows high and the river bends away from town. His face mirrors Munch, mummified in the Miami winter as he screamed. Ramirez snaps the morgue photos before someone else cuts off the noose.

west wind  
the sheet covering up  
old wounds

## **Exorcisms**

His cologne lingers on the pillow beside me, and I hear his footsteps in the hallway late at night when the wind rustles the rafters. A stray headlight flickers like the kitchen fridge raided at the witching hour.

holy water  
leaks through the ceiling  
his side still empty

**Colleen M. Farrelly**

writing senryu  
I start loving  
family dinner

baby's first words  
mama, dada, milk,  
covid

watching now  
the size of dinner plates  
80's shoulder pads

becoming a widow  
now she always knows  
where her husband is

**Antonietta Losito**

sitting  
on a wad of bubble gum  
lesson in attachment

**R. J. Swanson**

snow day  
making excuses  
for flaking out

**Joanna Ashwell**

last night's  
port-of-call girl  
the ocean gossips

last suicide attempt  
I survive only to argue  
about cremation

starry night  
his accent shyly  
brushes my skin

snowman  
one child creates  
another destroys

**Veronika Zora Novak**

## Jarred Memories

fading tan lines . . .  
she sneaks a ghost pepper  
into the casserole

*safe inside sweatpants*  
*Mom's hot dog legs*

young plumber  
the temptation to shower him  
with vacation photos

*hand-washing*  
*the long-lost speedos*  
*a tug here, a tug there*

cupped to her ear  
the shell's faint ocean

*booking ahead . . .*  
*9 months to wait for her*  
*bikini wax*

**Tanya McDonald**  
***Lew Watts***

## **Hair of the Dog**

after quiz night  
the landlord's border collie  
herding drunks

*a pause to piss  
on the poodle's favorite post*

wee nips with the pup . . .  
it's time we talked  
alliteration

*“who's a good boy then?”  
punctuated  
with a ripe belch*

mid-night munchies  
kibble, straight from the bowl

*playing dead  
a wet nose  
resurrection*

**Lew Watts**

***Tanya McDonald***

polar vortex deepening her southern drawl

political fundraiser  
the smell of money  
on a poodle

back-alley race  
my bachelor uncle  
beats me again

yes dear  
yes dear  
yes dear . . .  
recycling day

**Lew Watts**

construction crew  
my need for silence  
builds

counting on you  
not counting  
baker's dozen

breeding  
all over the bedroom  
dust bunnies

**Benedict Grant**

childhood  
lollipop sweet  
then a stick

pet shop  
an old parrot eyes  
the answering machine

movie of my life  
cast and reel  
the one that got away

it's legal in some states of mind over matter

the hand  
that brushed me away  
brushing her dog

**Robert Witmer**

suddenly vegan -  
the soft gaze of cows  
as they greet me

7 years old again  
I wiggle another  
loose tooth

poolside  
a pelican pecks  
the plates clean

dumping waves  
the surfer hefts a blue  
boogie board

rip running  
the seagull steals  
a hot chip

**Cynthia Rowe**

breathless  
on a morning jog  
an oldie overtakes me

family dinner  
the uncle who keeps  
twisting his moustache

**Adjei Agyei-Baah**

## Out of Hiding

Finding myself in the romance/erotica section of the book store, I realize this was once the province of grubby old men in trench coats ducking into sex shops. It appears erotic books have finally gone mainstream. They can be found pushed to the front shelves of some of the largest book sellers. In the process sexy prose has become respectable with literate anthologies and big-name authors characterizing the market.

Not too long ago women were shy about buying erotica in public, but now the internet provides browsing privacy and readers are looking at it as serious literature. The newest splash I found are synthetic paper waterproof books to be read in the bath. It seems supercharged prose are here to stay.

home alone  
quiet time with herself  
turns into a party

awards ceremony  
filling her old clingy dress  
with new cleavage  
the ecstatic star hugs  
her golden globes

moving day  
mom packs dad's viagra  
in a small box  
marked "FRAGILE"...  
her "all is right" smile

a wise man  
and a wise guy  
so opposite

**Carol Raisfeld**

how far can I go  
without incident  
water pill

**Ann Schechter**

**it's not the rain  
but the deafening silence –  
empty cricket shells**

**Cristina Angelescu**

**Cristina Angelescu**

nasturtiums  
line the church steps  
dressed for choir

egg hunt  
in the pouring rain  
how the colors run

**Ron Scully**

with  
no one looking  
i write  
my name  
in the prayer book

**Steve Black**

lockdown  
a man in a window  
holds up his dog

insomnia  
the cat and the man  
i think i might be

private forest path  
we both fear  
the other owns it

**Michael Baeyens**

Zoom chat—  
Revenge  
of the 50 Foot Tabby

**mantra**

“I had a system, a good system, which worked, but was not perhaps the best of all possible systems.”

every day  
in every way  
I go through my in-tray

**Mark Gilbert**

pink roses—  
rehearsing his first  
I Love You

stirred or shaken martini moon

postage scale—  
the excess weight  
of my anger

someone stole  
my stash of salted peanuts—  
the elephant in the room

**Barrie Levine**

warm biscuits  
in my next life I want  
to be butter

doctor's appointment  
the blood pressure pill  
slips down the sink

online fatigue  
the meaning of life  
just a meme away

lost in thought...  
the kink in the world map  
shower curtain

Woman's Day —  
learning that a mimosa  
is also a flower

my breath hangs  
in the air of my hut  
on Cold Mountain —  
once again I've failed  
to pay the heating bill

**Bob Lucky**

breakfast –  
the trail of dreams  
in our mugs

relaxing bath ...  
inside the bubbles  
all my selves



**Daniela Misso**

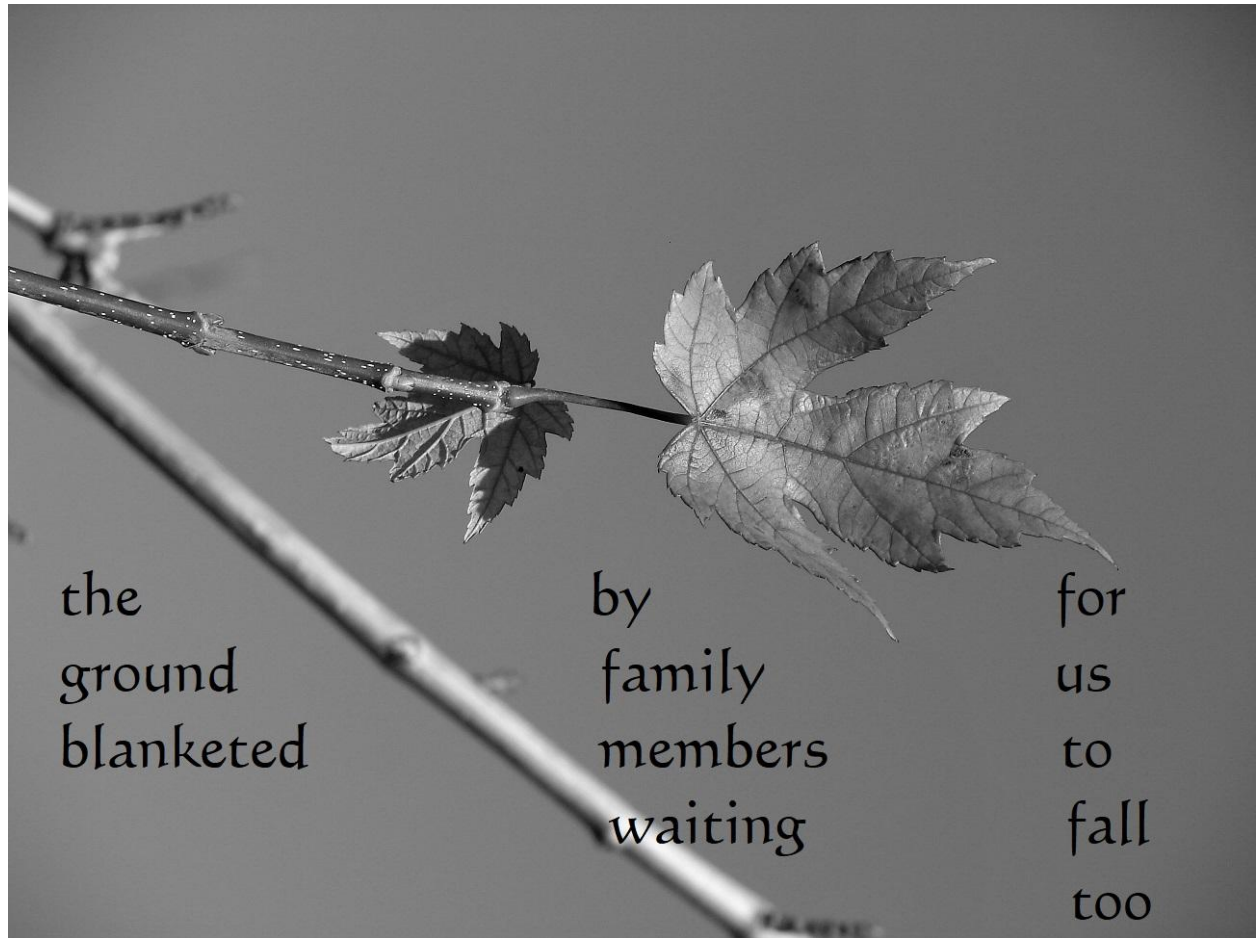
daybreak  
the jays as usual  
pissed about everything

heavy rain  
fucking lug nut  
won't loosen

**Tim Cremin**

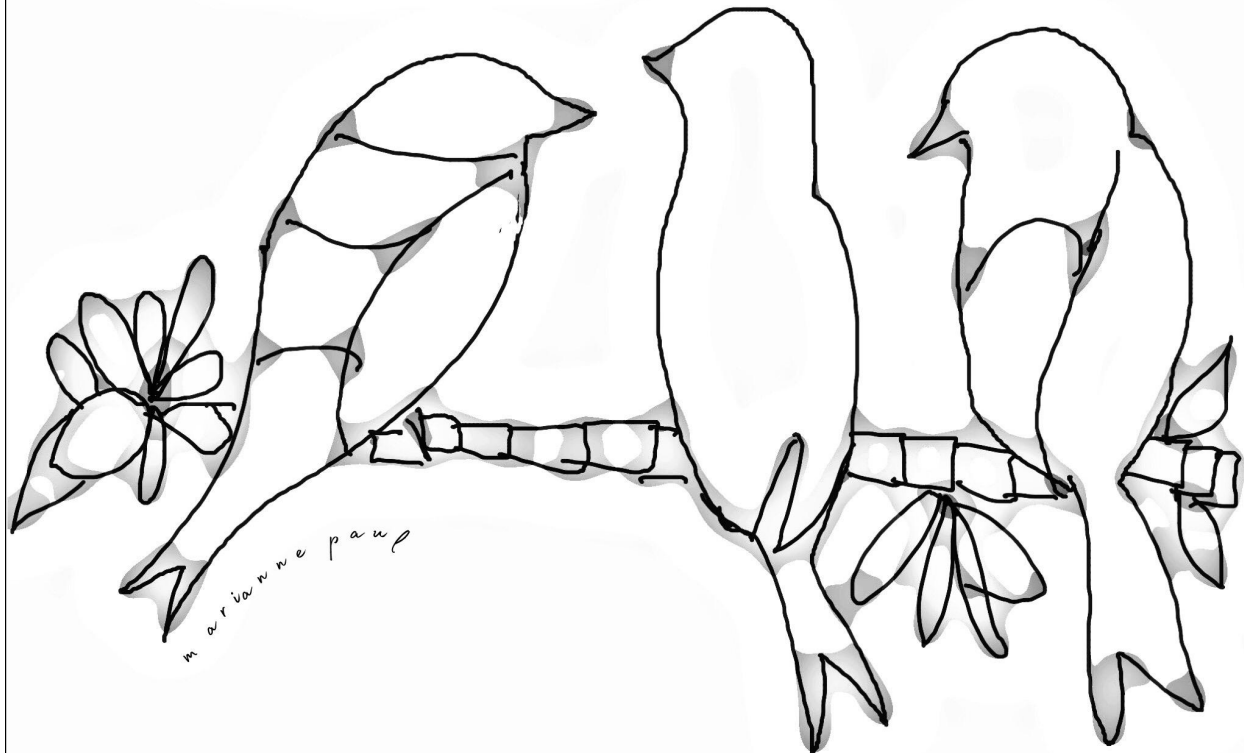


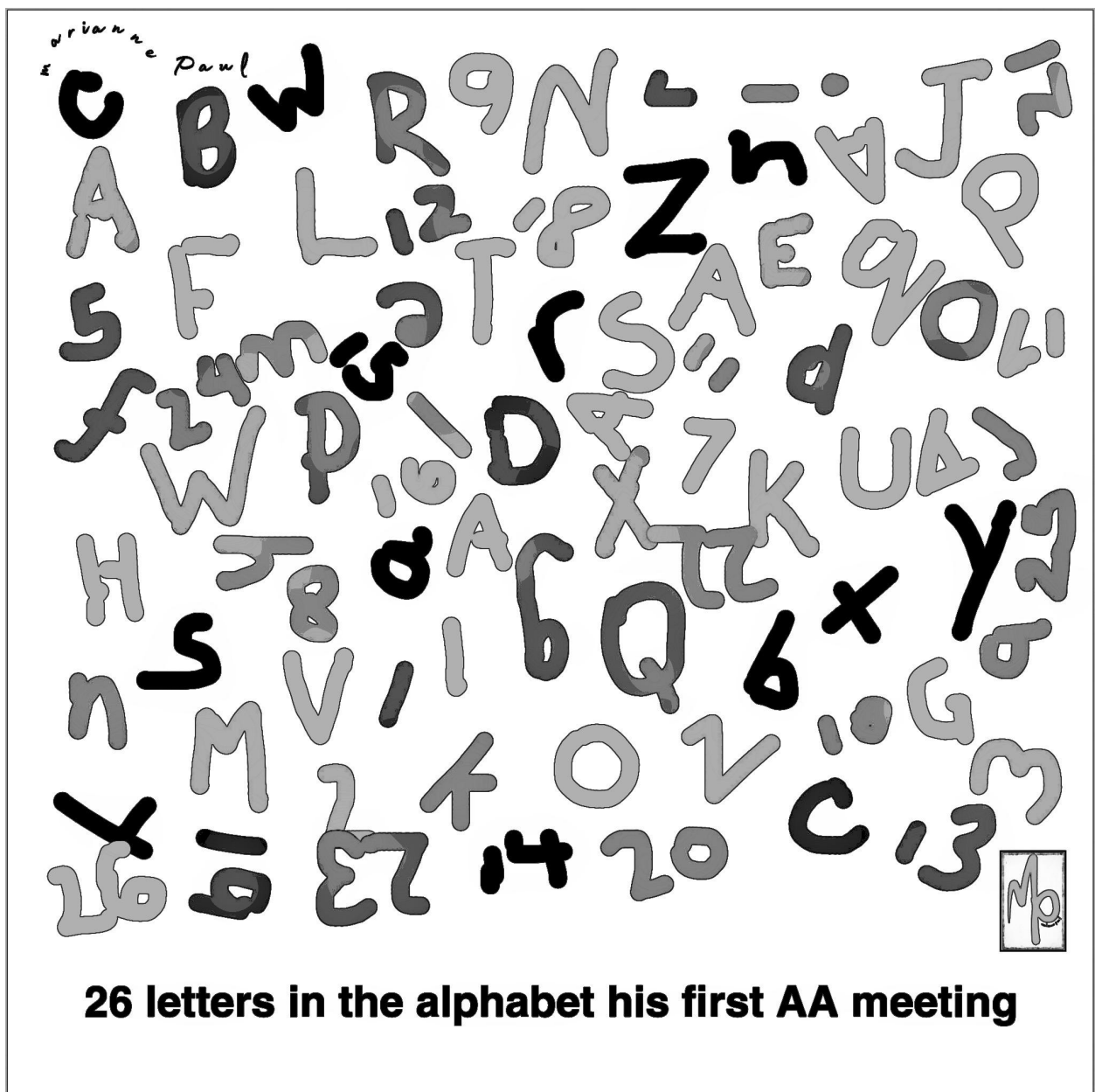
offering a hot dog  
to a grateful stranger  
boy meets world



**Michael Kitchen**

**fairytale  
once upon a time  
we gathered**





Marianne Paul

sprawled on the couch  
the house cat gives me  
the Melania squint

heart palpitations  
the song Free Fallin'  
on the thirteenth floor

the drone  
of the therapist's voice  
motivation group

**Jackie Chou**



*spring wind  
on my face  
your lips*

*poem and photo: Joanna Delalande*

**Joanna Delalande**

desolate...  
the clouds' trek from Halloween  
to election night

carrying bits  
of someone's bad breath  
fog

### **The Farm**

I was going to make fifty cents per basket and had to figure out how to earn more money for the day. I decided to use two baskets for picking the string beans. Moving on my knees between two rows of beans, I plucked from both rows. In the row to my right, a little girl, probably a first or second grader, started picking. It was hot and I didn't mind having a chatmate. As she prattled, the girl placed beans in both of our baskets.

roar of the wind  
this debate about migrant workers  
intensifies

**Francis W. Alexander**

mug shot  
on the arrested protester's forehead  
an ashen cross

April Fools' Day  
dummy tells his ventriloquist  
he wants to go solo

nursing home  
with his cane  
octogenarian pushes  
the MAGA cap off  
his son-in-law's head

Good Friday  
hammering too loud  
a woodpecker

**John J. Dunphy**

perfect death a bone voyage

turning stones inside out gravelectomy

rogue wave the ocean claims your holiday

frosted windshield forgoing the distance glasses

changing planes our bodies not where we left them

**Peter Jastermsky**

high stakes poker -  
betting on The Vaccine Kid  
to win

Featured Act  
Magic Bernie  
and The Traveling Chair

a haiku journey  
seventeen steps  
or less

Love Pandemic Style  
mailing un-invites  
to a downsized wedding

**Valentina Ranaldi-Adams**

housebound

I draw a line between  
what was and what is

icy rain

another slow night  
for hookers



**Nika**

meditating  
on all the things I could do to improve my  
focus

**Sarah Paris**

rejection mail  
I unscrew  
my new ballpen

Laphroaig  
the daredevil  
I wanted to be

unborn baby  
my windchime  
freshly polished

**Eva Limbach**

sunlit waves  
father's ashes  
still afloat

home demolition--  
I bring back a branch  
from mama's bougainvillea

abandoned house --  
the garden buddha  
peeps out of pampas

**Arvinder Kaur**

months of lockdown  
the urge to clean. . .  
again

the breeze I wait for—  
fluttering curtains  
moved by the cat

Happy Hour  
a time for venting  
the day's misery



### **The Condos at the End of the Cul-de-Sac**

“See you at the mail box,” I say to my friends when we speak on the phone. Neighbors we are, one on my left, one on my right, three widows, with me in the middle sharing a condo wall with each. The Merry Widows. Or we were.

a little tipsy  
senior decorum slips  
with a bawdy tale

Lunches, dinners, shopping. Impromptu gatherings for coffee with freshly baked cookies. All that was before. Before our advanced years and vulnerability made us cautious, made us retreat and pull back, keeping our contacts to the essentials. We keep in touch by phone and emails, gripe, worry, encourage. On occasion we meet outside at the mailboxes, short meetings, voices raised so as to hear words spoken at a distance and through a mask.

“What’s new? Saw the doctor. Ordered online. Catch you tomorrow.”

It’s not enough, but we endure and hope. I collect my mail and retreat, but with a lighter step.

slow cooker  
for one or a dozen  
it’s about the wait

**Adelaide B. Shaw**

mother's day...  
the void  
of a scar

*festa della mamma ... il vuoto di una cicatrice*

**Lucia Cardillo**

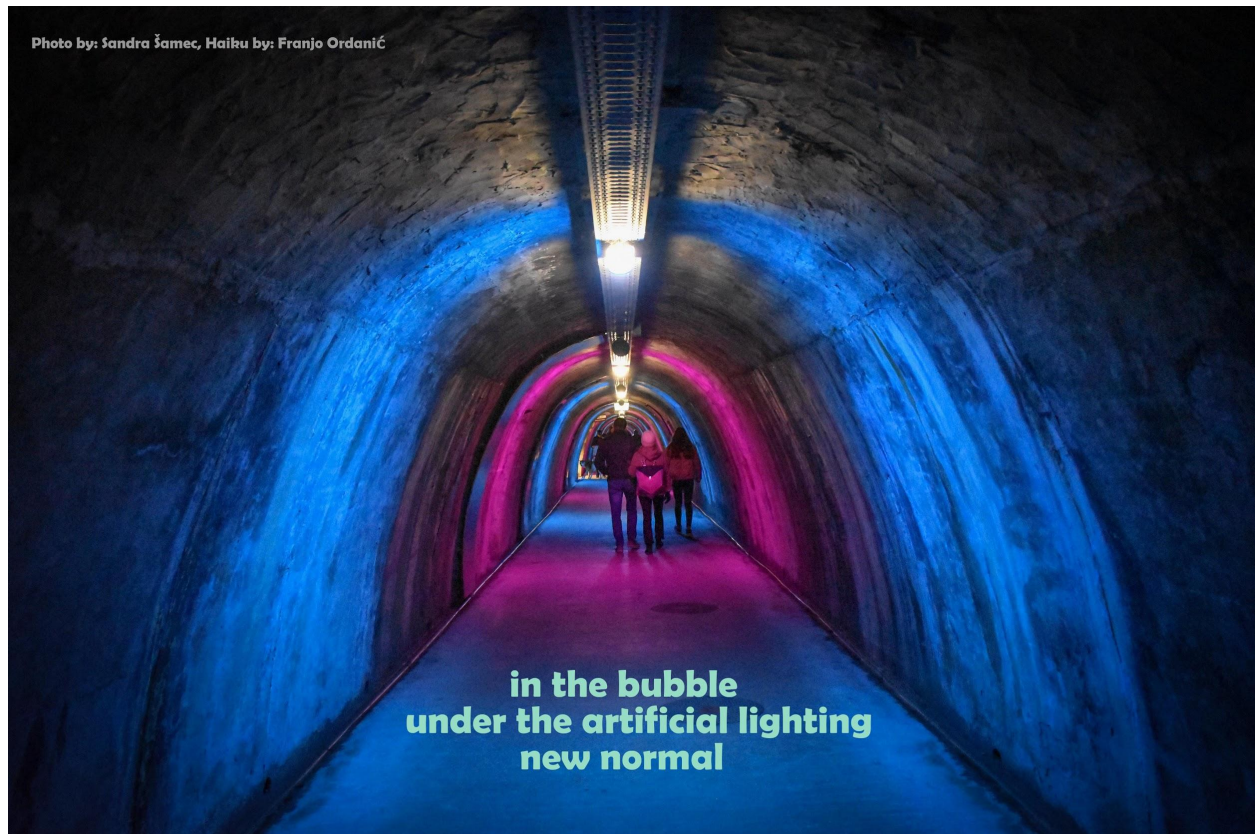


Photo by: **Sandra Šamec**  
Haiku by: **Franjo Ordanić**

returning to work  
adding social distance  
to the car in front

morning fog  
here to stay  
a state of emergency

morning rain  
far from my mind  
loving kindness meditation

**David Gale**

Year of the Ox —  
weren't we already  
dragged through it?

pine needle path —  
inoculating myself against  
the vaccine questions

YouTube video  
a senryu editor shorn  
of his locks

one year in. . .  
I bargain with a turtle  
for his shell

w/o hesitation  
she regurgitates  
her vaccine story

**Robert Epstein**

keeping warm  
banshee  
in central heating cupboard

artificial intelligence  
she dyes her hair  
chestnut brown

**Maureen Weldon**

rising creakily  
at the old priest's funeral mass  
the congregation

ghost stories  
so easily  
seen through

chalk dust  
in the school's sunlit beams  
a leather strap

**Mike Gallagher**

the fuel that ran out old flame

sumo wrestler  
obese, the dog ignores  
her sobriquet

**Madhuri Pillai**

survival –  
the last lily  
rising again

**carmen duvalma**



small town library shelf  
the faltering scent  
of old skin

Gabriela Popa 2021

**Gabriela Popa**

emerging from melting snow  
a cat  
made of ceramics

easy slumber  
the first hour  
of the meditation

**Christine Wenk-Harrison**

not hearing  
i nod at her  
rising intonation

snowfall  
we fall  
silent

everything  
the evening river and i  
cannot remember

**David Kāwika Eyre**

to know the ogre  
from the pistachio lover —  
dad's eulogy

moment of silence —  
the dog's new toy  
loses its squeaker

winter mountain —  
my skis slide down  
beside me

the dog  
lets me out —  
quarantine

betting everything  
on next year —  
helicopter seeds

twelve hour shift —  
surfing the wave  
of dread

**Eric A. Lohman**

nuts as  
health food  
squirrels knew

the drill  
whirs and grinds  
soup for supper

early morning drivers no Rules of the Road

Zoom meeting up close and impersonal

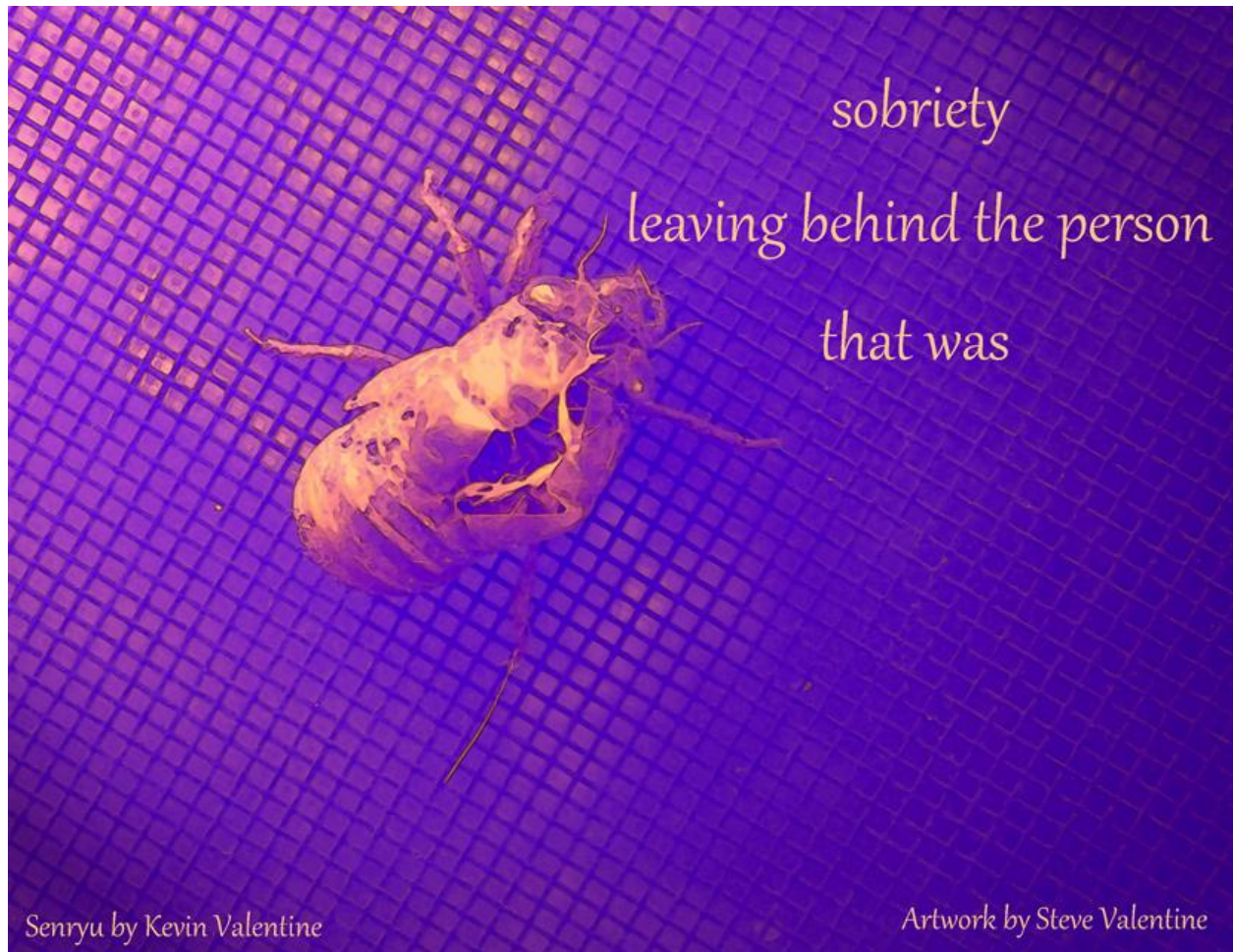
**Susan Farner**

inversion of light  
unprepared for the news  
of her affair

hallelujah!  
the preacher's  
final amen

family meeting  
the children pretend  
to listen

going back to the world  
he leaves her in country  
the girl inside his head



**Kevin Valentine** -senryu  
**Steve Valentine** -artwork

Open road  
Wind in the hair  
Bugs in the mouth

Tip jar  
Filled with guilt  
And selflessness

**Mark Farrar**

women emergency shelter—  
twilit balloons snagged  
in branches

from the shadows...  
a scream, the trap  
snaps

**Marilyn Humbert**

endless arguments  
over spring cleaning  
my croaking  
gets lost  
in the clutter

at the APA  
the sign on a dog's cage  
good with cats  
that dog is better  
than I am

absently skipping  
my mind misses a step  
senior moment

water exercise  
seniors entering pool  
shiver dance

senior card party  
shuffling our minds  
along with the cards

**Terrie Jacks**

holiday meal  
not a word of politics  
except for t-shirts

nursing home  
the empty wind tunnel  
of father's mind

creaking springs  
the neighbor's prostitute  
calling for God

**Rp Verlaine**

shots fired  
two scotch drinkers  
dueling

close together  
for eternity  
flypaper

a trip  
to remember  
black ice

praises spent  
i settle for  
pity

heart rate irregular  
somehow  
it matches my life

**Michael Rehling**

signs of spring  
skunk crosses the road  
seagulls peck at trash

*in the parking lot  
all we've left behind*

secrets revealed  
a cigarette butt and  
a tube of lip gloss

*beneath the car's tire  
what once happened  
sand and salt*

through thin snow  
the blue of crocus

*tulips bloom  
every color  
feeds deer*

**Tom Blessing and *Kristyn Blessing***

## **My Husband's a Rogue**

I used to catch him whispering to Wizards and Clerics in the hallway of our home. Plotting raids or combat strategies. Up to no good I'm sure. I walk by on my way to the kitchen and roll my eyes at them. They threaten to lock me in a tower.

roll of the dice  
the dungeon master  
unleashes a plague

either/or a tomato in the fruit drawer

pasta night we both get sauced

rest stop  
a mattress  
in the median

clown battle  
the little guy wins  
by a nose

**Terri L. French**

walled garden  
keeping me in  
or you out

death poem goes on a bit doesn't it

suicide forest  
there must be  
another way out

I'll swap  
my grey sky  
for your grey sky

tropical or temperate depression

**Tim Gardiner**

morning prayer  
she knots and unknots  
her apron strings

dinner for one—  
she reheats the  
argument

fallen leaves—  
we shift from being us  
to you and me

hearing it pull  
into the driveway—  
my neighbor's attitude

cockleburs—  
all those mistakes  
i've made

winter solstice—  
i chip the darkness  
off my toast

people magazine  
at the dentist's office—  
who are these people?

eating alone--  
can they see  
my hunger?

his cracker crumbs—  
when did i start  
to notice?

**Sondra Byrnes**

no censor  
in the village pub -  
psychotherapy

pink moon  
aroma of blooming flowers  
and sanitizer gel

**Tsanka Shishkova**

habits  
perform me -  
each day

sunset  
i have lived the life -  
almost

**Vijay Prasad**

pout under the mask:  
reading through  
the eyes of my kids

**Elisa Allo**

hi-vis-vest  
in the pop up pandemic  
ready for anything

stuffed koala  
mom's nursing home roommate  
eyes her peacock

making mosaics  
all my mistakes mixed  
with gold and tears

**Kath Abela Wilson**

lunch break  
a fizzy lemonade releasing  
my anger

family walk  
dancing smiling humming  
to myself

our first argument  
the cat looks at me  
than at you

**Nadejda Kostadinova**



vaccination-  
our hope for  
another country

lockdown mist -  
another day struggling with  
the jigsaw



**Dorothy Burrows**

finally  
learned to say NO  
I pinched off  
those suckers  
on tomato plants

cut flowers  
wilting in a vase  
refugee children

journey to Mars  
reserved in advance  
burial plot

**Wonja Brucker**

lasagna leftovers  
at midnight  
my fat cat winks at me

acorns cascade  
through dense oak branches  
chipmunk pachinko

**John S Green**

grocery store sparrows  
returning to reclaim  
their carts

**Hildegard Bachman**

rainy day . . .  
the egg on my galette  
sunny side up

another holiday . . .  
family at the table  
and family      not

squish the spiders  
let the ladybugs live . . .  
learned prejudices

**Anna Eklund-Cheong**

winter solstice  
I'll take mine  
black

everywhere  
but in the basket  
nail clippings

lunch date  
we talk about  
her death

shoveling snow  
together —  
I slip on small talk

shattered  
wine bottle  
ants stumble home

**Adam T. Arn**

gophers everywhere  
one hands me a notice  
eminent domain

tiny petals rush  
over curbstones  
the silent rapids

**Bruce Jewett**

*Al cuartear la cebolla  
me acuerdo de ella  
lágrima*



Upon quartering an onion  
I remember her  
tears

Art by **Noel Méndez** and senryu by **Wilbert Salgado**

death valley—  
the lowest point  
of the divorce

seed pod—  
finding the potential  
in your absence

### **Faulty Connections--**

My dad had a phone installed in the bathroom. He owned a home business and calls could come at any time. “Why keep ‘em waiting?” As a kid in the analog age this was emotionally bruising. Having friends over, or worse a girlfriend, regularly resulted in the question, “umm... why is there a phone in there?” One girl even asked, “You don’t call me from... there... do you?”

customer service  
take any number  
after 2

Of course, these days, with the advent of cell phones and the evolution of social norms, almost everyone has a phone “in there”. In the last six months alone I’ve found two phones forgotten in public restrooms, and business and social calls regularly utilize whatever space is available at the moment.

zoom meeting—  
her unapproved download  
a public record

I finally got up the nerve to try online dating. Between regular, busy adulting and the pandemic of 2020 it is the only safe game in town for the moment. The texting is a whole new dating challenge because you lose all sense of vocal inflection and facial cues. So I'm trying to appear comfortable here on camera, trying to actually get to know someone new. The starts and stops of digital conversation and the ability to get up and wander the apartment during a conversation add unexpected layers of familiarity.

first date  
she flushes our future  
down the drain

**M. Shane Pruett**

polite hellos  
shouted over the fence  
I still keep the distance

**Mona Iordan**

the pause . . . in tango . . . a poem . . . shared

**Jill Lange**

Lazy painter  
now this white spider  
will never leave the ceiling

It's a miracle  
this pimple-faced lady  
has no pimples in her picture

In different postures  
mosquitoes' corpses on a wall  
this too is art

**Waliyullah Tunde Abimbola**

new year...  
a new diary filled  
with the same news

senior prom  
she wears a mask  
that matches her gown

footprints in the snow  
my granddaughter asks  
if she's a princess

drowning  
in throw pillows  
i dream of marshmallows

so proud  
my grandson shows off  
the hole in his smile

**Nancy Brady**

## THE AFFAIR

hole in her stockings  
he resists the temptation  
to touch it

swimming pool  
her cleavage deeper  
than usual

water lilies  
he writes haiku  
up her inner thigh

the slow way  
her lips open  
birdsong in rain

his hand  
on her hand  
over his hand

wild roses  
she catches him kissing  
her sister

marriage ties  
blossoms break free  
in the breeze

forgive me he says  
I have been a prick  
cactus flower

day moon  
his regrets in her slippers  
under the bed

empty heart  
struggling to close her  
suitcase

**Bee Jay**

St. Patrick's Day  
drinking green beer  
to chase away the blues

vetting us  
from above—  
a turkey vulture

stubbed toe #@&%!  
this little piggy  
looks like roast beef

road trip...  
the distance measured  
in awkward pauses

outdoor cafe  
a stiff breeze  
picks up the tab

**Helen Ogden**



**the hot prophecy—  
you will not only be saved  
but write killer ku!**

Superman statue—  
the high school selfies  
we never took

**Geoff Pope**

sleepless nights...  
exam on  
Freud's dream analysis

**Sindhoor Varkoor**

one song  
one mosquito  
one murder

## **Sleepless**

One am  
I read the novel's end  
before its end

Two am  
the same dog-howl  
below my window

Three am express  
old fears  
resurfacing

Four am  
the geckos keep calling  
each other

Five am  
the complaints  
of the returning owl

Six am  
the paper lands with a thud  
inside my head

## **Sanjukta Asopa**

already lost—  
the moment  
I want it

at the nape  
of your neck—  
a kiss of curls

**Pippa Phillips**

spring-cleaning  
the curling edges of her photograph  
in the flames

prickly heat  
the shimmer of a scorpion  
on the cab driver's arm

**Mark Miller**

wine tasting tour  
sudden attraction  
to the guide

blind date –  
I'll be the one with  
the mask

untied shoes  
I collide with  
my shadow

**Tomislav Sjekloća**

archeology  
clearing the dust off  
the bookshelves

masked and gloved  
she walks into the store  
I wait in getaway car

rewatching the movie  
hoping for a happy ending  
this time

**Rehn Kovacic**

the zen of  
fleetwood mac

don't stop thinking  
about tomorrow

yesterday's koan  
yesterday's koan

**Curt Linderman**

a cobweb  
memories  
trickle through...

**Leanne Jaeger**

preparing lunch  
the cat's infinities  
around my feet

summer solstice  
between two tweets  
a Kalashnikov

**Sanela Pliško**

internalized misogyny  
the scent  
of mother's cold cream

witching hour i rest my anxieties on the old cat's  
moan

after the grieving  
the depth  
of her laugh lines

cricket song the urge to rub finger to thumb

**Kelly Sauvage**

overheard  
in the waiting room  
“Well six tv’s is enough”

rural Tennessee  
on the bathroom wall  
“King Trump”

schoolyard fight  
the jerk who shoves  
someone back in

hostage standoff  
a hot-dog vendor works  
the spectators

**David Oates**

minutes before  
the poem emerges  
coffee

GeorgeFloydGeorgeFloydGeorgeFloyd  
the man with a bullhorn  
won't let us up

**2016**

planted  
in a circle of kids  
your boots

a tour  
of the art gallery  
your frame

lunch  
In the front seat  
your car

a dog  
between us  
your lips

consolation  
after the vote  
my bed

**Robert Moyer**

## Are We There Yet?

death grip

*night blind  
navigating the shadows  
of my past*

clinging tight

*parentless child  
too old  
to be an orphan*

to middle age

*journey's end  
new flowers  
on old graves*

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