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Too Small For Meat

a collection of verses published in 2018

Too Small For Meat

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For Elaine Andre sensei, and every other soul who I owe my progress in this journey.

**making less heat
than usual . . . sparrows nest
by the hearth**

Foreword

A voice is rising in Africa, vibrating with its sense of place. Barnabas Adeleke's haiku overcome Nigeria's two-season limitation of either dry wind or rain. His gift as a storyteller eschews ego and artifice in favor of a more universal truth with enduring quality, which has garnered rapid acknowledgment among a wide array of international haiku venues.

There is a sense of an ongoing creation—of change and of movement-through-time in the deft sense of verb actions. I'm particularly struck by the use of verbs paired with images in this example:

too small for meat . . .
the jogger leaves a snail
to cross the path

A jogger usually keeps on jogging. Here, 'the jogger leaves' and the slower snail continues 'to cross the path'. The jogger's steps seem to change timing to avoid the snail. Under the conditions of scant resources, Barnabas' jogger would have stopped to collect the snail as augmentation to a meager diet. But, almost in Zen-like fashion, the snail is left to cross the path and go mindlessly on its way, never knowing that it had been scrutinized as a possible addition to dinner. We imagine that the jogger jogs on while the snail remains on its course to grow until it can no longer be resisted as a source of food. The battle of survival comes sharply into contrast with a measured sense of mercy and a time for every purpose. But that first line remains in my mind as I read all of the verses: 'too small for meat' plants a flag in the realm of innocence, encapsulating the whole collection as witnesses to this truth. That is why I suggested it as a fitting title for this collection, which seems to reverberate in the marketplace, in a vigil, in the loo, and in sounds that fill the night.

— **Elaine Andre**
(Tacoma, Washington)



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HAIKU

**housewarming . . .
a swarm of honey bees
in the crawl space**

The Heron's Nest, Volume XX, Number 4: December 2018

**autumn floods . . .
the emergency shelter
ankle deep**

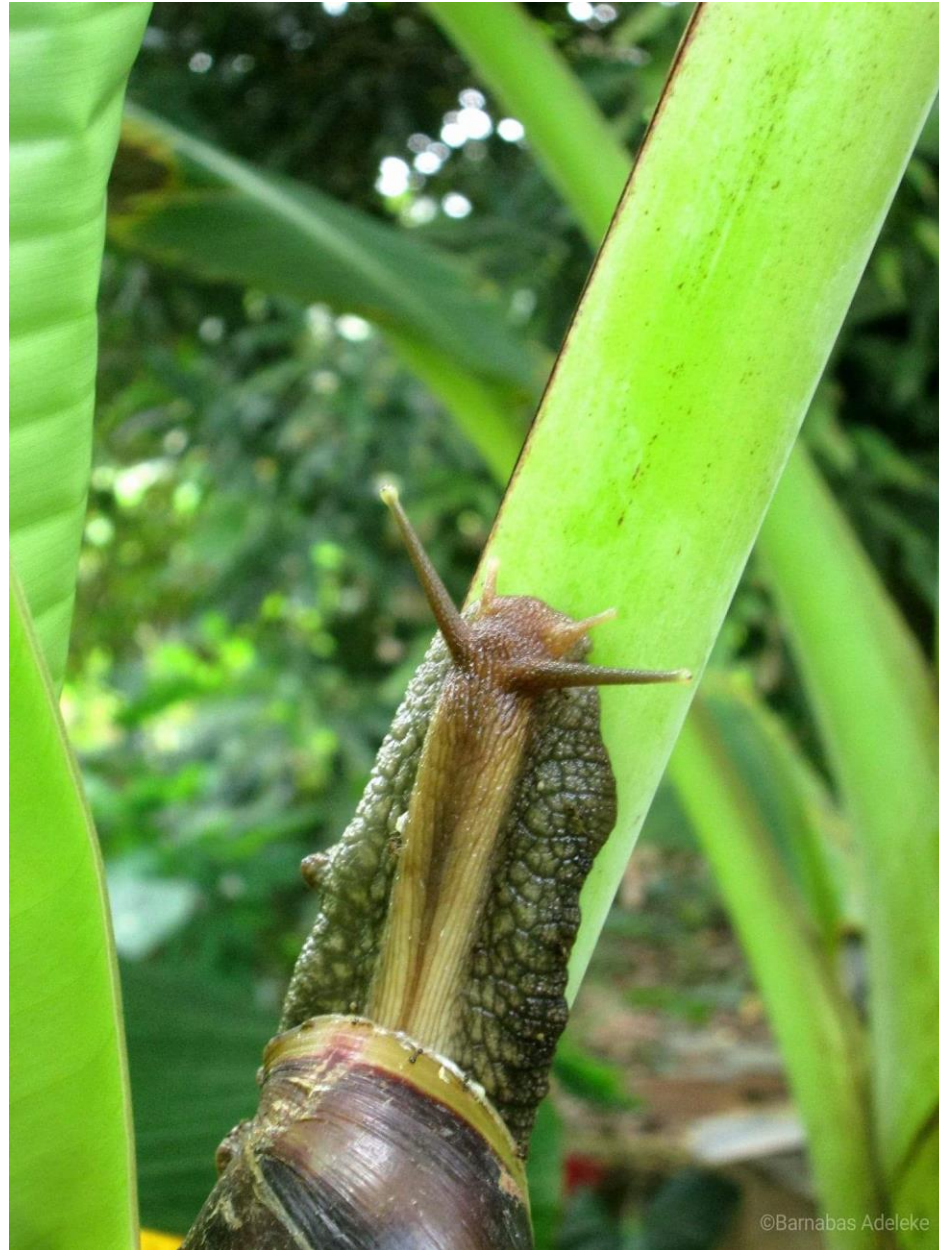
3rd Prize, 23rd International 'Kusamakura' Haiku Contest, Japan

**checking the label
for low saturated fats —
autumn trees**

Under the Basho, 2018

**too small for meat . . .
the jogger leaves a snail
to cross the path**

Under the Basho, 2018



**a bite
beyond my hand's reach . . .
these mosquitoes**

Under the Basho, 2018

**All Saints' Eve —
the Hitler moustache
on a boy's face**

Under the Basho, 2018

**fogbound village —
the old bus leaves a trail
of fumes**

Frogpond, Volume 41:3



**Ramadan fast —
the sickle moon gaining
size**

Cattails, October 2018 Issue

**lightning and thunder —
a prayer vigil stretches
beyond dawn**

Selected Haiku, 10th Yamadera Bashō Memorial Museum English Haiku Contest



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**the urge to yawn
in this fly-infested loo . . .
long day**

The Heron's Nest, Volume XX, Number 2: June 2018

**grandpa shows us
how to make fire with flint —
Hunter's Moon**

Cattails, April 2018 Issue

**flying termites —
the maid switches off the lamp
and lets moonbeams in**

The Heron's Nest, Volume XX, Number 1: March 2018

**Christmas service . . .
the fresh and musty smells
of clothes**

Frogpond, Volume 41:1



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**a new god . . .
the cool shade of a banyan
becomes its shrine**

Golden Haiku

(Displayed on the streets of Washington DC in the month of March)

**almost
saluting a mannequin . . .
Christmas fair**

7th Setouchi Matsuyama Photo Haiku Contest, Japan

**mother shifts her chair
towards the scent of jasmine . . .
moonlit garden**

7th Setouchi Matsuyama Photo Haiku Contest, Japan

**full moon . . .
watchmen answering whistles
with whistles**

Modern Haiku, 49:1



SENRYU

**class reunion
the most likely to succeed
begs for a ride home**

*Editor's Choice Senryu, **Cattails**, October 2018 Issue*

**machine-gun fire
the cassocked priest scampers
to a nearby mosque**

Modern Haiku, 49:3



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**home again
the smell of a strange cologne
on the marriage bed**

Frogpond, Volume 41:2

**unpaid salaries
propaganda machines too
join the strike**

Cattails, April 2018 Issue



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