

failed haiku

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michael rehling

'Failed' Editor

www.failedhaiku.com

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Haiga by Debbie Strange

Cast List

In order of appearance

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Rosa Maria Di Salvatore

Giddy Nielsen-Sweep

Mallika chari

Risë Daniels

Bob Lucky

Ray Rasmussen

Gautam Nadkarni

Kelly Sauvage Angel

Vasile Moldovan

Charlie Knowlton

Daniela Misso

Shaun Jex

William Scott Galasso

Christa Pandey

Bryan Rickert

Bryan Rickert/*Peter Jastermsky*

Mark Levy

Taofeek Ayeyemi

Pere Risteski

Radostina Dragostinova

Antonieta Losito
Paul David Mena
Pris Campbell
Madeline Lee-Mabe
Christina Chin
Oscar Luparia
Michael Minassian
Adelaide B. Shaw
Dan Burt
Jackie Chou
Robert Witmer
Aljoša Vuković
Chen-ou Liu
Massa Carrara
Thorsten Neuhaus
Elaine Wilburt
Tia Haynes
Tia Haynes/*Bryan Rickert*
Teiichi Suzuki
m. shane pruet
Joyce Joslin Lorensen
Elmedin Kadric
Vincenzo Adamo
Rick Jackofsky
Susan Farner
Lee Felty

dan smith
Jenny Fraser
Srinivasa Rao Sambangi
Roger Watson
Ian Mullins
Maria Bonsanti
Michael Baeyens
Linda McCarthy Schick
David Oates
Lavana Kray
Ezio Infantino
Laurie Greer
Kristen Lindquist
Natalia Kuznetsova
Debbie Scheving
William O'Sullivan
Srinivas S
Ingrid Baluchi
Irina Guliaeva
Maria Concetta Conti
Lew Watts and *Charles Trumbull*
Bruce England
Ingrid Bruck
Michael Dylan Welch and Curtis Dunlap
MariVal Bayles
Valentina Ranaldi-Adams

**Ana Drobot
Minal Sarosh
Lauren McBride
Gordon Gearhart
Marshall Bood
Bisshie
Eufemia Griffo
Hifsa Ashraf
Angela Giordano
Maeve O'Sullivan
Louise Hopewell
Nicholas Klacsanzky
John Hawkhead & Hifsa Ashraf
Elizabeth Crocket
Barbara Kaufmann
David Gale
Michael Feil
Tyson West
Bruce Jewett
Pitt Buerken
Marilyn Ashbaugh
Elizabeth Alford
Adrian Bouter
Julie Warther
Paul Beech
Jay Friedenber**

Alan Bern
Madhuri Pillai
Maureen Weldon
Ron Scully
Joanna Delalande
Ivan Gaćina
Joanna Ashwell
Tsanka Shishkova
Rashmi VeSa
Agus Maulana Sunjaya
Ben Moeller-Gaa
Terrie Jacks
Carol Raisfeld
Guliz Mutlu
Stella Damarjati
Michael H. Brownstein
Bill Kenney
Réka Nyitrai
John J. Han
Tim Gardiner
Jane Williams
Pearl Kline
Cynthia Anderson and *Peter Jastermsky*
Nisha Raviprasad
Christine Wenk-Harrison
Jill Lange

Kevin Valentine

Geoff Pope

John Hawkhead

Robert Moyer

Maxianne Berger

George Schaefer

Adam T. Arn

Adjei Agyei-Baah

Lorraine A. Padden

ripe grapes...
the sour taste
of his words

snowmelt...
my wrinkles
deeper and deeper

Rosa Maria Di Salvatore



*in my nightmare
the white spiders
under my bed*

Giddy Nielsen-Sweep

vacation
mother's kitchen
overflows

Mallika chari

favorite meal
she tries to apologize
for last night

Risë Daniels

red light
at an empty intersection...
fuck you, Pavlov

more or less
we think we believe
the power of doubt

politics
whatever you believe
check the tide charts

Bob Lucky

Voyage to Gray-Matter Island

A poet recently wrote:

"Hi Ray, Many thanks for your review of my book. Just one note, my name is Steve, short for Steven, not Stephen. It's a hiccup that happens often, but I like to get it sorted before it goes too far."

And I write back:

"Thanks, Steve. 'Before it goes too far' sounds like a rather dark hint at something amiss. I wish, as you suggest, that it was just a hiccup, one of those abashments that happens on rare occasion and doesn't signify memory problems. But alas! I make far too many transpositions these days."

And yet, not all is adrift as I journey between keyboard and gray-matter in search of words, phrases and sentences, and occasionally reaching out as if to pick fruit from an apple tree for memories and names. For example, wherever in my mind's distant reaches did I find the words "transposition" and "abashment."

It seems that such words are located in a place that might be called "Gray-Matter Island." Anchored in the sticky muck on the island's edge is a sign:

"BEWARE OF THE FOLLOWING":

- for all intents and purposes
- no Ss in toward/anyway/afterward
- regardless instead of irregardless

Fallen over, weathered, but still readable, a second sign:

"PLEASE USE ME SOMETIME" contains:

- Abashment
- Transposition
- Malapropism
- Emendation
- Longueur
- Befuddle
- Bemused

For all intents and purposes I hope you'll not find a single malapropism in this, my reply to your suggested emendation. Regardless, I pray you'll not think this an example of indulgent longueur or yourself become lost on your own journeys toward that Gray-Matter region called "Befuddled."

bemused –
not quite the same
as amused

Ray Rasmussen

<http://raysweb.net/haiku/>

The Claus In The Contract

When I was six I looked forward to Christmas eve in a way that would've shamed a devout Christian. For heaven's sake I didn't even know the meaning of Christian. Besides what's that got to do with a roly poly Santa Claus who went around in his sleigh disbursing gifts from an apparently bottomless gunny sack. All you needed to be was a good kid. If only for the last four days before Santa's ETA.

Going to bed on Christmas eve was a struggle. I insisted on keeping the nursery windows open for old Father Christmas to come through. I didn't want to make things unduly difficult for an old man. But sis had other ideas. She wanted the windows shut to keep out mosquitoes. I found her most unrealistic. And even told her not to be childish.

Then Mother intervened with the information that Santa came down chimneys. When I pointed out the glaring absence of chimneys in our third floor apartment sis pooh-poohed the idea. Finally I went to bed disgruntled and convinced that Santa would give our home a miss on finding himself locked out.

However, in the morning, to my utter delight the toy car of my dreams was parked beside my pillow. I don't understand why teeth have to be brushed and breakfast eaten before playing with one's sports car. But Mom insisted. I couldn't imagine anything more irrational. But one had to make allowances for cranky adults. Especially cranky adults who swung a mean punch.

For the remainder of the day I was one happy kid. Few children could be happier than one who makes a racket with his toy Lamb orghini with impunity.

Finally the day came to a close and I started counting the days until next Yule Tide. Impatiently.

letter to Santa...
I ask Dad how to spell
Kalashnikov

Gautam Nadkarni

*i remember
the last monarch
the one
who stole
my favorite pen*



now boarding:
passengers who require assistance
on the human plane

Kelly Sauvage Angel

the bookshelf-
between so many titles
a hesitant fly

a hole in the fence-
the hunting dog wants to pas
but does not fit

Vasile Moldovan

30 years
after divorce
i get to keep my hair

italian mother in law
i tell her how good
MY sauce is

entering a new year
all my bad habits
decide to come with me

her name tattooed
across my forearm
still under my skin

Charlie Knowlton

rain and rice –
a falling symphony
on bride day

Daniela Misso

His last breath -
Telling knock knock jokes
To the nurse

Phantom warmth
On the toilet seat -
Who made you?

Shaun Jex

<https://postcardpoems.home.blog/>

cotton PJ's
my curl fits hers
this winter night

spin doctors
working overtime
Year of the Rat

sleeping quarters
it all depends
on the chemistry

calming her
with my indoor voice
shelter rescue

William Scott Galasso

leafless oak
mostly old men
at urologist

baby hand
balled in my fist
soft memories

Christa Pandey

drive-by shooting
milkweed pods
let go

all his lies
the morning after
pill

its face
torn by the wind
lost dog photo

gas station toilet
faulty lights strobe
a cockroach

Well-Reared

I need a new butt...mine's cracked.

dad jokes
not just the comedian
getting old

Bryan Rickert

The Elder

(A Split Sequence)

ending his story

*a pause for effect
the sound of a frog
erupts in his throat*

the empty clink of ice

*another round
the old man's stories
blur into one*

dropped in a glass

*bitter twist
squeezing out
snores and snorts*

Bryan Rickert/*Peter Jastermsky*

summer day
refuses to wane
swatting flies in outer space

rosy dawn
cardio rehab
reset

new year's eve
alone
bottoms up for the demons

Mark Levy

the burden
of this umbrella
i pray for rain

unreturned calls
in anger i bite the
plastic apple

trade fair
i ask the way from
a mannequin

Taofeek Ayeyemi

defocusing
of the attention
rainbow

fashion TV
the acrobatics
of my eyes

Pere Risteski

mature wine
the monk reiterates
the prayer

reading lesson
my daughter spells out
wine labels

the mother
I've never had
a borrowed book

Radostina Dragostinova

Valentine's day
a helium tank for
his inflatable girlfriend

retirement -
now his boss
is the wife

Since going green
it's an "eco-friendly choice"
his constipation

Antonietta Losito

her 88th birthday
my mother insists
she's 87

starless night --
the dog sees something
I don't

in a closed conference room
talk of migration
to the cloud

Paul David Mena
[@pauldavidmena](#)

missing groom
the ice maiden weeps
into the punch bowl

footprints
from his abandoned car
coyote moon

heavy rain
the emerging bones
of my first cat

auld lang syne...
my old friend's memory
now my memory

last day
absorbing the sea
into my big toe

Pris Campbell

Suds of soap
Stretched out skin
Let the misery sink right in

Madeline Lee-Mabe

cabaret music
the saloon door
s[w]ings off key

a search
on Instagram
grandkids reset to private

Christina Chin

pruned vines
a bunch of memories
and tomorrow's wine

beautiful sunset...
little by little my shadow
mingles with the dark

Oscar Luparia

<https://issuu.com/oscarluparia>

Morning mandala
a dapple of sunlight
on the backyard fence

Michael Minassian

the sun on my face
thinking about not thinking—
is this meditation?

the winter fur
on a fat squirrel
better than mine

adult coloring book
I still can't stay
within the lines

Adelaide B. Shaw

www.adelaide-whitepetals.blogspot.com

outdoor wedding
the bride's beauty mark
flies off her face

the dog
flips the empty bowl
dinner bell

firefly
the spark of a horseshoe
ringing the stake

Dan Burt
[@danburt](#)

One Errand a Day

When I visited my relatives in Beijing, I had to get used to the slower momentum there. A retired professor, my grandaunt didn't drive. Nor did my grand uncle and cousin. Without a car, we couldn't go to too many places. So grandaunt came up with a rule, that we would only run one errand a day. On grand uncle's birthday, we spent the whole day preparing for the celebration. Grandaunt ordered the cake. My cousin and I took the bus to the bakery to pick it up.

China trip
my grandaunt slows down
my American pace

Jackie Chou

drying out
a rainstorm
scotches my plans

foghorn
a barge glides by
the oompah band

politics
the ambidextrousness
of a dead bird

Robert Witmer

after the Dracula movie
I'm glancing
at my wife's neck

twilight zone
my uncle
in the anatomy atlas

Aljoša Vuković

laid off ...
a drawn-out conversation
with my drunken shadow

the time we spent
choosing a bedroom set --
now between us
a wall of pillows
and her whining dog

she murmurs
I'm just not into you
for the first time
I notice a hairline crack
in our bedroom wall

Chen-ou Liu
[@ericcoliu](#) and [@storyhaikutanka](#)

old track -
a stray cat
plays with a newspaper

*vecchio binario -
un gatto randagio
gioca con il giornale*

Massa Carrara

mimicry
how work and me
become one

Thorsten Neuhaus
Totto@thoneuhaus

leftovers
grinding in the disposal—
too many words

first-born twin—
best 11 minutes
of his life

Elaine Wilburt

empty street
I try to lose
my shadows

sick day
all the symptoms
I didn't know I have

new poem
the resolve it takes
not to throw it away

sexting
I tell him
dinner's ready

Tia Haynes

[@adalia haiku](#)

www.adaliahaiku.com

Progeny

bra shopping
I say nipples
a bit too loud

saving now
for my children's therapy

after their bedtime
the snap-hiss
of a beer can

cancelled plans
we forget to lock
our bedroom door

never granting wishes
our Diaper Genie

long drive home
hoping the kids will forget
my name

Tia Haynes/Bryan Rickert

Undefined

icy peaks...
hiding my breasts
to fit in

*learning to fake it
when they talk sports*

diet culture
dreams
of liposuction

*lifting weights
still feeling small
inside*

his boss's hand
on my back

*girly man
not enough of one thing
to be anything*

Tia Haynes/Bryan Rickert

Empty Drawers

*burning bridges
a little light
for the journey*

road trip
just me and my skeletons

*hotel check in
admitting I need help
with all my baggage*

five dollar loneliness
raiding
the minibar

*liquid courage
I delete her number*

empty drawers
wondering who stole
the Bible

Tia Haynes/Bryan Rickert

dead leaves fall
with no strings attached
to this world

Teiichi Suzuki

siren song
temptation on the rocks
whiskey in my glass

the bitter taste
of afternoon coffee
2 a.m.

yelp review
this meteor shower
just 1 star

m. shane pruet
@[HaikuMyBrew](#)

Femme de Chambre

Summer by the sea. A rosy sunrise. The threshold of her future. The hotel was bloated with shore-scene groupies. There was the usual cigar stumps and half-smoked cigarettes in blackened ashtrays, the aftermath of guests' grooming, hair and soap scum, splashes of tonic dribbling down mirrors, wet towels and rumors, rumpled sheets and lipstick signatures, dust and sand, lots of sand. The daily scrubbing and sweeping, polishing each room to perfection, putting up with complaints and unwanted advances. It was a job.

Photographed together on her last day of work, her employer hands her a package.

wedding gift
an exquisite Japanese tea set
she will never use

Joyce Joslin Lorensen

Father's Day
the long story
much longer

done climbing
the boy tends
to his nuts

divorced
husband

his own
snowman

Elmedin Kadric

days of anxiety-
the pregnancy test
does not reveal sex

bad reception-
nobody at the cemetery
comes to meet me

Vincenzo Adamo

waiting . . .
for the light to change
writer's block

what kind
of chicory is this
cafe' au lait

Rick Jackofsky

the store changes from
dry cleaners to pet grooming
suits to shih tzus

Audubon society meeting
bird brains at
the library

Susan Farner

Spreading Marmalade Around

Morning and the cat sun waits for my Marmalade. And here she comes - orange splash and confetti, a bit of delicate and storm, the kitchen cupboard cat, the feather catcher. Let us not joke! She has been appointed Ambassador to Spain.

purring
the copper kettle
needs my attention

Lee Felty

at the ER-
she hooks me up
only kind I get now

the old dancer's poems still have legs

dan smith

redirected . . .
snails still
in the letterbox

shell beach
my inner kid
in the crunch

hotchpotch day
the poster board at lights:
Stay Zen

Jenny Fraser

below
the headstone
the truth

wandering animals
some in the zoo
some in a safari jeep

Srinivasa Rao Sambangi

Krakatoa
south
of my imagination

in the aquarium
the fish nibble
at my soul

if only
the poltergeist
would empty the dishwasher

Roger Watson

first heart attack
let's call it
a rehearsal

die another day –
graveyard closed
for the holidays

cool jazz
on the corner –
fingerless gloves

plugged in –
I hear my heart
skip a beat

Ian Mullins

third date ...
he pours wine
shows me etchings
of his grandmother

snowless winter
all the flakes
on the subway

morning hush
dog's gray snout
nuzzles my dream

bucket list:
live concerts of aging rockers
before THEY die

Maria Bonsanti

night
just the
dishwasher's surf

private browser window
asking the questions
i dare not ask

Michael Baeyens
www.michaelbaeyens.com

un
his prefix
propensity

not far from
the San Andreas Fault –
Frank's picket fence

scenic drive –
a deer's
white bottom

Linda McCarthy Schick

parent chaperones
dry brown flowers
in the blueberry box

self-conscious teen
Dad has tucked his t-shirt
into his boxers

new sheriff
the “massage” parlors
move off the main road

David Oates



Lavana Kray

<https://ourbesthaiga.blogspot.com/>



Ezio Infantino

begging to be saved
from another
superhero conversation

heart-shaped
balloon
stringing me along

first day
of first grade
Harvard t-shirt

long walk
taking things
out of context

rosary
all the decades
that brought her to 90

Laurie Greer

and more rain
consulting an app
to see the moon

mangroves at night
the presence of others
not always a comfort

distant thunder
the tragic ending
of my beach read

North Star
it always comes back
to this

Kristen Lindquist

once in a while
my passionate self erupts ...
sneezing fit

dehydration
after a drinking spree
paradoxes

my list
of New Year's resolutions ...
missing

Natalia Kuznetsova

Developments

new mall parking lot
sunning on a large rock
a desert rat

housing lots
still calling it home
the ants

new home
they have an open house
for the flies

Debbie Scheving

marathon run
the lives we've lived
since we were friends

my mother's name
inside the mug
tea with milk

William O'Sullivan
wmosullivan.com

Friday the 13th--
maybe the rainbow
bears bad news

the river
is ice again--
history lesson

Monday blues
the snooze button has
stopped working

Srinivas S

personal letter
writing between the lines
copperplate font

dinner date
looking away
from his lobster's eyes

pride — how we covered
our school books carefully
in brown paper

Ingrid Baluchi

fading rose
she still doesn't know
how to kiss

defender`s day
mum`s teaching me
how to hit a nail

family dinner
into a bottle of still water
my silence

snowfall and thaw
afraid of each other
homeless dog and me

Irina Guliaeva

fog
a little time to talk
to dad

insomnia
all of the stars
in their places

Maria Concetta Conti

Wallbanger

happy hour
the guy with a twist
holds assets in truss

reaching for the top-shelf Scotch . . .
barmaid's tartan miniskirt

facelift and fishnets —
recycled cherries
in the old fashioned

romantic stylings
by Russ at the baby grand
sung with a slight lisp

throbbing thongs
next up, drag queen cabaret

"for a good time, call ..."
he scribbles down all the names
on the men's room wall

Lew Watts and *Charles Trumbull*

Buddhist nun
asks about her hold
on The Thorn Birds

My face
a rubber mask
on a skull

Sentimental journeys –
old family addresses
and Google Maps

Bruce England

eighty-one
counting rings in the table
life in cedar

I get out of bed
to shut off the light
but it's the full moon

beside the church
more sheep on the lawn
than inside

Ingrid Bruck

Renandstimpy

oh boy,
we're writing haiku—
happy happy, joy joy!

Michael

don't be an eeeediot
we're writing a renandstimpy!

Curtis

what is your problem
you sick little monkey,
this isn't art!

Michael

grieving over Stinky
Ren buys Stimpy
a toy mouse!

Curtis

okay, Ren
time for the Happy Helmet!

Michael

no, time for the last verse
before this show gets cancelled—
shut up and look stoopid!

Curtis

Michael Dylan Welch and Curtis Dunlap

her smell lingers
on the white shirt she last wore--
daisies on the coffin

MariVal Bayles

bookends . . .
a sleeping uncle
in each armchair

election day -
scraping the bottom
of two barrels

salt water taffy
the taste
of tears

Valentina Ranaldi-Adams

not a single breeze -
so many open windows
on my laptop

play store...
I search for an app
to turn back time

her old pair of earrings -
behind her a sky
full of stars

cutting words -
I only spot
half of the moon

Ana Drobot

new year day
the boy still sells Santa
caps to passersby

breakup
hiding her neck tattoo
under the scarf

on ventilator
they try to understand
her silence

virtual birthday
the candles light up
again and again

Minal Sarosh

potato chip bag
expiration date
unnecessary

twice a year
the same question,
"Do you floss?"

first job hunt roadblock
even entry-level positions
prefer experience

Lauren McBride

roller coaster -
my father checks
his blood sugar

family reunion...
the conversations
around her casket

kintsugi -
her tattoo covers
the surgical scars

Gordon Gearhart

snow-covered hill ...
some dog poop too

searching for tartar sauce
in an ocean of mayonnaise

Marshall Bood

marshallbood.blogspot.com

she talks
to a rival
in his eye

Bisshie

poetrypea.com

[@thepea](https://www.instagram.com/thepea)

chilly twilight
looking for you
inside me

singing bowl
the muffled sound
of the first snow

Eufemia Griffo

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

ho(me)lessne(ss)

leftover loaf
he wraps it up
in yellow pages

end of summer
the faded grass stains
on her back

a refugee baby
curls up into a ball
frost moon

rusty bench—
the wear and tear
of summer dreams

winter solstice—
he snuggles under
the clouds of breath

monsoon stroll
his footprints leave behind
the rain puddles

homelessness—
the hollow trunk stuffed
with fallen leaves

Hifsa Ashraf

[@hifsays](#)

the dark faces
of young migrants-
rapeseed fields

Angela Giordano

coffin-less funeral
at the sign of peace
a stranger's wink

thirty years of yoga
and still my heels don't floor
in downward dog

cousins' meet-up
getting used to being
the older generation

Maeve O'Sullivan
[@writefromwithin](#)

another family dinner
dad says I don't think you've heard
this one before

Buddha statue
my nephews wage war
with water pistols

the street sign says
Half Moon Crescent
identity crisis

Louise Hopewell

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

blocking the view
of a dahlia blossom
my thoughts

family reunion
I stir tea
with a fork

after talking about zen
I tell “yo momma” jokes
one after the other

Nicholas Klacsanzky

Midnight Steps

dawn's sharp edges
stumbling into sunlight
a blind beggar
JH

chaotic wind howls
about the empty bowl
HA

hailstorm
the clatter
of coins in a tin
JH

stomach rumbling
passing through the dark alley
HA

night journey
stepping into a puddle
of deeper darkness
JH

finding nowhere
the footsteps of my ancestors
HA

John Hawkhead & Hifsa Ashraf

meteor showers
a field full
of cameras

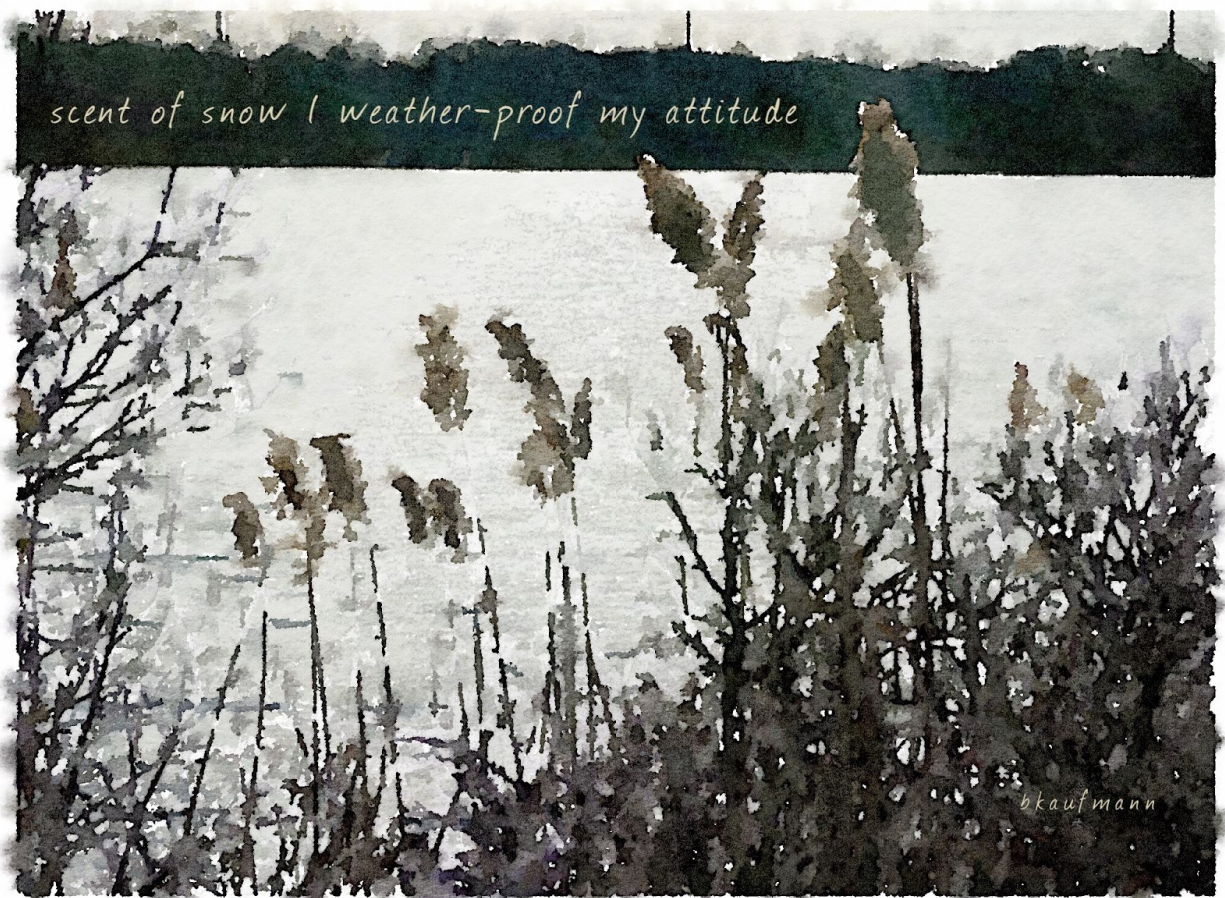
old calendar
each day a reminder of
who I used to be

Elizabeth Crocket

<https://elizabethcrocket.com/>

*first snowflakes
the swirl of no thought
around a mantra*





Barbara Kaufmann

morning fog
losing our way
your hair turns grey

dandelion field
my dog at large
with a stick-on beard

David Gale

self-published books
consigned to local bookstores
stolen, best reward

Michael Feil

special election
the philander mocks
the faithful gay man

my boss's death
cheats me of the chance
to quit

Tyson West

who cares what they see
ragged curtains wide open
sleeping with the moon

showing respect
bamboo grove bows deeply
winter marches on

inside every man
a ramshackle shed
big enough for one

Bruce Jewett

Mount Rushmore today
the founding fathers' faces
grimly distorted

light snow cover
a boy draws an emoji
on the car hood

Pitt Buerken

roughed up
and money taken
another massage

turkey vulture . . .
I circle
a rotten attitude

Marilyn Ashbaugh

peekaboo lace
unwrapping
a fantasy

Eraser

I wish I could erase you as easily as you erased me.

In this age of artful conversation, digital communication and instant gratification, paper and pencil seem pointless.

Standing mailboxes are left sealed, e-mails are eagerly opened. Handwritten notes in the mail slot are ignored but texts—oh, how can we resist the siren songs of our cell phones, which, if you've noticed, we don't even use as phones anymore. No one calls, no one answers. Answering machines lie dusty and forgotten. Now we call it "voicemail."

Everything in our lives is reduced to ones and zeroes, to screens and send buttons, to data and plan. And it takes a lot of planning to decide what to say when there's no way to unsay what's been sent.

bristling —
his long forgotten
toothbrush

* source text: p.65 "Memoirs of a Geisha" by Arthur Golden

time

Platsu
e mirror,

rust o

a pattern of deep

– E.Alford

* source text: p.65 "Memoirs of a Geisha" by Arthur Golden

time

Platsu
e mirror,

rust o

a pattern of deep

– E.Alford

* source text: p.65 "Memoirs of a Geisha" by Arthur Golden

time

Platsu
e mirror,

rust o

a pattern of deep

– E.Alford

Chicago blues the blizzard's one hue

flat tire
so much air
around my bike

hobo moon
a freight train
drums the dark

exploding into space the roads to you

Adrian Bouter

new year's eve party
my past
walks in the door

beyond words
i lie
with emojis



Julie Warther

AN OPEN CAP

The old city is practically deserted tonight. The storm has subsided to street corner growls, but the cold is bitter. So bitter. We walk.

Beneath St. Peter's, a pile of blue and yellow blankets lie smelly on the pavement. On top, a white woolly bonnet with ear muffs. On the paving, an open cap, just a few coppers inside.

As we approach, the bonnet rolls back to reveal a small face. The young woman is clearly unwell. Her elfin features are wasted to virtual transparency, her eyes watery.

My partner drops a 50 pence piece in the cap. The lass whispers "Thank you."

I do the same. Again, "Thank you."

Now, from the fetid folds of blanket, another small face emerges: the face of a brown and white dog. The Jack Russell stretches and the young woman pulls him close.

"He's lovely," says my partner. And the poor lass smiles.

I wave, just once...

Her smile lingers in shadow as we turn away.

first flurries...
an anxious dad
checks his texts again

mulled wine
the family gathering
I'm excluded from

Paul Beech

hospice hallways
the soft hiss
of ceiling vents

dirty bathwater
a temper tantrum spirals
down the drain

morning commute
the young mom sings a lullaby
into her cell phone

Jay Friedenber

Standing over mud
Pretending to play with mud
Three kindergartners

spit out whole from
the Little Free Library
Schizophrenias

Alan Bern
linesandfaces.com



Madhuri Pillai

on their double bed
'The Complete Works
Of Shakespeare'

Maureen Weldon

drunken uncle
baiting his fish hook
my questions

Saturday morning
Father's Old Spice refreshes
the confessional

campaign volunteer
takes in our trash can
leaves us lit

jet black hair
on the satin bed sheets
sans serif

Ron Scully

winter walk –
my unspoken prayer
with the silent trees

Joanna Delalande

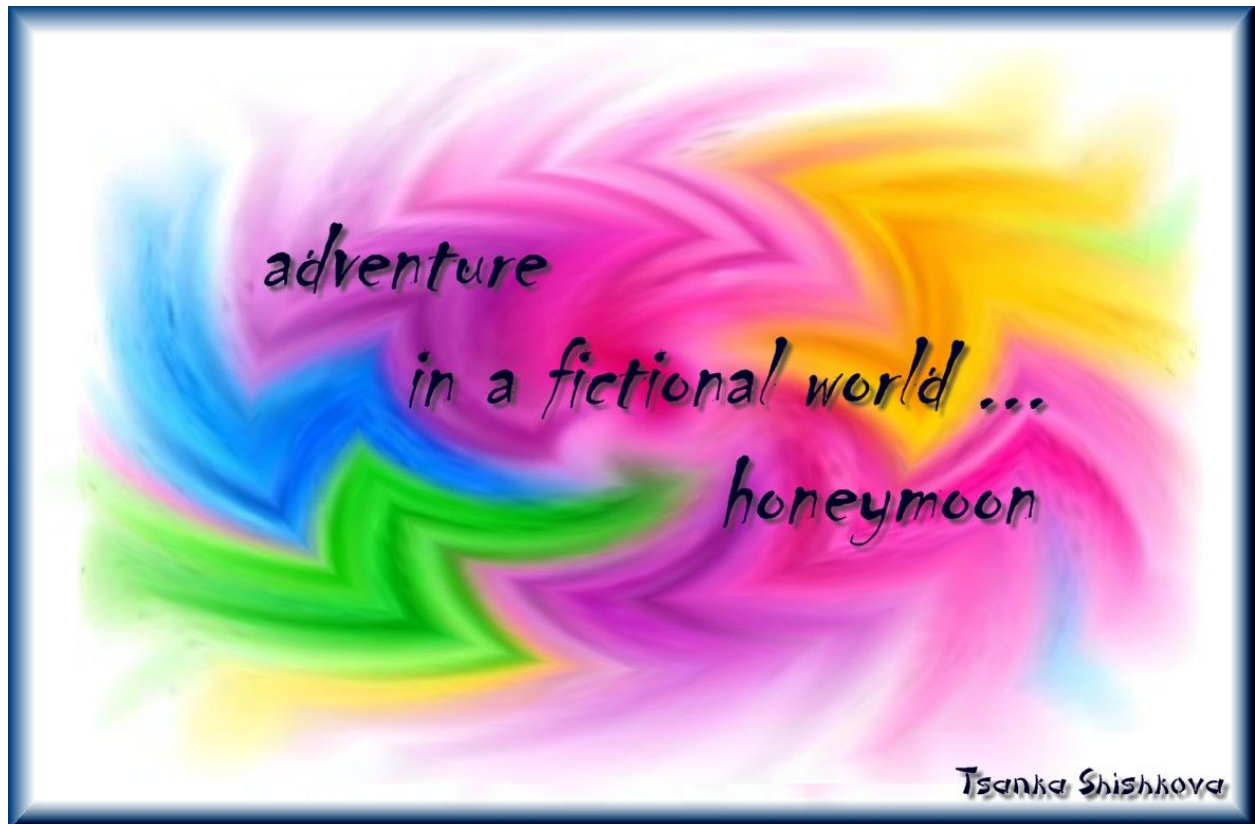
mixed marriage . . .
from opposite rooms
different music

Ivan Gaćina

making snow angels
for myself
to find

marzipan
I lodge my preference
back to you

Joanna Ashwell



coffee break
on the roof-garden
first date

Tsanka Shishkova

secret beach getaway
the juveniles fish
for trouble

public funds—
the official busy working
out his cut

new development
the old road
inaugurated again

Rashmi VeSa

abortion clinic
she laces up
her winter boots

longest night
the fragrance
of being alone

I don't read
what I sign
divorce papers

Agus Maulana Sunjaya

tonight's moon a little wider my waistband

lost
to the curve of her
tonight's sleep

a love song
on every tongue
blue moon

dandelion digger
whatever it takes
to win

Ben Moeller-Gaa

www.benmoellergaa.com

Medicare
enrollment ads
elderly hazing

fifty shades of gray
after all the paint samples
my walls

senior card party
explaining the rules
yet again

Terrie Jacks

blank stares...
the teacher explains
caucus chaos

custom doors
to fit every frame
we swing both ways

date night
pisces trying
a virgo

early to bed –
my arthritis, his bad back
young lovers in disguise

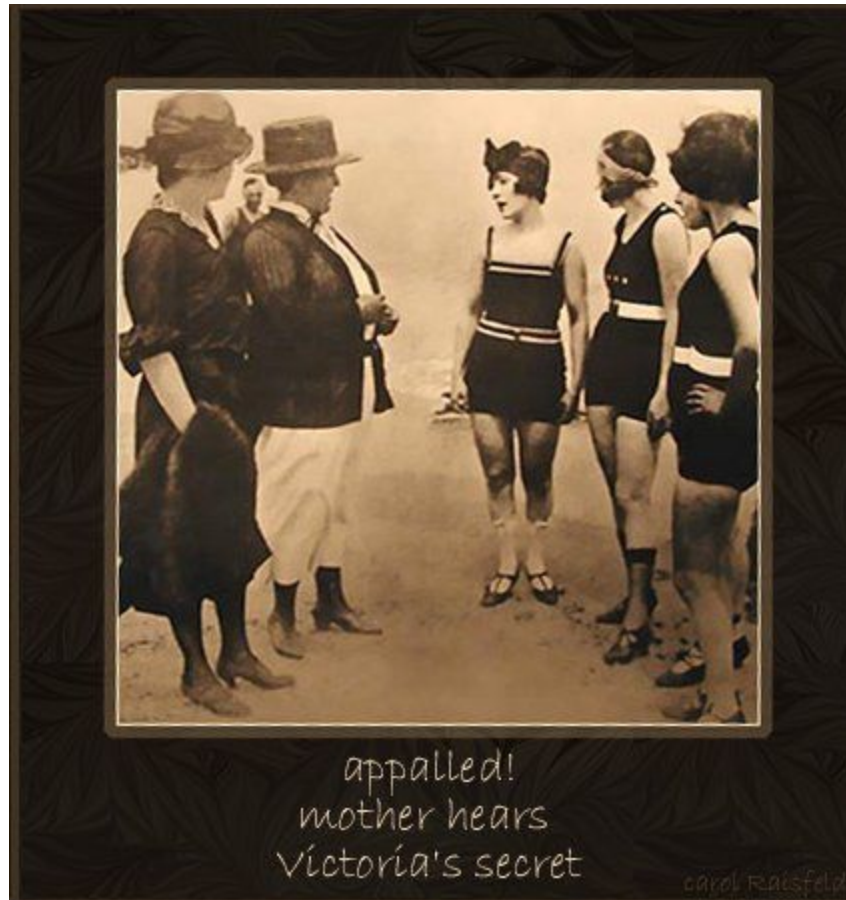
garbage man's
retirement party
a swill affair

retired
he needed alone time
for everyone's sanity

between snores
and the tick of the clock
an erection

carol raisfeld





Carol Rausfeld

downpour
a part of us
not running

milky way
blinking eyes
with grandma

Guliz Mutlu

fresh flowers
lay for you
goodbye...

Stella Damarjati
[@skdamarjati](#)

the man at table two
so involved with nothing
swallows his napkin

Michael H. Brownstein

workshop
practicing
death poems

after a visit
to my home town
going home

bearskin rug
I try to look
anywhere else

first light
when did she put on
the nightgown

giving up drinking
except on weekends
Lent

Bill Kenney

Yesenin's death—
I give birth to
a stillborn poem

Réka Nyitrai

seminary bookstore
CCTV to prevent
Bible stealing

almost ready
for a handshake...
coronavirus

pushing seventy—
other poets' short lifespans
cause a smile

my childhood bully
the joy of knowing
he's unemployed

John J. Han

Roger Moore Lives Next Door

Aunty says he moved in just before Christmas in seventy-five. He parties late into the night. If we have the windows open, cigarette smoke is accompanied by a strong smell I don't recognise. Women come and go, his last laugh accompanying them along the street. We never see the star, he must leave under the cover of darkness to avoid being recognised after the success of Live and Let Die. Most nights, the television can be heard into the early morning; what's Bond watching?

body bag
I raise an eye-brow
at the policeman

davy jones's locker the stench of a damp sock

never had a bad word for anyone mother's parrot

Tim Gardiner



Jane Williams
anewilliams.wordpress.com

battery charger
waiting for
the green light

blackout
the first star
comes early

Pearl Kline

strange silence
the queasy calm
before an earthquake

aftershocks
the comfort of teacups

Cynthia Anderson
Peter Jastermsky

birthday cake
grandpa slices
through the past

Nisha Raviprasad

<https://twitter.com/home>

after the party
sunglasses
at breakfast

Christine Wenk-Harrison

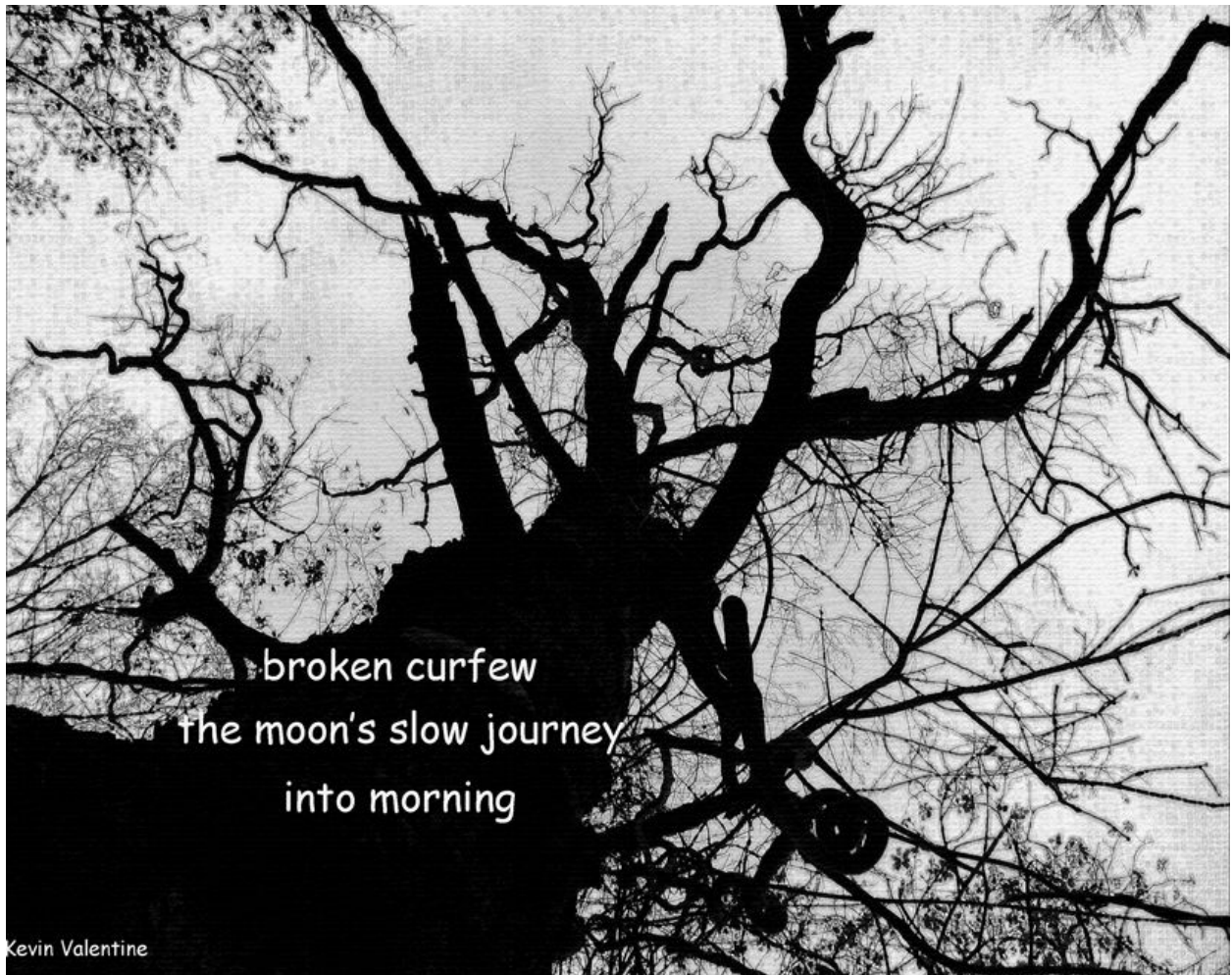
rainy day
conversation with
my Zuni fetishes

again the debate—
heir hostas
or this fawn

Jill Lange

rejection e-mail
the four-letter word
"unfortunately"

passing a love note--
the substitute teacher's
third eye



blow up girlfriend

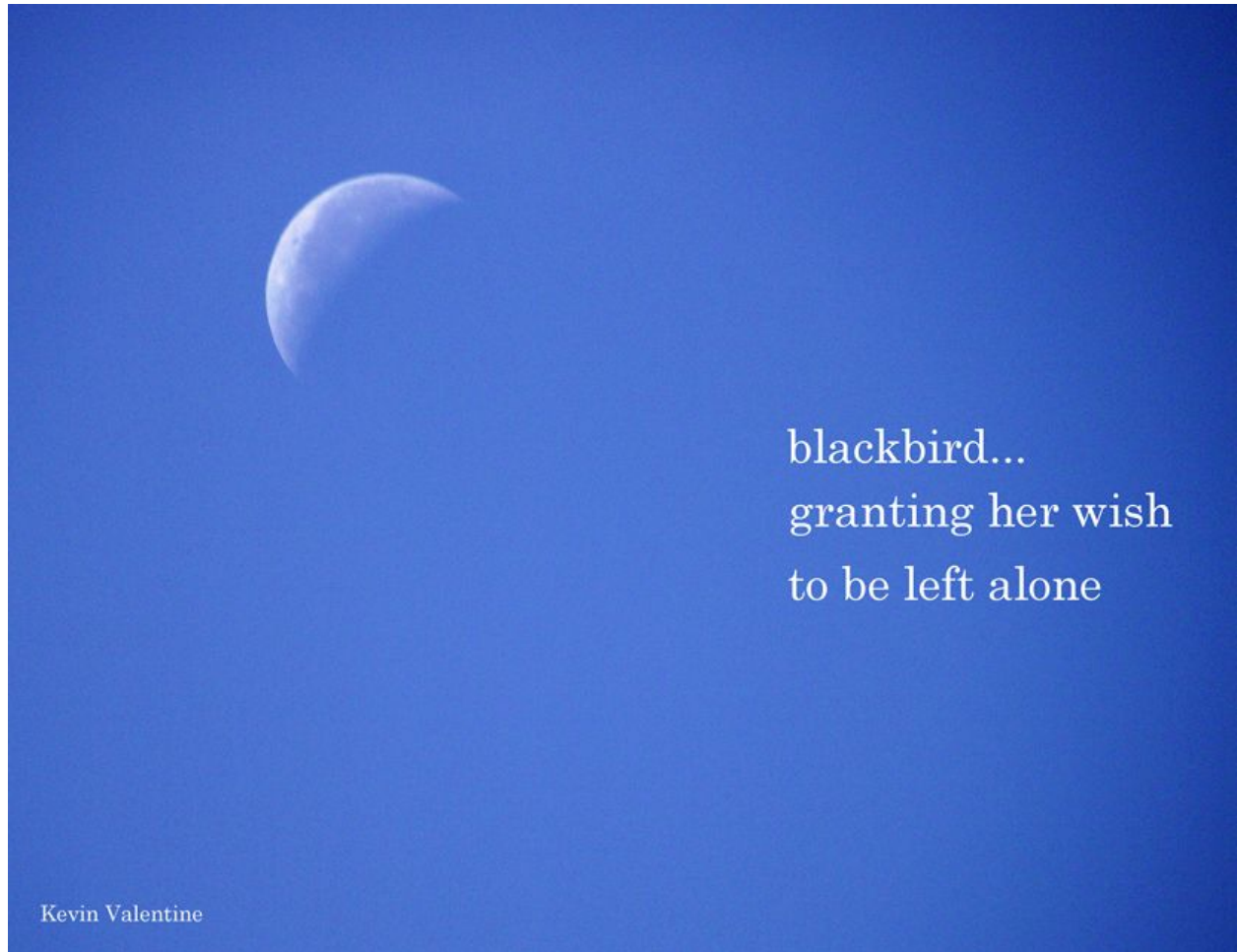
after three glasses

she explodes

Senryu by Kevin Valentine

Artwork by Steve Valentine

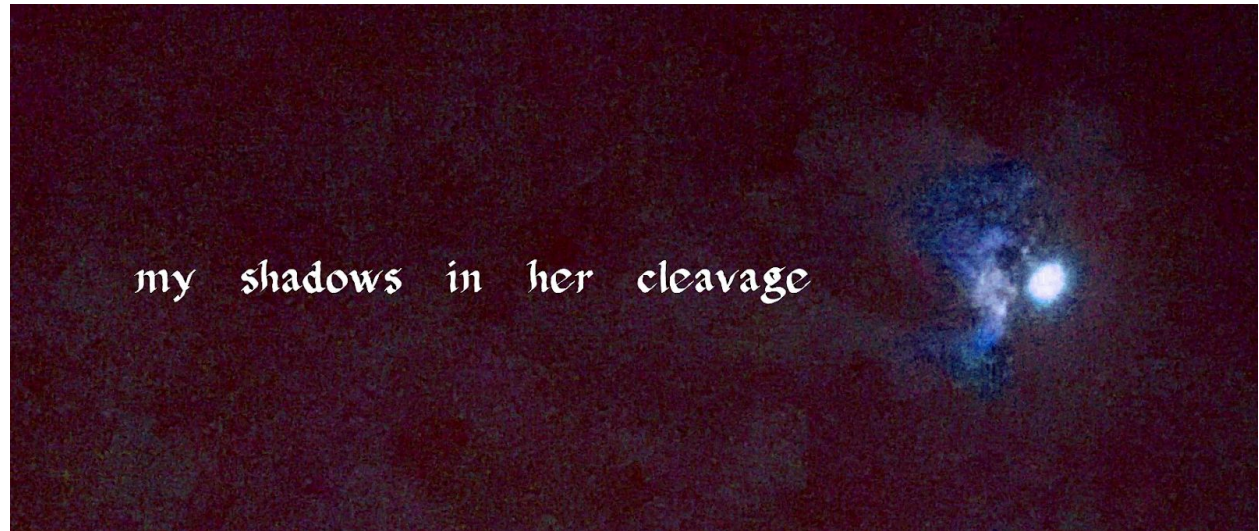




Kevin Valentine

slo
wing
down

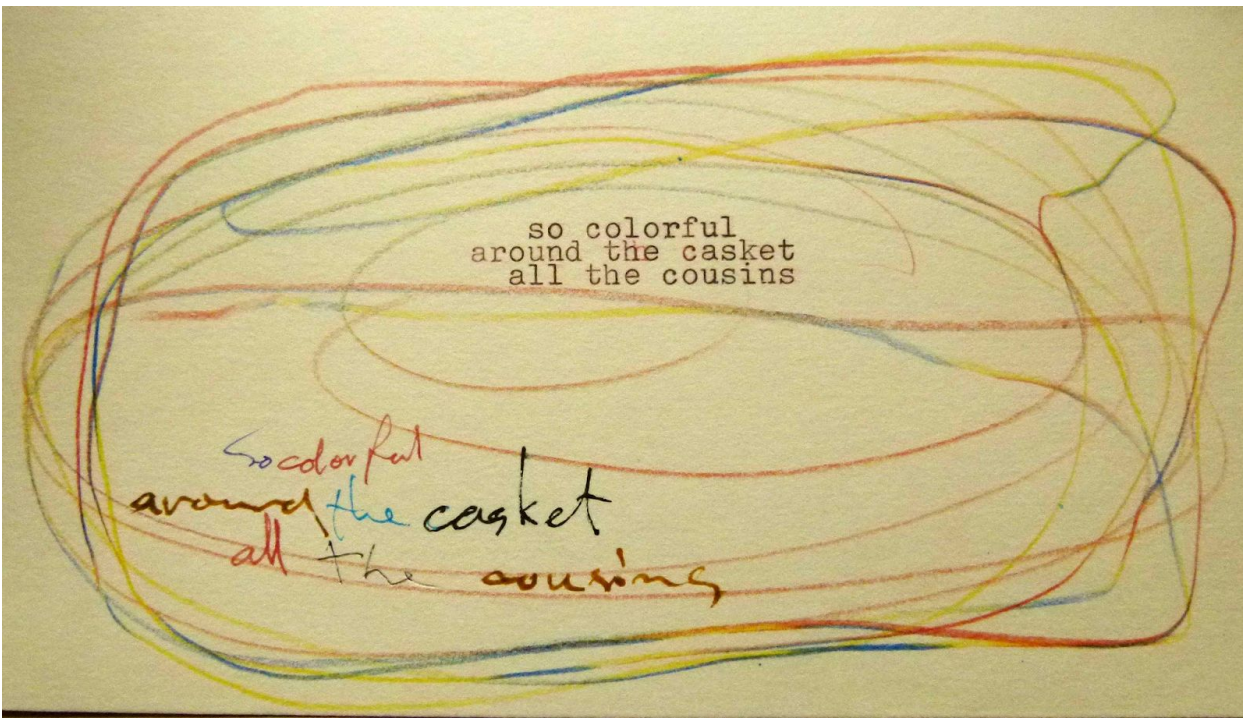
Geoff Pope



snowdust morning
the softened landscape
of last night's insults

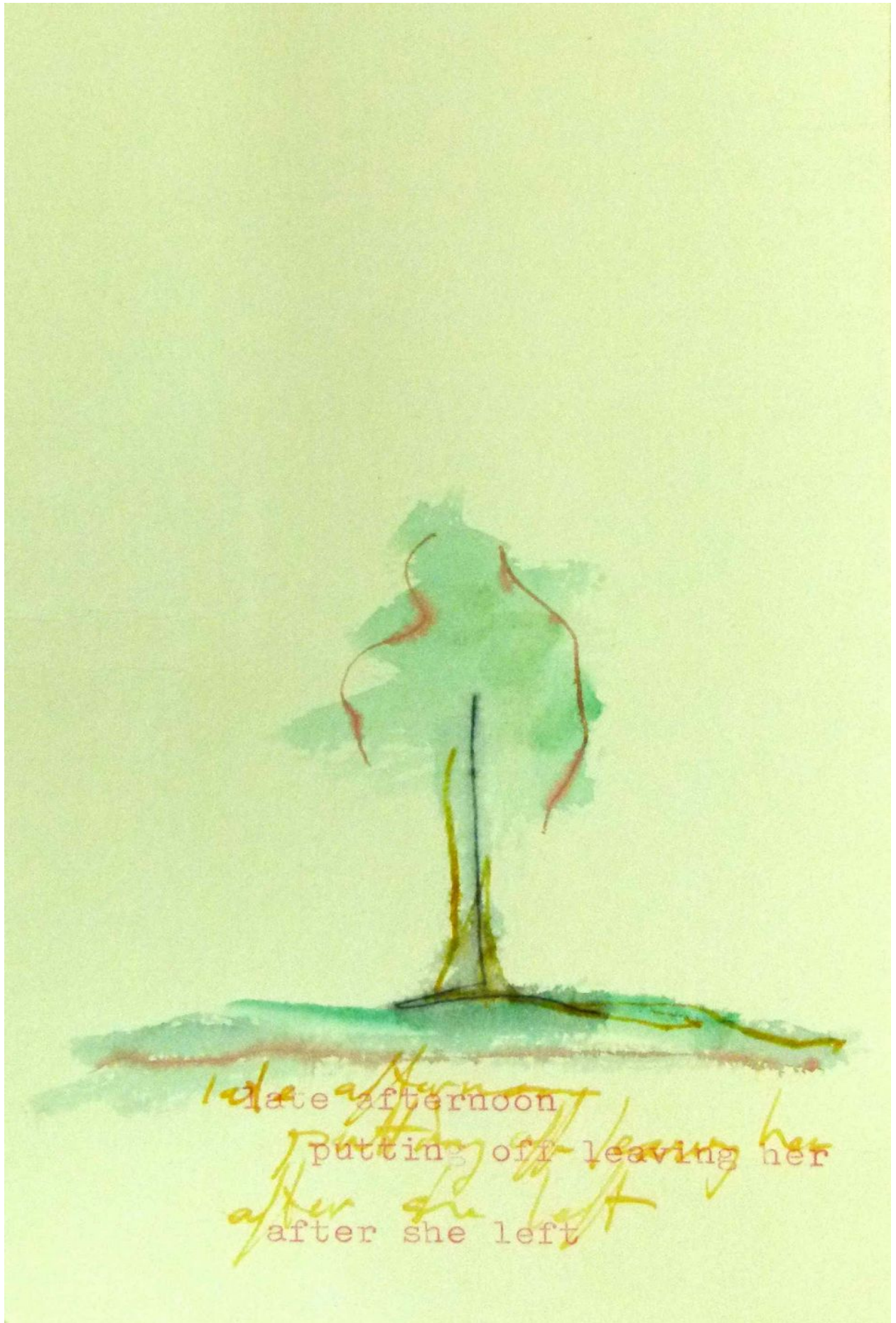
time to ourselves
it will not be long before
she wants to kill me

John Hawkhead




so colorful
around the casket
all the cousins

So colorful
around the casket
all the cousins



late afternoon
putting off leaving her
after she left



burial day
so hard to get up
dead tired

I try not to let
my intentions show
vacation beach

retreat about
race, class and poverty...
valet parking

the old man
and his VW bus
slow to start

anniversary
32 years
divorced

Robert Moyer

two boys
add some horns
grandsons

the crane's neck
getting shorter
construction site

Maxianne Berger

rolling papers
discovered in backpack
Lawd, it took me back

Dress code issued
No miniskirts, no minidress
No word on minikilt.

George Schaefer

meditating
a dog eats
my apple

the sound
my bike makes
— when I walk

Adam T. Arn

double hell--
her fart
and a blackout

river breeze
the dragonfly and i pick
separate stones

applause
a perfect timing
for my fart

dark days sermon
a bald worshipper's head
reflecting light

Adjei Agyei-Baah

nicks on shorn sheep
painted blue
the hole in my sweater

harvest moon
waiting all year
for a kidney

blustery day
election season
upon us

rip current
trolling for acolytes
on FaceBook

Lorraine A. Padden

rock and roll is not dead just underground where it belongs

60s hippies all lived under rocks or in cheap apartments that had cockroaches. maybe the cockroaches were just the beginning of the environmental movement. we got high and 'watched' them you know. can you guess where that one till turn next... i dunno but lets just crawl around the floor with the little bastard and see what happens...

in the background was the stones or maybe dylan singing one of his sad ballads. was he singing to the cockroaches we mused... then in the flick of a psychedelic eyelash by janis that little bug disappeared into the dirty floorboards. or maybe it was the couch but what the hell by then we were hungry and someone ordered pizza and beer. and..... we rolled another joint.

wu wei
a cat chases its tail
in a dream

Michael Rehling
'Failed' Editor
editor@failedhaiku.com

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