

failed ~~haiku~~

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bryan rickert 'Failed' Editor

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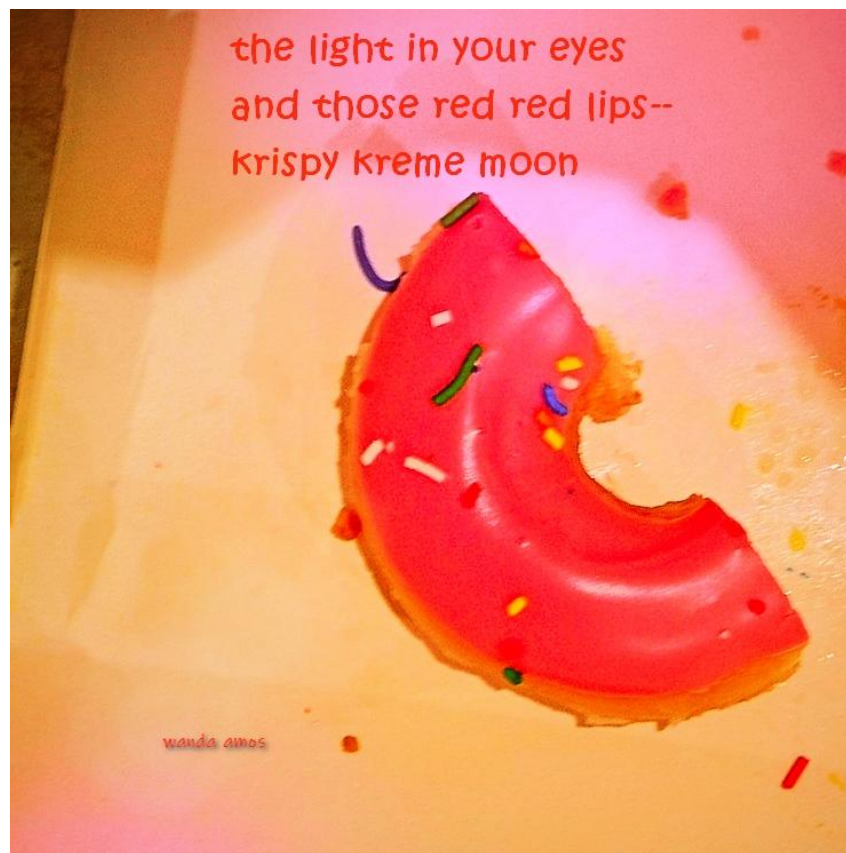


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Cast List

In order of appearance
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JOHN J. DUNPHY

Lev Hart

Michelle V. Alkerton

Jo McInerney

Matal Baker

Pris Campbell

Oscar Luparia

John Hawkhead

Joshua St. Claire

Marilyn Ward

Chen Xiaoou

M. R. Defibaugh

Jennifer Gurney

Debbie Strange

Bonnie J Scherer

Simon Wilson

John Budan

Roberta Beach Jacobson

Susan Yavaniski

Susan Burch

Corine Timmer

Maxianne Berger

John Pappas

Shawn Blair

Chen-ou Liu

Teiichi Suzuki
Christa Pandey
Maeve O'Sullivan
Anthony Lusardi
Birk Andersson
Richard L. Matta
Vandana Parashar
Ivan Gaćina
Pitt Buerken
Srinivasa Rao Sambangi
M. R. Pelletier
Randy Brooks
Joseph P. Wechselberger
Steve Hodge
Tracy Davidson
Kristen Lindquist
Deborah Karl-Brandt
Marsh Muirhead
Edward Dewar
Anna Maria Dombureg-Sancristoforo
Arvinder Kaur
Nick T
Margaret Tau
Ruth Holzer
Robert Witmer
Andrew Riutta
Wanda Amos
Neena Singh
Diana Webb
Lavana Kray

Ravi Kiran
Keith Evetts
Eavonka Ettinger
Gil Jackofsky
Rick Jackofsky
Suzanne Leaf-Brock
Mark Forrester
Cynthia Anderson
Peter Jastermsky
Franjo Ordanić
Charles Harmon
Carol Raisfeld
John C. Waugh
Jenn Ryan-Jauregui
Lynn Edge
Gillena Cox
Susan Farner
Mike Fainzilber
Vijay Prasad
Bob Lucky
Adelaide B. Shaw
Barrie Levine
Ron Scully
Ana Drobot
Alexander Groth
C.X. Turner
Louise Hopewell
Laurie Greer
Erin Castaldi
Mark Gilbert

David He
Chad Lee Robinson
Marianna Monaco
Lakshmi Iyer
Shasta Hatter
Barbara Kaufmann
Ann Sullivan
Mark Teaford
Joanna Ashwell
Tim Cremin
Tony Williams
David Gale
Gayle Worthy
Stephanie Zepherelli
Wilda Morris
Sondra J. Byrnes
Michael Henry Lee
Sébastien Revon
Govind Joshi
John Zheng
Lesley Anne Swanson
Cynthia Rowe
Lisa Sparaco
Surashree Joshi/Shloka Shankar
Erica Ison
Vladislav Hristov
Audrey Quinn
Françoise Maurice
Craig Kittner

Bill Cooper
Faye Boland
Eleonore Nickolay
Ram Chandran
Pat Davis
Robert Erlandson
Stephen A. Allen
Ben Oliver
John S Green
Bryan D. Cook
Deborah Burke Henderson
Mark Meyer
David Kāwika Eyre
Alvin Cruz
Richard Tindall
Curt Pawlisch
Mona Bedi
Valentina Ranaldi-Adams
Jackie Chou
Adrian Bouter
David J. Kelly
Adele Evershed
Jerome Berglund
Mike Gallagher
John J. Han
John Budan
Nitu Yumnam
Roman Lyakhovetsky/*Vandana Parashar*
Jamie Wimberly

Tomislav Sjekloća
Nancy Brady
Mona Jordan
Jay Friedenber
Samo Kreutz
Nina Kovačić
Claire Vogel Camargo
Andrew Terrell
Lori Kiefer
LeRoy Gorman
Priti Khullar
Kathabela Wilson
Mike Freedman
Irina Guliaeva
Sharon Martina
Kevin Valentine
Cristina Povero
Wonja Brucker
Linda Papanicolaou
Christine Wenk-Harrison
Heather Lurie
Bryan Rickert

putting down fresh newspapers --
my spirit animal
still not housebroken

holy smoke --
priest uses a votive candle
to light his joint

JOHN J. DUNPHY

mom shampooing larvae in the rain barrel

Lev Hart

short term memory
briefly forgetting
to be afraid

Michelle V. Alkerton

heart murmur...
deep currents stir
the seagrass

Jo McInerney

happy graduates
the new world order is
here to crush you all

Matal Baker

prom night
my corsage remains
uncrushed

red leaves in my hair
a platonic picnic
was the plan

Pris Campbell

where is the message?
abandoned on the seashore
an empty bottle

Oscar Luparia

who knows
what clouds will do
given free rain

soft spoken words
developing the rhythm
for making a child

John Hawkhead

she doesn't even remember
how much she hurt me
dementia moon

conventional wisdom
an entire football stadium
dancing the Macarena

slums
the crisp clean architecture
of the new pot dispensary

back to school night
a boy in my son's class
has a mustache

Joshua St. Claire

hot coffee
the barista serves
a snide remark

bruised plums
the mammogram turns up
a hard seed

Marilyn Ward

bedtime
doll baby falls asleep
without a story

Chen Xiaou

text messages
it's a shame you can't fold them
into an airplane

first publication
the rippled edges
of a frogpond

I fall in love
every time she sings a little
out of tune

M. R. Defibaugh

teaching
pretty much every day
a bit of chaos

Jennifer Gurney



Debbie Strange

finding likeness
in miscellany —
haiku

dirty dish water –
mom's reflection
looking back at me

Bonnie J Scherer

By the Book

“The Way to a Man’s Heart” is the tagline promised on the cover. The year is 1947.

The Settlement Cook Book is a gift for her wedding shower. There’s household tips and recipes galore.

Tonight she considers honeycomb tripe, fried liver sausage, smoked tongue, goose cracklings, beef balls and more. Settling on sweetbreads, she sets the table with the finest linens and good china.

trussed legs run afoul
of her plan to seduce —
the goose is cooked

Bonnie J Scherer

the broken wind chime
sounds now . . .
. . . and then . . .

a sense of
second best . . .
waiting for his hearse

Simon Wilson

Beginner's Mind

I'm a coffee snob who roasts and grinds my own beans and is familiar with the flavor profile of Black Jaguar Geisha. When I travel, I plan my routes considering the location of coffee shops or favorite baristas. But I am unfamiliar with the endless, unbending roads that stretch across Nebraska. The monotonous driving has a soporific effect which can only be relieved by caffeine. Yet, I can't find a coffee house among the Dairy Queens, pool halls, and grain elevators that occasionally dot the landscape. I feel so hopeless that I will even consider a Starbucks If I find one.

In Desperation I pull into a ramshackle roadside cafe surrounded by cowboy pickup trucks . "Cup of Joe,Sweetheart?" I Take one sip and my zombie eyes pop out of their sockets.The aroma of the simple generic delight and its mixture of tastes is highly acceptable. "Refill Honey?" I nod my head. In my years of searching for the perfect brew, I have forgotten how to appreciate the simplicity of unpretentious (good to the last drop) coffee.

tea ceremony
a zen master
void of manners
passes wind
with a smile

John Budan

adding up
as math professor drones on . . .
student debt

winter morn
my manuscript lands
in a slush pile

annual raise tossing coins into our cubicles

dropping in
uninvited
everybody

Roberta Beach Jacobson

sausage and grits
grandpa's cast iron
stomach

the freeway . . .
Powerball just beyond
Jesus

Susan Yavaniski

quarantined –
my Kohls cash
expires,
but I live to see
another day

Mapquest –
trying to follow
directions
I take a wrong turn
and go bananas

Susan Burch

I had a milkshake last night and no boys came to my yard.

hummingbirds fighting for the feeder

Susan Burch

summer heat
a sudden increase in
church-goers

climate changing old habits

Corine Timmer



Maxianne Berger

her first date
a movie featuring
cartoon turtles

mistaking
the osprey for an eagle
election results

evening echo
asking her dolls
am I made of money?

John Pappas

the roiling sea
a can of coffee
rolls across the aisle

Shawn Blair

singles party
I take a long sip
of moonlight

the gift from my ex
a heart-shaped cherry cake
cut in two:
on one half, *I do, I did*
on the other, *I'm done*

Chen-ou Liu

ethic class
I swat a fly
circling around the room

Teiichi Suzuki

kneeling bench
my knees unfit
to comply

Christa Pandey

chocolate from a student
melting away
blood, sweat & tears

superglue not working working

Maeve O'Sullivan

self-esteem—
ugly weeds
with beautiful flowers

cinco de mayo
the white man in a sombrero
his terrible spanish

how the car swerves
so it doesn't hit
the rabbit

Anthony Lusardi

thanksgiving dinner
we are filling up
the swear jar

photo album
my family appears
closer than we are

bring your kid to work
after an hour
I lost it

party trick
a disappearing
introvert

personal trainer
I´m getting ripped
off

Birk Andersson

Sketchy Memories

It's a twenty year college reunion and I'm at Senior Bar with a few chemical engineering classmates. We didn't party or study together in school (I was usually at the Arts & Lit library), but they're having a great time.

They've made

and spread all over the table stick figures out of straws and rolled up napkins and toothpicks like skinny people contorted every which way. Curious, I ask Joe, the instigator of all this, and he says, "don't you remember sitting in the front row of the classroom on the aisle edge and stretching the last fifteen minutes before you ran off to track practice." It never occurred to me that anybody would notice. So I fashioned a stickman and then put an olive on each end of a toothpick and said, "I see you still work at the 'clean and jerk.'"

mockingbird...

a picture brings back

all the songs

Richard L. Matta

breathless
and slapping myself silly...
mosquitoes

Richard L. Matta

outside her door
smelling his breath against
a cupped hand

long road trip
going as fast as
the smallest bladder

Vandana Parashar

tea cup . . .
the sweetness
of my sins

Ivan Gaćina

Transparency

Grandma is looking for her glasses and scolds her daughter-in-law. "She took them away," she says, - "she was the only one here."

"Why don't you touch your head," I interpose.

"What's that all about," she grumbles indignantly, but does it nonetheless. And already she holds the glasses in her hands.

nothing to lose
the cobra enjoys
its outfit

Pitt Buerken

leaving evidence
of crush on the lips
betel leaf

Srinivasa Rao Sambangi

Monday commute—
feeling the bus driver's attitude
through my seat

M. R. Pelletier

estate sale
letting the ghost out
of his desk drawer

Bob Marley jams
I wanna love you
every day and every night
her elbow
says not now

Randy Brooks

nursing home
photos of her days
as a Playboy bunny

new man in her life ...
she consults a daisy
petal by petal

Joseph P. Wechselberger

EMPTY SATCHELS

All we could afford to put on the wall in our first apartment was a map of the world they were giving away at a local travel agency.

toppled cairn stones . . .
all the places I promised
we'd go

Steve Hodge

another baby shower
I gift
my absence

UFOs...
the long queue
begging to be beamed up

Tracy Davidson

seeing it through to the end fossil fuels

Artifice

At the L.L. Bean flagship store, everything is larger than life: the giant Bean boot outside the front entrance, canoe built for ten hanging from the ceiling, stuffed bull moose posed near men's outerwear, guilt rising like a lump in my throat. A March wind knocks branches against the glass. Safe inside, in the quiet, well-lit fishing section, you ponder flies: Black Deer Hair Ant, Yellow Belly Umpqua, Silver Dahlberg Flying Minnow. And I, wandering past luggage, sleeping bags, am miles away, following the course of a different river through my mind, solo, wood of the paddle smooth against my palms.

store aquarium
the crack in a fake rock
hides a trophy trout

Kristen Lindquist

welcoming her back
grandma pours some water
into the soup

Deborah Karl-Brandt

the school bus
grinds its gears
the bully inside

Marsh Muirhead

another fad diet—
a plump robin
dangling a worm

Edward Dewar

evening walk
I avoid the street
where we were two

Anna Maria Dombureg-Sancristoforo

before life grows difficult the sound of aum

night jasmine
over everything and everyone
her come hither look

Arvinder Kaur

recycling day
my overindulgence
on display

walking meditation I leave my self behind

Nick T



Nick T

self-storage
I decide
to be cremated

Margaret Tau

in today's mail
next year's calendar
as if

Ruth Holzer

paired ducks
floating by
a flip-flop

cold shoulder
turning away
from the empty fridge

Robert Witmer

Gitchee Gumee

To the lords and queens of the sky, I'm sure that Lake Superior is merely one drop of fallen rain not yet evaporated into the cosmic winds. But for this fool it's an impossible matter. It can swallow one-thousand-foot iron ore ships and all the men inside without even having to confess it to God. Each night, it wolfs down our beloved star, which leaves blood everywhere. As far as the eye can see looking west . . .

train tracks—
spent ferns colliding
with the broken bottles

Andrew Riutta

his grave mound
...still pushing up
against the world

solitaire... i lose again

Wanda Amos



Wanda Amos

call to prayer
the sound fades
in blaring horns

long wait...
granny knits booties
pink and blue

Neena Singh

Back to School

" So why haiku ? Why not novels?"

The interviewee takes three considered breaths before he answers.

" Because of my handwriting. I always had trouble forming the letters. Especially when it came to joined-up. Haiku was my only chance to shine "

The man with the microphone raises his eyebrows.

"But wasn't that difficult too as a child ? Getting the hang of the haiku form I mean?"

" You're kidding". The author flashes a glance of contempt "Surely you remember the Bible. Suffer little children'. Not to mention Basho."

" I don't get your drift ?" The man with the questions shuffles his cue cards.

The infamous writer clears his throat while contemplating impostor syndrome.

" Well that's your problem. But please don't worry about me. Eventually I got the hang of doing joined up. I started writing haibun ."

hot air
among balloons a thistle seed
vanishes

Diana Webb



Chopin music sheet -
trembling fingers
by the hearth

Lavana Kray

Lavana Kray

missing the good times while the mistake lasted

kids party

the silence after

pizzas arrive

Ravi Kiran

Hallowe'en
everyone laughs
at my death poem

fireflies
my friends' marriages
on and off

Keith Evetts

karma sutra
one position I never
thought I'd be in

class reunion
I don't even recognize
myself

Eavonka Ettinger

serengeti—
a big crash!
of rhinos

frog and I
bored
with this pond

Gil Jackofsky

last note
of a steel drum
a lingering memory

*the sun sets
in Margaritaville*

Gil Jackofsky
Rick Jackofsky

a blanket
of dandelions
on the pauper's grave

friendly fire—
rising from the ashes
scrub oak and pitch pine

out of bullets
the bad guy throws his gun
faster and faster
the creaking
of my horse's springs

Rick Jackofsky

how young i was
how fun it was
how i choose to remember

Suzanne Leaf-Brock

season's end—
the infinity pool
closing early

still unraveling
my grandfather's lies
autumn wind

Mark Forrester

fast track
disasters not waiting
to happen

new school clothes
mom buys me what
she never had

earthly belongings
the ukulele on top
of his shopping cart

Cynthia Anderson

Finite Possibilities

There he stands, c. 1910--a young, working-class fellow in his one good suit and bowler hat. The farthest from home he'd ever been, or would ever be again, he rode the train from Erie to North Dakota, presumably to see the man and woman beside him in the photo. It looks like a wedding toast, glasses raised against the backdrop of a big sky and a wooden wagon. Whothese friends or relatives are, no one who's still alive can say. Upon his return, Grandpa had at least one serious girlfriend before he married my grandmother, wearing the same black suit. Once, my mother showed me the girlfriend's music books in a box of memorabilia.

heartstrings
the endings
that never end

Cynthia Anderson

knowing one's niche human wedgie

untying the knot lives at loose ends

Peter Jastermsky

full sink-
last night's party
starts to smell

Franjo Ordanić

rubber chicken
but no one dares complain
charity dinner

God would give us wings
if man was meant to fly
Wright?

Charles Harmon

spilled milk
in the dairy aisle
udder chaos

pushy as ever —
at the séance they hear
from Aunt Maggie

in the basement
ladies of the church
have cast off clothing

Carol Raisfeld

Repertoire

She knows the covert knock to a dozen underground establishments on the West side and the West bank. Speaking many languages and driving comfortably on either side of the road, she dances flamenco with a lover on weekends. You may have seen her with an entire set of suits in the boardroom in very few words, then rally their support with a smile.

What was her approach to an exquisite life? "Never take maybe for an answer."

on this journey
are heaven and hell
one breath away?

Carol Raisfeld

Bar door swings
swings
swin

driftwood knots
stare back

John C. Waugh

commuter train
I write each passenger's
backstory

tennis court
lobbing back and forth
grunts and swear words

Jenn Ryan-Jauregui

Misfit

One of my old horse friends lives in an assisted living and confides she is lonely because she doesn't play cards.

barbed wire
we look back on
open spaces

Lynn Edge

backyard chairs
the wind arranges them
and takes a seat

Gillena Cox

gender reveal
fruit
on the gingko

new brain
puzzles
my brain

noise pollution
in the playground
pickle ball

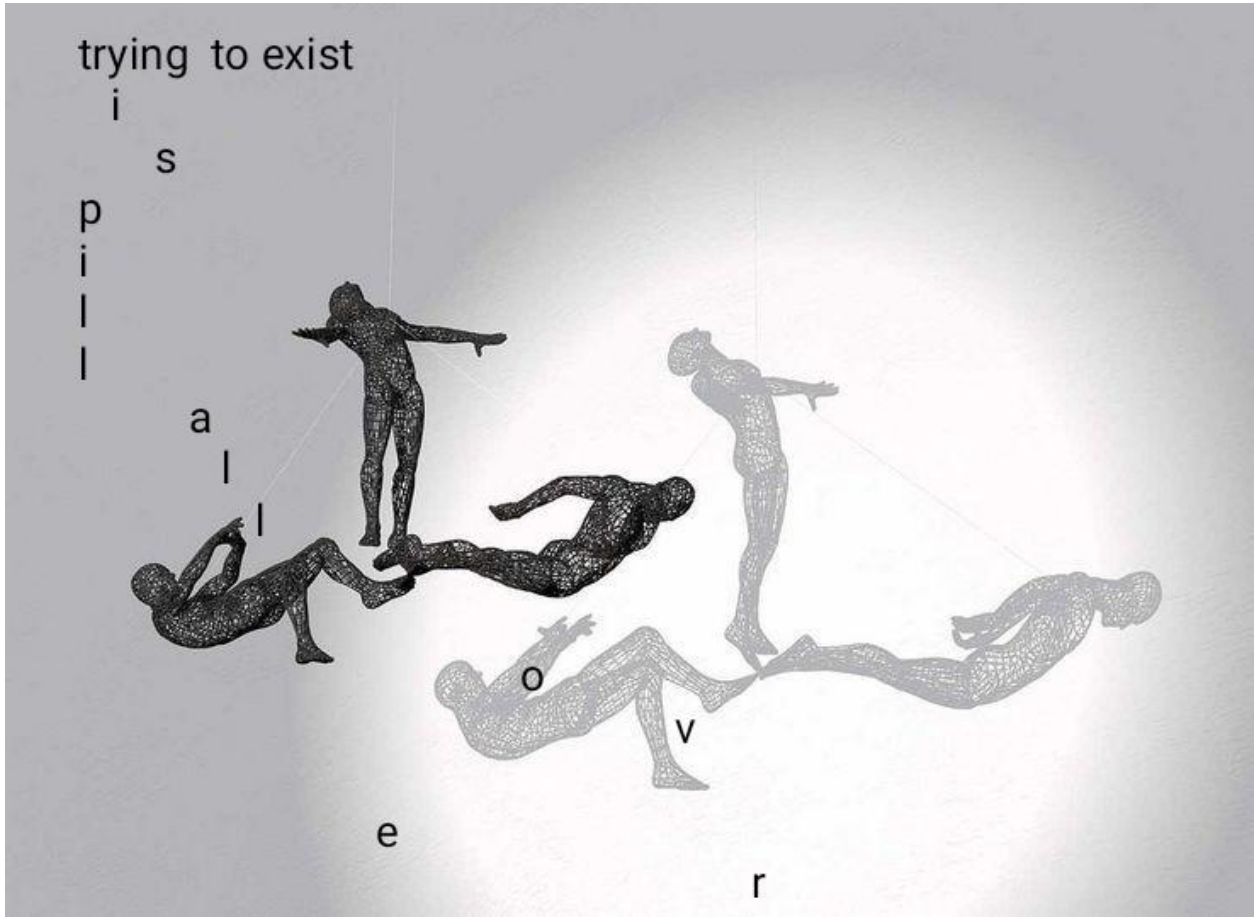
Susan Farner

collecting rejections
finally
a connoisseur

Mike Fainzilber

a perhaps all she leaves behind

Vijay Prasad



Vijay Prasad

police siren
a squirrel freezes
halfway up a pole

after the burial an exhumation of the past

Bob Lucky

CHRISTMAS EVE

The Feast of the Seven Fishes. My mother serves baccala (salt cod with tomatoes), lemon sole. and fried smelts. These are in the open. I recognize them and eat willingly. The other four are hidden in the pasta. They could be anything found in the ocean. I've seen what's at the fish market spread out on beds of ice. Creatures with claws or tentacles. Creatures hidden in little shell houses. Creatures slithering in a tank. I poke through the strands of spaghetti, looking for suspects, My mother tells me to stop playing with my food and eat.

unsolved mystery
the last page of the book
is missing

Adelaide B. Shaw

wind gusts
my neighbor tells me
some gossip

garage sale
the same items as last week,
only older

Adelaide B. Shaw

Plant ID
my walk in the meadow
downloading

poetry circle
they let me read one haiku,
once

Barrie Levine

a hole
in the bay window
softball moon

Ron Scully

end of day -
sitting on our bench
two shadows

Ana Drobot

flood disaster –
a sailing ship falls from the rim
of the bathtub

Alexander Groth

moving up the line

s w a l l o w s

just friends...

the way he watches

my mouth move

C.X. Turner

kids' magic class
mums and dads vanish
into their phones

beach road
a dense flock
of men in lycra

Louise Hopewell

relearning how to walk...

I study the park's

other toddlers

golden retriever...

bringing back the memories

I'd tossed

Laurie Greer

pushes the limits
of expectation
jackfruit chilly

current state
of politics in America
I identify as exhausted

missing dad
the loneliness
of unforgiveness

Erin Castaldi

another hurricane
named after someone
I once knew

Mark Gilbert

I pray
a temple bell
begins to strike

David He

a lucky penny
glued to the ground--
clown motel

mostly
unpaid bills--
poet's table

Chad Lee Robinson

visiting grandma
what big teeth
in the jar by her bed

Marianna Monaco

bathroom singing
the *Sound of Music*
drown the drain

Lakshmi Iyer

Cookies to Share

My older brother is a poet, too. He is very prolific. He has had over a hundred and fifty poems published, largely in biker magazines. He writes long, rhyming poems, and senryu that he insists are haiku because they are 5-7-5. He tells me most of his poems are finished in one draft. I am not prolific and I can't rhyme. I don't even own a Harley. It takes me six drafts to write a haiku. Maybe one in fifteen is suitable for publication, maybe. My brother is often wowed by the poems I do publish. He tells our younger sister that I would probably publish more if I revised less.

brother's flashlight
protects me
from monsters

Shasta Hatter

downtown train
the sound of everyone
texting at once

autumn walk
I race my heart
up the hill

Barbara Kaufmann

the sweet smell
of his sweat
stacked winter wood

Ann Sullivan

on the clothesline
his favorite blanket
still

Mark Teaford

the futility
of scattering nuts
another forgotten burial

Joanna Ashwell

on my own happy hour

spooky moon pumpkins fired up

Tim Cremin

nibbling my toes...
the ocean that swallowed
the Titanic

surprisingly deep
the throaty replies
of sheep

Tony Williams

morning dog walk
resisting my urge
to stray

David Gale

Carry Me Home

We cross the screened porch that wraps around our grandparents' house and go inside to give Maw Maw and Paw Paw hugs. Back out on the porch, I settle on one end of the glider with my library book. Paw Paw sits on the other end with a paper sack of unshucked corn at his feet. As he takes out one ear and gently peels back a layer of husk, I leaf through the pages of my book.

vigil

When I look up, he has shucked that ear and is coaxing fine strands of silk from between the kernels with his pocket knife. Toy cars race down the length of the front porch, and little brothers run on bare feet to collect them. Glass jars tinkle faintly as Maw Maw goes about her kitchen tasks. When the heat of the afternoon collects inside, she joins us outside and sits on the porch swing, saying "You children come up here with me." And we do.

remembering before

She's brought the damp of her apron and the scent of cooked figs with her from the kitchen. As she pushes the swing to and fro with her feet and sings *Swing Low Sweet Chariot*, we listen, eyelids drooping. At the gateway of sleep, I rise up and up toward billows of clouds. When Maw Maw finishes her song, I open my eyes and snuggle closer to her cushiony bulk, happy to be on her porch with corn silk like angel hair scattered on the floor.

she slips away

Gayle Worthy

shattered mirror
my young and old self
touch lightly

Stephanie Zepherelli

increasing
my vocabulary
a new diagnosis

Wilda Morris

turning the prayer wheel
my first pottery
class

demockracy

morning moon
another ball
in the air

Sondra J. Byrnes

prolonged power outage
the allure of the *Hobbit*
by candlelight

Michael Henry Lee

moon gazing
a snail ends its days
under my boot

Sébastien Revon

railway platform
solitude
in the evening rush

Govind Joshi

jail fence voices slide out and in freely

John Zheng

word warrior
sharpening my pencil
to make a point

my very own
merry-go-round
vertigo

Lesley Anne Swanson

beach reunion
a low tide leads us
to the rocks
a place where
we have been before

doctor's surgery
the same music
as last time

Cynthia Rowe

Hard-Left Swipe

less accurate
than tea leaves
dating profiles

no red hearts
roses or chocolates
I'm mine

in the tub
spooning Ben and Jerry—
my perfect ménage

Lisa Sparaco



Haiku: Surashree Joshi
Art: Shloka Shankar

cardinal sins the wreaths on your headstone

Haiku: Surashree Joshi
Art: Shloka Shankar

tattoo parlour
the piercings modelled
by teddy-bears

Erica Ison

even more alone...
turtles
in mating season

Vladislav Hristov

children run and fall
a megaphoned voice
entertains the crowd

Audrey Quinn

jet lag
in the sleepless night
I have lost sheep

Françoise Maurice

morning sun across the yard —
the length of grass
I can get away with

filterless cigarette —
the homeless vet
shares a memory

Craig Kittner

gone missing the classmate most likely

frog pajamas

the child jumps

pillow to pillow

Bill Cooper

back from holiday -
a stranger's boots
in the bedroom

embers glow -
waiting for you
to walk in the door

Faye Boland

video-conference
my vague memory
of his after-shave

meal on the terrace
my husband shares his beer
with our slugs

Eleonore Nickolay

no one in the highway
just for fun-
a loud horn

Ram Chandran

angels bowling
mama sings
the night away

Pat Davis

change
a team effort
me, myself and I

Robert Erlandson

KIROV BALLET

College semester abroad studying the Eastern Bloc. No sleep on the train ride from Leningrad to Moscow. Classmates partying with a pair of Russian girls, both in tears in the morning trying to figure how to get back home. We are whisked off to the ballet, a great cultural treat. Classic performance of Swan Lake. I have one of the best seats in the house, on a riser to the side, close to the stage. Elevated enough that everyone in my program sees me start to nod off during the overture. Afterwards, still half-asleep, I leave my jacket behind at the coat check, necessitating a trip back the following day. Not the most popular person in the program after that.

frozen morning
UCLA student's
first snowball fight

Stephen A. Allen

forget-me-nots
she texts from downstairs
to say she loves me

tiptoes . . .
a few inches short
of *the* blackberry

first birdsong
resolving to have
no resolutions this year

Ben Oliver

Church of the Nativity
taxi drivers praying
for tourists

John S Green

Headlines

Having had a hand in the discovery and first exploration of the Titanic, I'm fascinated by the drama unfolding on the TV. A lost submersible carrying tourists to view the rusting tomb of so many souls, four miles deep in the Atlantic. Captivated by sensational headlines of frantic knocking, the deadline of oxygen depletion, an international search and rescue, and the reluctant son who joined his billionaire Dad as a Father's Day gift.

Why were we not told about the thud heard on sonar two hours after she dove? An imploding Titan showering Titanic with shards and shreds. Would that have lessened the newsworthiness of the "rescue" saga and the forensic analysis and blame game?

Meanwhile, another human drama unfolds in the Mediterranean. The capsizing of a trawler overloaded with humanity, escaping from oppression. A botched rescue operation too late for many. But it's just one of many drownings of boat-people and soon leaves the headlines.

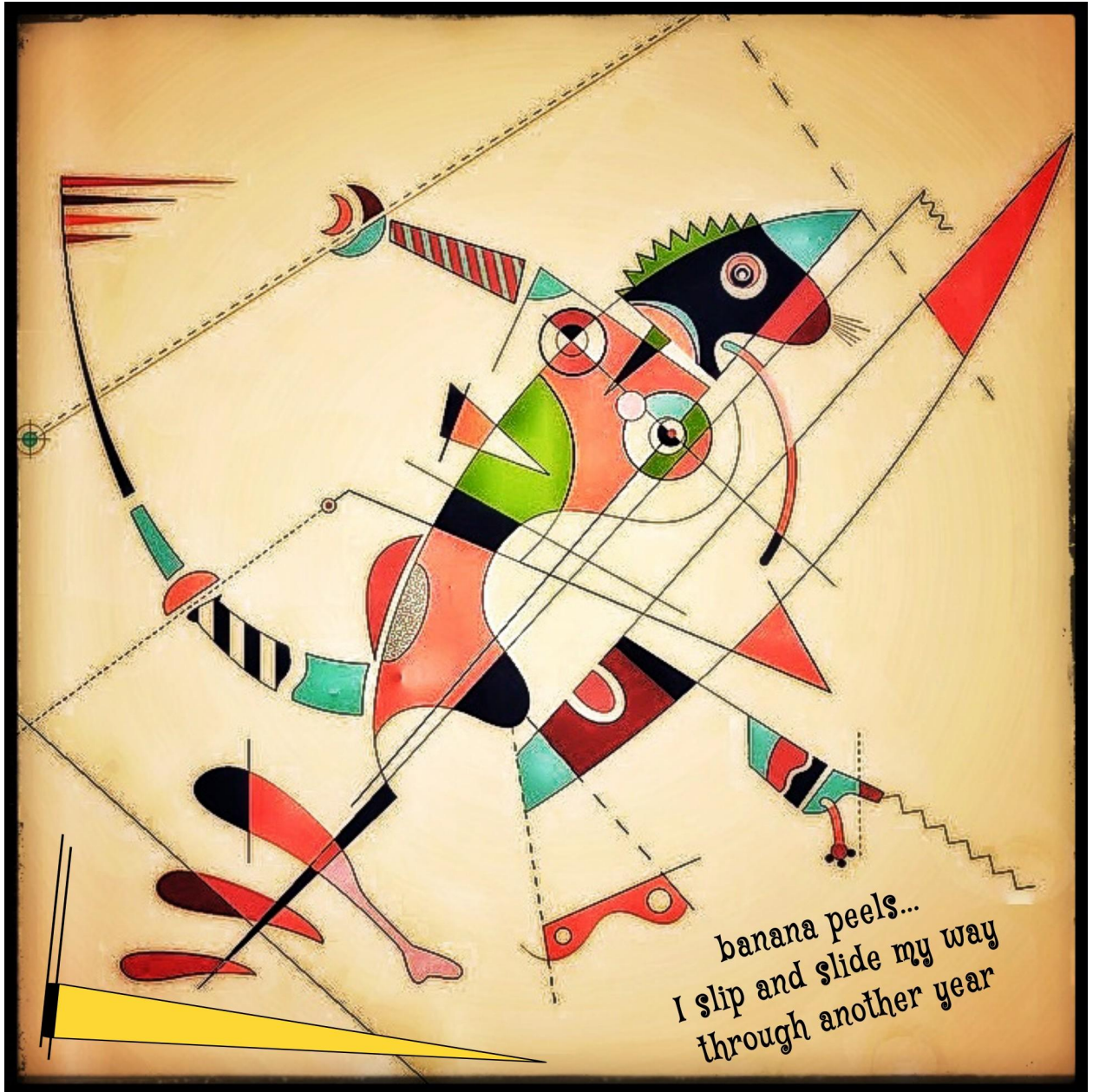
Upon reflection, I'm feeling guilty for enjoying the sensational, for being numbed by the continuing plight of refugees.

*headlines
selling tragedies
for profit*

Bryan D. Cook

counting cards
birthday greetings diminish
as years flourish

Deborah Burke Henderson



Mark Meyer

drifting through
hospice...
dead reckoning

David Kāwika Eyre

flower moon
you and I in love
with her

love triangle
the happy ever after
after you're gone

Alvin Cruz

waiting room . . .
an old couple suffering
from each other

Richard Tindall

in the wind
the willow waves
with a green smile
as its roots
destroy my septic system

American gigolo—
just another
working stiff

orthodontia—
the cost of having a kid
on retainer

Curt Pawlisch

the change in my perspective distant rain

deep winter

a missing button

on the janitor's coat

Mona Bedi

FIVE YEAR PLAN

write haiku

TEN YEAR PLAN

write haiku

bedroom skylight

the heavens reduced

to a rectangle

Valentina Ranaldi-Adams

watching
its final wiggles
my first
and last time
stepping on a worm

at age six
playing with Barbie
but not Ken
my discomfort about
changing his clothes

Jackie Chou

d
deep
e
pened

Adrian Bouter

crumple zone —
a small child collapses
into their mother's breast

filled with tears
by their presence, their absence
fireflies

idle hands
how they find
whatnot to do

David J. Kelly

monsoon rain...
the surprise of a heavy flow
in my knickers

early morning—
the trudge of a crow
around my eyes

Adele Evershed

a few seconds
of flashlight
navigating the rave

capacity
of a sponge
overclocking

Jerome Berglund

tomcats
with arched backs
high noon

Mike Gallagher

he says, *no offense, but...*
everyone is
offended

overnight flight
the different ways
we sleep

a frequent flyer
mastering the art
of snoring

John J. Han

feeling a presence
through worn fabric
I wear her apron
while baking scones
for her memorial

after her death
hidden photographs
of an unnamed man
whose mirror image
haunts me

John Budan

rubble heaps
donkeys trudge
with heavy remains
the weight of sorrow
tread on their backs

Nitu Yumnam

Seashore Gambit

chess on the porch -

*no free will
the tree's shadow moves
with the breeze*

Ursa Major pondering

lighthouse beam
cuts through the night -
humpback song

on the next move

*forcing everyone
out of their houses
winter sun*

Roman Lyakhovetsky

Vandana Parashar

scent of magnolias
crossing over
the double line

inchworm...
still trying
to measure up

Jamie Wimberly

barcode scanner beep
the cashier's
scarred wrists

sake hangover
last night's haiku
surprisingly good

Tomislav Sjekloća

night cafe...
the deep shadows
in her eyes

Nancy Brady

divorce
she weeds out
the wedding album

Mona Jordan

quiet car
the constant crinkle
of her pretzel bag

manual gearbox
the feel of bone
grinding on bone

Jay Friedenber

ripe peaches ...
in our garden the smell
of neighbour's vows

Samo Kreutz

reunion party
she's the only one chewing
with her own teeth

Nina Kovačić

crying for Sophie
the vet clinic calls
with a final bill

we turn on
matching CPAP machines
sync our dreams

Claire Vogel Camargo

unboxing
new air purifier
packing fumes

Andrew Terrell

evening prayer
a mosquito in one ear
and out the other

Lori Kiefer

Christmas shopping
if only I could buy
more time

LeRoy Gorman

9876543 trees
train journey
to parent's home

therapy sessions
a lone sapling grows
from the wall crack

Priti Khullar

slide whistle It's just the way I walk

Kathabela Wilson

Unchained

Now everyone is watching us. They form a widening circle as we rock and roll to a local band belting out Beatles, Stones, and Hippy, Hippy Shake on repeat. Nadia, hair flowing, whirls around, laughing and free. Hitching from Vienna to Split was a breeze. Tomorrow, we take a boat to Dubrovnik. Tonight, in a hall built for rallies, parties and wakes, we are missionaries converting our audience to love with a strong backbeat.

no matter what
never hang up
your dancing shoes

Mike Freedman

new hiking route
another place
mother-in-law
wants her ashes
to be spread

halfmoon
space where his legs
used to be

unequal marriage
new bra and old panties
from the same set

coffin shop
by the door
immortal weeds

Irina Guliaeva

overthinking
my next move
four-way stop

fallen leaves confessing my sins

Sharon Martina

parade music
the jaunty bounce
of a toddler

person of interest--
my daughter describes
the new boy at school

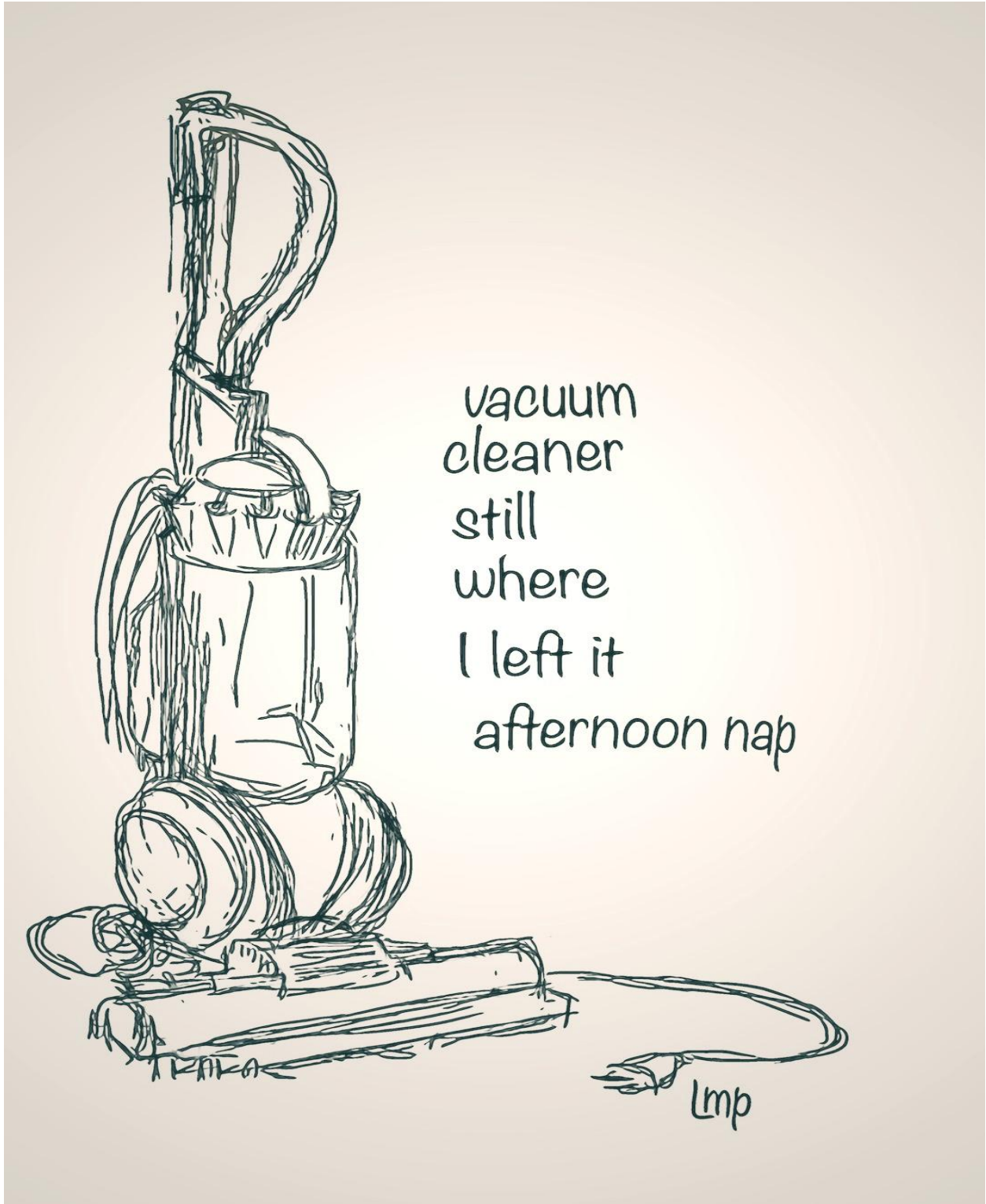
Kevin Valentine

butterflies still in my stomach –
his first look
over the Latin book

Cristina Povero

feasting day
altar flies sampling
for Buddhas

Wonja Brucker



vacuum
cleaner
still
where
I left it
afternoon nap

Lmp

Linda Papanicolaou

numbers release
the lottery ticket
now a bookmark

Christine Wenk-Harrison

still trying
for that first fish
twilight

Heather Lurie

one drink at a time this suicide

nothing worth
arguing about
we do it anyway

midnight gas station
refueling
with coffee

Bryan Rickert

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