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Issue 1.4
April 2019

HUMAN/KIND

Journal of Topical & Contemporary
Japanese Short-forms & Art

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Journal of Topical and Contemporary
Japanese Short-forms and Art

Issue 1.4
April 2019

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Special thanks to Mark Gilbert for his assistance with proofreading.

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Mirrors of Loss

I can talk about how my mother surrendered me. Although a newborn, I knew. It mattered. That she held me for nine months, and might not have remembered, in her arms for a brief hello, I know. I remember.

At six, I learned my parents were not the ones. A deep flood of fear and questions arose. Would there, *could* there be another separation, any other separation? I feared what new separation could—no—*would* bring.

Worry haunted me into my 20s and 30s. Inevitable, cruel separation, fear of final separation. There would be, and it would be my doing, my fault. The panic of ultimate loss—loss of self.

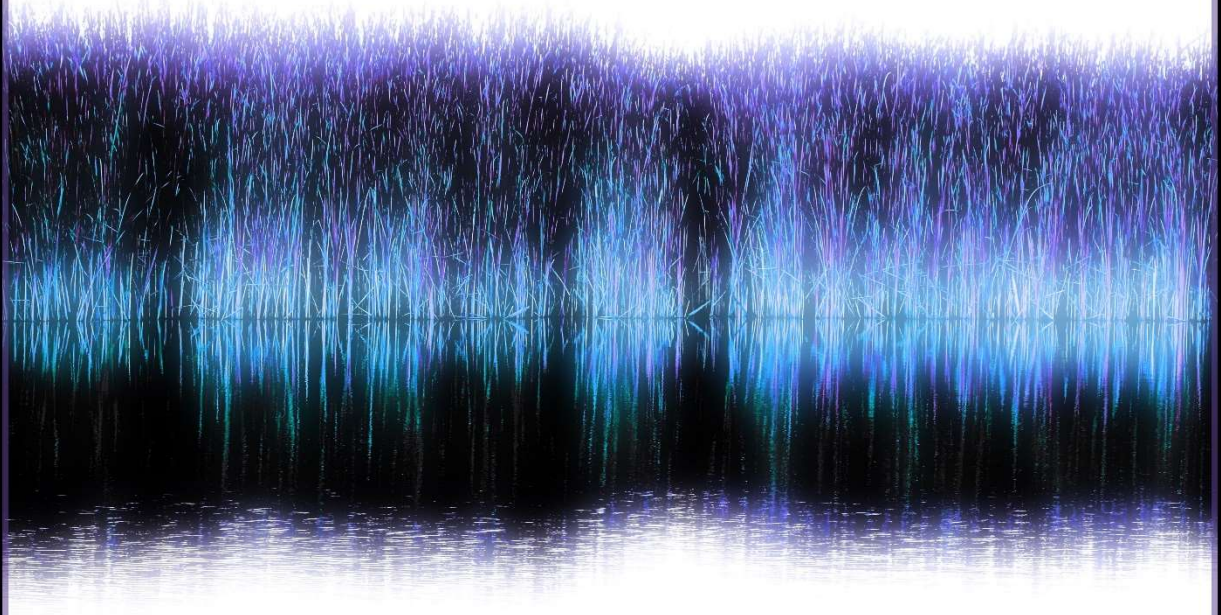
Wasn't the mother cruel? Did her cruel destiny destine me to repeat her cruelty? Like my genetic father, whom I never knew, my Dad was a military man, and was away from me and Mom for a week, two weeks, months. More than once away for a year, so much time in awayness, in separation. I formed identity through loss without a living person to look in the eye or in the mirror to recognize, until this daughter bore a daughter. Until long search found my elderly birth-mother and birth-right of living kin.

Kin. The wow of reunite, recovery, realization. My fear abated in the knowing, maybe her own fears did, too. Lessened, never lost.

a sheer scrim ripples
over a girl's image
waking to now

-Mary Ellen Gambutti

shifting narrative the people we might have been



words/image(C)DStrange

shifting narrative

Debbie Strange

Wild

Left to its own devices, almost any patch of ground will not remain bare for long, before being colonised by some kind of plant. Even rocky shorelines are home to thrift and sea kale, and retreating glaciers are swiftly replaced by alpine grasses and willowherbs.

This planet may be small and blue by virtue of being seventy percent ocean, but the land is most definitely green.

Wild flowers are one thing, happy to be left to their own devices to grow, fruit and senesce. Gardening is quite another. Growing flowers and vegetables from seed is an art and domesticated plants are like pets—they need far more care and protection than their feral counterparts.

No one would call me green-fingered and plants in my care are rather taking their chances. Best intentions are soon forgotten and, before too long, a once well-tended patch is abandoned to the wild, as much as I am myself.

daisy print dress
she loves me
 loves me not

-Andy McLellan

venus & moon
we enter the new year
almost touching

-Brent Goodman

matrimonial
can a Libran balance
my shopping bags

-Vandana Parashar

retail therapy leaving the mountain one rock smaller

-Elizabeth Alford

Tabula rasa

some who are near my heart

the song
in turn
is born

with one purpose alone

a stone
changes
within

minute by minute they live

a heart murmur
run
wild

-Samar Ghose

Source: "Easter 1916" by W B Yeats (pg. 203) from *Seven Centuries of Poetry in English* edited by John Leonard, Oxford University Press.



Happiness

Fabio Sassi

Emma and Ursa

I'm a big girl, ungainly, loud, and simple.
The constellation "Ursa Major" should prove my alignment.

Last August I got married to a local Rom.
A festive day, full of joy; smiles all around.
Dad walked me down the aisle, and I even danced a jig with Mum at the reception. There is video!

My eyes are a bit wide apart; not wall-eyed, just spaced widely.
In grade four, a school psychologist documented me on the "Fetal Alcohol Spectrum" for learning dysfunctions.
Mum always said I'm beautiful. So, yes, I'm a bit slow, but always full of good self-esteem.

On Christmas Eve, I was asked to pose for a photo with the gift Mum got me. It seems my new husband has complained I'm not well focused on household duties, and Mum bought me a kitchen mop.

The photo shows my sheepish grin, narrowed shoulders and embarrassment. A shadow of a shadow of a shell.

gentle palm-press
numbing the harshness
on a tone drum

-Jan Benson

he tweets her his
“power lunch with parrots
on the veranda”
back home in the barn
a nest is screeching

-Helen Buckingham



Passersby #1

Earl's Court, London UK

Olivier Schopfer

Foreign Affairs

hotel lobby

smoothing a collar
the energy
of a rendezvous

a paper cup stained

dry season
the danger
of our spark

with coffee and lips

kiss and tell
a new scent
to confess

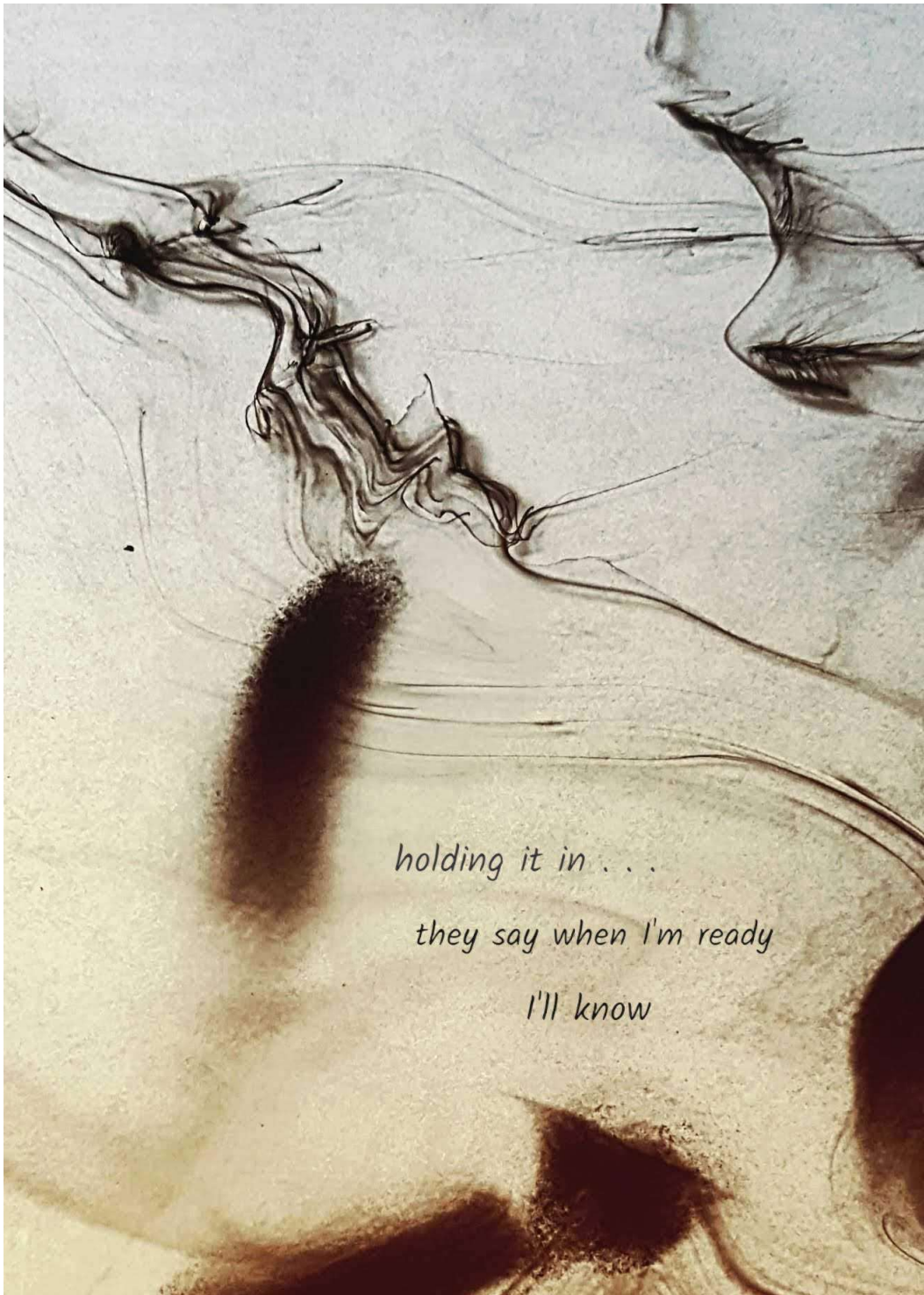
-Bryan Rickert & Peter Jastermsky

the
redacting
of
truth
(a
previous
version)

-Mark Gilbert

Facebook debate
a great blue heron
ponders its reflection

-Amy Losak



holding it in . . .

they say when I'm ready

I'll know

holding it in . . .

Julie Warther

fiddleheads
no longer holding back
my words

-Martha Magenta

Auto-Tuned.®
Unable to trust
my own voice.

-Mark Gilbert

reminded
how words are spelled . . .
my mother's voice

-Eric A. Lohman

tuning by ear
the old acoustic . . .
october snow

-Brent Goodman



Blooming to You

Natalia L Rudychev

plastic milk jug
filled with spent batteries
the new mom nods off

-Barbara Sabol

wheels within wheels refining the diagnosis

-Eric A. Lohman

spring sickbed
my profile picture becomes
a butterfly

-Lucy Whitehead

Call out fee

It was always Dad that we called out for in the night when we were sick. In the darkness (we didn't have night-lights) hanging over the side of the bed wanting to vomit. Or sitting on the toilet in pain, tears streaming down cheeks and hitting bare thighs. "Dad! DAAAD!" I don't know how it came about. I don't know who was first. Maybe it began with me. I've always been the sick sibling.

breaking of dawn
the first-born calf
s e p a r a t e d

- Kirsten Cliff Elliot



searching for distraction

Marianne Paul

Unfettered

*barbed wires
this oneness
of the morning mist*

There was this tree near my house in an empty plot. A eucalyptus tree.

I could go on and on describing its ethereal beauty but that was not the case here.
It was simply a eucalyptus tree.

I could see it from the windows of my kitchen, the little classroom where I teach my students and the room of my kids. Pretty much from everywhere that I spent my waking hours.

Every winter when it shed a multitude of its leaves, scores of migratory starlings perched atop its branches. Perhaps they tried to cover its baldness.

Mornings and evenings these birds would be chattering-chirping-trilling just like the exuberant children who come to learn at my place.

Yesterday the chainsaw whirred deafeningly.

*blossoms again
the pain
of a phantom limb*

-Yesha Shah



Passersby #2

Exeter, UK

Olivier Schopfer

city tram
a hundred and forty
characters

-Mark Gilbert

passport checks
on the night train
a tunnel with no lights

-Lucy Whitehead

in baggage claim
an older woman
reaches for my case

-Barbara Sabol

vacation brochures
a chill wind
finds its way inside

-Gary Hittmeyer

Fingers Crossed

I see this meme over and over: Someone is behind the wheel (cue steely gaze of determination), and the text reads something to the extent of “deciding if I should go home or leave town.” Leave town? Really? That’s your big getaway plan?

If I’m gonna blow this popsicle stand, I’m not just gonna leave this town, state or country. I’m gonna truck it out of this planet, this solar system, this galaxy, this universe, and hitch a ride on a parallel dimension’s Big Bang and start from absolute square zero within absolute square zero.

rewrite
the sky finally
rains glitter

-Tiffany Shaw-Diaz



Crash

Fabio Sassi

Theory Weary

Dear Uncle Albert,

Your Theory of Relativity has really created waves and you are to be congratulated on that score. However, I have to indicate a few things that appear to have escaped your attention.

Mom is always finding fault with my lifestyle. She says I sleep all the time. When I pointed out to her what you have brilliantly derived that time is relative, she pooh-poohed the idea. She refuses to accept the fact that for a certain inertial system my nap of three hours could shrink to a mere three minutes and actually dismissed it as balderdash.

She also complains that I eat far too much—as if such a thing is possible!—and have become fat and lazy. Once again, I showed her your clever equation that establishes mass-energy equivalence to point out to her that my extra bodyweight translates into lots and lots of energy. But all she could say was, I should have my head examined.

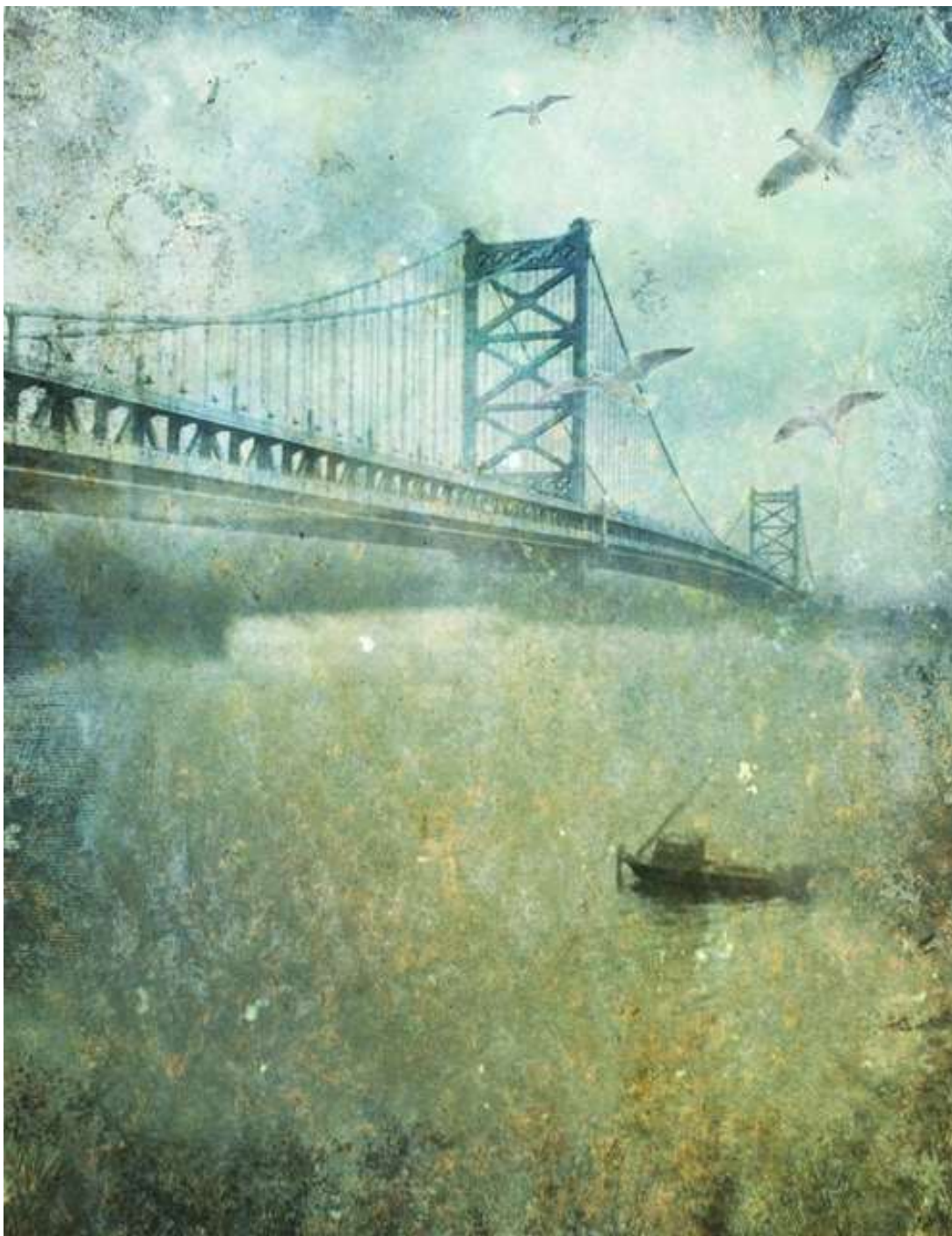
Uncle Al, you may have convinced the world of physicists that you are onto something hot, but unfortunately you draw no dice whatsoever with your sister.

Your despairing nephew,

Otto

delusions—
the psychiatrist much concerned
with my bank balance

-Gautam Nadkarni



*Ben Franklin Bridge,
Philadelphia*

Alexis Rotella

out of line sea mist & stars in vacuum

-Chris Dominiczak

future d(us)t

-Rich Schilling

backpacking trip
a little closer
to home

-Maria Concetta Conti

my days ahead a trail of breadcrumbs

-Julie Warther

the raven arrived to make a long allegory short

-Nicholas Mathisen

suicide
forest
my
poetry
journal

-Barun Saha

too-bright flowers
the urge to sweep dirt
off the coffin

-Agnes Eva Savich



*Mennonite,
Philadelphia Flower Show*

Alexis Rotella

If I could say it in words

Magical things happen to me—meeting the same wild owl twice in the middle of Manhattan (what are the chances?) is just an example. My wise roommate Stan usually remarks, "Oh, here is Natalia with another miracle." He also once said, "Either everything is a miracle or nothing is." I believe I never really understood his words. Everything is a miracle if you can see. Magical events are kind of beacons that give you a glimpse of what can be seen in full light.

The only time I give my camera to somebody else is when I want an image of me in a particular setting. The resulting pictures are truly thought provoking: "am I really that ugly," "I wish I could look like that," and "it is me." Sure, there is a whole separate issue of personal body image. I am not gonna explore this topic. "It is me" almost never happens. The other two are quite common. There is something in the eye that pulls the trigger of the moment: the kind eye, the irritated eye, the loving eye, the angry eye, the happy eye, the "blind" eye . . . Even if physical setting of the picture is the same the results achieved by two people randomly picked from the surrounding crowd can be strikingly different. My picture-taking journey is a gradual discovery of how little do I see.

Once, I was taking a picture of a pencil in a puddle and a couple approached me to photograph them. The guy said, "I hope you would take a good picture of us since you are that immersed in capturing a found object in the street." I still wonder what they think of that picture.

the owl
things
I do not see

- Natalia L Rudychhev



Passersby #3

Paris, France

Olivier Schopfer

Fraught

missing

a dog
strips the air
of fright

there is no breeze

trapped
the bruise
of a sky

she knows, she knows

no sound
is silent now

-Samar Ghose

Source: "Rhubarb" by Craig Silvey (pg. 41) publisher Fremantle Arts Centre Press.

Bi-P TSD

depressive dip
subsistence fished
from the kaleidoscope

a revolving door
both ends of a tempest
round and round

mania spike—
sheep count
spirals of the moon

a crevice of truth
the belly of a garden
pulls my eyes . . .

in the woods again;
a bracelet of elms
lumbering
at the live edge of
insanity and light

-Lisa T.W. Jones and TAK Erzinger



night to day

Marianne Paul

reading
an anthology
of death poems
for hours they exhume
my thirty-three years

-Barun Saha

Passed On

In the American South a death in the family means food begins to arrive almost immediately in an unending outpouring of support. Soon there is no more room in the kitchen. The refrigerator and freezer are full; and friends stay from early morning until after dinner for days to answer the phone, greet visitors at the door, list who brought which dish, and make sure the crowds of mourners are fed.

“funeral food”
favorites bury
the dining room table

The pound cakes, pecan pies, peach cobblers, pimiento cheese, sweet potato casseroles, and tomato pies accompany platters of deviled eggs, country ham biscuits, brownies, and fried chicken. All are cherished, not only for the kindness, but because they are home-made from recipes handed down through generations; and though the rare “new dish” is introduced we all have our favorites.

yellowed papers
a celebration
of former lives

Each giver of lovingly-made food must receive a hand-written “thank you” note extolling the virtues of their special dish.

extra credit . . .
naming the original
recipe writer

The note-writing can take weeks to accomplish, but in the task of thanking others there is solace—thus the food feeds both body and soul.

old spirits rise
to console
the living

-Margaret Walker



Passersby #4

Lillie Road, London UK

Olivier Schopfer

Living in a second

My father dealt in explosives. We've all had a job at some time that's a bit precarious. For five years I had that kind of job.

I'd check around a dozen suspicious (explosive) devices a day over the Christmas holidays, back in the last century. We just called them suspect devices, not I.E.D.s. I covered two British cities. Oxford Street (London) was more Christmassy, and we would see millions of shoppers each day.

I remember John Lennon's *Happy Xmas (War Is Over)* being played when a particularly high bomb alert was put out, I loved that song. I'm in my early twenties thinking I'm James Bond. But I'm not. Don't get me wrong, it's just that every day I thought I was saving hundreds of lives, and one day I did, but that's another story, another haibun.

one hanging
by sparkling threads
Christmas baubles

We have to have a sense of humour to survive, don't we? So two funny incidents in particular stayed with me. Okay, first one. I was partnered with a hot-headed guy, all tough macho stances. He'd leave his thinking head somewhere, but unfortunately not at work or at home. So we get the alert call to check out a suspect bomb, and we always have to move fast, very fast, not much time for thinking, or contemplating. We're told "it" was moved by shop staff so time isn't on our side if it's for real, with its timer counting down.

whiteout
how each snowflake
carries its light

I was excited a few weeks earlier as I met an officer with the Special Air Service (SAS) elite unit of the British Army. He told us explosive devices aren't bombs, as they aren't dropped from planes. "Devices" are placed, they are planted explosives small enough to pass as a box of matches, and blow off your hands, or face, if you tripped the mercury switches (not to be confused with the planet, or the late singer of Queen, by the way).

Christmas
the world of glass
and yet and yet

after Issa

So my hot headed partner races ahead, and I'm trying to close the gap. We thundered down blocks of stairs, jumping ten feet at a time. We'd storm across busy streets without looking too, and well, you get the idea. It was all fast. We arrive at the store called Selfridges—which has suffered terrorist attacks before. We execute a really nifty gravity-defying sharp turn into the place where the suspect device is waiting. Too fast, and we are skidding.

"It" was neatly propped up on a chair. Everyone waiting and watching. My colleague can't stop. Time slows down. He's going right into that chair, full force, and set it off. We are now living in a big fat second. It's all bonkers. It's as if he's become some kind of soccer star. The "thing" gets kicked up into the air, and I crane my neck to watch it arc over us. Quite impressive, really.

The store staff dive behind a tiny display counter. Things get split screen, like in some movie effect. It's all *Laurel and Hardy*. A wicked grin starts across my face, I watch his expression. The fact he's sitting on top of a pile of imagined doodah. The staff realise this as well. I leave you to fill in any blanks.

Oxford Street dash
Buster Keaton deadpans
out of a speeding film

Days later there's the "second incident." I'm with my regular partner, we'd just got romantically involved. She's brave, really brave, and sometimes thinks things out, and sometimes doesn't. We get the call, running into a packed food hall, where a lot of glass counters, other displays, windows, and lots of Christmas treats are shining.

The suspect device is small, and if packed tightly, it could rip a hole through everything. Size isn't an issue. "It" was covered in dirty old newspaper. We peel back the outer wrapping, gently pulling to see pink plastic. Is it plastic explosive? I'd been taught that old-fashioned P.E. (plastic explosives) smelt like wedding cake (the marzipan part), and another kind of P.E. could give you a headache if handled with bare hands.

Well it wasn't cake; I didn't have a headache. It had strange ridges though. It had a slot, plus a place for batteries. We must have pushed something as it started vibrating. She picked it up, embraced it to reduce the amount of shrapnel, and started walking where there was fewer people.

Christmas season
I revisit the grotto
this time as Santa

This all happened in one of those fat seconds. Did I tell you how long a second could be? I was going to lose my girlfriend. I started to follow. Then the split-screen thingie happened.

Being a bit naive, it took a while, as I'd never seen a "sex device" before, and never even heard of one for blokes. It was the first and last time I ever handled one.

another exo-planet
Santa Claus renews
his visa

My father never saw me check those suspect explosive devices, risk my life year after year. His devices were real bombs, dropped by actual planes. It was World War Two, and for his five years he physically loaded aircraft up with explosives, in various places including North Africa, but probably never Japan.

dad's photograph—
were there cherry petals
in your war?

-Alan Summers

war memories—
the caterpillar dies
in its cocoon

-Goran Gatalica

another killing
the gap between
prayer hands

-Terri L. French

cold shoulder
steam rising from
the sewer grate

-Ben Moeller-Gaa

my reflection
staring into snowfall
past paralysis

-Rich Schilling

another noon
still standing
in my father's shadow

-John Hawkhead

end of spring almost fitting into my father's shoes

-Barun Saha

Book Review

inkblots revealing my story to the therapist by Lori A. Minor (2019 Lulu Press), 6" x 9"
Perfect-bound paperback. 60 Pages. Black ink on cream paper. ISBN 978-0-359-34896-1.
www.lulu.com.

Reviewed by Robin Anna Smith.

Reading *inkblots revealing my story to the therapist* by Lori A. Minor is almost like being a silent witness in the room, as the author unpacks years of experience to her therapist. She opens with two haiku, which alone, could be the beginning and the end of her book. The white paper in between them lets us imagine, from the very start, where she might be taking us. For those who follow Lori's work, we know to expect ups, downs, twists, and turns ahead. For those who don't: Keep your hands inside the ride at all times!

*

signs of depression
the first leaf falls
to my feet

*

diagnosis
the last leaf
still holding on

*

The first haibun in the collection "Safe Space" sets the tone for our understanding of what triggered a lifetime of trauma and mental illness challenges. Page by page, she adds information and layers to her story, so that it reads similarly to a memoir in verse. There is just enough white space to allow the reader's mind to wander between pages, and wonder about details purposely omitted.

*

Safe Space

He grounded me for everything. Whispering at the table. Crying. Wetting the bed. It wasn't your typical grounding where you can't play with friends or you get the PlayStation cables taken away. I had to live in my room and the only reason I was allowed out was to shower, but he insisted on monitoring me. Said it was to make sure I wasn't "playing around". Dinner was served in my room. Sometimes only cheese and crackers, and if I was lucky, a few slices of pepperoni. My room became my safe space. It was the only home I knew and even now, sixteen years later, I still find it hard to leave.

voyeurism
even the moon
has eyes

*

Throughout the book, Lori continues to connect with nature in her expertly-crafted haiku, returning repeatedly, as if to physically ground herself. Perhaps, it is a way to find a deeper connection with the world—to find the world within herself. This proves to be an important relationship, as we see in her haibun “shock waves” how shaken she is when unable to seek solace in her kindred stars.

*

shock waves

It's three in the morning and the sky is completely clear, but there are no stars in sight. The light pollution just drowns them out. It's almost like they're dead... and I'm mourning the loss of each one.

power struggle
the worm curls
into itself

*

As the book nears its conclusion, Lori's voice grows stronger and her outlook more hopeful. Her tanka “releasing” celebrates small victories, which are amplified in contrast with the heavy weight of persistent depression, and all that comes with it. She ends the book with her senryu “erasing the stigma” which is apt, given the platforms she has created with *Scryptic* and *#FemkuMag*, and now her forthcoming *Bleached Butterfly* to support the voices of others.

*

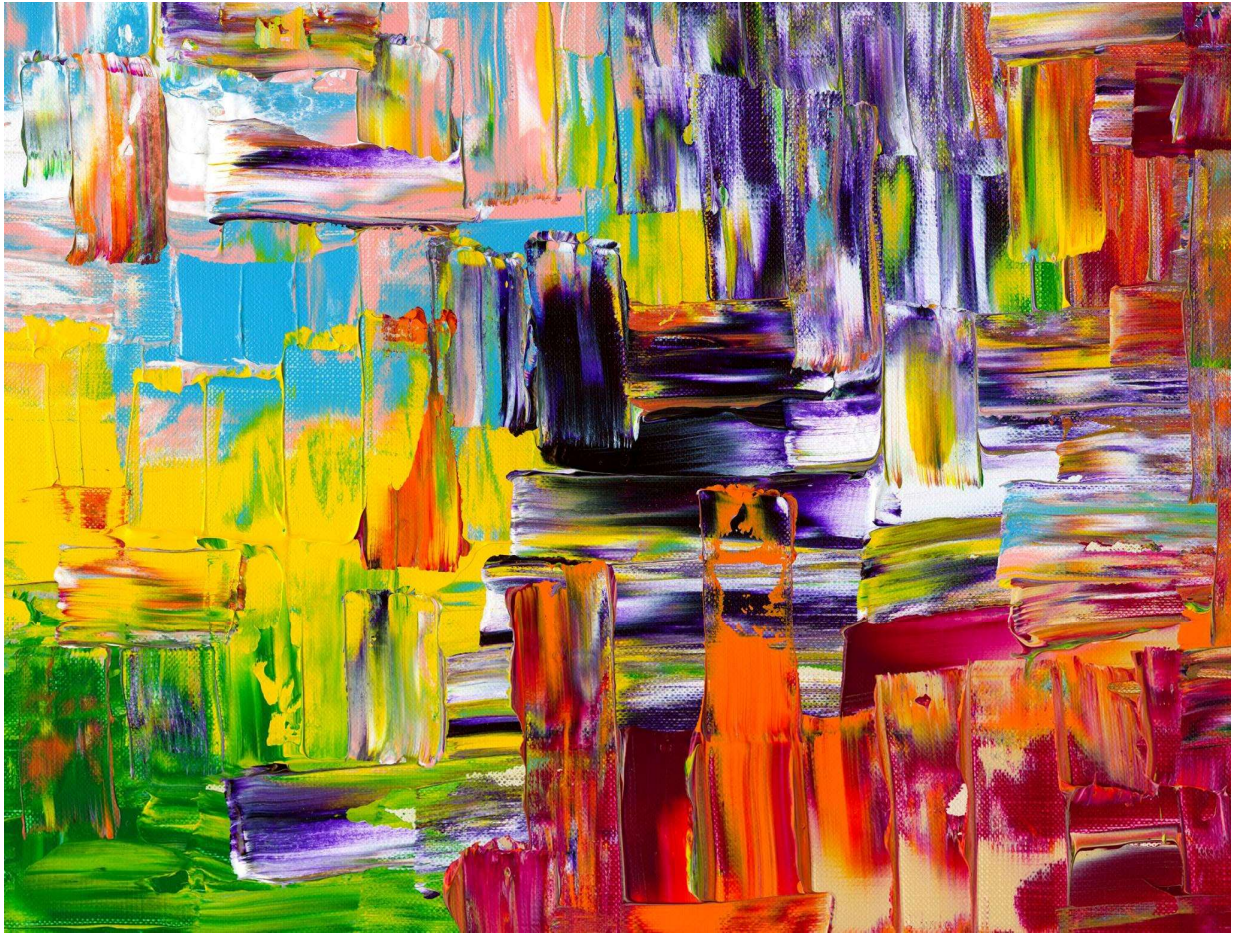
releasing
the firefly
from my palm
one year free
from self harm

*

erasing the stigma
I clean the dirt
from under my nails

*

inkblots revealing my story to the therapist is an important and uncompromising collection that readers will connect with, as we all know someone affected by trauma and/or mental illness. Lori has created a remarkable body of work, illustrating the lifelong effects of abuse and, at the same time, given us a glimpse of the hope and spirit that drives her and her stunning creative work.



Mr. Turing

Tiffany Shaw-Diaz

Biographies

Elizabeth Alford (Hayward, CA) writes on her phone when she isn't selling you secondhand merchandise. Recent work has appeared in *Haikuniverse*, *Stardust Haiku*, and *One Sentence Poems*. She received 1st Prize and 2nd Honorable Mention in the Bay Area Poets Coalition Maggi H. Meyer Memorial Contest #39, 1-5 line category.

Jan Benson is a Pushcart Prize-nominated haiku poet living in Texas. She is as comfortable writing about physics or pagan ritual, as social issues and quilting. Jan's haiku are anthologized in world-leading haiku journals and magazines. Benson is a member of The World Haiku Association, and Poetry Society of Texas. Profiles at The Haiku Foundation "Poet Registry" and "The Living Haiku Anthology." Twitter: @janbentx.

Helen Buckingham lives in Wells, England. Credits include: *Haiku in English: The First Hundred Years* (W. W. Norton, 2013) and *The Wonder Code* (Girasole Press, 2017). Among her collections are: *water on the moon and mirrormoon* (Original Plus, 2010), *Armadillo Basket* (Waterloo Press, 2011) and *sanguinella* (Red Moon Press, 2017).

Maria Concetta Conti lives in Catania, where she graduated in Philosophy. She teaches Italian literature in a secondary school. Her work has appeared in *Otata*, *Autumn Moon*, *Haikuniverse*, *Mamba*, *Stardust*, *Failed Haiku*, *Memorie di una Geisha*, *Le Lumachine*, *Harusame*, *Poeme de Primavera*, and *Haiku Column anthology*.

Chris Dominiczak recently exhibited with AiR (Artists in Recovery) in Newcastle upon Tyne. He won the first UHTS Rosenberry Literary award for Haiku and has been published in several journals—writing short poems, haiku and related forms. When he is not writing, he's taking photographs, cutting trees, or subject to his daughter's demands. Facebook: Chris Dominiczak, Instagram: @backabeyont, www.artistsinrecovery.co.uk.

Kirsten Cliff Elliot fell for haiku in 2007 and has been writing/publishing them ever since. Her haiku were featured in *A New Resonance 8: Emerging Voices in English-Language Haiku* (Red Moon Press, 2013), and her first poetry collection is forthcoming from Velvet Dusk Publishing velvetduskpublishing.weebly.com. Find her on Twitter @bookfuelled or helpmyhusbandhasaspergers.wordpress.com.

TAK Erzinger is an American/Swiss poet and artist. Her poems have been published by *The Mohave He(art) Review*, *The Beautiful Space Journal*, *The Cirrus Poetry Review*, *The Curlew*, *The Rising Phoenix Press*, and more. Her debut collection, *Found: Between the Trees* (Grey Borders Books) is currently available at www.greyborders.com.

Terri L. French is the Secretary of The Haiku Foundation. She is past Southeast Regional Coordinator for The Haiku Society of America and former editor of *Prune Juice Journal of senryu and kyoka*. Terri was recently added to the editorial team of the online journal *Haibun Today* and was a featured poet in *New Resonance 11*.

Goran Gatalica (Born in Virovitica, Croatia, 1982), got both physics and chemistry degrees from the University of Zagreb, and proceeded directly to a PhD program after graduation. He has published poetry, haiku, and prose in literary magazines, journals, and anthologies. He is a member of the Croatian Writers' Association.

Mary Ellen Gambutti's stories appear in these and other literary journals: *Memoir Magazine*, *Remembered Arts Journal*, *Halcyon Days*, *Haibun Today*, *Contemporary Haibun Online*, *CarpeArte*, *Soft Cartel*, *Bookends Review*, *Borrowed Solace*, *FewerThan500*, *BellaMused*, and *QuietStorm*. *Stroke Story*, *My Journey There and Back*, and *Permanent Home: A Memoir* are both on Amazon. She and her husband reside in Sarasota, Florida. Ibisandhibiscusmelwrites.blogspot.com

Samar Ghose lives in Perth, Western Australia with his wife and two adult daughters. He is enamoured of the haiku genre and its related forms. He enjoys the appreciation of the art form via reading and occasionally writing. His work has been published in international online & print journals. Samar feels that haiku can live in both poetry and prose.

Mark Gilbert writes poetry and prose. His recent work can be found in *The Mamba*, *Haibun Today*, *Prune Juice* and *Twist in Time*. He was proud to be included in the anthology *Poems for the NHS* (Onslaught Press, 2018) and to have read at its launch.

Brent Goodman is a poet, musician, and teacher living with his partner and three cats in Wisconsin's Northwoods. He is the editor of *Prune Juice*, and most recently featured in *New Resonance 11: Emerging Voices in English-Language Haiku* (2019 Red Moon Press).

John Hawkhead (Bradford on Avon, UK) is a poet and artist from the south west of England. His book of haiku *Small Shadows* is available from Alba Publishing. You may like his twitter feed of haiga and haiku at twitter.com/HawkheadJohn.

Gary Hittmeyer (Shokan, NY) was born in Brooklyn, New York and currently lives in the beautiful Hudson River Valley of New York State, where he enjoys NY Mets baseball, BBC crime dramas, classic rock, and EPL soccer.

Peter Jastermsky writes Japanese short-form works. He was inspired to try his hand at writing haiku after reading the work of Nick Virgilio. Peter's writing has appeared in many fine journals, including *Failed Haiku*, *Haibun Today*, *The Cherita*, and *Sonic Boom*. Peter and his family now live in the high desert of Southern California, where he works as a Licensed Counselor.

Lisa T.W. Jones is a severally published and awarded literary-press poet and feature writer, whose work has appeared in *Off the Coast*, *Drown In My Own Fears*, & multiply in *Ribbons Tanka Journal*, with pieces forthcoming in Ivy League Columbia's *Calico* magazine. She is an international contemporary sonnet-prize recipient.

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Amy Losak is a New Jersey-based public relations professional. She was inspired to write haiku by her late mother, Sydell Rosenberg, a charter member of the Haiku Society of America in 1968. Amy's poems have been published in *Frogpond*, *Modern Haiku*, *Akitsu Quarterly*, *Prune Juice*, *Failed Haiku*, and more.

Martha Magenta lives in Bristol UK. She was awarded 2nd and 3rd prizes and Honourable Mentions in contests for haiku, tanka and haibun in 2017 and 2018; The European Top 100 haiku authors, 2017 and 2018. Her poetry has appeared in many journals and anthologies.

Nicholas Mathisen is a writer and creative director living in Portland, OR. His poems have been published in *Modern Haiku*, *Under the Basho*, *Presence*, *Bones*, *bottle rockets*, *Sonic Boom* and *Prune Juice*, among others. When he's not experimenting with short form poetry, he's making ad-like-objects.

Andy McLellan is a haiku poet living in Canterbury, UK. He has three teenage children and a PhD in plant biology. When not writing haiku, he can often be found drinking tea and knitting hats.

Ben Moeller-Gaa is a widely-published and Pushcart-nominated haiku poet from St. Louis, MO whose new book, *Wishbones* (Folded Word 2018), has been shortlisted for the 2018 Touchstone Award. He is also the author of three haiku chapbooks, *Fiddle In The Floorboards* (Yavanika Press 2018), *Blowing on a Hot Soup Spoon* (Poor Metaphor 2014) and *Wasp Shadows* (Folded Word 2014). Learn more about Ben online at: benmoellergaa.com.

Gautam Nadkarni, 63, lives in Mumbai, India. Having entered the haiku realm in 2007 he has since written and published haiku, senryu, and tanka extensively. Shying away from haibun all this while, due to cold feet, he attempted his first haibun in November 2017. He now has nearly 50 published haibun to his credit.

Vandana Parashar is a microbiologist, a teacher and a haiku enthusiast. Her work has been published in numerous journals. She has a Grand Prix in 8th Setouchi Matsuyama Photo Haiku Contest to her credit and prizes and honourable mentions in some other contests including Kukai. She lives in Panchkula with her husband and two daughters.

Marianne Paul is a Canadian poet, novelist and, recently, an amateur bookbinder. She has won the Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival haiku contest and the inaugural Jane Reichhold Memorial Haiga Competition. Marianne posts her words and art on Instagram @ms.haiku, Twitter @mariannpaul and on her websites: www.mariannepaul.com and www.literarykayak.com.

Bryan Rickert lives with his family in Southern Illinois and has degrees in art and education. After teaching in urban schools for fifteen years, Bryan changed careers and is now a roaster in the coffee industry. He has been studying and writing the Japanese short poetry forms since 2012 and been published in many fine journals and anthologies.

Alexis Rotella is a visual storyteller, wordsmith and licensed Acupuncturist in Arnold, Maryland.

Natalia L Rudychhev is a poet, scholar and artist residing in New York. Her book of haiku *Simple Gifts* (2018) is on the Shortlist of the Touchstone Distinguished Book Awards. Natalia is a member of The Photo Group in New York. Her photography won several international contests.

Barbara Sabol is the author of two chapbooks, and her debut poetry book, *Solitary Spin*, was published in 2018. Her poems have most recently appeared in a number of journals and anthologies. Barbara was awarded an Individual Excellence Award from the Ohio Arts Council and the Mary Jean Irion Poetry Prize. She reviews poetry books a guest editor for the blog, *Poetry Matters*. Barbara lives in Akron, OH with her husband and wonder dogs.

Barun Saha is a scientist and poet from Durgapur, India. He primarily writes tanka and haiku, and has published in *Atlas Poetica*, *Blithe Spirit*, *NeverEnding Story*, *The Bamboo Hut*, and *Wales Haiku Journal*. Visit goo.gl/cnTY5y for his poems and barunsaha.me for more information about Barun.

Fabio Sassi makes photos and acrylics using what is considered to have no worth by the mainstream. He often puts a quirky twist to his subjects or employs an unusual perspective that gives a new angle of view. Fabio lives in Bologna, Italy and his work can be viewed at www.fabiosassi.foliohd.com

Agnes Eva Savich was born in Poland, grew up in Chicago, and has lived in Texas for 15 years. She's recently been published in *Modern Haiku*, *Acorn*, *Frogpond*, and *The Heron's Nest*, among others.

Rich Schilling lives in Webster Groves, Missouri with his wife and three kids. He has been published in *Mayfly*, *Modern Haiku*, *Is/let*, *Akitsu Quarterly* and numerous other journals.

Olivier Schopfer lives in Geneva, Switzerland. He likes to capture the moment in haiku and photography. His work has appeared in anthologies, and numerous online and print journals. He is the author of two books: *In the Mirror: Concrete Haiku* (Scars Publications, 2018) and *So Many Miles: Fifty Senryu* (Alien Buddha Press, 2019).

Yesha Shah lives in Surat, India. She is a mother, a poet and a teacher. Absolutely in love with the Japanese genre of haibun, she strives to write whenever she can. Her works have found homes in print and online journals.

Tiffany Shaw-Diaz is an award-winning poet and artist living in Centerville, Ohio. To learn more about her, please visit: www.tiffanyshawdiaz.com. She can be found on Facebook (@tsdartist) and Instagram (@tiffanyshawdiaz).

Debbie Strange is an internationally published short form poet, haiga artist and photographer, whose creative passions bring her closer to the world and to herself. She maintains a publication and awards archive at debbiemstrange.blogspot.com, which also includes hundreds of haiga, and reviews of her books. Please visit her on Twitter @Debbie_Strange.

Alan Summers was born in London and now lives in the South West of England. He likes dogs and cats, and birds, and Christmas. Alan is co-founder of Call of the Page, with Karen Hoy, and teaches haiku and related genres. Website: www.callofthepage.org.

Margaret Walker is a former school principal. She and her husband planned extensive travel. Instead, she has the opportunity to meet people from across the world as a leader of the ME/CFS Self-Help Program. A group member introduced her to haibun and haiku.

Julie Warther serves as Midwest Regional Coordinator for the Haiku Society of America (www.hsa-haiku.org), is an associate editor at The Heron's Nest (www.theheronsnest.com) and was instrumental in establishing The Forest Haiku Walk in Millersburg, Ohio (www.innathoneyrun.com/open-air-art-museum/haiku-walk) and the Seasons of Haiku Trail at The Holden Arboretum in Kirtland, Ohio (www.holdenarb.org/seasons-of-haiku-interpretive-trail).

Lucy Whitehead (Essex, UK) Lucy's haiku have been published in various international journals including *Akitsu Quarterly*, *Blithe Spirit*, *Cattails*, *Frogpond*, *hedgerow*, *The Heron's Nest*, *Otata*, *tinywords*, and *Under the Basho* and appear in three anthologies including *a hole in the light: The Red Moon Anthology of English-Language Haiku 2018*. Her Twitter handle is @blueirispoetry.