

# failed haiku

*A Journal of English Senryu*  
*Volume 3, Issue 35*

**michael h. lester**

*Guest 'Failed' Editor*

[www.failedhaiku.com](http://www.failedhaiku.com)

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*Haiga by Lori Ann Minor*

RESULTS  
OF  
THE THIRD ANNUAL  
Jane Reichhold  
Haiga Competition  
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# Cast List

*In order of appearance*  
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**Gayle Sweeper**

**Barbara Tate**

**Jay Friedenber**

**Simon Hanson**

**Nikolay Grankin**

**Stuart Bartow**

**Keitha Keyes**

**Linda McCarthy Schick**

**Roberta Beach Jacobson**

**Agnes Hanying Ong**

**David He**

**Roger Watson**

**Kate Alsbury**

**Bill Cooper**

**Pris Campbell**

**Elaine Wilburt**

**John Hawkhead**

**Mark Gilbert**

**Rachel Sutcliffe**

**Michael J. Galko**

**Richard Grah**

**Lavana Kray**  
**Radostina Dragostinova**  
**Louise Hopewell**  
**Anna Cates**  
**Barbara Sabol**  
**Ivan Gaćina**  
**Guliz Mutlu**  
**Colleen M. Farrelly**  
**Vishnu P Kapoor**  
**Hifsa Ashraf**  
**Kath Abela Wilson**  
**Vandana Parashar**  
**Mary Ellen Gambutti**  
**Terri L. French**  
**Pitt Buerken**  
**Tracy Davidson**  
**Debbie Strange**  
**Chen-ou Liu**  
**Ingrid Baluchi**  
**Antonio Mangiameli**  
**Martha Magenta**  
**Minh-Triêt PHAM**  
**William Scott Galasso**  
**Bruce Jewett**  
**Ray Caligiuri**  
**Gary Hittmeyer**

**Barbara Kaufmann**  
**Marianne Paul**  
**Corine Timmer - Gautam Nadkarni**  
**Adrian Bouter**  
**Michael Henry Lee**  
**Srinivasa Rao Sambangi**  
**Paula Dawn Lietz**  
**Cynthia Rowe**  
**Paul Beech**  
**Réka Nyitrai**  
**Angela GIORDANO**  
**Peter Jastermsky**  
**Madhuri Pillai**  
**Ross Neher**  
**Marshall Bood**  
**Barry George**  
**Hazel Hall**  
**Carol Raisfeld**  
**Elisa Bernardinis**  
**Lori Becherer**  
**Alexis Rotella**  
**Stella Pierides**  
**Marita**  
**Lucia Cardillo - Rodi Garganico**  
**Lorin Ford**  
**Margaret Walker**

**Geoff M. Pope**  
**Sondra J. Byrnes**  
**Adjei Agyei-Baah**  
**Rashmi Vesa**  
**Terrie Jacks**  
**Bob Lucky**  
**Tyson West**  
**Christine L. Villa**  
**Chad Robinson**  
**Wendy C. Bialek**  
**John J. Han**  
**Bruce England**  
**Claire Vogel Camargo**  
**Johnnie Johnson Hafernik**  
**Mary Gunn**  
**Kathryn Bold**  
**Kevin Valentine**  
**Jill Lange**



rising in the morning  
it's not obvious that the day  
will steer you  
where horns will alarm  
and roads be long and hard



that time of the day  
to relax  
to sit back and clean  
the meat  
out of your teeth







**Gayle Sweeper**

in the garden  
my son wants to plant  
french fries

coming nuptials  
I receive a sympathy card  
from his ex

southern breeze  
the mynah bird  
says y'all

**Barbara Tate**

child's play  
the park snow  
becomes a man

**Jay Friedenberg**

chihuahua  
in through  
the cat door

jewel box ballerina  
another wobbly pirouette  
in front of the mirror

pond ripples  
wobbly images of me  
in the minds of fish

life after death  
so many versions  
from those who know

**Simon Hanson**

flea market  
among treasures  
a sleeping cat

**Nikolay Grankin**



Halloween night  
a witch rings  
my dead doorbell

road rescuing  
                    the turtle  
                                pees on me

spider webs  
at the doors and windows  
who needs gargoyles

failing again  
    to rise at 4 a.m.  
                    for the rising trout

**Stuart Bartow**

too many beers ...  
last night's fireworks  
just fizzled out

sabotage —  
I hide some pieces  
of the jigsaw

beauty pageant —  
trees in autumn splendour  
do their striptease

a rooster  
with its head chopped off  
still on the run

in 2018  
April Fool's day  
and Easter Sunday  
fell on the same day —  
some jokes were resurrected

leaving behind him  
a trail of breadcrumbs ...  
no fairytale Hansel  
just my darling husband  
nibbling on his morning toast

**Keitha Keyes**

crossing the street –  
my walk on the  
wild side

prairie fire –  
the red buffalo  
stampedes again

**Linda McCarthy Schick**

pulling the synthetic wool over his glass eye

didn't catch your name  
chipped  
tombstone

once the mime  
started talking he  
wouldn't shut up

too much mustard no tip

change of season  
- store window mannequin  
blushes

every excuse in the book customer service

crystal chandelier in lobby  
burned-out light bulb  
in room 418



sound asleep  
in broom closet  
- dead-mall Santa

**Roberta Beach Jacobson**

leaves  
on tree branch  
wave goodbye

**Agnes Hanying Ong**

classmates party  
I drink the red wine  
until my face reddens

general cleaning  
the old man brushes  
his few teeth

**David He**

Uber driver  
another  
life story

bench with three seats  
the middle one  
always empty

keynote speaker  
with no end  
in sight

coffee breath  
the girl on my right speaks  
to the one on my left

**Roger Watson**

trick or treat  
wonder woman  
seven again

school board members  
fly to their cars  
witching hour

the wallet  
you thought you lost  
ghosthunting

rekindling  
an old grudge  
bonfire day

**Kate Alsbury**



solar paneling the coal museum roof

drizzle dawn  
a confederate statue  
outflanked by spiderlings

waking early  
the toddler asks  
*what's for brexit*

mid-gargle  
a shift in pitch  
breaking news

**Bill Cooper**

old married couple  
he figures last year's jeans  
must have shrunk

old married couple  
she knows 'get around to it'  
could mean next year

old married couple  
he rakes the first leaf  
just for practice

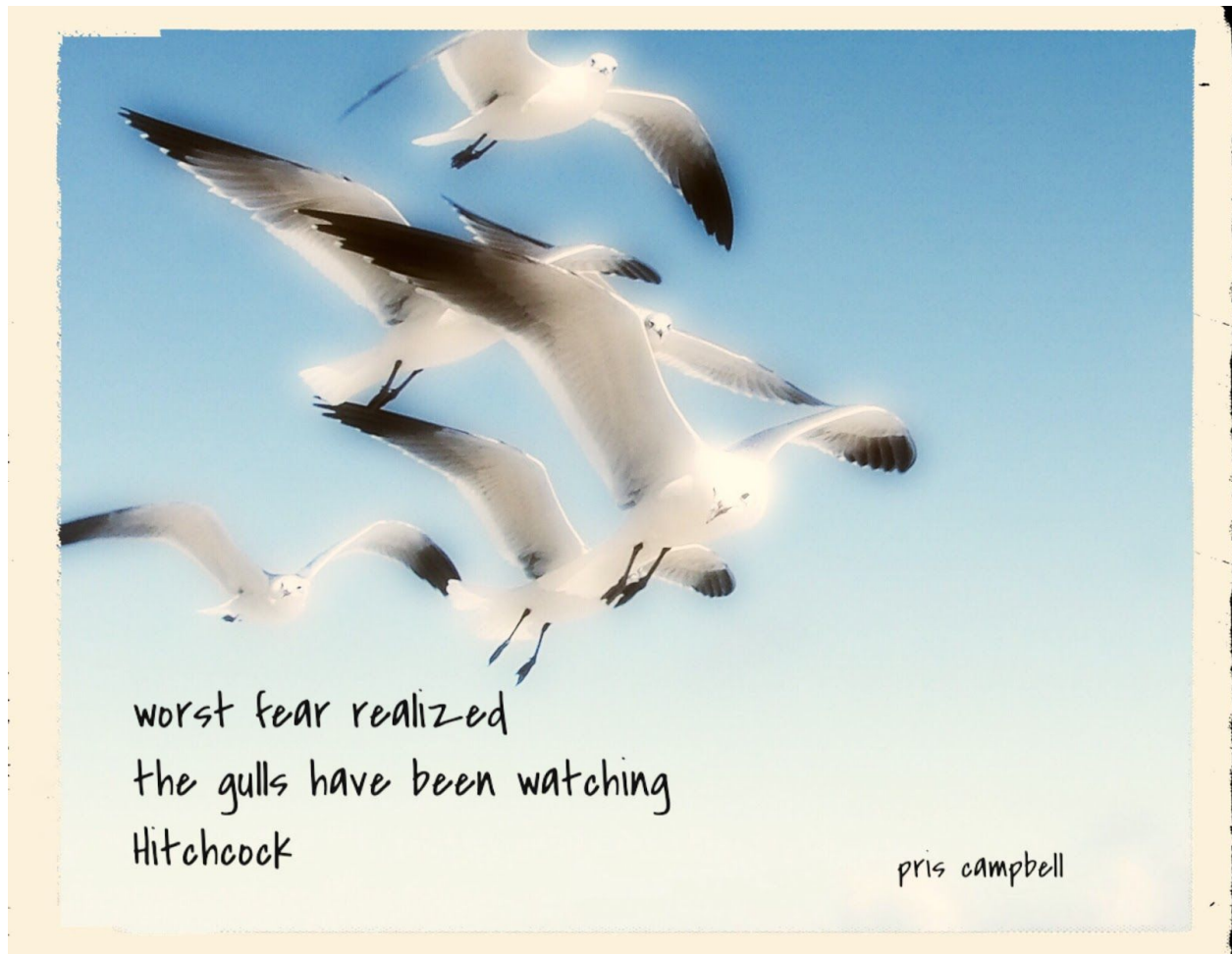
old married couple  
surely he can wear that shirt  
one more year

old married couple  
she's older than her mother  
when mother was old

beach bum  
brain cells lost in the debris  
of bikini memories



prig campbell



worst fear realized  
the gulls have been watching  
Hitchcock

pris campbell

**Pris Campbell**

heat-seeking mosquitos  
needling you, not me --  
a human shield

what I know of heaven --  
a well-worn comforter  
snugged under the chin

late autumn pruning,  
brush pile ready for burning --  
old pictures of us

first day of school --  
"Let's make the swing bird  
chirp!"

**Elaine Wilburt**



perseid shower  
I follow the signs  
wherever she says

leaving  
her slammed door echoes  
in my mouth

life class  
learning to look  
while not looking

wall mural  
old freedom fighters  
peeling away

middle age  
getting ready for fireworks  
that may not go off

**John Hawkhead**

Karaoke Night  
in the shithole bar  
No Regrets

pouring tea leaves  
down the drain  
stock market crash

shaking a little  
me and the rattler  
retracing our footsteps

psychometric test ...  
I don't answer questions  
about my private life

rolling news  
stopping the world  
to throw up

puberty  
infused in the slipstream  
of his aftershave

in the outhouse —  
whistling at the window  
just in case

To the Occupant  
unwelcome junk  
on the welcome mat

'Ugh' —  
another haiku journal  
to add to the queue

how  
can  
I write  
haiku  
when  
there  
are  
aphids

**Mark Gilbert**

algorithms  
another password  
scrambled

crime movie  
an explosion  
of soda cans

wellness questionnaire  
my pencil  
missing the point

new book  
dad says the download  
doesn't smell right

morning chill  
in the meeting room  
hot air

tuning in  
to my insomnia  
tinnitus

thirty years on  
still sleeping  
with Winnie the Pooh

high maintenance  
his girlfriend's  
manicured garden

the window  
we forgot to close  
car wash

low bridge  
I duck  
behind the wheel

**Rachel Sutcliffe**

hot beach sand  
guarding the ocean  
from walk-ins

fuzzy like owlshit–  
tangled eyebrow eaves  
of the old sage

bakery dumpster–  
just a sticky touch  
more fragrant

dumpster fire  
in the walkabout bar district–  
another diversion

Earth movers  
belch their slow way  
through the landfill

bored barista  
his smile not as strong  
as the coffee

**Michael J. Galko**

## **Best Friends**

loyalty . . .

I used to wet the bed  
now my dog does it for me

really . . .

do you think that only dogs know  
what dog food really tastes like?

call me slow . . .

but I've learned my love  
that you are just a poodle

if you bark at the moon

one more time

I'm calling out your hairdresser

let me know

when you want to go out

I'll draw for you a bath



put your head down on my leg  
I'll pet you oh so gently  
while you drool into my lap

**Richard Grahn**

family tea party -  
mom asks who is  
everyone



Lavana Kray

broken bifocals -  
I fall in love  
at first sight



Lavana Kray



the therapist's office -  
getting a large talk  
about his problems


Lavana Kray



sleepless  
wedding night -  
her lovely snore



Lavana Kray



all my dreams  
in a first class wagon -  
out of use railway

Lavana Kray



stones  
warming each other -  
wish I was one

Lavana Kray





deep fog -  
the sound of mom's cane  
leads me home

Lavana Kray

**Lavana Kray**



mountain dew  
I try  
new anti-aging therapy

blood moon  
I swap the evening tea  
with rosé

lavender fields  
the sweetish taste of  
my tranquilizers

**Radostina Dragostinova**

blind date  
we summit  
Mount Disappointment

honeymoon  
the way you touch  
your phone

meditation retreat  
the playfulness  
of monkeys

goldfields  
the seagull eyes  
our picnic

**Louise Hopewell**

eyes following  
the new girl in town . . .  
loose leaves

**Anna Cates**

global warming  
Phil retires  
his shadow

at the audiologist  
the other shoe drops  
without a sound

a regular at the corner pub  
his beer glass  
always half-empty

holes in the toes  
of his black socks,  
the astrophysicist

mixed blessing--  
offered the senior discount  
without asking

morning commute  
daydreams interrupted  
by a pot hole

very behind  
wish I had time  
for the gym

swiss cheese. . .  
I keep forgetting  
my grocery list

feeling my age--  
Dylan's face  
on the cover of AARP

**Barbara Sabol**

monkey business . . .  
because of donkey justice  
the horse was injured

goat breakfast . . .  
from the snowman face  
nose is missing

fallen into the trap  
poacher and fish . . .  
double catch

**Ivan Gaćina**

long night  
I burn the quilt  
for a louse

double rainbow  
childhood fairyland  
under construction

**Guliz Mutlu**

the dog eats crow and sleeps in the doghouse

frantically

filling a college bluebook—

the pencil breaks



## **Airport Decathlon**

Call the taxi. Red light. Red light. Honk. Red light. Screech. Check the luggage. Yes, Chicago. O'Hare. Security line closed. Next terminal's overflow backed up to the Starbucks. Half hour. Hour. Bible sets off x-ray machine. Step forward, Ma'am.

Carefully-packed carry-on in disarray as security digs deeper. All clear. Run to gate D-53. Changed last minute to D-2. Dodge the stroller of the lady on the cell phone. Arrive at the gate in time for a lightning delay. Two coffees and a Nathan's hotdog later, time to board again. Luggage compartments full. Check the bag with a gate agent. Seatbelt broken. Head to a middle seat in the back of the plane crammed between a 6'5" guy and a lady with a screaming one-year-old whose ears won't pop. Really need to pee.

fasten seatbelt off—  
lavatory! Now!  
flush! out of service...

old pond, same frog—  
sploosh! smack! sploosh!  
new alligator

squawking peacocks  
another  
televised debate

**Colleen M. Farrelly**

wardrobe malfunction  
relishing  
the awkward silence

"open sesame "  
double swipe across  
the smart phone

widower's freedom  
getting down from either side  
of the double bed

**Vishnu P Kapoor**

maize crop field  
completely ruined  
by those rats  
who I fed cheese  
last night

leftover soup  
finally settles down  
the restless fly

rejection email  
another starred message  
into the trash

**Hifsa Ashraf**

campus tour

a grey squirrel  
digs a black hole

in front of  
the astronomy building

kangaroo paws  
where no kangaroo  
would dare set foot  
I leap to conclusions  
that don't exist

if only I were a lemur

leaping  
loquaciously

my pen a pogo  
across the pages  
of my lifelong book

on a tour a desert voyeur  
finds giant tortoises  
are not shy  
atop her he huffs and puffs  
she munches a green tuft nearby

**Kath Abela Wilson**

zigzag  
when will papa learn to part  
my hair right

school reunion  
no one recognises me  
except the dog

off season sale...  
I spend four thousand  
to save five hundred

holy dip...  
I come out feeling  
itchy

**Vandana Parashar**

birds gone to roost  
yet  
data flies freely



**Mary Ellen Gambutti**



## **Can you hear me now?**

I heard of a town today that had banned all cell phones. Not just the use of them while driving, but totally banished them. There are no cell phones in this town. Nary a one. Can you even fathom that? Next you are going to tell me they all use rotary phones! Or maybe a wife has to go out in the back yard, gather sticks and build a fire to send up a smoke signal asking her husband to pick up a gallon of milk on the way home from work. And how would you tell your kids to get their little butts home for dinner? Carrier pigeon?

I'm sorry but I just as soon cut off my right hand than part with my cell phone. Siri is my friend. After all, who else in your life responds to "I love you" with "I am only here to serve you."

storm warning  
the rustle of branches  
one tree to another

\* haiku previously published in my book, *A Ladybug on My Words*, available on [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

**Terri L. French**

fast food  
the vegetables don't grow  
any faster

traffic circle  
one driver doesn't find  
his way out

making a short poem  
what the heck was I going  
to write?

**Pitt Buerken**

heather-clad hillsides  
the splendour of men in kilts  
on a breezy day

laundromat  
now he sees  
where the red sock went

my neighbour's parcel  
I opened by accident...  
I keep the handcuffs

her hundredth birthday  
my great-grandmother requests  
a hot stripper

**Tracy Davidson**



IF WOOD FROGS  
CAN HOLD THEIR PEE  
FOR MONTHS,  
WHY CAN'T I MAKE IT  
THROUGH ONE NIGHT

WORDS/IMAGE(C)DSTRANGE

**Debbie Strange**

slammed door ...  
my wife leaves me alone  
with my big dream

the chemistry  
between us  
drunken shadow and me

my blind date  
in white with black spots  
under dim streetlight  
I dress up a few facts  
about my work and age

**Chen-ou Liu**

toffee apple  
me and a wasp  
minding my business

the last peppercorn  
doomed to stay in its glass mill  
-- for eternity

Sydney circular  
every sentence  
ends with a question mark

frosting up the window  
neighbor's new cat  
chats up our canary

new tongue  
learning how to say  
I don't speak your language

**Ingrid Baluchi**

four street lamps -  
my shadows  
are all the same

**Antonio Mangiameli**



strawberry moon  
the builder's butt  
sunburned

conkers  
his Adam's apple  
up and down

he bends over  
to pick a pumpkin  
harvest moon

expanding frontier  
he loosens his belt  
another notch

immortal  
the mosquito  
I killed yesterday

blind date  
only the cabbage  
on his teeth

**Martha Magenta**

blood donation —  
around his neck  
some hickeys

dating site —  
his wife doesn't know  
that he is single

bees  
attracted to flowers  
of her dress

groans —  
the neighbours  
are back

**Minh-Triết PHAM**

squawking hens,  
strutting roosters...  
senate hearings

movie night  
senior discount please  
why not, I earned it

to the well  
once too often  
...wine stains

**William Scott Galasso**

at a pet clinic  
the construction worker  
coos in baby talk

**Bruce Jewett**

a cat dismembered my bunny but missed its lucky feet  
frogs' legs out of pond into frying pan  
your silence my heart neither broken yet  
sharp people always have a point  
went to kill some time but it slipped away  
tried buddhism but found myself wanting

**Ray Caligiuri**

garter snake  
in the basement:  
leave or pay rent

home again  
the moths greet  
my headlights

a hoarder tries to  
discard an empty box  
fills it instead

two eyes glow  
from under the bed  
    I hope it's the cat

“Think it'll rain?”  
a drenched stranger asks  
outside the market

**Gary Hittmeyer**

afternoon light  
dead nettle's slow creep  
to the compost

windstorm  
my inbox fills  
with spam

**Barbara Kaufmann**

living large  
greasing the ring  
off my finger

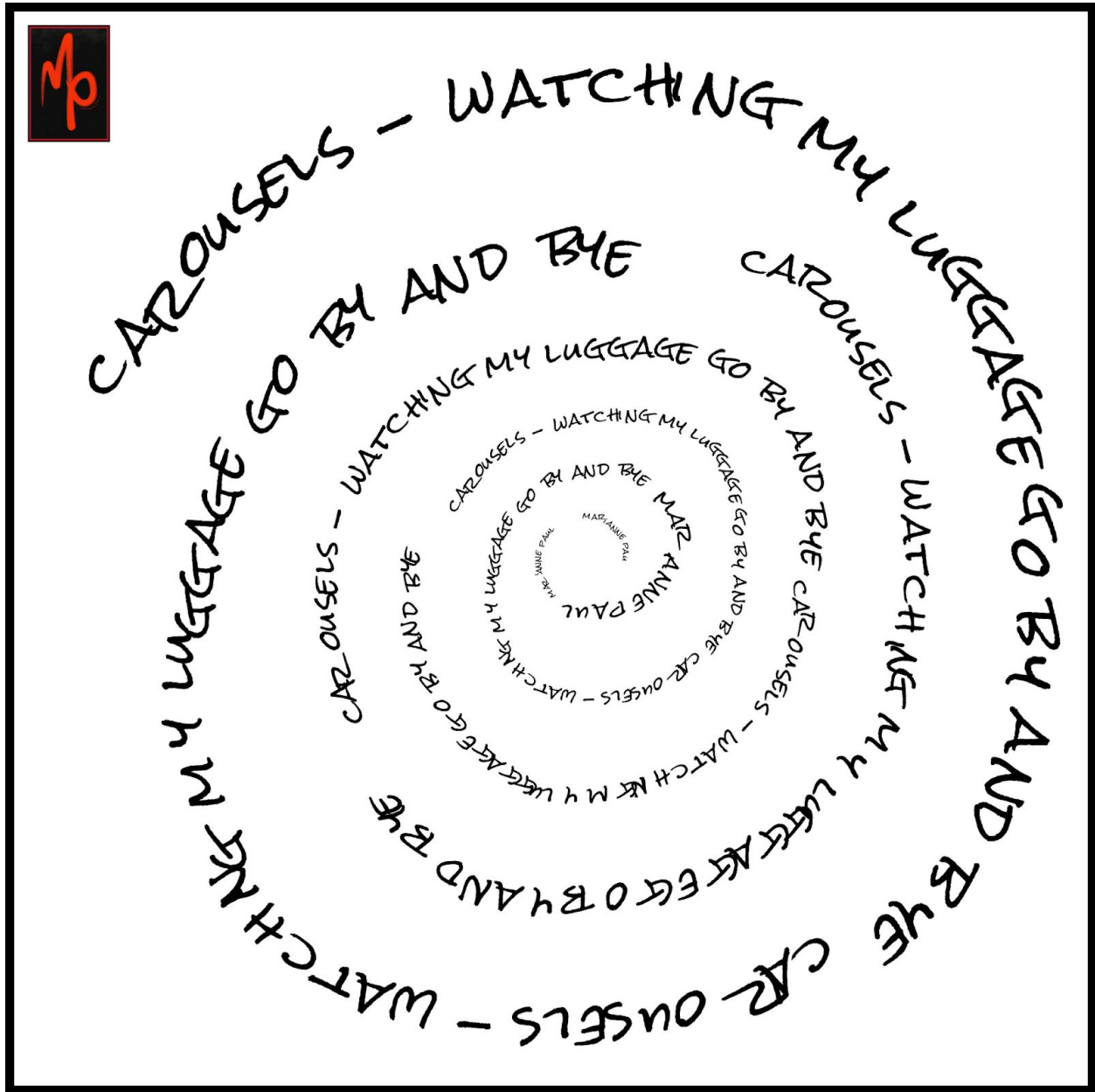
fridge crisper—  
the little green caterpillar  
eats its fill

abandonment issues  
the cat chooses sunlight  
over me

losing it—  
on my head the missing  
glasses

life at the equator all things being equal

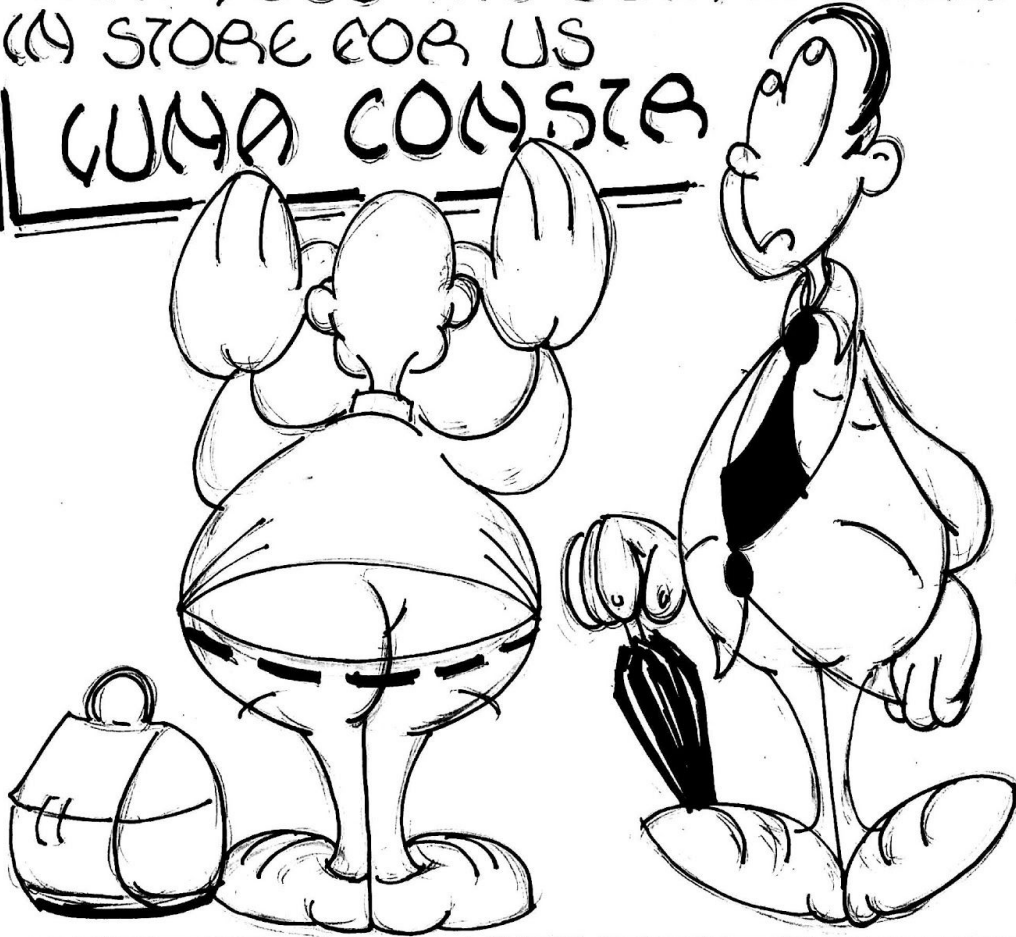




**Marianne Paul**

LUNA CONSTRUCTION -  
WHAT DOES THE BUILDER HAVE  
IN STORE FOR US  
LUNA CONSTR

senryu: Corine Timmer Illustration: Gautam Nadkarni



DAY MOON

DO YOU THINK THE PORT-A-LOO  
KNOWS ITS PURPOSE



senryu: Corine Timmer Illustration: Gautam Nadkarni

THE PLUMBER SAYS  
HE'S FULLED ALL THE CRACKS  
WAXING CRESCENT

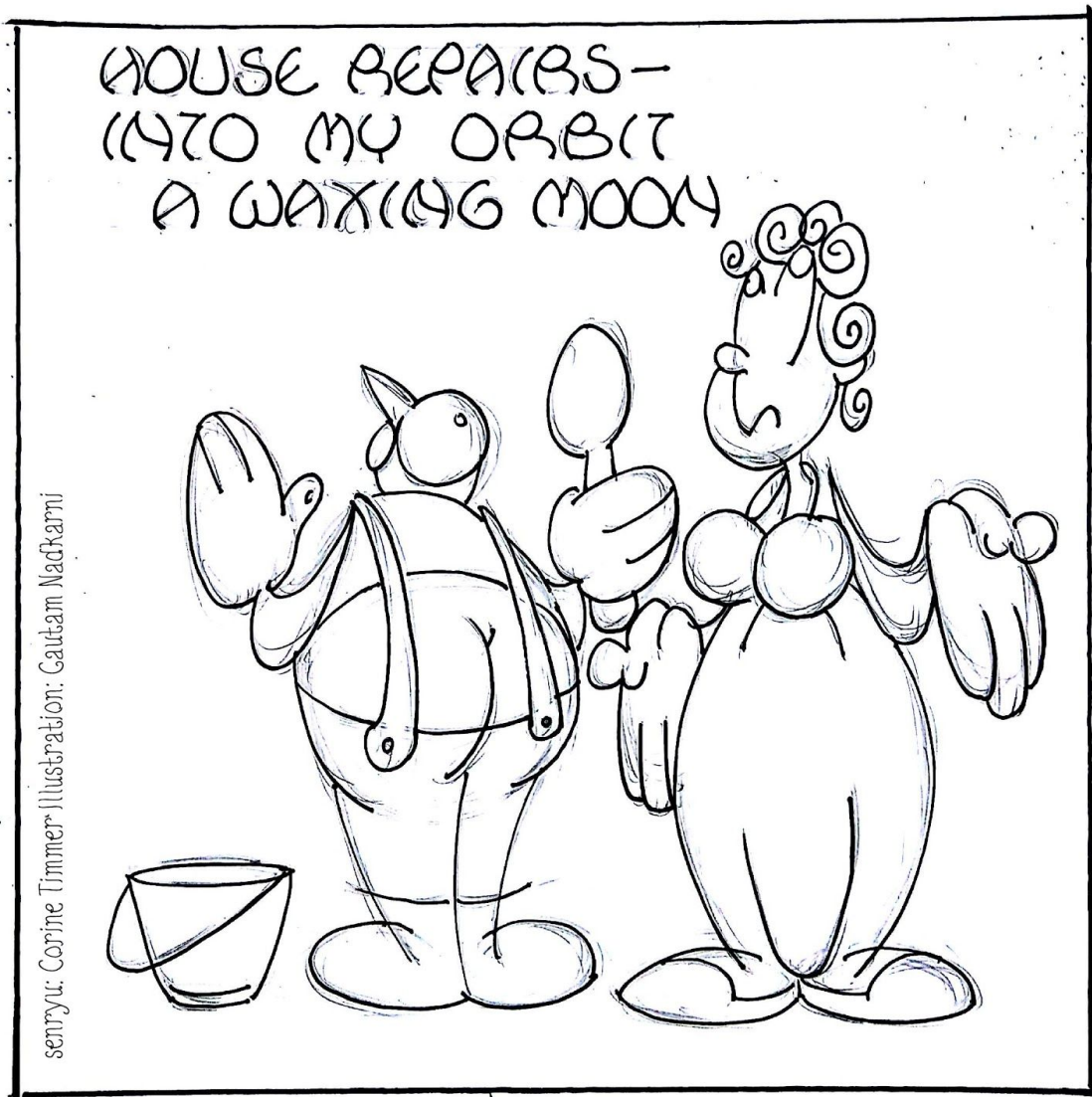


senryu: Corine Timmer Illustration: Gautam Nadkarni

THE CONSTRUCTION TRAINEE  
TRIES TO TIE HIS LACES —  
BLUE MOON

senryu: Corine Timmer Illustration: Gautam Nadkarni





**Corine Timmer --- Senryu**  
**Gautam Nadkarni --- Illustrations**

skin mags you pluck out a hair

chicken of freedom -  
the feathers on the floor

**Adrian Bouter**

night fall  
losing my religion  
at her bedside

appaloosa sky  
the small cirrus finds  
a break in the fence

straw flowers  
breaking it off  
for the holidays

**Michael Henry Lee**



diet plan  
till I can play with  
the wedding ring

maturity show  
one after the other  
my gray hairs

belly dance  
till  
the baby cries

**Srinivasa Rao Sambangi**

no sense nor reason  
one can't push the river  
but oh how I try

Paula Lietz Photo





**Paula Dawn Lietz**

on the road again . . .  
Garmin breaks into  
our argument

wild peony . . .  
we dance to the vibe  
of bees

**Cynthia Rowe**

## BONFIRE BANDITS

*W-h-u-m-p-h*, our giant bonfire catches and orange sparks fly to the moon. Down our cinder-slope, opposite the chapel, Guy Fawkes Night 1958 is under way, Dad in charge.

The Bonfire Bandits came round earlier and nicked half our timber, towing it away behind their bikes, sneaky sods. But Bro and I have bikes and ropes too, and now we gloat in the scorching glow as the blaze proclaims our triumph.

cowboys  
wage bonfire war  
size matters

Oldies sit around on spindle-back chairs, nattering, whilst Bro and I, mate Ken and others, take turns lighting blue touch paper to set catherine wheels spinning, jumping jacks jumping, roman candles erupting and rockets whooshing high over this Lancashire town of pits and mills.

Mum is the perfect hostess, and soon we're all sipping tea, sucking treacle toffee or nibbling parkin.

maiden aunts  
reminisce gently  
old flames

Hot chestnuts are pulled from the embers now –  
delicious! But, hey, what's all the commotion?

A pair of lads, shrieking with glee, race for their bikes  
at the top of the slope, an old boy puffing in hopeless  
pursuit. Near collapse he turns glowering and we  
recognise the chapel janitor.

Too late Dad realises why our waning fire is roaring  
again. A couple of Sunday School chairs have been  
thrown on from behind.

The lads were two of our Bonfire Pirates from earlier,  
sneaky sods.

bonfire mayhem  
the spirit of Guy  
lives on

**Paul Beech**

a person  
engaged to a cell phone...  
autumn rain

**Réka Nyitrai**

at the same time  
the alarm always rings-  
retirement







**Angela GIORDANO**

it wasn't the drugs

who needs  
the Holy Grail

when you've seen  
a snail  
in Adidas

attachment

it's said what you fear  
will own you

for years  
my dreams came  
with anchovies

on the fly  
another day I forget  
to zip

cheesy smiles  
grating  
over dinner

rookie bagger  
my eggs  
his inexperience

**Peter Jastermsky**

wafting in  
a spring fly  
for a sneak preview  
of what's cooking  
on the stove

the  
big word  
he couldn't spell  
he flaunts  
in his speech

downsizing...  
all the balconies  
Romeo could wish for  
we follow the host  
on a tour of his apartment

dinner hostess...  
wishing I wasn't one  
as she remarks  
how hard it is  
to cook for a vegan

**Madhuri Pillai**

blocked burros  
title search on hold  
nude noon nosh

**Ross Neher**

vacant holodeck —  
even interstellar  
space  
couldn't satisfy  
my appetites

doing an iOS update —  
the woman across  
the coffee shop  
draws  
my face

psych ward —  
the absence  
of decaf

sunburnt bald man most find this humorous

**Marshall Bood**

low mass—  
beneath the rector's robe  
New Balance sneakers

musty and somewhat  
worn around the edges—  
the used bookseller

not quite  
the tailors I had hoped for...  
moths

the no skateboarding sign  
by the courthouse—  
scuffed up a bit

up late reading  
another tired article  
about insomnia

reunion—  
that's  
Old Mr. Hager's  
son  
Old Mr. Hager

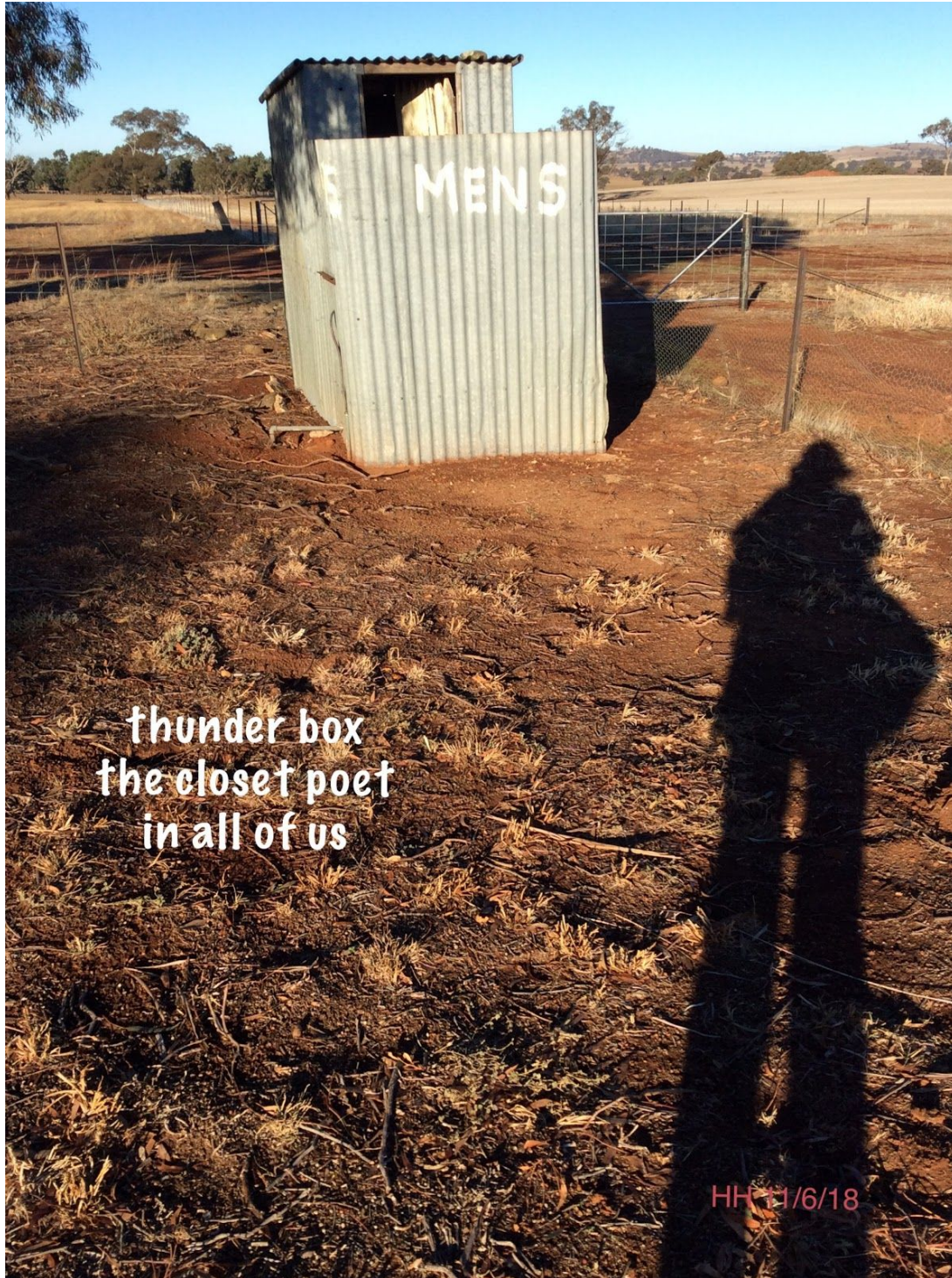


in my dream  
I take the shot that misses  
everything

**Barry George**

black cat night  
my stygian self  
takes over

vineyard dance  
twisting together  
after wine



**Hazel Hall**

at the lingerie shop  
asked if it worked, she said  
of corset does

cops arresting a mime  
"you have the right  
to remain silent ..."

the doorbell rings ...  
Pavlov suddenly remembers  
he forgot to feed the dogs

farm stand --  
I love you from my head  
to.ma.toes

mourning the death  
of his horse, finally  
he dismounts

overbooked...  
outside the airplane window  
grandma hanging on

reading a book  
about anti-gravity  
he can't put it down

Rigor Mortis Pub  
serving stiff ones  
since 1788

window washer --  
reflections  
of a window washer

halloween dinner  
in his skeleton outfit  
he orders spare ribs

**Carol Raisfeld**

the whole world  
plummets --  
a sneeze

all around  
the sushi bar counter  
wasabi faces

the job research  
eventually becomes  
a full-time employment

not knowing  
about wabi-sabi  
irises bloom

**Elisa Bernardinis**

still pressing  
his buttons  
Dad's Underwood

dialing back  
my impatience  
rotary phone

supermoon  
I resist the urge  
to howl

**Lori Becherer**

High school yearbook  
a friend remembers  
how high  
my high jump  
wasn't

Cuban music  
my feet go where  
they've never been

Old beau assesses  
the square footage  
of our house  
says nothing  
about my art

The garden does  
what it wants...  
wish I could

Cajun country  
no frog  
no turtle safe

**Alexis Rotella**





**Stella Pierides**

little beach house  
bought and bloated  
by big spenders

a self-driving car  
no advantage —  
arguing with the cops

dollhouse window  
the lesser  
pains

trying to cut back —  
three baby aspirin

your tip  
as big as  
parsimony

another poem  
meets the editor's cut —  
Katana

**Marita**

sixtieth ...  
seventies music  
in the head

sessantesimo ... nella testa musica /anni settanta

**Lucia Cardillo - Rodi Garganico**

the ghostwriter  
tapping her biro –  
All Soul's Night

flash mob cherry blossoms selfie after selfie

blossom cool –  
two widows in matching  
Hello Kitty pink

urban beehive the buzz word that does

a blowfly, too  
with nothing else to do . . .  
ladies' luncheon club

under the spreading chestnut tree  
... cigarette butts . . .

**Lorin Ford**

misstep  
manure lingers  
on his shoes

bathroom skylight  
roofers'  
clear view

in the mirror  
no glasses  
no wrinkles

**Margaret Walker**

multi-millionaire father  
his son laboring over  
free three-liners

at the bottom  
of her Christmas stocking  
a tongue scraper

stadium cleaner  
stumped by a slug  
in the nosebleeds

**Geoff M. Pope**

day of the dead  
waiting for my dna  
results

a gate that won't  
open after the rain—  
my arthritis

a simple life—all the effort it takes

ah—  
the chamisa's in bloom  
choo!

raccoons rip up the thyme and thyme again

street block party  
trying to distinguish the odd  
from the even

**Sondra J. Byrnes**

still waving  
on the lost incumbent's billboard  
a stuck kite

news headline  
a politician ends  
in a pothole

**Adjei Agyei-Baah**



a new arrangement of footwear  
every morning  
the dog on night shift

in the yoga class  
a low whistle chases us...  
my asthma

each family member  
gets a new distorted name —  
toddler's privilege

lightning strikes—  
we all display  
momentary halos

**Rashmi Vesa**

fishing  
the worm on the hook  
beguiles nothing

new meds  
encourages sprinting  
restroom dash

my cars:  
a Nissan and Mazda  
do they need green cards?

**Terrie Jacks**

mid-song  
I pretend I know  
the lyrics

medical alert –  
too old  
for a surprise party

in my eye  
the finger  
I can't see

Thanksgiving  
prayers answered  
when the turkeys leave

**Bob Lucky**

teen girls  
short shorts and crop tops  
run in cliques  
pack up out of fear  
of feeling naked

high school reunion  
live bios full of errors  
and omissions  
the dead attend vibrant  
in gossip and obits

high school reunion  
i reminisce with heroes  
unbeaten senior year  
no one recalls I never  
attended a game

**Tyson West**

morning ritual  
who catches my dog  
with the missing sock

star jasmine  
my puppy takes over  
his side of the bed

booby's feet  
the impulse to buy  
a pair of bright blue shoes

warm cinnamon roll  
I forget my name  
in each bite

at the party  
only remembering the name  
with the sweaty hand

we list our ailments  
like we're in competition  
in the waiting room . . .  
the fishes in the aquarium  
vying for attention

our new puppy  
I still look at him  
when he says *Hi, baby!*



**Christine L. Villa**

clown motel--  
for assistance  
honk nose

clown motel--  
the porter trips over my bag  
more than once

clown motel--  
the porter tries to balance  
all our luggage

clown motel--  
a balloon animal  
on my pillow

clown motel--  
the only channel plays  
The Three Stooges

clown motel--  
dinner arrives  
on a spinning plate

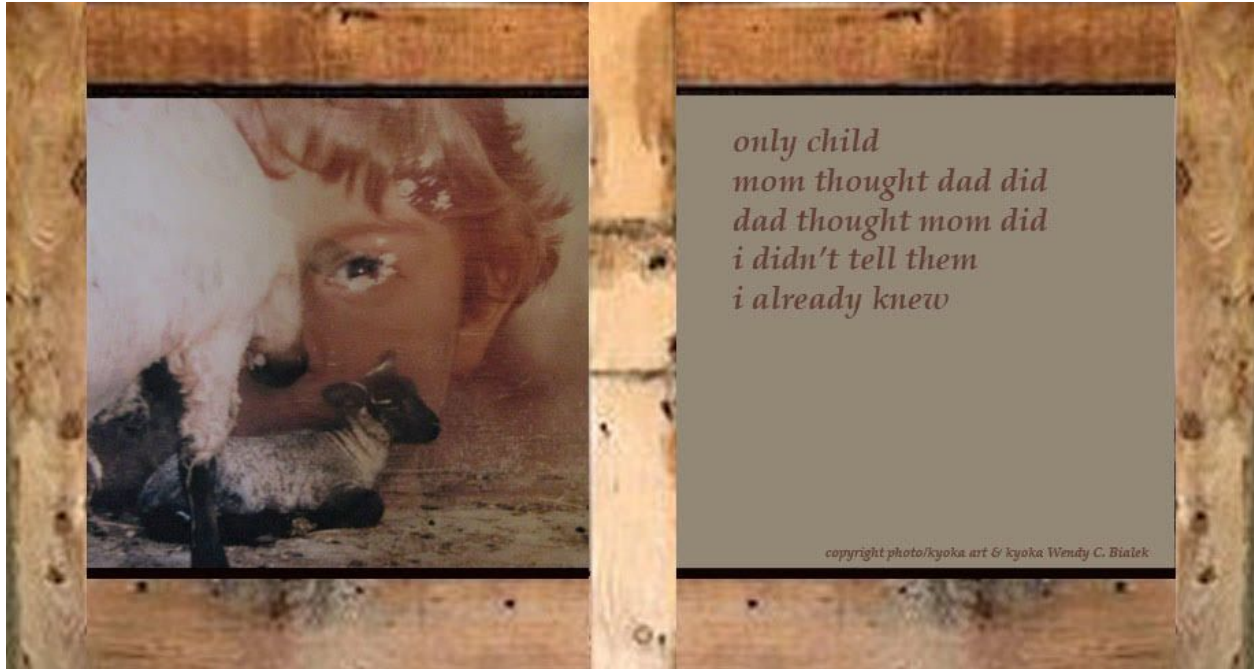


clown motel--  
the squeal of a balloon  
my wakeup call

clown motel--  
a complimentary pie in the face  
at checkout

Halloween sack race--  
the skeleton falls apart  
at the finish line

**Chad Robinson**



in college now

he tilts the picture  
to the left

"mother smiling down on her baby"

before his new lady  
guest arrives

kyoka drafts  
fall in fan-shapes  
on the bamboo floors

even in  
my password window  
submitting senryu

**Wendy C. Bialek**

surprise!  
a five-year-old girl drops  
the word apostrophe

not so good morning—  
overnight someone let his dog  
poop in my yard.

lunch buddy today  
trying to ignore his food  
that landed on mine

karma—  
the driver cuts me off  
then is pulled over

skilled driver—  
both hands off the wheel  
grooming her hair

**John J. Han**

She lifts her t-shirt  
to show the staring women  
she has shorts on

Amusing routine  
one woman plays Laurel  
the other Hardy

**Bruce England**

the bustle  
of the self-important  
crowd

photographers  
and giraffes crane their necks  
at each other

Halloween horror  
the missing front tooth  
my mirror confirms

m e o w  
a crow biting  
the cat's tail

**Claire Vogel Camargo**

lost on Google Maps a cartographer

desert screaming hot salsa sunset

eight-layer cake  
only in photos  
such perfection

a tiny waist  
what she always wanted  
an ant has

**Johnnie Johnson Hafernik**

when no-one is looking—  
grandma  
spoons in the sugar

Elizabethan collar—  
the old cat learning new ways  
post-op

every time  
i reach for the zapper ...  
the moth stops flying

bending  
to sniff the flowers  
on her desk  
i feel stupid –  
they looked real

first-born  
among my cousins ...  
but  
i don't want to be first  
at the exit!

**Mary Gunn**



magnifying mirror  
I look at my face and feel  
five times worse

in the kitchen  
we kiss  
the teapot whistles

I show her how  
to play a 45  
sounding like an oldie

admiring them  
before I pull them --  
dandelions

sorting through  
mom's collection  
of funeral cards --  
saints on one side  
sinners on the other

**Kathryn Bold**

geisha house . . .  
my hostess helps me forget  
what's-her-name

grocery shopping  
– the ace detective  
hasn't got a clue

**Kevin Valentine**

early years  
learning from mama . . .  
to dance ballet  
and win at poker

mahjongg  
I feel lucky—  
second margarita

trivial pursuit—  
they say our team  
gets all the easy ones

he—  
down to his skivvies  
she—  
poker face on

hurry, come see  
the rainbow  
she calls—  
it's all the colors  
of the crayons

all spent  
in a week  
her lemonade-stand  
quarters . . .  
darts at balloons

**Jill Lange**

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