

Prune Juice

JOURNAL OF SENRYU, KYOKA, HAIBUN, & HAIGA



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Prune Juice

JOURNAL OF SENRYU, KYOKA, HAIBUN, & HAIGA

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Prune Juice, founded in 2009 by Alexis Rotella, is a digital journal occurring tri-annually, dedicated to publishing and promoting modern English senryu, kyoka, haibun, and haiga. Past editors include Steve Hodge, Terri L. French, Bruce Boynton, and Liam Wilkinson.

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PruneJuiceSenryu.com

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome to the 29th issue, celebrating our 10th year dedicated to publishing the finest international Senryu in English!

- **It was an honor this past August to meet so many Prune Juice contributors in person at Haiku North America 2019** in Winston Salem, North Carolina, USA. Thank you for making the journal such an entertaining and enlightening place to discover new senryu over the years! Deepest gratitude and big hugs to the event's Master of Ceremonies, Robert Moyer. For this editor, it was an especially soul-expanding experience to meet the founding editor of Prune Juice, Alexis Rotella, and the "Senryu King" himself, Alan Pizzarelli, in person — along with Bill Kenney and Jim Kacian, who were both inaugural contributors to the very first issue back in 2009. I am thankful for their gifts and ongoing support of our growing community.
- **Congratulations to the winners of the The Fourth Annual Jane Reichhold Memorial Haiga Competition**, *co-hosted by Failed Haiku and Prune Juice*:
 - **Traditional Category**, *judged by Ron C. Moss*
 - 1st Prize: **Belinda Broughton**
 - 2nd Prize: **Johnnie Johnson Hafernik** poet, **Dorothy S. Messerschmitt** artist
 - 3rd Prize: **Gautam Nadkarni**

- **Photographic/Mixed Media Category, judged by Steve Hodge**
 - 1st Prize: **Mary Kendall**
 - 2nd Prize: **Marianne Paul**
 - 3rd Prize: **Pris Campbell**

[Check out the winning entries, judges' commentary, and Highly Commended haiga from this year's contest:](http://www.haikuhut.com/FourthAnnualRiechholdHaigaCompetiton.pdf)

<http://www.haikuhut.com/FourthAnnualRiechholdHaigaCompetiton.pdf>

- **Exciting changes coming for 2020 + anthology launch!**
 - Update your submission calendars! **Reading periods have changed** to January for the March issue, May for the July issue, and September for the November issue.
 - The March 2020 issue will see **big changes to Prune Juice's online presence!** Stay tuned for details . . .
 - Coming in **Summer 2020: The Prune Juice Anthology!** We're currently looking through the most notable pieces we've published over the past 10 years to bring you the best selection of English Senryu in print!
- If you haven't already, check out Micheal Rehling's new online resource center for Senryu poets, SenryuCircle.com, and join the conversation to share your work on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/senryucircle). While you're there, don't miss Alan Pizzarelli's personal [Definition of Senryu](#), quoted by permission of the author from his latest book *Mind Zaps*.

Brent Goodman

Rhineland, Wisconsin, USA

November 5, 2019

two tangled kites
fly away free
as owners brawl

Rp Verlaine
USA

looking
in the store window
my selfie

up the hill
dragging my shadow
a slow climb

Bernard Gieske
USA

remote retreat
Victoria's Secret perfume
for me and the sheep

a smell of hops
along the south quays —
last bus home

quiet autumn night
WD40 on the squeaky hinge
quieter night

Maeve O'Sullivan
Ireland

defined
by their parameters
love triangle

Mary Kendall
USA

ninety-six today
looking at photos
of all her faces

first jewelry box
she fills it with
magnolia seeds

Tina Crenshaw
USA

a toothache
noticing a crack
in the table

battered waffles
in the freezer
no longer wanted

crumbs
in the drawer
our new home

Adam T. Arn
USA

complimentary drinks:
if only I could believe
what they say

sharing DNA
with the Neanderthals
(across the aisle)

always a bridesmaid never a bird

hard hat across the gap a soldier's eyes

death the electrocardiogram's horizon

Lee Gurga
USA

payday loans
a bag of salt
by the icy steps

LeRoy Gorman
Canada

pumpkin carving
I scrape out
his brains

the school's
wall of trophies
one for each ghost

year of the dog
carrying her up
then down the stairs

drone surveillance
all the fine print
I waived

Peter Newton
USA

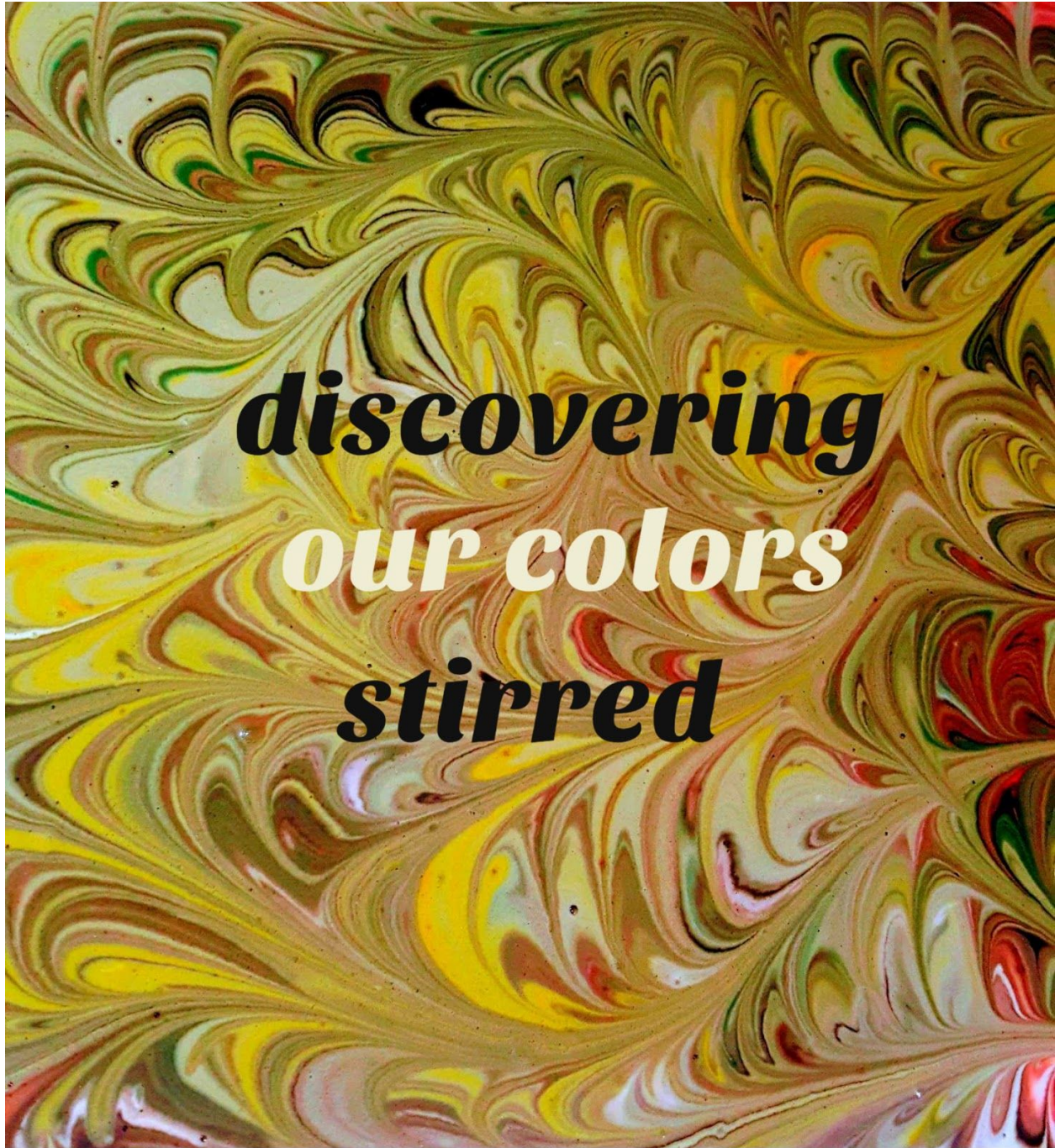


Image / Senryu: **Julie Warther, USA**

karaoke night —
a soccer mom's version
of "Satisfaction"

bouquet toss
the bridesmaids jockey
for position

in remission
— I give a spider
a second chance

Kevin Valentine
USA

Mohawk

There is a black and white photo of me as a toddler, probably taken by my Dad who was handy with a camera. In it, my face is scrunched up into a grimace. Tears have welled up in my big baby eyes and my mouth is wide open, in mid-bawl. My hair, though short, has several spikes sticking up perpendicular to my skull. I am also crying in my family portrait taken by a professional photographer around the same time.

back in the old room:
pirates in the wardrobes
and everything is blue

Up to the time of her last illness, Mum used to remind me every couple of years that I had her to thank for my thick locks: You had very thin hair as a baby and I just kept cutting it and cutting it until it got stronger, she'd say, much like a celebrity gardener boasting about their pruning prowess. Ironically, she usually

(Cont.)

(Cont.)

disapproved whenever I got my hair cut as an adult, often saying
that I had let them take a bit too much off.

after mother's death
growing my hair longer
eyebrows thinning

Maeve O'Sullivan
Ireland

power lines
crammed with birds
my to-do list

Agnes Eva Savich
USA

cemetery visit —
the GPS app
rerouting

family farm —
scrawled in the dirt
PRAY FOR RAIN

Mark E. Brager
USA

in McDonald's
a tramp
solving crosswords

cinema festival
the biggest fans
the old ladies and me

beautiful guy
all the young girls
smoking around him

Nadejda Kostadinova
Bulgaria

washing dishes
funeral of a friend
I avoided

morning coffee
a dither of geezers
schmoozing

invaded by
coffee maker gurgles
my thoughts

a white guy asks for
r-e-s-p-e-c-t
karaoke night

a gift on my
forty-second birthday
divorce papers

Robert Moyer
USA

eye contact I return a flying kiss

Christina Chin
Malaysia

male logic
I refuse to see
the doctor
for fear he will find
something

the miracle
of social media
wishes
from friendly strangers
on my birthday

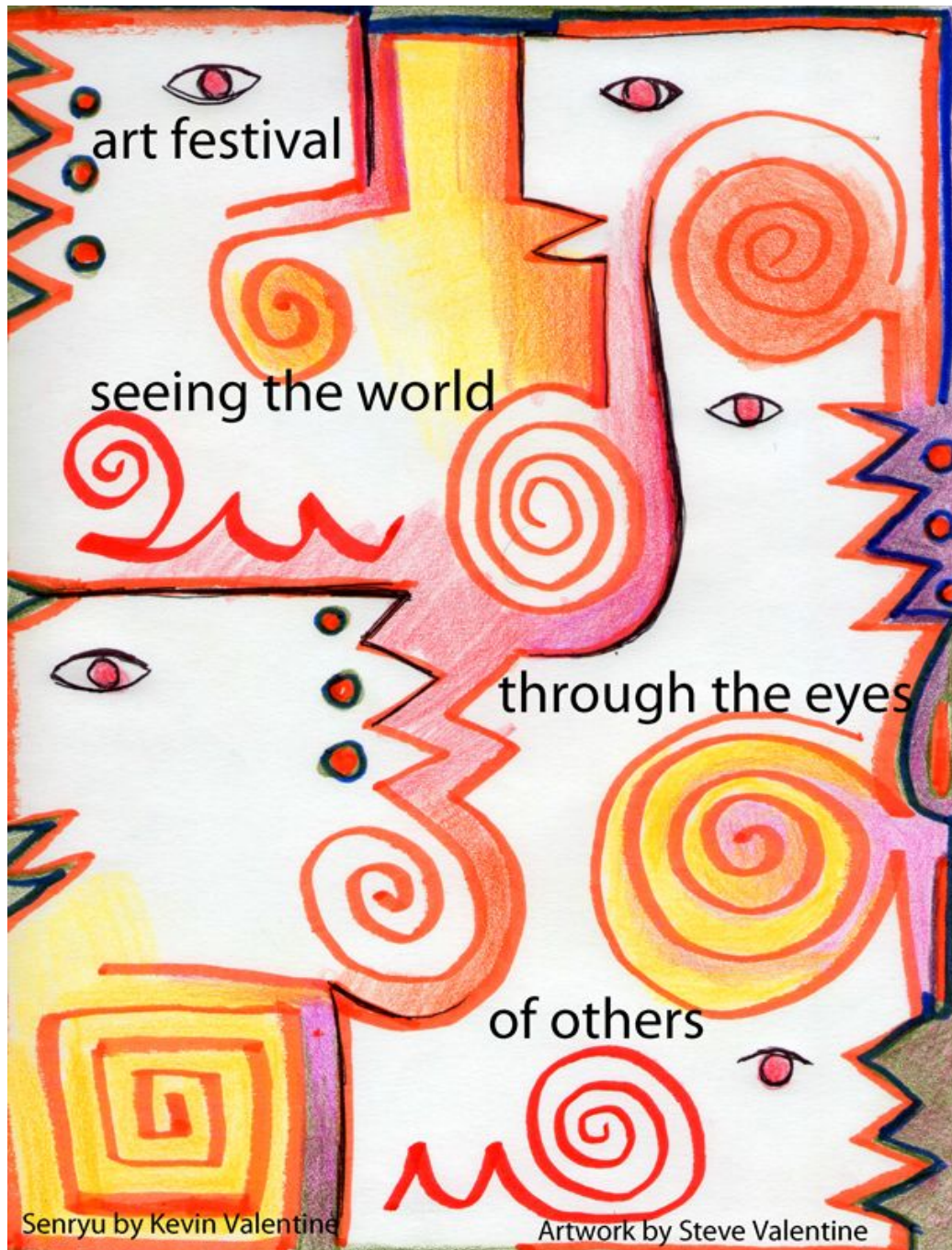
Bob Lucky
Saudi Arabia

my shadow
parodies
my carbon footprint

my shadow
fills out my application
to be myself

my shadow
an elastic band
to the sun

Hansha Teki
New Zealand



Senryu: **Kevin Valentine, USA**
Image: **Steve Valentine, USA**

his small hands
the long and the short
of it

Carol Raisfeld
USA

chanting sutras
the little monk plays
with his paper plane

housewarming
the neighbor's cat stays
just out of reach

school performance
a smile ripples
though the hall

abandoned house
Jesus watches over
empty bottles

Joanne van Helvoort
Netherlands

waiting room
I turn my back
to the clock

grocery store
an old man asks
for his own address

career shift
a room full of posters
now empty

Bhawana Rathore
India

The Good Soldier

She feels sorry for them. Those who chameleoned their name in youth, only to reclaim their true identity in late middle-age. She never wavered. Unlike the others. Some of whom still are so confused. Signing their correspondence, Trish one week, Patsy the next. It's as if they can't keep track of themselves. She looks in the fridge. Empty as usual. Except for the wine bottle, which is almost empty. But the shiny, white door is full. Row upon row of Patricia magnets in perfect formation. Standing at attention. Like all good soldiers.

at the bottom
of the inkwell
no forgiveness

Roberta Beary
Ireland

to find my way
I ponder
her navel

the roses I sent you
are plastic
they should last forever

checkout on aisle nine
I discover I'm pushing
someone else's basket

hands down
the worst poker night
of his life

candlelight vigil
the empty seat
at a table for two

Richard Grahn
USA

errand day —
running in circles
around the sun

Angela Terry
USA

bobbing for apples —
the she-devil's skirt
comes up short

Halloween date
ghosts me

Chad Lee Robinson
USA

huge and ordinary
Mom's smile
in my mirror

moonrise
we lift her head
to fluff the pillow

trip around the sun
what haven't
we seen before

Lorraine A. Padden
USA

3 a.m.
emotional triggers
everywhere

Amy Losak
USA



Image / Senryu: **Lavana Kray, Romania**

morning meditation
that same runner
back again

nearly dusk
he shows me the shortcut
we could've taken

Julie Warther
USA

full harvest moon
the neighbor
guns his engine

café window seat
the cycling sound
of his oxygen

the contorted clay
figure with head thrown back
and mouth agape
shatters . . .
as does the artist

Claire Vogel Camargo
USA

morning walk
woman waving at me
window cleaner

labrador's barking
she hopes
it's his letter

quiet village
my shaking hand
sends a blizzard

mother on the beach
her thoughts
playing volleyball

secondhand book
wondering
if they are still together

Tomislav Sjekloća
Montenegro

more strangers
in the elevator
i stand a little taller

Jay Friedenber
USA

turning five
first teacher
strike

down the path
out of breath . . .
hospice

S.M. Kozubek
USA

Rumination

What she said. And how I reacted. Yes, he felt bad and so did I.
How was I to know? That missing detail. If only. I know she was
angry but she's probably forgotten by now. If only I could too...

sealed boxes
tumbling in the attic
midnight thunder

Gail Oare
USA

meandering jazz
the conversation
takes a turn

what she would look like
without the glasses
licorice tea

reaching a new low
fluffing up
his dog's pillow

Mark Gilbert
United Kingdom

warhol museum
a coca-cola t-shirt
studies the wall

Mark Forrester
USA

open mic:
what a warming earth
can germinate

out-of-town meeting
the vibration
of her reply

igneous rock
the way we can't fathom
deep time

Monday
setting my coffee cup
to dry next to hers

Craig Kittner
USA

Haiku: Robin Anna Smith
Art: Shloka Shankar



Senryu: **Robin Anna Smith, USA**
Image: **Shloka Shankar, India**

first fuzz
on my son's chin —
spring peaches

city skyline —
the mayor's plan to hide
the homeless

between us
and our difficult neighbors
their cherry blossoms

Eric Lohman
USA

lockdown drill
someone lets loose
a killer fart

new classroom the same old story

ice cream truck jingle
the neighborhood stray
licks his balls

moonning the moon
getting out of the hammock
harder than getting in

reunion
the roads we took
took their toll

Bob Lucky
Saudi Arabia

fitness plan . . .
he starts to run
his mouth

Dave Read
Canada

child's pose —
thinking of
calling mother

warrior pose —
forgetting
last night's fight

Elaine Wilburt
USA

Father's Day . . .

I forget
to forget

rechecking
my inheritance . . .
180 over 90

stomach cramps
a torn cat claw
in my blankie

Lew Watts
USA

alumni news
very little mention
of my class

Sondra J. Byrnes
USA

understanding life
I make a puzzle
of the monarch's wing

lighthouse beam
my childhood spins
the dark

Kath Abela Wilson
USA

Bloke Talk

Five o'clock, Viagra Triangle, Chicago, and Gibson's is already filling up. Ah, a space—"You leaving?" God, I hate a warm bar stool.

New barman. Catch him, catch him ... okay, caught his eye.

"Hi, Bombay Sapphire, no vermouth, up with a twist, please."

"English?"

"Welsh. You?"

"Irish. Name's Sean."

"Lew. Footy or rugby?"

"Think my balls are round? Rugby, 'course."

"Tidy. Same here"

"Grand. You going to the World Cup?"

"Son's got two tickets."

"Long way to Japan."

"Haven't told the missus yet."

"When's her birthday?"

(Cont.)

(Cont.)

“Next month.”

“Get her something nice, then drop it on her.”

“That’s the plan. She’ll be here in a minute.”

“That her at the door? The blond?”

“Yep. Say fuck-all.”

“Mum’s the word.”

“Say, Sean, this is my wife.”

“What can I get you, love? Fancy a sake?”

on the rocks
the swollen end
of a swizzle stick

Lew Watts
USA



Senryu: **Johnnie Johnson Hafernik, USA**
Image: **Dorothy S. Messerschmitt, USA**

breakup
I leave the keys
in the usual place

as if
it were a religion
global warming

tourist guide
from statue to statue
a war

Sanela Pliško
Croatia

garden party
his eyes linger
on her rose hips

taking candy
from strangers
day of the dead

the hoard
remains
inheritance

my list
of first loves
undo button

memorial day
my photos
in the cloud

Sarah E. Metzler
USA

before her stroke,
grandma would hug me so hard
it hurt

Ed Bremson
USA

full subway car
the fly chooses to sit
next to me

hipster
his fedora older
than he is

Rehn Kovacic
USA

dog days . . .
an outfielder waves off
a lazy fly

my old fear of new

another blue johnny
the specialist
remembers me

Brad Bennett
USA

contemporary poetry . . .
what I hear
in traffic

Ana Drobot
Romania

leather briefcase
the old you
still on the name tag

glacial erratic—
I go nowhere
fast

dump gift shop
it's the thought
that counts

windblown curls
my young-looking
shadow

Laurie D. Morrissey
USA

in the fog
of haiku
senryu

work stress —
she envies
the centipede

on top of Old Smoky jaded millennials

Robert Epstein
USA

home town
an old love
at last Mass

butterfly tattoo
she settles on the arm
of my chair

another spring
the widower grows
a mustache

where does
the accent fall —
metastasis

drowsy
my death poem
can wait

Bill Kenney
USA



Image: **Karthik Ranganathan**, India
Senryu: **Shloka Shankar**, India

almost forgotten
my father's green shirt
buried in the closet

James Babbs
USA

Sneaking a Peek

dandelions
by her swimming lake
ready to be blown . . . away

*gardening . . . a sneak peek
at the neighbor's patch*

plumber's truck
her curtains open
a crack

*through the aperture
of a compound microscope
the prurience of germs*

zooming in . . . next to the dentures
horny goat weed

*coitus interruptus —
in our bedroom window
two grinning faces*

Lew Watts, Illinois, USA

Charles Trumbull, New Mexico, USA

evacuation siren
waiting for my coffee cup
to be full

bus stop shed
the rain keeps us
in someone's fart

Adjei Agyei-Baah
Ghana/New Zealand

exchange of knowledge . . .
in Chinese clothing
squeezed white man

scent of brandy
in the swirling snowflakes
barging drunkard

neglected monastery . . .
crucifix caught
in a spider web

Ivan Gaćina
Croatia

summer heat —
still posting letters
with Santa stamps

R. J. Swanson
USA

dollar bills
his origami are
pigs

Sunday bells
drinking my first coffee
religiously

Marie Derley
Belgium

the seatbelt clicks
my wife puts on
her errand face

life overseas
the smudge on the pan
looks like home

Zen temple
people taking pictures
of themselves

Ian Willey
Japan

collection plate
digging in a pocket
for a little scratch

heard above
baby's cry
fake snores

Christmas tradition
the whole family comes
apart

accepting the ring
with a definite yes
pawn shop clerk

driver's ed teacher
sucking butterscotch candy
yellow caution light

Dan Burt
USA

taking the table
with the best view
the couple eye their phones

Robert Witmer

Japan



Image / Senryu: **Terri L. French, USA**

a style
to run with
dandelion wind

old local bar
the warmth
of a cold beer

beach stones
the way they run
for office

fox carcass
I use
the selfie stick

Elmedin Kadric
Sweden

war news
the days that end
in why

minimum wage
the sun sets
before supper

assisted living
all the toiletries
are travel sized

Joe McKeon
USA

Daily Routine

Recently there was another mass shooting. The President of the United States withdrew from a nuclear arms treaty and my neighbor's three-year-old child drowned in their swimming pool.

lotus position
a bead of sweat
runs down my back

Joe McKeon
USA

nursing home
even when awake
she sleeps

Raymond C Roy
USA

hunter's moon
every scar
well-hidden

in the front yard
of my nagging neighbour
the same weed

Eva Limbach
Germany

marble stairs
the depression where people
have walked for years

hop-on
hop-off tour
my inner journey

depending on what I do today tomorrow

Olivier Schopfer
Switzerland

her face on the way up
her face on the way down
glass elevator

first skinny-dip
letting go
of the pool's edge

a speck of green
between her teeth
St. Patrick's Day

summer breeze
her ashes
encased in marble

rest stop closed —
forty more miles
of rain

Tanya McDonald
USA

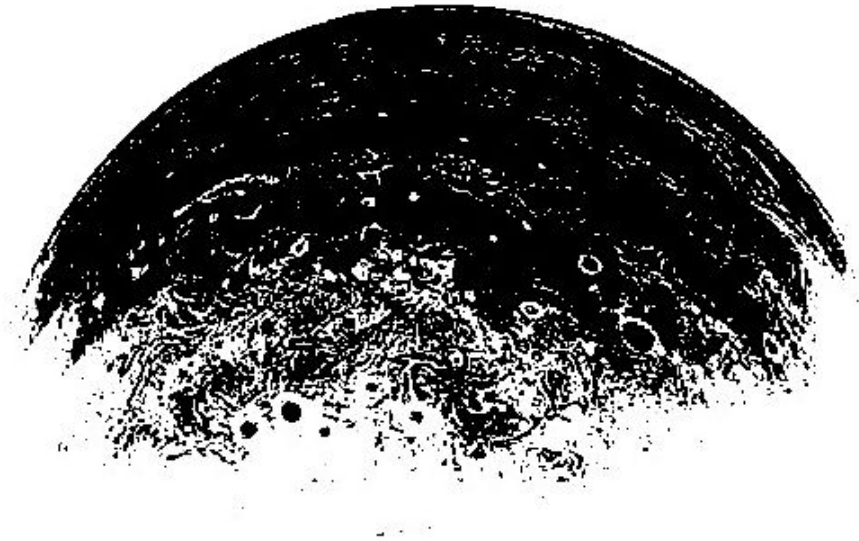
anniversary
buying the perfume
she wore

Richa Sharma
India

bell flowers —
my thumbprint
while checking its dryness

a hot room
the coolness coming in
from mother's wet hair

Muskaan Ahuja
India



hybrid masculinity eclipsing the moon

Image / Senryu: **Lori A Minor, USA**

undertaker
buried
in work

clothes shopping . . .
my daughter tries on
my wife's expression

résumé
the last time I trimmed
my beard

Keith Polette
USA

waking up
to fresh opportunities
that ugly tie

Gary Hittmeyer
USA

low armory roof
up barbed wire
to retrieve a ball

fight night
dad offers me a slice
of pickled tongue

Bill Cooper
USA

supermarket
Marvel heroes
on bags of chips

the sixties are over
my father drops poison
down the rabbit hole

a Christmas tree
strapped to the roof
open season

Tom Sacramona
USA

A Prelude to Dementia

After a downpour, the back of her wardrobe begins to ooze black mold. Shortly after that she starts forgetting words, sits on the sofa and ruminates, her jaw latching, unlatching. A neighbor says she gets lost in the hallway, doesn't remember which apartment is hers. The lawyer won't take her case—her peers on the jury, he explains, would never make one of their own a millionaire.

sent to a psychic her Social Security check

She knows I think she's acting crazy, but they really are coming today. Publishers Clearing House. They'll hand her a bouquet of red long-stemmed roses and a check for ten million. Just like they do with all the other winners on TV. She tells everyone in her building. She'll pay off her kids' mortgages, buy them new cars. She'll finally be able to play croquette with the rich.

Only the mouse
sees him
Mr. Sandman

Alexis Rotella

USA

dog shelter
a friend exchanges numbers
with my ex

spring thaw
the doorman returns
my head nod

dinner date
she takes sex
off the table

bomb scare
the platform much longer
than I remember

hate speech
a bird craps on the racist
and his bullhorn

John McManus
United Kingdom

windy day
the motionless skirt
of a flight attendant

Nikolay Grankin
Russia

homecoming —
the old faces
within the vinyl

smoke alarm chirps
three years
since his passing

quake damage . . .
seeing the blood vessels
of my retina

writer's house —
to think she wrote those books
with a feather

Barbara Strang
New Zealand

corn fritter
the way his belly
parts his suspenders

his winning haiku
something something something
fireflies

Indian summer
he calls his new girlfriend
'honey'

Alan S. Bridges
USA



Image / Senryu: **Elizabeth Crocket, Canada**

le filme francais
its subtitles
missing the plot

Bisshie
Switzerland

reaching into darkness
I pull out something
light

perfect stranger
the flaws he sees
in everyone

Peter Jastermsky
USA

dead battery
suddenly life
kicks in

over the hill
on a dandelion field
the kid in me

self help
the wine glass I keep
half full

Fractled
USA

farm to table
a cow patty sticks
to daddy's boot

no passing zone
the semi driver
winks at me

quilting circle
two old friends
patch things up

adoption
the stick figure family
adds a dog

the flags
stay at half-mast
blood moon

Terri L. French
USA

late May
Christmas Fitbit
still wrapped

David Oates
USA

Sanctuary

My mother used to send my sister and me to our bedrooms for misbehaving (or perhaps because she just wanted some time to herself). After just a few minutes my sister would crack open the bedroom door and beg to be released from her confinement. I, on the other hand, didn't consider this a form of punishment. My stuffed animals kept me company and there was always Nancy Drew to take me on an adventure. If I really wanted to leave my room all I had to do was start playing "Onward Christian Soldiers" on my Magnus electric organ. (I'm sure my mother cursed my grandmother for that Christmas present). Soon mom would open my door. "You can come out now if you can behave." "Naw, I'm good," I replied. After all, I had four more choruses to get through.

bedtime prayers
I give Jesus instructions
on preparing my room

Terri L. French
USA

navigating
adolescence
outdated travel guide

summit of Mount Fuji
he beholds
Issa's snail

Ronald K. Craig
USA

Monday's snooker hall —
the quiet
hum of men

the cool
breeze of his arc
skateboard kid

winnowing
the depths of a daughter
late fall

Jenny Fraser
New Zealand

also in August
I discuss with my husband
closing windows

Antonietta Losito

Italy



Image / Senryu: **Jianqing Zheng, USA**

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playing ball
with my grandson
my back goes for a toss

in this life
had I been blind to thorns . . .
roses within reach

the sand
collects at the bottom . . .
hourglass gossip

insomnia
one pain unearths the other

Kala Ramesh
India

rising early
to beat the crowd
balloon race

deep within the paint
of the old blue guitar
wild horses

lighting up
across the bar
the hot girl's cell phone

Ben Moeller-Gaa
USA

hotel bathroom
I practice
my O face

purity ring
I discover
my fingers

college professor —
he teaches me
a new position

the patriarchy polluting the air

our relationship biodegradable

Lori A Minor
USA

morning meditation
between breaths
tomorrow's dentist

John Budan
USA

eye
of the millstone
my beggar's usual spot

table reservation
swan napkins
busking

Ingrid Baluchi
North Macedonia

planing through the zodiac the night's possibility

the search for a more profound zero conducted in french

summer money now gone to the dog days

Jim Kacian

USA

a hand
through the window
cigarette butt

Hazel Hall
Australia

Strait And Narrow

I should have seen it coming. The writing was on the wall. I blame myself entirely for the lapse.

The fact was that my friend Dinesh was a healthy youngster like the rest of us. He smoked pot, drank like a fish and flirted with anybody in skirts. He was also a lazy, good for nothing bum. You see what I mean. A perfectly normal young adult. The role model for other youth. And then it happened.

Dinu came to me the other day and confessed in a whisper that he had given up pot. For good. I was alarmed. He then landed a bombshell by admitting to have gone on the wagon. Yes. He would never, ever touch alcohol. I was shocked.

"Dinu," I pleaded. "You're cracking up. Come to your senses, old pal."

Then Dinesh went on to say that he would henceforth wear three-piece-suits and attend to his father's business. No more dirty tees and torn jeans. To cap it all this included taking a bath everyday. By then I was totally traumatised. I wept for him.

(Cont.)

(Cont.)

I have now taken an appointment with a psychiatrist for my unfortunate buddy. The shrink is quite confident that a few months treatment should bring Dinu back to normal.

Meanwhile I have been making the rounds of places of pilgrimage and offering prayers. Even breaking coconuts.

Benares . . .
no one recognizes the priest
with his shirt on

Gautam Nadkarni
India

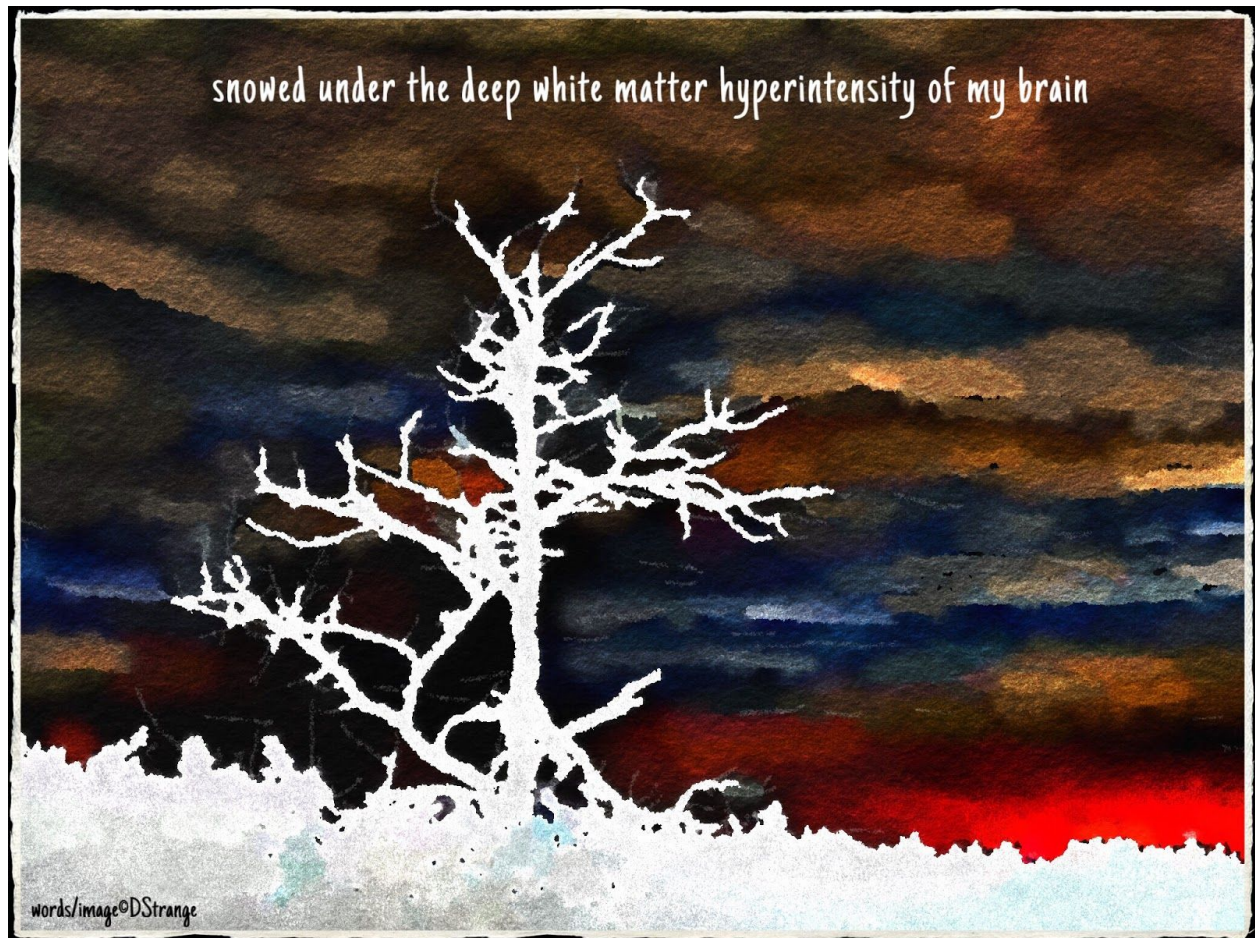


Image / Senryu: **Debbie Strange, Canada**

piling clouds
new building materials
behind the jail fence

quiet reading room
a man in the painting
looks curious

Jianqing Zheng
USA

crowd watching
my old dog and I
on a nude beach

humid heat
a drunk drones on
about bad luck

a rooster
with my backyard hens
voluntarily
the new neighbor gives
a speech about himself

Chen-ou Liu
Canada

home at last unpacking bags under my eyes

Bach briefly an upper case God

gathering dust
well-thumbed erotica
long untouched

sighs of relief . . .
the elephant agrees
to leave the room

city sky —
Orion's Belt
studded with neon

Susan King
United Kingdom

Mother's wake
her special occasion dress
finally worn

Joseph P. Wechselberger
USA

eyes peeled
they still don't see
potato heads

dancing
in the street
hailstones

Rick Jackofsky
USA

menopause
second base sliding
toward third

state fair
line of midway barkers
on cell phones

talking heads
shades of gray turn
black and white

Debbie Olson
USA

handshake
the smell
of a book

Pere Risteski
North Macedonia

caught in the not knowing descendants of stars

open palm my fate line crosses my life line

shadow boxing yesterdays contort the now

reciprocated butt sniffs the language of dogs

Veronika Zora Novak

Canada

complications



words/image@DStrange

I keep the last pair

of her socks

Image / Senryu: **Debbie Strange, Canada**

second marriage
working out the kinks
in the hose

frigid night
the homeless girl's
naked doll

Christmas
not giving
a damn

kintsugi
the gold filling
my tooth

small southern town
old cannons in the square
still pointing north

Bryan Rickert
USA

summer heat
my youngster's questions
on sex

lonely planet
an old man orbits
our table

his lapel
still filled with plastic
where the poppy was

Robert Kingston
United Kingdom

Bereft

Everything from the coils of burnt incense in the cat box to the KISS poster over the bed, says pro. But she had offered herself to me for 'love'. Had insisted, after a few drinks, that I follow her home, though I had no money. But when I try to kiss her she breaks out screaming "pig", and pushes me away. I feel a heavy object hit the door as I hastily close it behind me. One of the votive candles, I imagine.

alone again
a cockroach scurries ahead
to the stairs

Garry Eaton
Canada

blue sky
eye
floaters

Pearl Kline
Australia

funeral
origami crane
unfolds

maybe around
the next bend
the word I want

Nancy Shires
USA

therapist's office
holding space for each
color in the carpet

oyster bar his better half a shell of herself

identity crisis
the stone buddha and i
laugh until we fart

Kelly Sauvage Angel
USA

kissing
under cherry blossoms
boys

Erin Castaldi
USA

phishing expedition
caught me —
hook, line and sinker

swallowtail larvae
on her fennel
SHE noticed!

Susan Farner
USA

giving him that look mood ring

constellations
of Hollywood stars
wrinkles ironed out

as K9s go he was more of a K8

dinner over
I clear off
my insecurities

king asking as king

Roberta Beach Jacobson
USA



Image / Senryu: **Lavana Kray, Romania**

a cracked heart
in the crumbling sidewalk —
house for sale

another creak
from the old schooner
my aching bones

grandpa's visit
my pet parrot
learns a bad word

Pris Campbell
USA

mother's day
I begin
my journal

Guliz Mutlu
Turkey

raking leaves
what's not forgiven
at seventy, forgotten

after dinner
the couch sinks lower
best team loses

Ron Scully
USA

a monkey wrench
on the lacy tablecloth —
husband's return

back at work
taking a smoke break —
the stroke survivor

luxury cruise —
getting back in time
for garbage day

Ruth Holzer
USA

open window theory
grandma explains
her marriage

Radostina Dragostinova
Romania

pillow talk
we check the status
of his Amazon package

speed dating
a bunch of fake flowers
at every table

sitting together
on our smartphones
drifting clouds

he doesn't call
the hot water bottle
loses its warmth

Lucy Whitehead
United Kingdom

summer clouds
my hair turns greyer
waiting for the rain

all the rings
on a coconut tree
old age wrinkles

small town gossip
its sounds faster
than light

Srinivas S
India

empty church
the old god
lies in wait

honeymoon car
the can-clatter discord
to look forward to

John Hawkhead
United Kingdom