

# *#FemkuMag*



*Issue 34*

# #FemkuMag

haikai poetry by womxn and non-binary folx

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Issue 34

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## A note from me to you—

Please let me start by apologizing for how incredibly late this issue is. I had planned to get it out on time, and certainly before today, but my health has not been good. I won't get into too much, but I will say that bone spurs, osteoarthritis, and nerve damage have completely overtaken my body and at 30, my body is the equivalent of a 65 year old, so I'm doing a lot of adjusting and experimenting with different treatments to find what works.

It is because of this that #FemkuMag will go down to two issues per year next year and I am seriously considering taking on an assistant editor to help things run more smoothly. To be fair, when I started this journal, the issues were less than 15 pages and now we're close to 80 sometimes. With my health deteriorating, this format is just too much by myself four times a year. I do hope y'all will understand.

As for this issue, there's a lot to unpack. First, the Marlene Mountain Contest results (poems only, commentary to come soon!!!) and on top of the normal submission period, I also asked for Roe vs Wade poems which are found all throughout this issue. I wanted to get the contest commentary into this issue, too, but with my current Bronchitis, I just can't. However, it's **ELECTION DAY** here in the USA and I **NEEDED** to get these poems out into the world to encourage as many people as possible to VOTE for the rights of anyone AFAB (assigned female at birth), and to VOTE queer. We have the right to exist in our bodies however we need to. I'm sorry I couldn't get this out sooner because it really means everything to me, but I do hope you can help share these poems in protest and encouragement today—even if you don't have a poem in here, find one that affects you, share their experience, and encourage people to go VOTE!

💙 Lithica Ann, editor

# Marlene Mountain Contest Results

## First Place

maidenhair ferns he hides the condom

*Lorraine Padden*

## Second Place

Roe v Wade the right not to bear

*Laurie Greer*

## Third Place

schrodinger's womxn knowing and unknowing our place

*Tracy Davidson*

## Honorable Mentions

(r)aging

*Barrie Levine*

where polliwogs used to be the neighborhood

*Cynthia Anderson*

## Contributors

Susan Burch  
Joan Torres  
Aidan Castle  
Ustat Sethi  
Kristen Lindquist  
Richa Sharma  
Kimberly Dawn  
Laurie Greer  
Corine Timmer  
Barrie Levine  
Hifsa Ashraf  
Sarah Metzler  
Helen Ogden  
Jillian Calahan  
Debbie Strange  
Antoinette Cheung  
Wanda Amos  
Christine Eales  
Mona Bedi  
Daniela Misso  
Nancy Brady  
Marilyn Ashbaugh  
Debbie Olson  
Cynthia Anderson  
Hazel Hall  
Allyson Whipple  
Mariel Herbert  
Ana Drobot  
Arvinder Kaur  
Lakshmi Iyer

Helen Buckingham  
Billie Dee  
Deborah P Kolodji  
Mariko Kitakubo  
Jackie Chou  
Sharon Hawley  
kris moon kondo  
Pris Campbell  
Margaret Walker  
Vandana Parashar  
Tracy Davidson  
Sangita Kalarickal  
Reid Hepworth  
Kerry J Heckman  
Mirela Brăilean  
Maya Daneva  
Anna Maria Domburg-Sancristoforo  
Teji Sethi  
Laurie Wilcox-Meyer  
Mary McCormack  
Neera Kashyap  
Maeve O'Sullivan  
Erin Castaldi  
B. L. Bruce  
Tina Mowrey  
Baisali Chatterjee Dutt  
Bernadette O'Reilly  
Daya Bhat  
Maria Concetta Conti  
Muskaan Ahuja  
Betsy Hearne

## Susan Burch

self-absorbed raincloud

ex-boyfriend his dick pic a Pixar short

that jerk  
might be  
her baby-daddy  
if not for  
Plan B

**Susan Burch** is a good egg.

## Joan Torres

noting my weight gain balding doctor

**Joan Torres** is a junior college student studying social work. She is from a small town and whose world through poetry has gotten a little bigger. She has been published in *#FemkuMag* and *Sonic Boom*.



## Aidan Castle

the ledge where i was standing moonlit

wet with rain the sex worker's mascara

**Aidan Castle** is a nonbinary poet and visual artist whose work is informed by neurodivergence and a passion for nature. He lives in the Pacific Northwest with his husband and two cats. Aidan's poems have been published in various journals of haiku and senryu, and he was a 2021 Trailblazer finalist.

## Ustat Sethi

fogged mirror  
sharpening the contours  
of my thoughts

scratching away her worth in gold :: caveat emptor

inter alia *fearless* is a trait of the living

**Ustat Sethi** is a student of grade 12, Cambridge Advanced Level. When she is not scribbling away in her journal, she enjoys dancing, collecting dog pictures and discussing everything from socio – politics to cryptography.

## Kristen Lindquist

neighborhood tracks  
just another way  
a kid could die

learning to read  
his facial expressions  
moon map

new cribbage hand resisting the binary

female rain  
the five beating hearts  
of an earthworm

**Kristen Lindquist** is a poet and writer living on the coast of Maine. She was featured in NEW RESONANCE 12.

## Richa Sharma

sea storm i risk honesty

dried mud the body eager to dissolve into a definition

in my world he assumes the worth of rain

after the storm so much forgotten

**Richa Sharma** loves to write Japanese short forms. Her work has appeared in numerous international haiku journals since 2019.

## Kimberly Dawn

abandonment  
the hollow familiarity  
of home

**Kimberly Dawn** is a constant work in progress, continuously evolving in her personal and creative life. She is a poetess of many platforms including haiku, haibun, blackout, elfchen and more. You can find more of her work on Instagram @rockport\_press ❤️

## Laurie Greer

first crescent moon  
they tell her the fetus  
can make a fist

pomegranate seeds...  
the names of the missing  
on the tongues of their mothers

black-eyed Susans. . .  
a blind spot  
for too long

**Laurie Greer** lives, writes, and walks in Washington, DC, where there is still taxation without representation.

## Corine Timmer

urban tiger she lap dances her way into his pocket

that smile  
used to flutter my heart  
frozen waterfall

extramarital affair again the flowers

new moon in Aquarius  
following the beat  
of my own drum

**Corine Timmer** is a visual artist, author, publisher, award-winning haiku poet, and street dog advocate. She has completed four anthologies of animal haiku keyed to the signs of the Chinese zodiac. She lives in rural Portugal between the sea and the Algarvean hills.

## Barrie Levine

senior date  
all our decades  
a perfect match

taste of dawn  
the salt on your lips  
from an early swim

jeweledclutchmom'stightgriponme

**Barrie Levine** practiced family law in Boston, dedicated to representing women, from 1973 to 2014. She began writing haiku in her seventies, an incredibly generative decade for her. She recently published a collection of 126 haiku and senryu entitled *COTTON MOON*.



## Hifsa Ashraf

apart from  
the part of me. . .  
(still)born

day moon. . .  
she takes the blame  
for miscarriage

ivy vine—  
the way he portrays  
a woman

peacock flower—  
I still am a mother  
of the unborn child

**Hifsa Ashraf** is a widely published award-winning poet, author, editor, and social activist from Rawalpindi, Pakistan. She won the Touchstone Award (Individual Poems, 2021) and received special mention for her book, *Her Fading Henna Tattoo*, (Touchstone Distinguished Books Award, 2020 and Haiku Society of America Merit Book Award, 2021).

## Sarah Metzler

first day of school  
her backpack  
safety orange

first day of spring  
the still wet paint  
on a graffiti penis

the white privilege of colorblindness

**Sarah Metzler** is a poet and kids' counselor living in rural Pennsylvania with her husband, dog, and a few old chickens. Besides short-form poetry, she is currently enjoying fragrant peonies, private swimming holes, and hazy IPAs. She is not enjoying grown-ass adults' use of violence instead of conflict resolution skills.

## Helen Ogden

falling petals  
he asks me the meaning  
of *foreplay*

coming out—  
the abortion  
I kept to myself

draft opinion  
sizing up  
the dildo display

supreme court leak  
I google *Lysistrata*  
followed by *libido*

**Helen Ogden** maintains her sanity with a daily haiku/senryu practice in Pacific Grove, CA. When she recently discovered that it is not simply a 5-7-5 poem her world expanded, along with her mind.

## Jillian Calahan

snowdrop  
her secret hidden beneath  
the Bible belt

laundry list  
of household chores  
bloody coat hanger

**Jillian Calahan** (she/her/they) is a poet and short story writer from Seattle, Washington. When she's not writing you can find her in a bookstore, chilling with her 4 cats and 2 dogs, crafting, or taking too many pictures of pretty sunsets. You can find her work on Instagram [@novamarie\\_poetry](#)

Debbie Strange



ghost birds  
the haunting sound  
of bereavement

words/image(C)DStrange

## Debbie Strange (cont.)

lunulae  
a friend tells me  
about her stillborn

**Debbie Strange** is a chronically ill poet and visual artist. Her book, *The Language of Loss: Haiku & Tanka Conversations*, won the 2019 Sable Books International Women's Contest. It also received an HM in the 2021 Haiku Society of America Merit Awards, and won the 2022 Marianne Bluger Chapbook Award.

## Antoinette Cheung

mission impossible beauty standards

Mother's Day tea –  
knowing I will never be  
one of them

defiled snow  
the lingering clang  
of his belt buckle

wedding rings the pretty little nooses we tie

nightclub  
the male gaze  
on every dollar bill

**Antoinette Cheung** is a member of the Vancouver Haiku Group in Canada and coordinator of the Haiku Society of America's under 40's social club. She is drawn to the meditative quality of haiku as well as the potential for such a small poetry form to carry so much weight.

## Wanda Amos

decluttering I ask him to leave

nanna's shawl  
the scent  
of lavender and cigarettes

the shame  
at junior school. . .  
recycled clothing

**Wanda Amos** lives by the beach on the east coast of Australia. She enjoys connecting her two hobbies of Haiku and Photography.



## Christine Eales

sisyphus  
inside my body  
mood swings

breakdown  
the scent of petrol  
cuts through the rain

counting  
the pills in her hand  
morning glories

**Christine Eales** lives in Surrey UK with her husband, dog and sometimes one or two children. She loves writing haiku and children's poems. She has been published in journals including *Presence*, *The Heron's Nest* and *Modern Haiku*. Two of her favourite hobbies are making truffles and staying happy.

## Mona Bedi

young waitress  
the old widower talks  
to her neckline

family dinner  
her sexuality becomes  
the topic of discussion

Dr. **Mona Bedi** lives in Delhi, India with her husband, two children and dog. She started writing haiku a few years back and has two poetry books: *they you and me* and *dancing moonlight*. Her poems have been published in *Failed haiku*, *Haiku in Action*, *The Haiku Dialogue*, *cold moon journal*, *tsuri-doro* and many others.

## Daniela Misso

first date –  
in the shadows  
wild violets

hay-scented wind  
I never imagined  
my hair being blonde

**Daniela Misso** lives in a medieval village in Umbria Italy. Her haiku and senryu have been published all over the world and she was awarded 1st Place in the 2021 AHA Haiku/Senryu Contest Annual Hortensia Anderson Memorial Award and 2nd Place in The Fleeting Words Tanka Contest 2021 UHTS. She is author of the book *Connessioni Sottili* (FusibiliaLibri, 2022).

## Nancy Brady

(in)justice  
of the peace--  
spousal abuse

**Nancy Brady** is a pharmacist by vocation and a poet by avocation, focusing mainly on haiku or senryu (although she admits that she hasn't figured out which is which). She likes to escape the realities of life by reading spicy romances and spine-tingling thrillers.

# Marilyn Ashbaugh

## Inheritance

She never eats at the table. If she can't drink it or eat it while headed out the door, she leaves it alone.

morning  
the long commute  
from hand to mouth

The cherry farmhouse table is where all the fighting started. The one piece of furniture everyone else wanted after Mother died.

first AA meeting  
she takes the seat  
her mother left her

## **Marilyn Ashbaugh** (cont.)

baby's breath a boy with a gun

dope sick she calls him sweetheart

porch light moon  
the charred wings  
of a broken promise

**Marilyn Ashbaugh** is a poet, nature photographer and organic gardener. Her poems are published in journals and anthologies featuring Japanese short-form poetry.

## Debbie Olson

she measures her worth size zero

purpling  
her left shoulder  
butterfly tattoo

is she  
or isn't she  
Mona Lisa

**Debbie Olson** lives in Syracuse, New York. Her haiku and senryu has appeared in *Acorn*, *bottle rockets*, *Failed Haiku*, *Frogpond*, *Heron's Nest*, *Modern Haiku*, *Presence*, *Prune Juice*, and *Wales Haiku Journal*.

# Cynthia Anderson

## Forces of Nature

These days, every full moon has a name—Wolf Moon, Snow Moon, Worm Moon—and now, the Super Flower Blood Moon, complete with total eclipse. Social media fills with photos. As the light returns, my wakeful night is made more so by an immense bang. Living where I do, in the Mojave, this can mean one of two things: an earthquake with sound but no shaking; or, an explosion at the world's largest marine base, where live fire weapons training is a way of life. Come morning, I learn that this time, it's the former.

not yet a robot  
I turn over  
a new leaf



## Cynthia Anderson (cont.)

fire-breathing dragon they got that part right

me myself wanting more than I can give

**Cynthia Anderson's** most recent book is a collection of haiku and senryu titled *Full Circle* (Cholla Needles, 2022). She lives in the Mojave Desert near Joshua Tree National Park. [www.cynthiaandersonpoet.com](http://www.cynthiaandersonpoet.com)

## Hazel Hall

hospital food  
every dinner  
smells the same

board games—  
the way a marriage  
ends in stalemate

bright spring day—  
my blues begin  
to deepen

**Hazel Hall** is a widely published Australian poet and musicologist. Recent collections are *Step by Step, tai chi haiku* (Picaro Poets 2018), *Moonlight Over the Siding* (Interactive Press 2019), *Severed Web* (Picaro Poets 2020) and a verse drama *Please Add Your Signature and Date it Here* (Litoria Press 2021).

## Allyson Whipple

hazy moon  
humid air holds  
the smell of garbage

sweat bee proboscis  
dips into my wrinkles  
summer's end

first shovel of dirt  
hits your casket—  
break in the clouds

**Allyson Whipple** is the editor and host of the Culinary Saijiki blog and podcast ([www.culinarysaijiki.com](http://www.culinarysaijiki.com)). Past projects include editing the Texas Poetry Calendar and co-creating the interactive fiction Choice: Texas ([www.playchoicetexas.com](http://www.playchoicetexas.com)). She now lives in St. Louis, Missouri, where she works in higher education and teaches Pilates.

Marcel Herbert



## **Mariel Herbert** (cont.)

his soapbox in a funhouse set up

late-night browsing  
startled by a pop-up  
for red plums

**Mariel Herbert** writes haiku, senryu, and speculative poetry. Unfortunately, she also enjoys collective nouns for birds. She lives in Northern California with her family. Online: [marielherbert.wordpress.com](http://marielherbert.wordpress.com).

## Ana Drobot

after the rain  
the smell of linden flowers  
follows me  
everywhere around I feel  
your footsteps

acacias  
blooming again -  
street protest

the scent of musk  
again in my bed -  
another date

Born in 1983, in Bucharest, Romania, **Ana Drobot** was present in Haiku EuroTop, the top of the most creative haiku authors, during 2015-2021.

## Arvinder Kaur

garden party  
the bee stung lips  
of a social butterfly

maudlin  
he says he loves  
my flaws

**Arvinder Kaur** specialises in English literature and media studies and has a passion for short forms of poetry. She loves jacarandas and sunsets. She lives in Chandigarh India with her family.

## Lakshmi Iyer

a newborn  
wrapped in the rubble  
how long  
the pain to last  
beyond nine months

at fifty-six  
I'm still sorting out  
my past  
in different voices  
seasons after seasons

**Lakshmi Iyer** has started loving Haikai and is trying to capture every moment of her life in minimalist words. Haiku seems to be simple, but it is very deep and it resonates with our five senses and its actions. Her belief : 'The soul of haiku lies in the perspective that one sees through'.



## Helen Buckingham

Year of the Tiger  
she leaves with nothing  
but the child on her back

holy shameman

no women no pause

weapon of ~~bad apple~~ rapist police

**Helen Buckingham** lives in Wells, England. Her work appears regularly in journals such as *Bones, is/let* and *Modern Haiku*. Anthologies include: *Haiku in English* (Norton, 2013). Among her collections are: *water on the moon* (Original Plus, 2010) and *sanguinella* (Red Moon, 2017), each of which was shortlisted for a Touchstone Award.

## Billie Dee

that little spot routine mammogram

lunchbreak  
her perfume  
still in my hair

Girl Scout camp  
the woodpecker feather  
I've kept all these years

**Billie Dee** is a poet from San Miguel, New Mexico.

## Deborah P Kolodji

the wrong name  
from your lips  
sudden dryness

prickly pear  
outside the chapel  
no fruit

not yet extinct  
the rainbow sheen  
of another oil spill

our baby blanket  
my husband tries to stop  
his girlfriend's abortion

right to life march  
my husband insists  
you're Catholic now

**Deborah P Kolodji** is the California Regional Coordinator for the Haiku Society of America and the Moderator of the Southern California Haiku Study Group. Her 2021 e-chapbook of scifaiku, *tug of a black hole*, by Title IX Press (now Moth Orchid Press) has won second place for an Elgin Award.

## Deborah P Kolodji and *Mariko Kitakubo*

### Coming of Age

angel hair pasta  
her baby tooth  
beneath a pillow

*first kiss  
under the olive tree,  
garden party  
on this mellow  
summer solstice*

**Mariko Kitakubo** lives in Tokyo and has published six books of tanka, including three bilingual ones, *On This Same Star*, *Cicada Forest*, and *Indigo*. She is an experienced performer who has performed her tanka with percussion in more than 51 cities across the world. Her website is at <https://en.kitakubo.com/>

## Jackie Chou

lost chivalry...  
buying daffodils  
for myself

first date  
he asks about the dirt  
under my nails

Sharon Hawley, *Jackie Chou*, kris moon kondo

soulmates

*what we all say  
we want in a lover*

half a world apart  
a moonflower &  
a morning glory

**Sharon Hawley** is a worker in civil engineering and adventurer in unheard of canyons.  
She dabbles in poetry.

**Jackie Chou** is a poet of short form poetry and free verses from Southern California.

**kris moon kondo** is an artist and poet who has made her home in Japan since 1972.

# Pris Campbell

## Time Tells

Surely he'll look me in the eyes soon when we make love, I tell myself. He was so kind during our courtship, though yes, inexperienced. I told myself he would start trying to please me, stop running when the deed is done( from his point of view[OBJ]) to wash off some unspeakable proof of the act then move to the far side of the bed.

How many more years will it take?

But that[OBJ]'s the back story, the reason karma brought me earlier to so many good men's beds. I was being prepared for these long years of deprivation.

north star  
aiming the boat's bow  
anywhere but here

## **Pris Campbell** (cont.)

dumped  
my sixties friend tells me  
about the coat hanger

old now  
for the first time  
no longing for youth

the relief  
hits me in waves. . .  
abortion

Formerly a clinical psychologist, sailor, bicyclist and casual pianist before ME/CFS stalled her, **Pris Campbell** has been writing free verse and short forms for around 21 years. She has published in multiple anthologies and journals. In 2021 she was thrilled to win first place in the Marlene Mountain and Sanford Goldstein contests. She makes her home in SE Florida with her husband.



## Margaret Walker & *Pris Campbell*

### In dependence

She was 12 when I picked her up in the maternity ward at the hospital. A beautiful strawberry blonde who had just given birth to her father's child.

With no mother in the home her dad had made her his substitute wife. Keeping her out of school Moving from place to place so no one would know. Finally, this child called Child Protective Services herself. By then close to 9 months.

Over the next year she attempted suicide several times at home. Then at school. We could no longer keep her safe.

It was a Friday afternoon. No hospital would take her for suicide watch. No bed for a 13 year old girl. It was evening when I reached a psychiatrist acquaintance in a city 50 miles away. He found a spot for her.

I drove her to the hospital that rainy night unable to tell her where we were going. Afraid she would open the car door and throw herself out. Nurses met us at the door of the ER to get her out of the car.

What happened to her father? Probation and supervised visitation.

*lights out*  
*her heart still pounds*  
*with each creak*

Margaret Walker is a former school principal. Now homebound with ME/CFS, her work has been published in Failed Haiku, Human/Kind Journal, Drifting Sands, #FemkuMag, Stardust Haiku, Whiptail, Prune Juice, and Bloō Outlier Journal. She is a Pushcart Prize (haibun), Red Moon Anthology (haibun) and Touchstone Award (haiku) nominated poet.

## Vandana Parashar

squeezing the last of lemons full-time mom

far away from home  
a kite falls  
in the red light area

music to my ears  
the silence  
after he leaves

can I  
be happy just this once  
white lilies

**Vandana Parashar** is a haiku poet in progress. Her love for brevity made her fall in love with haiku and related forms of Japanese poetry. Her work has been published in many national and international journals and has won several accolades. Her haiku was shortlisted for Touchstone Award (2021.) Her debut e-chapbook is “I Am” (Title IX Press [now Moth Orchid Press], 2019).

## Tracy Davidson

little black dress  
the stains  
I can never get out

supreme (in)justice the screams of our grandmothers

no independence day  
too many fireworks  
aimed at women

bleeding us  
one way or the other  
trigger laws

**Tracy Davidson** lives in Warwickshire, England, and writes poetry and flash fiction. Her work has appeared in various publications and anthologies, including: Poet's Market, Mslexia, Atlas Poetica, Modern Haiku, The Binnacle, A Hundred Gourds, Shooter, Journey to Crone, The Great Gatsby Anthology, WAR, In Protest: 150 Poems for Human Rights.

# Sangita Kalarickal and Reid Hepworth

## Bottomed Out

judges gavel

*rainbows end  
those old fears  
creep back in*

the hourglass sand

*another betrayal  
her sparkle  
slowly wears away*

reverses it's flow

*santoku edge  
the choices  
we are left with*

Trained a physicist, **Sangita Kalarickal**'s passion lies In wordsmithing. Her poems and stories have been published in various magazines and anthologies.

**Reid Hepworth** lives in a tiny cabin in the woods in Jordan River, BC, where she plays tiny ukulele and writes tiny poetry.

## Kerry J Heckman

overturned  
tonight i question  
the stars

rising sun  
remembering  
her dissent collar

**Kerry J Heckman** is a therapist and writer in Seattle. She was introduced to haiku in 2002 and has since picked it up and set it down. This time she hopes to hold onto it. Her poems have appeared in Modern Haiku, failed haiku, and bottle rockets among other publications.

## Mirela Brăilean

cocoon mom's evasive response about abortion

beyond pain the pain

**Mirela Brăilean** began writing haiku in 2018 and since, her haiku poetry has been published in many international journals and has won prizes and accolades. She was selected to the European Top 100 most creative haiku authors in 2020 and 2021. She has been nominated for the long list in Touchstone Award 2021. She recently published a collection of 150 haiku entitled *Telling my desire/in a breath* She loves reading, writing, and nature.

## Maya Daneva

taking turns  
at his family vault  
his wife and I

gathering thyme  
loving her first husband  
more

**Maya Daneva** is a Software Engineering scholar and a Board Member of the female faculty network in a Dutch university. She developed her passion for haiku as a way to cope with grief after the death of her mother. Her work appeared in #FemkuMag, Haiku Canada, Wales Haiku, Frogpond, and Kingfisher.

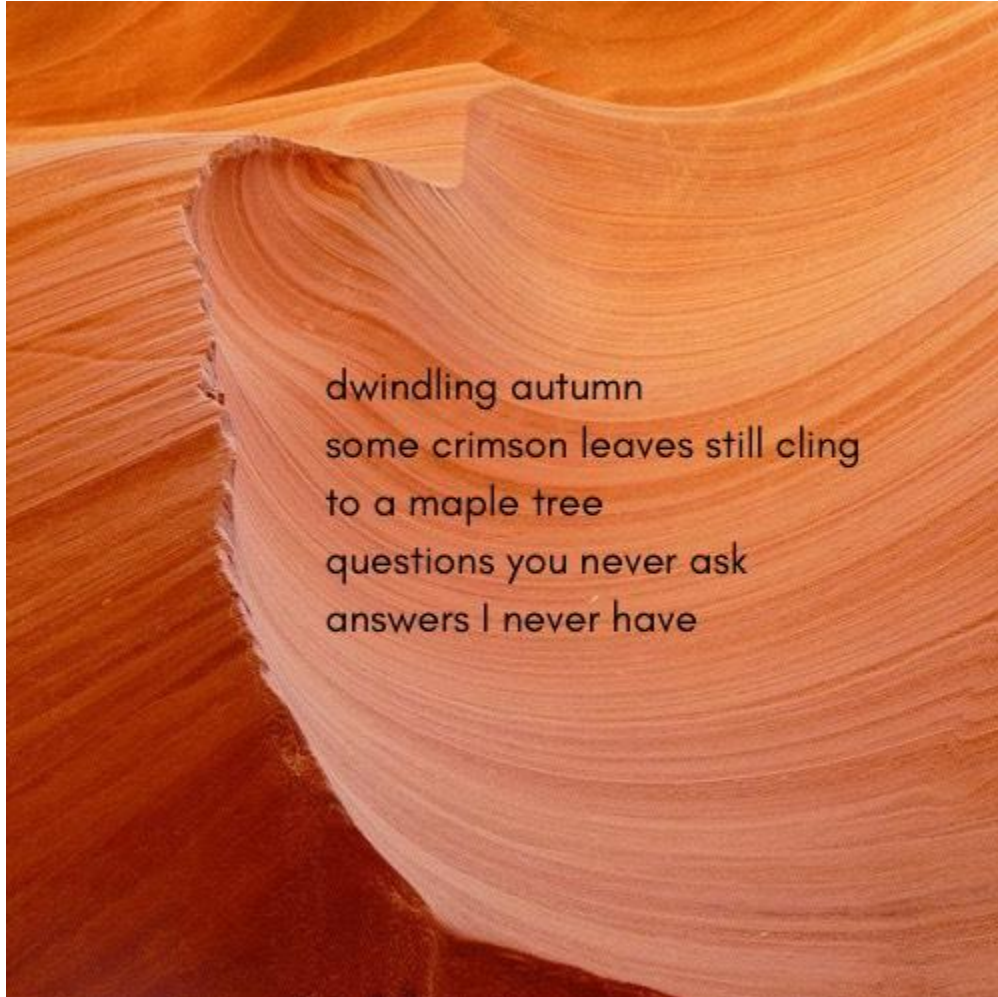
## Anna Maria Domburg-Sancristoforo

yesterday. . .  
when his eyes  
made me pretty

**Anna Maria Domburg-Sancristoforo** currently lives in the Netherlands as a retired university lecturer and translator of literary works. Her poetry, written in Italian and English, has been internationally published. Most recently, she placed 3rd in the Kusamakura Haiku Contest (2020). Anna Maria has been included in The European Top 100 Haiku Authors for three years consecutively.



## Teji Sethi



dwindling autumn  
some crimson leaves still cling  
to a maple tree  
questions you never ask  
answers I never have

**Teji Sethi** is a nutritionist, researcher, poet and a visual artist. She believes that a rich tapestry of experiences lives within us as stories and these stories define us, connect us and outlive us when we are gone!

## Laurie Wilcox-Meyer

more white houses,  
fewer trees—  
a caution of wind

sardines  
in mass migration. . .  
american fear

**Laurie Wilcox-Meyer's** poetry is shaped by her upbringing in Louisiana, where she played Chopin and dodged alligators while waterskiing. Her third poetry collection is *Conversation in the Key of Blue*, Main Street Rag Publishing, 2020.

## Mary McCormack

windswept hair caught up in a kiss

parting petals the most delicate touch

gossip—  
a venus flytrap  
snaps shut

**Mary McCormack** is enchanted by the sun.

## Neera Kashyap

thin ice -  
an unease  
I live with

home  
I wage war  
in hope of peace

**Neera Kashyap** has worked on social and health communications. Her poetry, short stories and book reviews have appeared in various international journals and anthologies. She started writing haikai three years ago and has been published in Poetry Pea, Haiku Dialogue, Failed Haiku, Bloo Outlier and Scarlet Dragonfly. She lives in Delhi, India.

## **Lorelyn De la Cruz Arevalo**

gibbous moon  
her skin crawling  
under his grip

skirting around the subject objectification

**Lorelyn De la Cruz Arevalo**, a member of the Write Your Legacy community in the Philippines, is a self-published author. She works overseas and got "diagnosed" with ADHD in her 40s.

## Maeve O'Sullivan

sitting outside  
with no sunscreen on —  
scent of tomato leaves

super blossom blood moon -  
blowing in the wind  
prayer flags, tee-shirts

soon to be a great-aunt seedless grapes

not a date the plastic red rose between us

## **Maeve O'Sullivan** (cont.)

### **Her Perfect Life**

Her perfect hair and perfect skin. Her perfect smile. Her perfect figure,  
perfect clothes to hang on it. Her perfect house with its perfect décor.

Her perfect boyfriend turned fiancé turned husband.

Her perfect career and perfectly positive attitude.

the email states  
that she's outgrown our friendship –  
first butterfly

Dubliner **Maeve O'Sullivan's** poetry and haikai have been widely published, anthologized, awarded and translated. She is the author of five collections from Alba Publishing, the most recent being *Wasp on the Prayer Flag* (2021). Maeve leads workshops in haikai, and writes reviews and features for various journals. [www.maeveosullivan.com](http://www.maeveosullivan.com) Twitter @writefromwithin

## Erin Castaldi

a sound in the thicket bent on stars

spring thaw  
divining the future in  
candle light

tiger child  
a full grown moon's  
misunderstanding

acclimating  
to a new threshold  
the ache of everything

**Erin Castaldi** has appeared in Akitsu Quarterly, Heron's Nest, and Presence, as well as a dozen anthologies and has received merit in several contests. She has had work translated into Japanese, Croatian, Romanian, Italian, German and Chinese. Her current positions include: Poet Laureate of the city of Somers Point, New Jersey.



## B. L. Bruce

pine tar  
your name  
in my mouth

**B. L. Bruce** is an award-winning poet and Pushcart Prize nominee living and writing along California's Central Coast. Her creative work has appeared in dozens publications, including Frogpond, La Merle Poetry Journal, Visitant, Blood Moon Poetry, and Feral, among others. Bruce is the author of four books, *The Weight of Snow*, *28 Days of Solitude*, *The Starling's Song*, and *Measures*, and is the editor-in-chief of the nature-centric literary magazine *Humana Obscura*.

## **Tina Mowrey**

new school year  
my daughter asks for  
a bulletproof backpack

**Tina Mowrey** is a picture book author, poet, and 8th grade English Language Arts teacher. She has several published picture books and her haiku will appear in upcoming issues of the following journals: Cicada's Cry, Mayfly, and Poetry Pea.

## Baisali Chatterjee Dutt

birdsong  
outside my window,  
not looking  
I hit the snooze button  
again

play-acting --  
all my different roles  
as a woman

dancing in the bedroom jazz sax

my period early fresh sheet day

**Baisali Chatterjee Dutt** is a domesticated nomad who writes, edits, dabbles in theater and teaches. Her poetry has been published in various anthologies and magazines, print as well as online. Her latest novella in verse, “Three is a Lonely Number”, is available on Amazon Kindle. She also eats chocolate by the bucketful, gazes at clouds and tries to mother two teen boys.

## **Bernadette O'Reilly**

i delete our conversation summer clouds

**Bernadette O'Reilly** has been published in various anthologies on and off line including #FemkuMag and some blogs. She has taken part in various open mics in Dublin city and participated in various workshops. Bernadette has been writing since the eighties.

## Daya Bhat

peonies before the bad touch

sealing her fault lines bridal henna

**Daya Bhat** has two books of poetry and enjoys writing both free verse and short forms. She lives in Bangalore, India.

## Maria Concetta Conti

balcony full of stars  
our conversation  
about illness

clouds  
are clearing away  
the trip that i lost

**Maria Concetta Conti** is a poet from Italy.

## Muskaan Ahuja

midnight rain —  
this longing to be  
yours again

**Muskaan Ahuja** is a haijin who immerses herself reading and writing Japanese forms, especially haiku. Out of more than 800 poems inspired by Japanese woodblock prints, her haiku was selected for the Bristol Museum & Art Gallery, UK in 2019. Her poems have been published in reputed online and print journals like Frogpond, Failed Haiku, FemkuMag, Nick Virgilio Haiku Association, The Haiku Foundation, the cherita, and more. She even holds an honourable mention in THF Monthly Kukai.

## Betsy Hearne

bedside  
left holding  
your spirit's hand

**Betsy Hearne's** publications include *A Narrative Compass: Stories That Guide Women's Lives*, collections of poetry, and short stories. Her creative nonfiction "The Cobra's Son" was nominated for a Pushcart Prize, and her haiku have appeared in *The Heron's Nest*, *Frogpond*, and *Shamrock*.



## Ingrid Baluchi

over the hill . . .  
no longer noticed  
by his friends

Temporarily resident in North Macedonia, **Ingrid Balduchi** has spent much of her life travel-writing. Her micro-poetry has been published in international journals, in print and online. A retired teacher and professional artist, she has a deep love and respect for the natural world, and enjoys the quirky side of human nature.

## Announcements

- Marlene Mountain Contest commentary will be released in a PDF that also announces Touchstone and Red Moon Press nominations. Keep an eye out for that in the next few weeks!
- [Moth Orchid Press](#), the sibling press to #FemkuMag has released its third anthology, Shaping Water: Erotic Haiku and Tanka. [Click here for ordering information.](#)
- Submissions for Moth Orchid's Youth and Young Adult anthology (for haikin 45 and under) is open for submissions until November 10, 2022. This is the third and last extended call for submissions, so please make sure you get those in. [Click here for more information.](#)
- Guidelines for Moth Orchid's "then and now" anthology are now available and submissions will open in January 2023. [Click here for more information.](#)