

running
from
yesterday

selection of haibun by michael rehling

curated by kelly moyer

Dedicated to my wife

Abbey-jo Rehling

without whom there is no poetry

Forward

This collection of haibun has been chosen by Kelly Moyer, my friend, and frequent writing partner. I gave her about 160 haibun, all but a handful previously published, and she culled the 70 or so included here as her personal choices. Without her persistence and constant support this would never have happened. For that, and all that she is I can't say anything but Thank You!

I also want to thank the many other poets who have inspired me to write haibun, and whose work and encouragement kept me going. About thirty years ago Paul Woodward, Ray Rasmussen, and Glen Coats first pointed me in the direction of haibun and firmly established in me the same 'addiction' that they had fallen into for themselves.

Along the way, Roberta Beary has been a primary inspiration to me, but please don't blame her for my tired representations in this collection. Teaching me to have the courage to just be me and let it happen, and reading her work that contains that spirit only more perfectly than my poor efforts is still an inspiration to me daily.

Many others have helped and inspired me along the way, not the least of which are the following: Michele Root-Bernstein, Alexis Rotella, Terri French, Jennifer Hambrick, Steve Hodge, Angellee Deodhar, Kala Ramesh, Alan Pizzarelli, Shloka Shankar, and Hortensia Anderson have been among those whose work I look to often.

Peace

Mike Rehling

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oracles and wishing wells

you see a lot of things if you live long enough. the politicians come and go. never saw a single one i felt i could trust. plans for liberty equality and fraternity fade into mindlessness and destruction. but it does not get me down anymore. living life is so much more fun. it is just up to me and the rest of the universe to come to terms with my beating heart. engendering smiles and giving frowns only the briefest of moments. if you can just leave off the nonsense happening all around you then your 'safe space' just moves with you through the day. dragging the sun into the lives of others. been doing this a long time now and just sitting quietly watching the dust sparkles in the sunlight is more than i will ever need. i pet my cat and save the elephants of india and africa. enjoying the worldly nature of a hummingbird staring at me staring at him.

walk in the woods
holding my shadow
like a lover

gonna blow a fifty amp fuse

there was a time when i thought leon trotsky was right as rain. we had an a&p store a couple blocks from my apartment and we went down to break out the windows once a week. as a first step we thought toward the revolution. it was a small store and the only one in the area for fresh fruit and pasta. two old italian ladies in the neighborhood caught us one night. they gave us a ration of shit for fucking with the only store they had nearby that carried all the old canned tomatoes and cheeses they needed. we explained that a&p was owned by huntington hartford and he supported nixon and the war. they seemed unconvinced but did not call the cops just told us never to do it again. our crew of revolutionists slunk away from those old ladies like a cat that just knocked over the vase. after that i hung out with mellow souls and became convinced it was better to be a peace loving freak instead.

slipshod
but still holding out the cold
the ill fitting door

a couple of years later i told the story to a friend. she slapped me hard on the head. it was sudden and i was taken totally by surprise. that is when she explained that huntington hartford did not own a&p for over a decade and he did not support nixon in sixty eight either and was no fan of the war. i had wasted my rage and soundly defeated some store windows that were not at war with anyone.

echoes
off empty walls
footsteps from the past

reserving a room in hell

Over time, you experience these losses. But you never see them coming. They seem unnatural, but then suicide always has that going for it. No one seems to know the cause, it masquerades as a general dissatisfaction with their life. Thinking back you saw something, but still can't put your finger on a fact, or find a reason. Religion is a barrier and no relief. "His soul will go to hell you know?" *No, I don't know that, and right now I would rather be with him than you.*

impermanence . . .
a winter storm
passes between us

It does not take much to remember . . .

Vietnam. Someone says that word, places that place into my mind and it speeds through all the black and white movie reels again. As if it matters, my cat jumps into my lap and wants to be petted. I do it, mechanically moving my fingers between her ears, and think to myself about gain and loss. It is a perfect moment, really.

shooting the moon
my finger
always dead center

watermelon man

buying vegetables and fruit from a vendor in the alley behind her home. my grandmother loved everyone equally. if she was not born roman catholic she would have been a buddha. no one was beneath her. not even the old "colored" man relegated to the alley. his watermelon slices were to die for. my grandma was a "peasant german" and spoke "low" german not that "fancy stuff." she was a maid for dozens of years to the wealthy. when my granddad who started at general motors at fifteen after lying about his age in flint michigan rose to be an executive in the fisher building in downtown detroit they moved to grosse point woods. she never learned to drive. but my grandfather got a new cadillac every year. she still cleaned her house herself. immaculately by the way. my grandma went to church every day. our lady of the sea church. it was a block from her home. but she had my grandpa take her to the eastern market in detroit for fresh food and they went to the old catholic church in detroit. st. pauls it was. once a month for the german mass. she hugged everyone she met. old young poor rich drunk or sober. she was my champion and everyone elses too. i was never jealous of her attention to others. it was just her way. to see the good and to be the good.

the calm
of a breathless candle
in my heart

you never find out anything listening to yourself

when i was a kid i would ride around on my bike for miles and miles. pedaling that bike took me to a lot of places. it also took me to a lot of people. not friends. not acquaintances even. but they changed my life and i think about them every day. the old guy who taught me how to whittle. the woman on my paper route who said i was kind. funny i had never thought of myself that way before she said it. i like to think that any kindness i have ever shown was inspired by that moment. i beamed inside myself as i peddled away to finish my route. and i learned from that and many other encounters of my childhood that the best sounds of our lives are the sounds from the voices of others.

a clothespin
holds the ace of spades
to my spokes

the value in going over the line...

i firmly believe that the third glass of wine is the best. the fourth glass is good too and i highly recommend it to you. without it you will never know for sure that the third glass is the best.

sometimes
the future is already dead
moon viewing

clarity overrated

some people like to nail things down. me i just wonder at the wonder of it all. good days. bad days. what are they anyway. sometimes the closest you are to anyone is the day they die. not to be morbid but there are no longer any expectations. no worry about what they might or might not do. only that peaceful reflection that comes when you place the last piece in the puzzle and can finally marvel at the entire picture. but even that is just a dream. in the end all the puzzle pieces go back into the box.

fog horn
but i already knew
about the fog

faint as a will of the wisp

you sing to the moon if you want. me i just stare quietly. i live with the oaks and pines. so very often my view is broken by leaves and needles and just as quickly there it is again. if we had many moons like saturn would it be better or would we just get bored with all those choices. as it is our lonely moon often matches our moods. the light grows and fades and grows again. in the changeless verity of it all the moon unites us. i imagine all the lonely others looking up with me.

as i reach
the end of the path
my mind wanders

two sides of infinity

listening to jazz. the purple sunset fades and i am left to follow the edges of the trees to the end of the day. when will it quit this auto repeat of nature. well it could be when i leave this world or will it be when the sun explodes. who cares everything has its limits and yet the universe continues to expand and with it my tender feelings toward those i love . . .

my brothers memorial
an empty chair
at the table

witnessing the truth

*i climb mental mountains
every day you know
not the kind that cost you
your life for sure
but they are there nonetheless*

*spinters in my hand
the soft skin
of another*



the way the flowers mate

needing each other seems so very human
but we are not alone in this world
everything in nature is co dependant
if we could only see that nature needs us too

seeking meaning
in every small thing
butterflies



waking qrendel

i try not to think before sleeping dont watch sad movies
either and especially dont read books with traqedies
from olden times these provide no respite from the
technicolor world that sleep can slip you into...

*eating my enemies
i dream myself
into an epic poem*



visiting my true self

it is late. i am in a quiet spot but my mind is racing. it seems like forever since I had time for myself. all my time is given freely but sometimes i am too generous with others so here i finally have arrived. sitting quietly and taking in some sandalwood incense. everything i have done has come to this moment. my face relaxes into a smile and i know everything is just right. to myself i say. i should do this more often.

fingerprints
in the hummus
likely my own

Prose by Mike Rehling
Poem by Kelly Sauvage Angel

no preferences

for the last several weeks i have been caught up in the 'news' of the day. not very interesting news, not even 'compelling' news, just the news. and so now, when the gist of the argument rests in some dusty corner, at least for now, i have come to rest here, on my cold but very sunny front porch. i am trying to remember other times, other places, other friends (many who are no longer on this plane we ride in), and wondering where it all fits. then it dawns on me, like the revelation to st. john, that what matters is not what we think about, but what IS when we stop thinking . . .

sitting still
steam from my cocoa rises
to somewhere else

Over the Top

The Mogollon Rim in central Arizona is a special place from which to 'view' the world. You can hike over 130 miles along the rim, with views of the treetops and clouds changing with your every step. Nature's gift to us is our own senses with which to enjoy the beauty of an ever changing creation. It was a shift of the earth's gigantic plates that created each precipice here that we use to view the myriad landscape. Who knows what the next shift will bring.

clouds race
chasing themselves
into new shapes

A good book, and a rainbow

It seems as if the spirit of Henry Miller suspends itself over the bar at Nepenthe, a restaurant perched over the ocean in Big Sur, California. He occupied a particular stool at that bar most nights, when he was in Big Sur, and often other writers, famous and not so famous, joined him. He is long gone from the stool, but the staff and visitors still venerate the place he sat. There is the occasional interloper, a tourist who selects that stool, and they allow it of course, but people do stare. Me, I sit one seat over from his, and watch a rainbow filled sunset while I wait . . . patiently, for a manifestation of the man himself . . .

at a loss for words
in the tropic of cancer
tilting my drink back

A Failure of Language

It has been years, yes years, since my brother and I spoke in any meaningful way. It was his decision, and not based on any action or inaction of mine, at least that I am aware of. Now, I will never really know. Having just finished a phone call with him, the last I will ever have, all I can do is wonder at the why?

long winter
birds peck at dry grass
in fresh snow

After a sharp weight loss, celiac disease was the diagnosis, and a gluten-free diet the prescription. Twenty pounds more in weight loss and an MRI revealed the mass in the small intestines of my brother. The surgery the next day removed the mass that had already involved the intestines. 'Lymphoma' is an undramatic word with dramatic implications. His life would be over in less than six months.

contemplating
the vernal equinox
lost in a 'polar vortex'

two cigar day

i have thought too much. and now it is time to just sit. when the losses pile up it sometimes seems to burden your soul in a special way. not something you can define. not something you can share with others easily. so i will not do that. just smoke my cigars and watch clouds of my own making move away and disappear. i am sad in a way that does not have a healing.

getting older
the friends i have lost
getting closer

miles davis was a haiku poet (yes he REALLY was)

yes. the previously sealed archives have been opened now. it is an established fact (like sunshine and rain) that every note he blew was a syllable in the trumpet language. long ignored by anthropologists this language has persisted for thousands of years. older than sanskrit is the speech of notes. first on hollow logs. then on branches hollowed out to become flutes. the industrial age gave us brass sections. and the electronic age synthesizers and override tubes for amps. but it took miles to put it all together for us. we can now close our universities and gather around a huge fire and recount our moments in the poetry of music.

winter rain
the piano man works
it into the tune

becoming new

i want to become famous. the most famous person on the planet. not this planet. some other planet much smaller and easier to rise to prominence on. all I need is an elon musk rocket and time to travel forty light years. yeah. home is where the fame is.

with no pain
i become a precious stone
the crush of time

uncertain healing

the past can't move us. it just is a part of us. how big a part. now that is up to us. do you carry it with you or leave it to its own devices. a bit of both it seems. if you pick the scab you keep the wound. the quiet din of the present can heal you only if you care enough about it to forget it when it is over.

chasing me
down the street
wolf moon

the fleeting glimpse of a child

doing peyote in the sixties. i went to an agricultural college in the midwest. they had an experimental forest they called it. no official trails but you could slip a motorcycle through the fence openings. once we were high we decided to drive through the forest to the other side. straight lines were only imaginary by then. time slipped too and although it felt like minutes a few hours passed before we got out to a road. the noise of the cycles were like screams from a wagner opera. we made it back. at least i think we did. ...

in a crazy diamond
two minds
merging

preoccupation with the verb

what is it about poets. focus focus focus. always this thought or another just like it or completely different. it seems we just cant find our way to an ending. but then

how i used to
wish for things...
leaves in the wind

"broken hearts are for assholes" - Frank Zappa

how many notes in a saxophone. what is the best booze for loneliness. who knows. is there a google search for this or the next question heading to my mind. i need to know all the answers. but with only a few minutes to spare i am bracing for disappointment. can you feel the moonshine. i can.

drunk on sad
passing a bottle of sloe gin
around a fire

poems left undone

every poet has them. poems that explode into our minds just when there is no pen within a hundred miles. when we do try to find them again they seem so incomplete. where does the mist go when the breeze blows it away.

tender
and without guile
(insert your own words here)

someday soon

i miss old friends. youth is such a terrifying time but the relationships last a lifetime if treated right. but then not everyone survives that time and that is what makes it so terrifying to remember.

winter
grabbing fog
in gloved hands

obliged to sit in

the storm ended. and a wonderful sunset finished the day for me. as the last clouds blew away i saw a universe or two or three appear. i felt that my plastic adirondack chair had become the throne of the pharaohs. and happy/sad filled my soul. everyone i had known living and dead filed into my limitless castle. it was a jam session for my soul. *'just one thing i ask of you when they bring the wagon round please forget you knew my name'*.

while i label the stars...
a blues tune
carries me away

three thousand llamas wail

if i could and i cannot i would do something to make you feel better. the world i live in is a movable bit of nothing in particular. low proof scotch and a cigar creates the mask i wear. but to attend my specific church. a religion of my own creation. you need to accept this moment. no heaven. no hell. just a piece of amethyst i bought from a smiling mexican kid at big bend national park in texas. after it dropped to the floor it became two. me. still one. i stare at that stone and everything seems right.

amateur night
at the blues bar
i sing a jimmy buffet tune

old dogs children & watermelon wine

looking for something to believe in. well just read the title to this haibun and make it your lifes work. nuff said. you will likely live long and if you dont you wont care having lived so good.

my mantra
interrupted by
a lonely puppy

for Terri French

innocent when you dream

i dream very little. at least i think that is true. who can really tell. if you wake with a warm and happy feeling was it the result of a deep dream or are you just thrilled to have checked the box for one more morning. sunlight through the blinds in our bedroom always seems welcoming. i believe it is the closest we can come to resurrection.

snowy trail
i see my footprint
in front of me

getting sick of my shadow

there is no enemy you can have that is a greater threat to you than yourself. i know too much about myself to get on the wrong side of me. every other person has to imagine you in their own image of you. but you only have one way to go if you want to live on the sane side of the street. i talk to myself. it isnt madness just getting to know myself better is all.

slipping out of my skin
into
the shadows of pines

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 will 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

channeling basho and the oracle at delphi

i dont want to find the spirit of basho. if i did i would just shake him silly for creating my addiction. what the hell was he thinking. rambling around the backcountry like a lonely bob dylan. inventing a 'stage name' out of a tree. i always laugh when people pretend they know what he was thinking when he wrote that hokku or this other one. right now i cant figure out how the oracle at delphi got into the title of this haibun. for the love of christ dont ask me what a haiku is. ask that pine over there instead.

throwing rocks
into a pond
all the frogs leave

leaving the present behind

when a relationship is over for the love of god dont drag it around like an old doll whose button eyes have fallen off. when you reach that point just let the next moment happen. and a divorce is actually 'final' not when a judge says it but when you say it.

my dogeared trophy
a scratchy stones album
from the sixties

the view from tranquility

from where i sit typing this prose poem i cant see anything right or wrong. so much for yin yang which is really about the changing light of the seasons and the rest of the shit attached to it is just one big hippie joke after another. we did have a crazy way of answering foolish questions with a quadrupling of the foolishness. oh well back to the view from here. looks pretty peaceful to me. done deal.

meditation only taught me one thing. that who i was is not as important as what i experienced. so i went about having experiences. seventy four years in and nothing has changed. not being attached to things i have a lot of them. funny eh. not wanting money i actually did quite well. but to be fair i handle losing everything better than most and always landed with my mind still reasonably intact.

i have never tried to understand myself. i think that is why failure and success both come naturally to me. things just happen and you deal with it and go off along the new road that experience opens up for you.

my reality is less attractive and less real to me than most other people. i am fine with that. dancing over the lines has never scared me. the trees are moving in the breeze and i am shivering with them quite in sync i am with the natural world.

the epic nature
of finding yourself
by not looking

stay close to the womb

when my slithering persona emerged in this world it must have felt weird to hear all the sounds. my entire life since has been a slow quiet journey back down that path to a heartbeat not my own...

reading
the miranda warning
to my psyche

leaving the trenches

wars are won and lost. but after the war that is when the troubles really begin. dividing the spoils. choosing which despot gets what patch of land. and deciding if anyone from the other side lives through the cease fire. winning is the hardest thing to manage. losing is just sucking it up and handing over your freedoms and your weapons and hoping for mercy.

in the fog
no mans land
disappears

preface to poetry

something is hidden in the white spaces of my poems. if i ever figure out what it is i will not let anyone know. and i will do my best to forget it myself.

*it goes so well
with poetry
slipshod prose*

the person you didnt count on

in life there are people who just appear in your day to day seemingly from nowhere. carl jung called it a circle of friends. people who keep appearing on your periphery. pay attention to them. that person who has coffee every morning in the same shop you do. introduce yourself. those people keep appearing for a reason that neither of you may be conscious of. there are no coincidences in the universe. if there were the universe would have blown up a long time ago. large systems live on consistent behavior. we all fit somewhere in the dynamics of creation and destruction we are all a part of...

friends for life
the car crash
in slow motion

the light from a prism goes where it will

sometimes people ask me what my poems mean. often it is just one poem. other times they believe that there must be an overarching theme to my work. there is neither a single meaning to any of my poems or to my work in general. everything i write is for me and for others at the same time. when i look at it the poem contains all the many versions of me and when a reader views it they see themselves or someone they know or someone or thing they wish they knew. one thing is for sure they dont see me. i keep that part of the poem strictly private.

a comforting voice
the flickering candle
in my room

Zen/Shmen

A famous koan in Zen is that: "If you meet the Buddha on the road, kill the Buddha!", and it is obviously not to be taken literally, as taking a life is very much against the teachings. The true meaning of this koan is as varied as the person reading it, but for me it simply means the 'true Buddha' is the one that resides in you, and can't be experienced externally, or through any other person. The spirit of this is encapsulated in another truism: "If you know you're humble, then for sure you're not."

if you meet the Buddha give him a hug and promise a lollipop

It's my meditation time. I place my cushions in the center of the room, face east, as is the mundane custom, and after lighting candles and incense, I cross my legs and allow my hands to assume a comfortable position. Just as I enter a deep state of quiet and all my little muscle aches finally disappear into my practice, I hear a door from another room open and footsteps head toward my quiet meditation area. It's the three year old from down the way, who has invited herself in, and now, while desperately looking for 'company', enters my room. Without stopping for an instant she grabs one of the incense sticks and begins dancing around the room, waving it in the air and softly singing a child's song to herself.

a dancing Buddha splashes candle wax on my toe

Lost Thoughts

Memory is fluid and fickle, but words on paper, a screen, or recorded on a smart phone have a strange 'substance', and we writers know this instinctively. But I am stumbling, it is so hard to explain this moment, and my perception of it, to anyone else, but I keep trying, and in less than seventeen syllables. Am I shooting for a miracle? The longer I try, the more doubt clings to each word. I am so frustrated, and now I just want to put this one behind me. But I just can't stop thinking about it!

warm rain
mosquitoes follow me
into the men's room

humphrey bogart blues

success is internal for me. the maltese falcon exists and world war two never happens in my dreams. but still. there is too much to deal with so i just have one drink after another and wake up in the arms of lauren bacall. i was born with too much irony in my bones. i know that now.

the apocalypse
has come and gone...
i am alone

bags groove

i was blessed to be born in detroit michigan. yeah the murder city. home of corrupt politicians of both parties both genders and all races. hey if you are going to claim 'soul' you spread it around right. one thing we had on other cities including new york chicago and the city of angels was music. it was everywhere i went as a kid. lots of music. but i loved it all. all the greats played detroit because it supported them and taught them. new tricks all the time in detroit and the different genres all hung out together. downtown mostly but on the 'line' at the edge of the city as well. nothing like bakers keyboard lounge the masonic hall and orchestra hall. yeah the 'd' has always had a first class symphony too. motown jazz rock and roll and blues singers came from detroit as well. one was milt jackson the great vibraphonist who played with miles monk and coltrane. they called him 'bags' because he stayed up so late he always had bags under his eyes. one of the reasons was the all night 'blind pigs' that detroit was also famous for. they served regular liquor. not like the prohibition days but they stayed open all day sunday which was prohibited by law due to it being a 'church' day. but then they stayed open until four or five in the morning during the week too. long after the closing time for the legally licensed bars. they needed music and the musicians needed gigs. it was a perfect marriage. yeah they got raided. mostly the cops gave them tickets but stole the booze. somehow just a small sample ever made it into 'evidence'. the system in the 'd' may have been more than just bent but the combination of good music too much booze and the rebelliousness of doing the forbidden became sewn into the fabric of the city. it has not changed to this day.

a trumpet squeals past a piano a race with no winners

so what

i have had the opportunity to meet a lot of 'famous' poets and writers. it just happened sometimes. other times i 'hung out' until they pitied me or something. the great inspiration i received from being around those celebs is that i realized they were just like me. with the one exception that they had put their dreams of a walter mitty life down on paper. so i started doing what they did. ok. not anywhere near as successful. i held the straight jobs all my life to pay the bills. but i wrote every day. every day.

not making it as a poet...
the sweetness of
a fresh peach

yes i been drinkin

exhausted with getting on with life. it has been seventy two years now. i love life. but i have to admit the other side of life is catching up. we measure life in time but what does time measure itself against. is it us. i cant find my way to the exit but i am not worried. i suspect it will find me. sure i will miss this life but what good is it to keep walking when the path ends at an ocean. when i disappear from your view know that i went without struggle. it was my pleasure to end it in a dead run. when the foghorn blows i will be coming home.

black coffee

two scoops per cup...

sleepwalking the blues

an invisible spectator

it is important to observe yourself. but the trick is to watch each present moment from a distance. yes. i did say it was a 'trick'. but it can be done. the largest mansions are not in the hamptons or in heaven. those really beautiful mansions are in your mind. i like living in my mansion and looking out the windows of my eyes on my life. i see it. i record it. but i cant judge it. and that is the 'trick' i refer to. if you spend time in judgment you are not really investing in the present moment. being there is actually the only tactic for the dedicated spectator. dont try to think past it either. you see the future is dependent on the present in order to become.

deserted diner
the sign
flickers all night

the second hand unwinds

i have a lot of clocks. cuckoo clocks. mantel clocks. an old austrian pendulum wall clock that my grandfather rocked me to sleep in front of. none of them have a battery or a plug. they are the eternal reminder of the true nature of time. it moves on even after we are gone. at some moment in the future there will be no time left. no one will wind the clocks. our universe will shrink to the size of an electron and disappear until the next big bang. everything i know will run out of time. everything will become one again. so. if you dont want to go 'cuckoo' just halt the pendulum.

walking meditation
i stop myself
at the first step

NOTE: when i die does time cease or do i?

live under the sky

chickadees are so happy they fill me with unbounded smiles. all over my yard in the heat of summer or the bitterest days of winter they fly. cocking their heads in noisy celebration and observation. they see every movement and react in their perfect chickadee form. each moment is born and births another for them. the certainty of pachelbels canon and i never tire of listening and watching.

the way
branches move...
with no breeze

apotheosis of a free mind

seeing nothing is a greater feat than seeing everything or anything. people often speak about thinking 'out of the box'. in truth the greatest gift is to think 'in the box'. when a painter paints they first choose a canvas or some surface to paint upon. they start inside the box so to speak. they choose a medium or more than one to express themselves with. every step adds further limitations and yet they keep going. science approaches solutions and questions by fixing and limiting the scope of inquiry. where would we be if they did not. of all the laws of physics the shortest solution has provided the greatest strides in thinking. $E=mc^2$ is way 'inside' the box. and yet it starts off from the very beginning and goes to the end of creation. the big bang was not big and made no sound.

careless breeze
my dinner bell
rings at midnight

my muse is betting against me

i dont have anything to say.

wisps of incense
a singing bowl tunes into
silence

giving away all my sins

right and wrong. the diatribes of others. i know enough not to walk into a busy street against the light. that is enough for me. everything else is just there. and then gone.

gifting my solitude...
a box of cheerios
for the homeless man

you got your god and i have mine

i have a spiritual life. but not one attached to any other path. this one is mine but i will happily share it with you. a least until you wander off on your own.

eightfold path
shorebirds scatter
with the waves

invitation to the blues

lauren bacall always fascinated me. a calm sexiness combined with a smile that never seemed to entirely fade. if i was a fifties sugar daddy i would have wasted a fortune on her.

old movies—
but still sidney greenstreet
never gets the girl

i didnt mean to treat you so bad

a long time before indians ran casinos. that long ago. time changed my mind about everything. i want to be hip but still like bow ties so that tells you all you need to know about me. or does it. my confusion predates the indians and the invention of bow ties.

confessions
to all the clouds in all the skies
your selfish suicide

famous too long ago

one day i will get my fifteen minutes. i just hope i am not so high that all i do is babble about how it used to be. you know. back when i walked fifty miles through rain sleet and snow to get to wherever i was going. apples were sixty bucks apiece. and the aliens built temples to me when i was napoleon. pitiful is the base state of poets and i hate being trite (but what the hell).

dust mites in sunlight
living my future
in a flashback

id rather not give you my name i am in politics

leaving both parties was easy. what to do next is the issue. thinking about it the only solution is to 'write in' johnny depp for every office in every election. i believe it is the only way to win in the game of elections. oh and every yard sign should be red white and blue.

prime minister
of another country
nothing but
questions

rubberband man

there is no credit limit on cash. if you have it you have it. and if you dont you dont. a wad of cash on the dresser and a diamond ring on my hand. it says what it says doesnt it.

judgment day
finding out
if it was worth the wait

a hitchhikers guide to haibun

ok. you have been reading haibun. i know because you are reading this one. magic eh. simply put there is a title that adds nothing until you get to the end. some prose that often is disguised as poetry. and then a wonderful haiku or senryu that either ties the whole of it together or just blows your mind. there you know all i know.

imagining
my death
choking on an apple

mysterious fog

fog is often discussed by poets as obscuring the view. but what i enjoy is what it reveals. if you understand fog you realize that what you cant see is still right there in front of you. fog demonstrates the real nature of existence. we see the stars in the sky. but we see almost nothing of them. as the poet archibald macleish penned in his play jb. are those the staring stars i see or only lights not meant for me. indeed it seems to me that what i cant see are the things that make life worth living. what is friendship if not a fog we cast over a relationship. it is the bond that allows us to overlook the 'defects' in the 'others' in our lives. i thank god for fog. all the good things in my life spring from it. join me in it will you...

i find more
and put my hand through it
fog

just my imagination running away with me

i feel like i will live forever. i am not looking for or anticipating the end. i think i will just keep listening to the music of the clouds and pick a few stars from the sky for dinner later on...

at the waterfall
adjusting
the pace of my life

locked tight in the universe

the best experience in the world is when you think yourself right into a tight corner and then blow right through the walls. freedom is after all only an experience and you can have it at will once you learn the trick. it cant be given to others and it cant be stolen from you once you have it. it is your original self.

a day lily
opens
to a bee

non sequitur as art

sometimes you are just sitting there listening to dry conversation. if you want it to change course just do what I do. say something totally and entirely off point. whatever happens next will be better for everyone even if the others just ask you to leave. i have data on this that proves my theory completely.

the still
of lilies
the sound of a frog

when i was young just yesterday

as a kid i valued my bag of cats eye marbles more than anything. when i grew up i valued paper with paintings of queens and kings and revolutionaries on it. today i would give a bag of gold for my cats eye marbles that are long gone. my view of the past is much clearer today than it was when i lived it.

joys of youth
exploding the sun
with my thumb

i defy any cloud to appear in the sky

when i was a little kid my grandfather bought a brand new cadillac every year. he was a boss at general motors so he knew what they would look like. what the colors would be. and he picked it up the morning of the first day they were introduced to the public. he let his young grandchildren pick out the colors. my sister was the youngest and when she was four grandpa said she could pick the color. now my grandpa was a tall handsome german man with grey hair who wore impeccable suits and shoes and looked like a million dollars. so. my sister chose pink. and so it was for a whole year with not a word of complaint. that was the last year the grandchildren picked the color of grandpas cadillac.

nothing on netflix
the complex nature
of butterflies

if my last breath is this one...

it was an epiphany like no other. I was sitting in the sand meditating. no breeze and the water like fresh blown glass. it was so quiet that i suspected i had left the body. i guess that is when i heard that steady sound. i thought to myself. it is so quiet what is that sound. it was the sound of my blood in my ears. not so subtle either. that is when great discoveries can be made. just me alone or the sound of the sixth avenue el. the same thing really. left for everyone to see.

one
with everything
the holy nature
of loss

the sky is crying

there was a blues joint in detroit years ago. might still be there. cant remember the name and the location is lost to me now. i find myself there some days though. memories rain down my street and disappear into a rusty drain.

the old days
were not that good
scratchy vinyl

running from yesterday

i ask myself does the past still exist. in a hazy way i guess it does. but have you ever really thought something happened and then found out or better yet 'realized' that it didnt. yeah that has happened to me too. the brain is a tricky place to navigate sometimes. we imagine or dream something and it jus 'seems' so true we believe it. the great philosopher martin buber said it for me "does anyone still believe in belief". the answer is that we all do but occasionally smarten up enough in the end to stumble toward a more correct version of reality.

sunrise or sunset the debate over the vacation photo

Thank you for reading and I hope these brought you some enjoyment.

Mike