

haikuKATHA

unfolding the story within



Priti Isola

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haikuKATHA is the official monthly publication brought out by Triveni Haikai India. Its primary function is to publish the best in contemporary English-language haiku, senryu, tanka, haibun, tanka-prose, tanka-art, and haiga.

Each month's issue is put together by a team of editors who select poems from the previous month's prompts posted on the Triveni Haikai India website. The magazine is copyrighted by Triveni Haikai India.

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haiku, tanka, tanka-prose,
haiga and tanka-art

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haiku, tanka, tanka-prose, haiga and tanka-art

Our heartfelt thanks to:

Dipankar Dasgupta, Lorraine Haig,
Rupa Anand, Lafcadio and Srinivasa Rao Sambangi,

for providing the weekly challenges
for the month of May 2025,

Priti Aisola
for her brilliant ink sketch,

our contributors
for sharing their poems.

Tejasvat Award

Triveni Haikai India

Tejasvat in Samskrit means shining bright
with strength and excellence just like the sun.

The tanka editors,

Firdaus Parvez, Kala Ramesh,

Priti Aisola and Suraja Menon Roychowdhury

are pleased to present

the

Tejasvat Award

to a poet

who has a set number of poems

which hold the essence of Japanese short-form poetry

in any one issue.

In this issue, we'll be honouring

Alfred Booth

for his five impressive tanka and tanka-prose.

Tejasvat
Alfred Booth

Triveni Haikai India

a dove coos
while wild barley welcomes
a breeze
spring's green palette
overwhelms my blues

a soft rain
shimmers the lake
something about it
reminds me
of your last breath

ten thousand poems
quietly flutter at dusk
a flight of swallows
revive the freedom dreams
of Icarus

midnight
overlooks the lake
we wait
on the bench
until shadows return

Tejasvat Alfred Booth

Triveni Haikai India

Gifts of Life

The gardener says the birch tree has let its lower branches die so the sap can continue flowing upwards to reach even more sunlight. Its roots plunge deep into the earth's loamy goodness. I have stretched my own roots between two continents. They have no more elasticity. At almost 70, my life force has let my hair thin, my voice croaks much too often, and my vertebrae sink. I too, would like to continue standing taller and to wean myself off of my past dead weight.

grounding myself
to quiet this wanderlust
grass tickles my feet
and dappled sunlight warms
more than these old bones

haiga

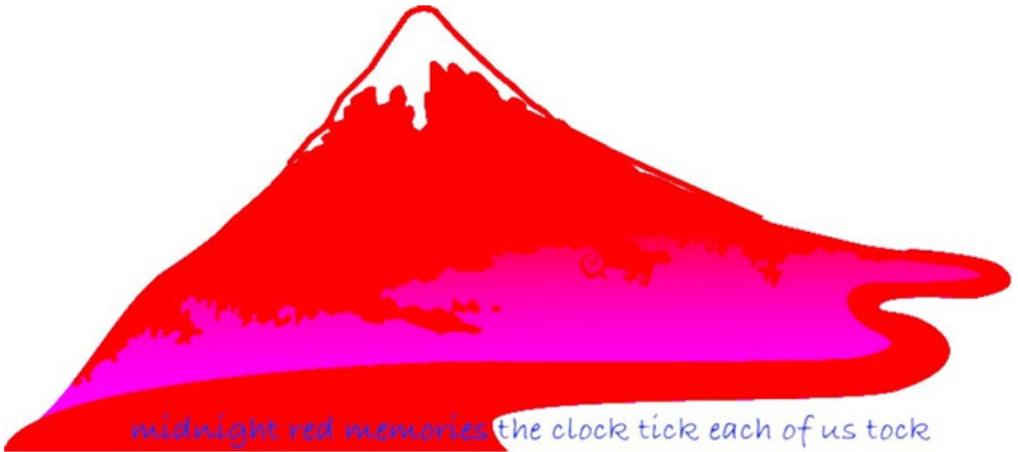


image and ku: Alan Summers

haiku

how each note
fits into the silence
blackbird

Alfred Booth

up in smoke ...
that one promise
in the ashtray

Baisali Chatterjee Dutt

beach sunset
I let the waves take
my castle

Baisali Chatterjee Dutt

mango lassi
painting summer toenails
to match

Billie Dee

haiku

laundromat moon
my loose ends tangled
with the whites

Billie Dee

third date
the jasmine in your voice
... in mine

Billie Dee

pollen drift —
I let her anger
settle first

C.X. Turner

Friday traffic jam
so many commas
before full stop

Fatma Zohra Habis

haiga



image and ku: Debbie Strange

haiku

seaside silhouettes ...
we push a distant yacht
with our fingers

Gowri Bhargav

psithurism ...
with every stride
i hum

Gowri Bhargav

a blackbird beak
the wriggling worm
with nowhere to go

Joanna Ashwell

house-boat
the song of river
beneath our bones

Joanna Ashwell

haiku

forest conclave
the deepest part
of a pinecone

Joanna Ashwell

deep blue sky ...
the squirrel's hind legs slip
again on the power line

K. Ramesh

brooding
over my dog's death
I miss the first nightingale

Kala Ramesh

bottling up
your sourness with spice
pickled mango

Kalyanee Arandhara

haiga



*Vivaldi's storm!
a yellow leaf twirls
the wind*

_kala

image and ku: Kala Ramesh

haiku

soft breeze
the day unwinds
in a hammock

Kanjini Devi

outdoor shower
a skink scuttles across
my shoulders

Kanjini Devi

turmeric handprints
on both sides of a nightie
the long day

Lakshmi Iyer

dark brown stains
on the radio's volume tuner
village tea stall

Lakshmi Iyer

haiku

hailstones
mother calls it
another
headache

Lakshmi Iyer

neighbour's Tecoma
drunk bees drifting
in my yard

Leena Anandhi

white scent
a bee crawls deeper
into the petals

Lorraine Haig

lavender bush
two pollen-filled baskets
on the bees knees

Marion Clarke

haiga



thyroid meds
she tells me she's having
none of it

image and ku: Marion Clarke

haiku

spring peepers
listening for mom
to call us home

Marilyn Ashbaugh

temple ruins
only a lizard's eyes
moving

Meera Rehm

mating dragonflies
the longer pause
of an em-dash

Meera Rehm

evicted homes
a girl's red ribbon flutters
on a bare branch

Milan Rajkumar

haiku

winter chill
scrabbling for the sweater
in the give-away bag

Mohua Maulik

uprooted pipal
the keening saw
our rudaali

Mohua Maulik

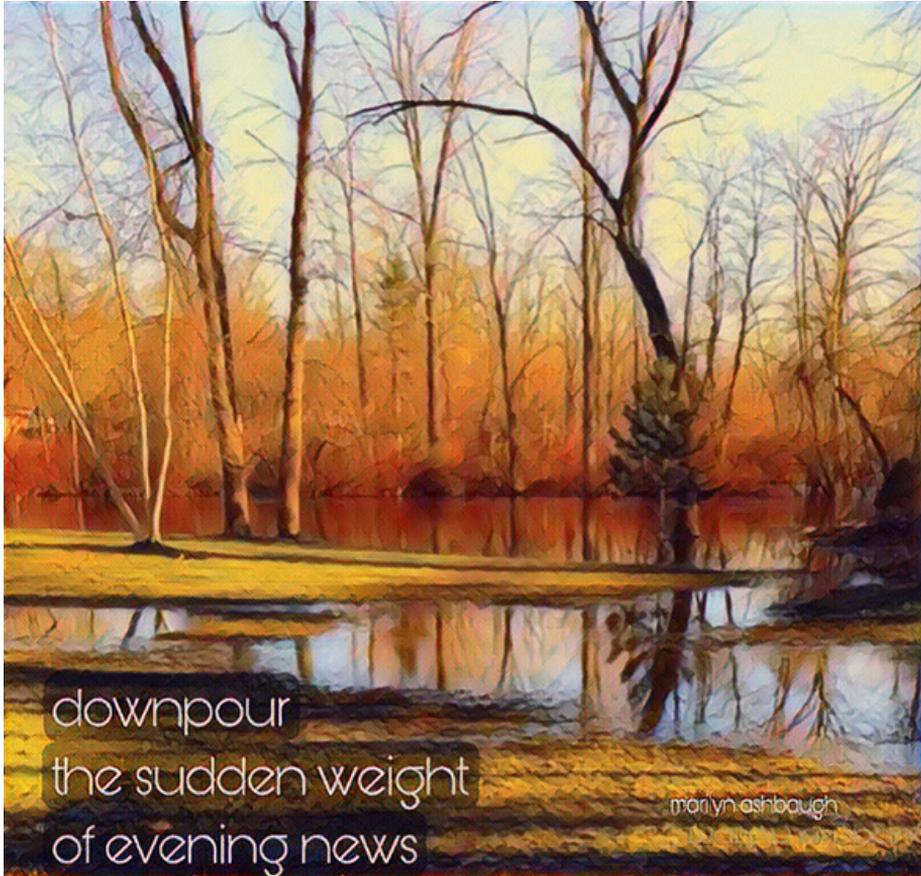
summer sun
matching dangles
of the amaltas

Mohua Maulik

after my nap
the same crow
on the same wire

Nalini Shetty

haiga



downpour
the sudden weight
of evening news

marilyn ashbaugh

image and ku: Marilyn Ashbaugh

haiku

palm fronds
swaying dusk colours ...
taste of wind in my tea

Padma Priya

foraging magpie
one end of a seesaw
always down

paul m.

Seville Cathedral
all my photos
in "portrait"

paul m.

pitted road
one by one the jackdaws
startled into flight

Robert Kingston

haiku

orange-bellied sky
kangaroos mosh through
the flood plain

Ron C. Moss

neon lights
notes of her song settle
on empty chairs

Samir Satam

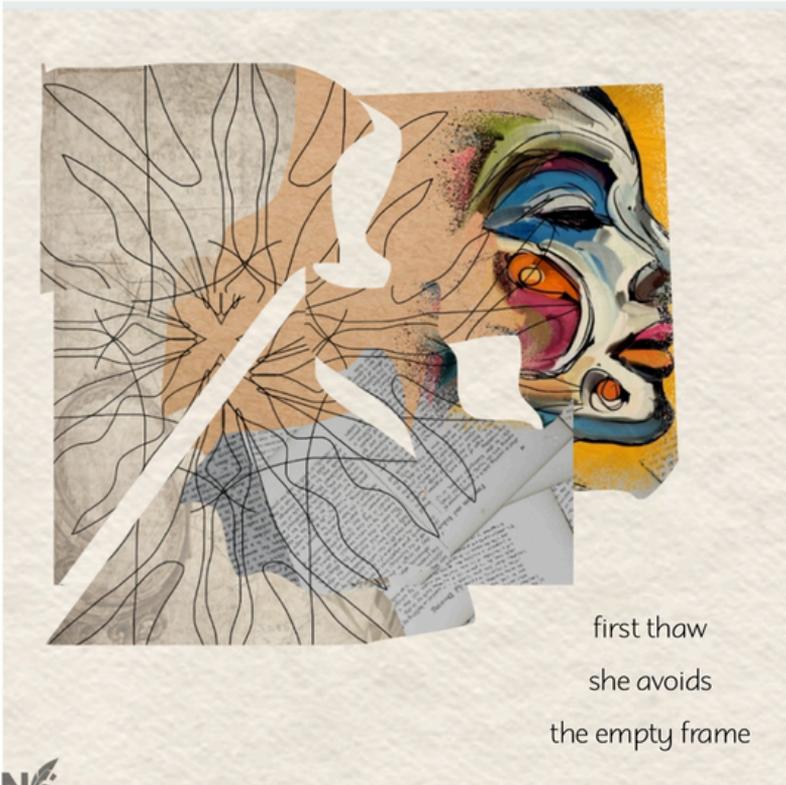
Red alert —
the umbrella seller sits back
to enjoy his tea

Sathya Venkatesh

flower show ...
among the spectators
bees and butterflies

Somu Sakthi

haiga



first thaw
she avoids
the empty frame

N^S

image and ku: Nalini Shetty

haiku

rocking chair
hailstones in a tumbler
of toddy

Srinivasa Rao Sambangi

inbuilt GPS —
the lizard i drove out
is back home

Sumitra Kumar

one-line haiku

klinklonkhssssssteeeeeeamslurchsssssaturdaybuzzzzyessspresssso

Alan Summers

jasmine still opening after the door shut

C.X. Turner

dune wind I follow what he didn't say

C.X. Turner

spiral staircase I turn and return to distant swallows

Kala Ramesh

jasmine trails the terrace tea for two

Kanjini Devi

haiga

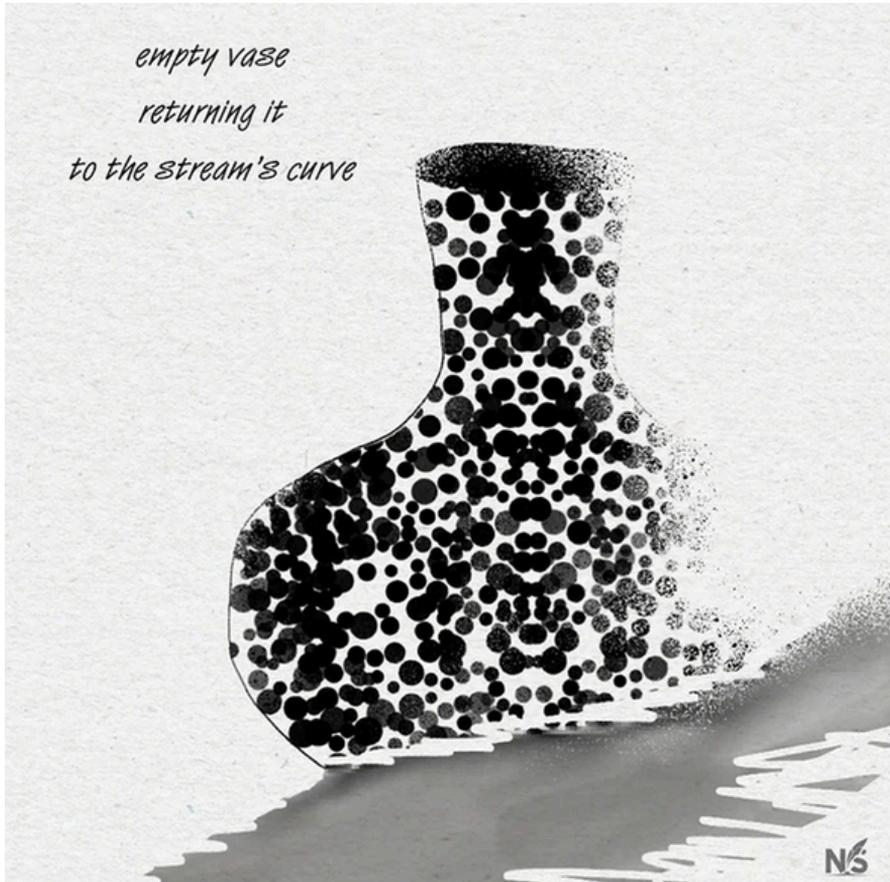


image and ku: Nalini Shetty

one-line haiku

the commas in our conversation first date

Mona Bedi

child-pose I let out some wind

Mona Bedi

patterns of frog song shading the night

Ron C. Moss

the prosody of wind beneath my wings

Shloka Shankar

happy hour dining bite-sized peace

Vandana Parashar

concrete haiku

delayed
rains

from
a
ceiling
fan

a
farmer
h
a
n
g
s

Kala Ramesh

haiga

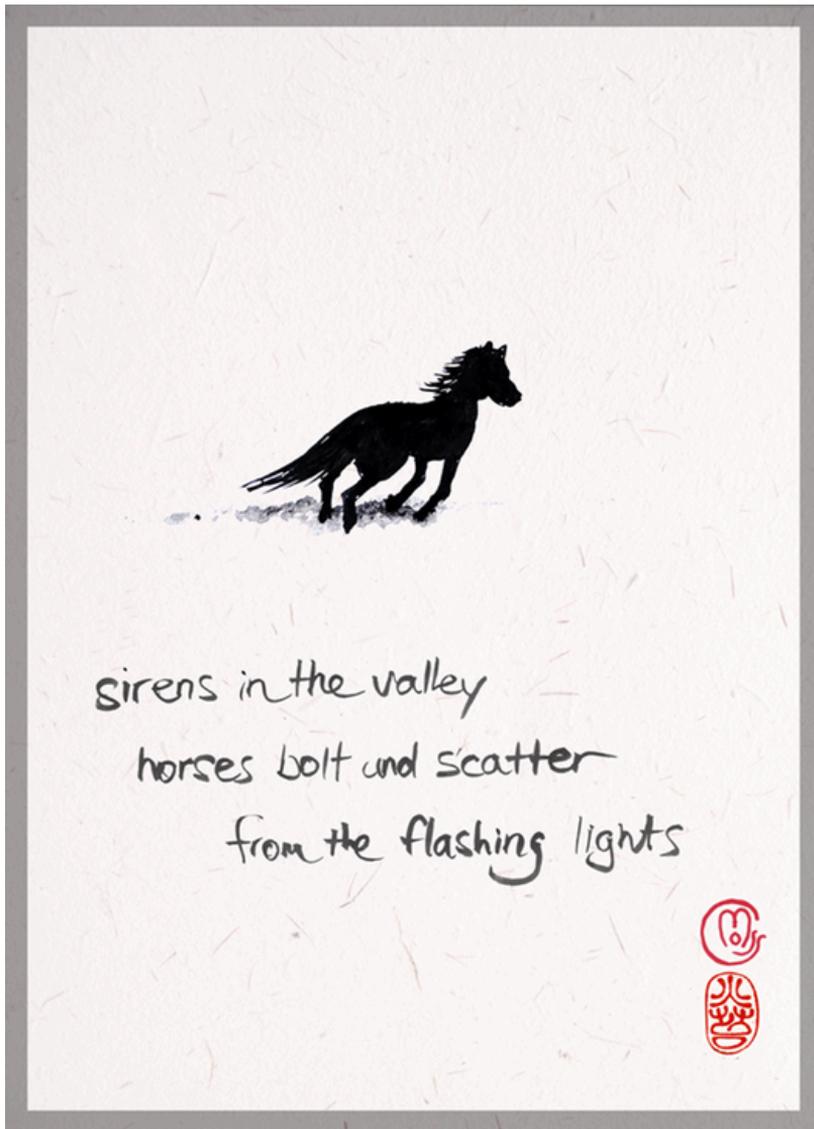


image and ku: Ron C. Moss

tanka

a dove coos
while wild barley welcomes
a breeze
spring's green palette
overwhelms my blues

Alfred Booth

a soft rain
shimmers the lake
something about it
reminds me
of your last breath

Alfred Booth

ten thousand poems
quietly flutter at dusk
a flight of swallows
revive the freedom dreams
of Icarus

Alfred Booth

tanka

midnight
overlooks the lake
we wait
on the bench
until shadows return

Alfred Booth

counting stars ...
wondering, wondering how
a trillion neutrinos
just passed through me
without an ouch

Billie Dee

spring
again he steps
into
the poem
without knocking

C.X. Turner

tanka

may day
the wren's feet
drum
soft dents
in the puddles

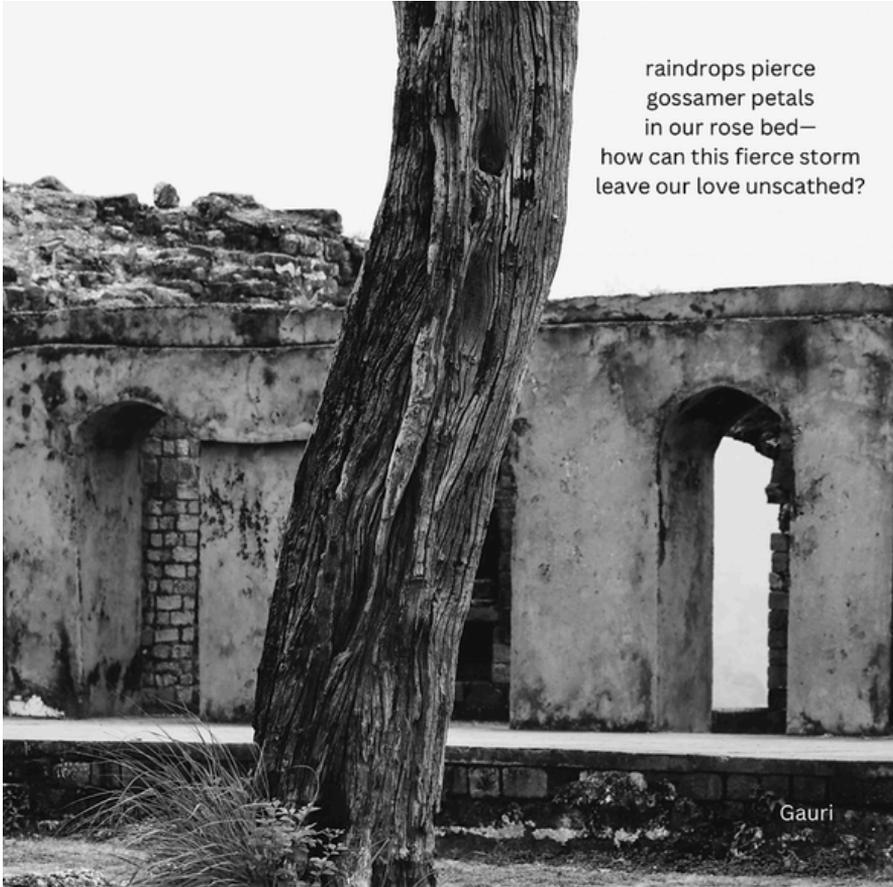
C.X. Turner

the quiet
in my footsteps
each night
I walk without
naming the ache

C.X. Turner

an old puzzle
missing the last piece
your absence
a familiar annoyance
I just work around

Cynthia Bale



raindrops pierce
gossamer petals
in our rose bed—
how can this fierce storm
leave our love unscathed?

Gauri

image and tanka: Gauri Dixit

tanka

a lone warrior
at the precipice
of a seaside cliff
winds swirl around
a world torn asunder

Dinah Power

one language
at the train station
hands waving goodbye
how warm it is
a kiss behind the glass

Fatma Zohra Habis

an ant struggles
with a crumb
this everyday life
at the first light of dawn
I hear father's steps

Fatma Zohra Habis

tanka

trespassing
on disputed property
in the patch
where banana plants thrived
a coiled snake

Geetha Ravichandran

strobe lights ...
I pull down the blinds
and curl up,
rows of trees blister
under the glare

Geetha Ravichandran

the trail winds
past cliffs and chasms
on my way to sleep
I begin to drift, as rain
washes the path away

Joy McCall

tanka

the song
of the roots is a deep
grave song
they work in darkness
and do not seek light

Joy McCall

she serves food
from morning to night
we hardly notice
her monotony
lost in our abundance

Kala Ramesh

green fields ...
after a month of tai chi
my limbs
begin to welcome
the stretch of a moment

Kala Ramesh



the cosmic dance
of Lord Shiva
sparrows hop
keeping pace
with my steps

_kala

tanka

winning
is that
all chaff
which has fallen
on the ground?

Kalyanee Arandhara

ten thousand
maple leaves softly falling
some days
the hollow in this heart
still holds out for you

Kanjini Devi

moonvine
and studded sky
I lie awake
trying to grasp this space
between our worlds

Kanjini Devi

tanka

the red
of a dozen sirens
bleeding
into the palm
of midnight

Lafcadio

aging mother
neatly tucks the bedspread
under a pillow
a picture of hers in bridal wear
now creased and faded

Lakshmi Iyer

betwixt
the moon and earth
my wish
clinging to the tail
of a falling star

Lorraine Haig

tanka

waking
to whitewash on windows
a frost dipped-world
blurs the places beyond
where violence echoes

Marilyn Humbert

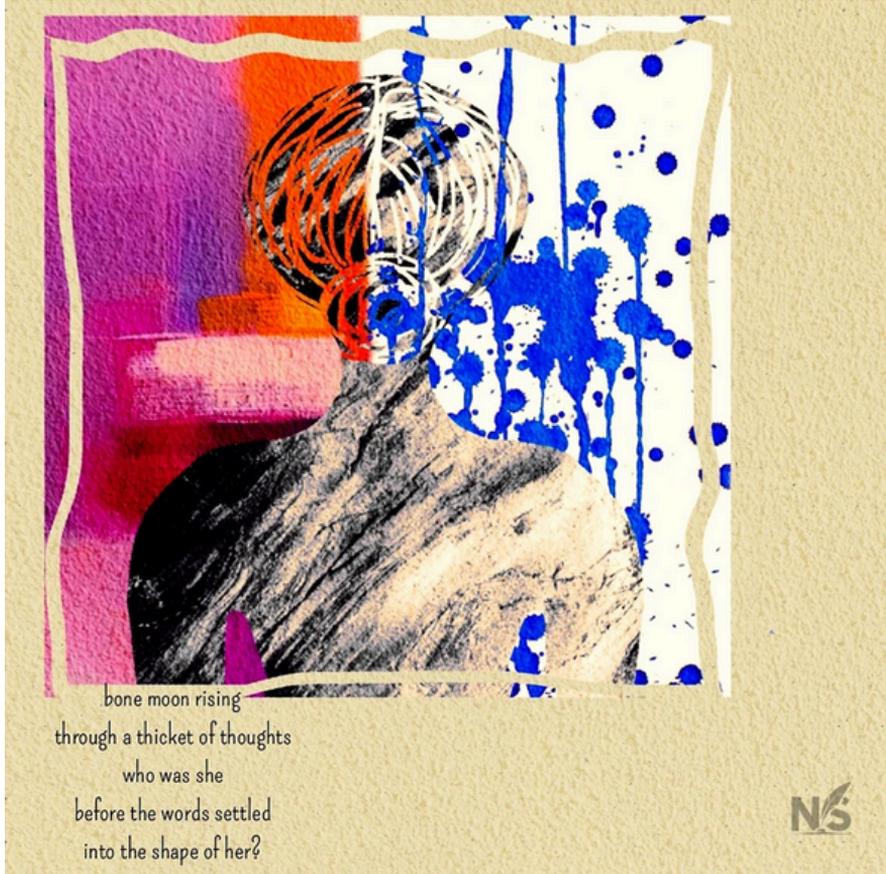
how to untangle
the knots that bind
me to you ...
a white heron's flight
towards the setting sun

Marilyn Humbert

an eclipse of moths
around the streetlamp
blackout
granny relives the horrors
of another war

Mohua Maulik

tanka-art



bone moon rising
through a thicket of thoughts
who was she
before the words settled
into the shape of her?

NS

image and tanka: Nalini Shetty

tanka

the thunderstorm
sucks me into a nightmare
jerked awake
i wish it were just as easy
to escape reality

Mohua Maulik

in an inky sky
trying to pin down the stars
flickering
and disappearing in the smog
just like my poems

Mohua Maulik

too many years
trying to mend
what never tore
the bulbul just sings
without fixing a thing

Nalini Shetty

tanka

he said nothing
when he left
only the chair
rocking a little
after he was gone

Nalini Shetty

lost button
in the back of the drawer ...
how far i've left
the little girl who used
to run wild and play

Nitu Yumnam

train journey ...
at 120 kmph
the trees rush past
distilling past and future
into the now

Padma Priya

tanka

grudgingly
I close the book
as routine edges itself
into the dreamscape ...
somewhere a robin sings

Padma Priya

is there a pain-free world
for the departed
browning
rose petals scatter
around a planter

Priti Aisola

playing
bhajan after bhajan
yet nothing reaches you
what if i could chant
your thousand names

Priti Aisola

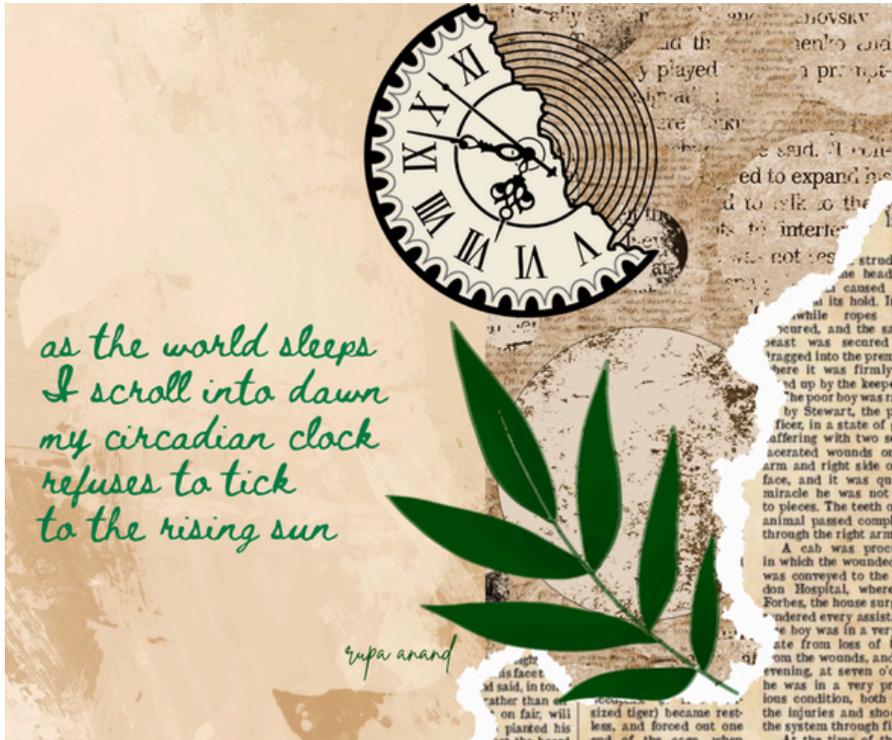


image and tanka: Rupa Anand

tanka

a change
of battery and the clock
revives ...
each day my life force
weaker and weaker

Priti Aisola

end of day
a blackbird
in full voice
files away
the dusk

Robert Kingston

sinking deeper
into a dream state
these dolphins
creating hoops
into sunset

Robert Kingston

tanka

sunbird hovering
in front of the swaying
hibiscus
the years you took
to decide

Sreenath

wild games
in the long night
his mind
unable to walk away
from a what-if theatre

Sumitra Kumar

this slow forgetting
of who I used to be
and then there's grandma
all she remembers
are her yesteryears

Suraja Menon Roychowdhury

tanka

this rainy day
has no sunset or stars
I hum a raga
evoking the dawn
and your instant irritation

Suraja Menon Roychowdhury



tanka by Rupa Anand
image by Ashok Mahindra

Alfred Booth



Gifts of Life

The gardener says the birch tree has let its lower branches die so the sap can continue flowing upwards to reach even more sunlight. Its roots plunge deep into the earth's loamy goodness. I have stretched my own roots between two continents. They have no more elasticity. At almost 70, my life force has let my hair thin, my voice croaks much too often, and my vertebrae sink. I too, would like to continue standing taller and to wean myself off of my past dead weight.

grounding myself
to quiet this wanderlust
grass tickles my feet
and dappled sunlight warms
more than these old bones

C.X. Turner

A Beak Full of Green

I was never the girl who made sense. I spoke sideways, thought in weather, laughed where silence was expected. They wanted smooth edges, mirror-light. I brought fog, flint, the smell of rain. Still, something in me held fast — a moss-born confidence, soft but certain.

Over time, it was worn thin by those who said they loved me, but called me difficult, too much, not enough. They clipped the voice they claimed to cherish. I bent myself to fit their hollow praise, mistaking that for safety.

And yet, just out of reach, the self I might have grown into if left unpruned. Maybe confidence isn't born loud, but grows quiet where light breaks through the fray.

green
in the garden wall
I bend to see
a version of myself
still learning to rise

C.X. Turner

A Theory of Lightness

The air leans close tonight, the kind of stillness that makes you notice ivy shadows, the forgotten gate unlatched, the beech branch with no leaves. A yellow butterfly lifts from the bramble and wavers out of sight.

I keep replaying your quiet, as if there might be something I missed. But there is no echo, not even a hollow to climb into.

I held on — too long. Not to you, perhaps, but to the outline I made of you.

the shape
of whistling wind
through thistle
I watch what never held
still find a way to move

nothing
to look back or forward
but looking within
i wouldn't want
anything different either



Poem / Pic: Sreenath

image and tanka: Sreenath

Dinah Power
~

Tumult

While on a walkabout I reach out to give a helping hand, it is slapped away.
Going through the park I give an encouraging smile to a toddler trying to kick a ball. Mum glares at me.
I ask for the bathrooms. A nasty tone says "none here." I mimic him sotto voce.
My friend grabs me for fear we will be shot, but his friend is laughing. Relief spreads through me and I share a smile with him.

a game console
is abandoned by the boy
in the real war now
black clouds
punctuate the sky

Gauri Dixit
~

Around the Corner

She wakes before the alarm, as always. She manages to switch it off in time,
before it startles him awake.

When he opens his eyes, the tea must be ready. If not ...

forgotten dreams
of companionship —
the tailorbird
readies himself again
to weave his fragile nest

Robert Kingston



Boards Don't Hit Back

I'd studied karate for several years before moving onto weapons. This was the first time our instructor mentioned the technique whereby the little finger side of our palm becomes an axe.

purple irises
through the window
at the fracture clinic
droplets of rain
from petal to petal

Rupa Anand

Alchemy

There's a small grove just beyond the house. It's part of the community. The trees stand tall, replenished by songsters and raptors. Midnight-blue rustles the branches of silver oaks. I place a row of water-filled clay pots for them. The best time to find them sipping delicately on the sun-kissed wall is in the early afternoon. When I'm down and under and without hope, I look up with keen eyes and ears for them to call and then go running.

survivor
the brokenness
held together
by something
as soft as feathers

Sandip Chauhan

Uncounted

For all the unlived lives and wrong turns folded into quiet corners, there were things I did right without knowing.
The friend I called at 2am.
The song I played softly in the kitchen, hoping you'd hear it from the next room.
The branch I cleared of cypress needles so you could sit beside me.
The time I stood in the doorway while rain patterned the leaves and listened, though I wanted to walk away.
And for all the selves I might have been, I would not trade these.

wild mustard
threads through the gravel —
not every joy
needs tending hands
to turn toward light

gembun with tanka

Gauri Dixit
~

No storm visits this quiet street, no rain batters its pavements.

the lone banyan
sprawls heavy
on old stone steps –
why must living
be an event each day?

Sandip Chauhan

Reunion beneath the banyan tree.

ants thread
between fallen fruit —
the sillage
of childhood summers
lingers in the dusk

Dear Readers
thank you for being with us.

See you once again on 22 July 2025!
with many more fine poems
from our contributors.

Team: *haikuKATHA*