

haikuKATHA

unfolding the story within



Prakash Thombre

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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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CONTENTS

Tejasvat Award - Jacek Margolak 1-3

haiku

Alfred Booth 4
Alicia Samson
Anjali Warhadpande

Anju Kishore 5
Artur Zieliński
Baisali Chatterjee Dutt

Barrie Levine 6
Jacek Margolak

Jacek Margolak 7
Joanna Ashwell

haiga by Jacek Margolak 8

Joanna Ashwell 9
Kala Ramesh
Kavita Ratna
Keiko Izawa

Keiko Izawa 10
Lori Kiefer
Malabika Mitra
Marilyn Ashbaugh

Mohua Maulik 11
Nicholas Klacsanzky
Padma Priya

CONTENTS

Sathya Venkatesh 12
Sherry Reniker
Srinivasa Rao Sambangi
susan burch

haiga by Marilyn Ashbuagh 13

one-line haiku

Alan Summers 14
Anju Kishore
Kanjini Devi

Nicholas Klacsanzky 15
Ron C Moss
Rupa Anand

Sathya Venkatesh 16
Srinivasa Rao Sambangi
Susan Burch

haiga by Nalini Shetty 17

concrete haiku

Kanjini Devi 18

zip-haiku

Lorraine Haig 19

tanka-art by Dinah Power 20

CONTENTS

tanka

Alfred Booth Amrutha V Prabhu	21
Baisali Chatterjee Dutt	22
barbara olmtak Fatma Zohra Habis Jacek Margolak	23
Jacek Margolak Jennifer Gurney	24
tanka-art by Marilyn Ashbaugh	25
Joanna Ashwell Kala Ramesh	26
Kala Ramesh Kanjini Devi	27
Kanjini Devi Lakshmi Iyer	28
Lorraine Haig Mohua Maulik Nicholas Klacsanzky	29
tanka-art by Marilyn Ashbaugh	30
Nitu Yumnam Padma Priya	31

CONTENTS

Padma Priya Priti Aisola Rashmi Buragohain	32
Sandip Chauhan Sathya Venkatesh	33
Sathya Venkatesh Suraja Menon Roychowdhury	34
susan burch Tejendra Sherchan	35
tanka-art by Sreenath	36
tanka prose	
<i>Impact</i> by Bryan Rickert	37
<i>History on Repeat</i> by Dinah Power	38
<i>The Leftovers</i> by Jacek Margolak	39
<i>The Old Orchard</i> by Jacek Margolak	40
<i>Splinters</i> by Jacek Margolak	41
<i>Bed-Springs</i> by Joanna Ashwell	42
tanka-art by Sreenath	43
<i>Gone Too Soon</i> by Kanjini Devi	44
<i>The Last Laugh</i> by Kanjini Devi	45
<i>Rescued</i> by Kanjini Devi	46
<i>By a Thread</i> by Lorraine Haig	47
<i>Fading Shadows</i> by Mona Bedi	48
<i>Will You Walk With Me Till the End</i> by Padma Priya	49
tanka-art by Sreenath	50

CONTENTS

<i>When the Hills Gave Way</i> by Sathya Venkatesh	51
<i>Across the Distance</i> by Sathya Venkatesh	52

gembun with tanka

Amrutha V. Prabhu	53
Mona Bedi	54
Suraja Menon Roychowdhury	55

gembun terbalik

Kala Ramesh	56
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Our heartfelt thanks to:

Prompters for the month of May
HAIKUsutradhar: Padma Priya
haikaiTALKS: Srinivasa Rao Sambangi
thinkALONG: Padma Priya
Tanka Take Home: Stacey Dye
The Haibun Gallery: Teji Sethi

for providing the weekly challenges
for the month of May 2026,

Prakash Thombre
for his brilliant ink sketch of the bull,

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 haiku editors,
Ashish Narain, Kala Ramesh,
Sanjukta Asopa and Vandana Parashar
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 honour

Jacek Margolak

for his six brilliant haiku, senryu
and haiga.

Tejasvat Jacek Margolak

Triveni Haikai India

night bus –
a loose handle
tapping time

first cold rain –
three strangers fogging
the same window

train delay –
forty minutes of winter
on the platform

cracked pavement
a dandelion head
heavy with light

Tejasvat Jacek Margolak

Triveni Haikai India

old photograph —
holding it farther
from my eyes



haiku

raised voices —
to be one in a flock
of migrating geese

Alfred Booth

used books
the mysteries
in underlined words

Alfred Booth

cricket chitter
all way down lover's lane
the noon heat

Alicia Samson

riding a race horse
the flea
who refuses to flee

Anjali Warhadpande

haiku

leaving
the 13th unplucked
lemon breeze

Anju Kishore

autumn chill
dawn to dusk
in bed

Artur Zieliński

pillow fight --
last night's argument
hits me in the face

Baisali Chatterjee Dutt

empty matchbox ...
i'll ignite my inner spark
tomorrow

Baisali Chatterjee Dutt

haiku

parlor cushions ...
the powdery scent
of my great aunts

Barrie Levine

night bus —
a loose handle
tapping time

Jacek Margolak

first cold rain —
three strangers fogging
the same window

Jacek Margolak

train delay —
forty minutes of winter
on the platform

Jacek Margolak

haiku

cracked pavement
a dandelion head
heavy with light

Jacek Margolak

old photograph —
holding it farther
from my eyes

Jacek Margolak

daisy chain
I leave a trail
through the meadow

Joanna Ashwell

dual signatories
a shaft of moonlight
parting the page

Joanna Ashwell

haiga



image and ku: Jacek Margolak

haiku

seed-puffs
summer already
afloat on the breeze

Joanna Ashwell

loneliness
a weaver's nest
in the autumn wind

Kala Ramesh

branching out
every which way
heritage tree

Kavita Ratna

puffy cloud ...
the driver talks of his children
all the way

Keiko Izawa

haiku

spring cleaning
half-century-old air
from the matryoshka

Keiko Izawa

storm clouds
the sparrow still holds
its two-note song

Lori Kiefer

food stall ...
the street boy
half-full with smell

Malabika Mitra

tadpole shallows
the blue heron lifts
a little lake mist

Marilyn Ashbaugh

haiku

winter moon ...
the giant matchbox
nearly empty

Mohua Maulik

writing conference
the buck carves a language
on my car

Nicholas Klacsanzky

graveyard bombing
the news reporter adjusts
his tie

Nicholas Klacsanzky

his anger ...
screeches of a red-tailed hawk
circling the sky

Padma Priya

haiku

deadlines —
outside the window
clouds move slowly

Sathya Venkatesh

baby's breath —
filling the gap
between us

Sherry Reniker

all day long
the blind beggar's ears
open to footsteps

Srinivasa Rao Sambangi

how you left me
high and dry
beached whale

Susan Burch

haiga



image and ku: Marylyn Ashbaugh

one-line haiku

water dripping the echo of a crossword clue

Alan Summers

in a length of a day the span of a jackdaw

Alan Summers

regardless of all that rain lilies

Anju Kishore

cherry blossoms the high notes

Kanjini Devi

one-line haiku

maple spinner landing a new home in my thin hair

Nicholas Klacsanzky

trying on dad's felt hat scent of Old Spice

Ron C Moss

weighing scale back to square one

Rupa Anand

walking through tree after tree walking through me

Rupa Anand

one-line haiku

waiting for a reason to write dandelion drift

Sathya Venkatesh

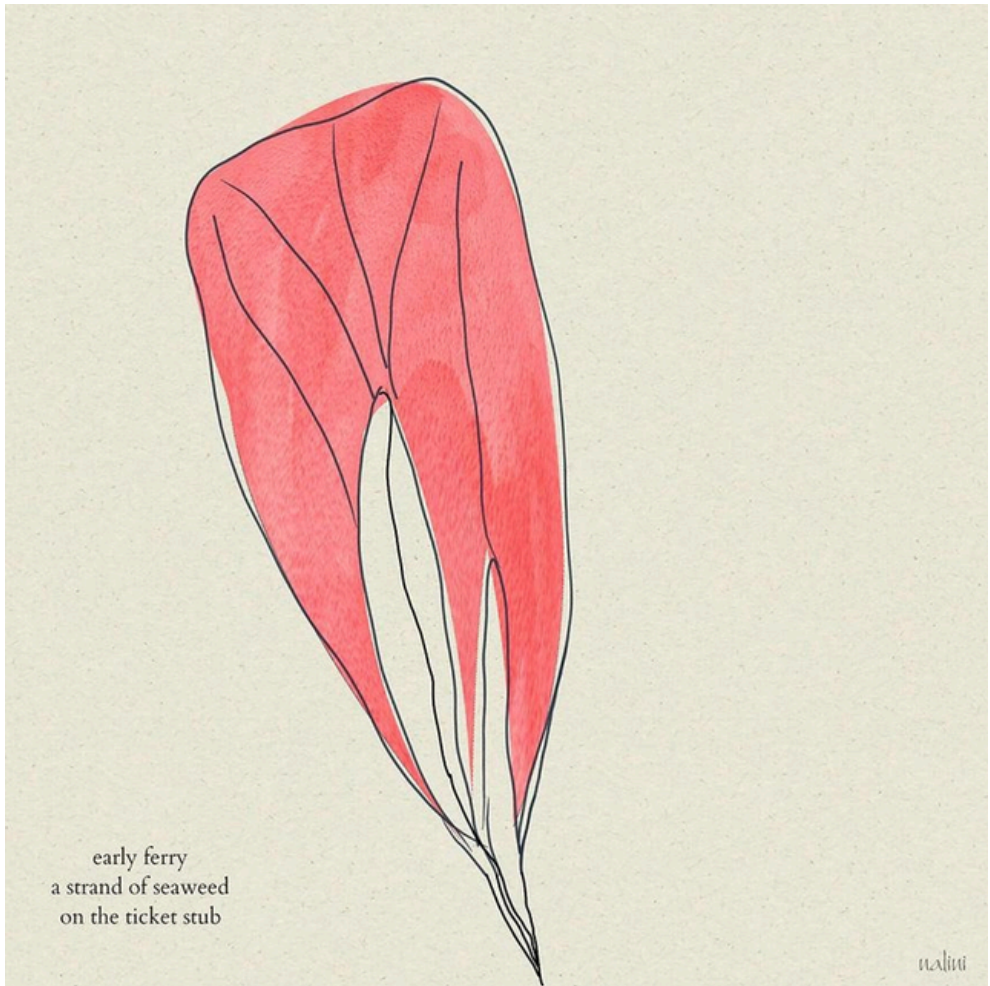
songbird the echo the size of a rock mountain

Srinivasa Rao Sambangi

and so it begins frosty morning

Susan Burch

haiga



early ferry
a strand of seaweed
on the ticket stub

nalini

image and ku: Nalini Shetty

concrete haiku

temple
hillside
a mossy wall
along
stones
zigzag

Kanjini Devi

zip haiku

honeyeater plucking his hair
to line her nest with silver

Lorraine Haig

tanka-art



society is always
pushing us into boxes
i want OUT
wild flowers travel
with the breeze

photo & tanka Dinah Power

tanka

my vision
is blurred by these grey skies
you would have said
scream from the highest mountain
until you accept my death

Alfred Booth

breathe deeply
and let the sadness rise
like a wave
sometimes the ocean brings
a letter in a bottle

Alfred Booth

around me
the world's endless music —
i listen,
then continue
along my path

Amrutha V Prabhu

tanka

I started
taking coffee black
how you used to ...
the bitterness
helps

Baisali Chatterjee Dutt

you gaze at me
gazing at the stars,
is this how it feels
to be
the centre of the universe

Baisali Chatterjee Dutt

listening to ancient chants
in a language
i don't understand,
my bones settle down
and i hear myself breathe

Baisali Chatterjee Dutt

tanka

patterns pass
through generations
a seesaw
lifting into balance
in the autumn light

barbara olmtak

an empty page
how ink can turn it
into a poetic masterpiece
i wonder how to begin
everything from nothing

Fatma Zohra Habis

winter power cut —
between our teacups
a candle flame
leaning first
toward your side

Jacek Margolak

tanka

low tide —
the sea-glass smooths
its broken edges
shining brighter
for all the storms it knew

Jacek Margolak

the smallest things
remind me of you ...
a couple holding hands
the taste of Ben and Jerry's
your voice, a whisper on the wind

Jennifer Gurney

softly
you settle on my lap
all black
save for one white whisker
purring contentment

Jennifer Gurney

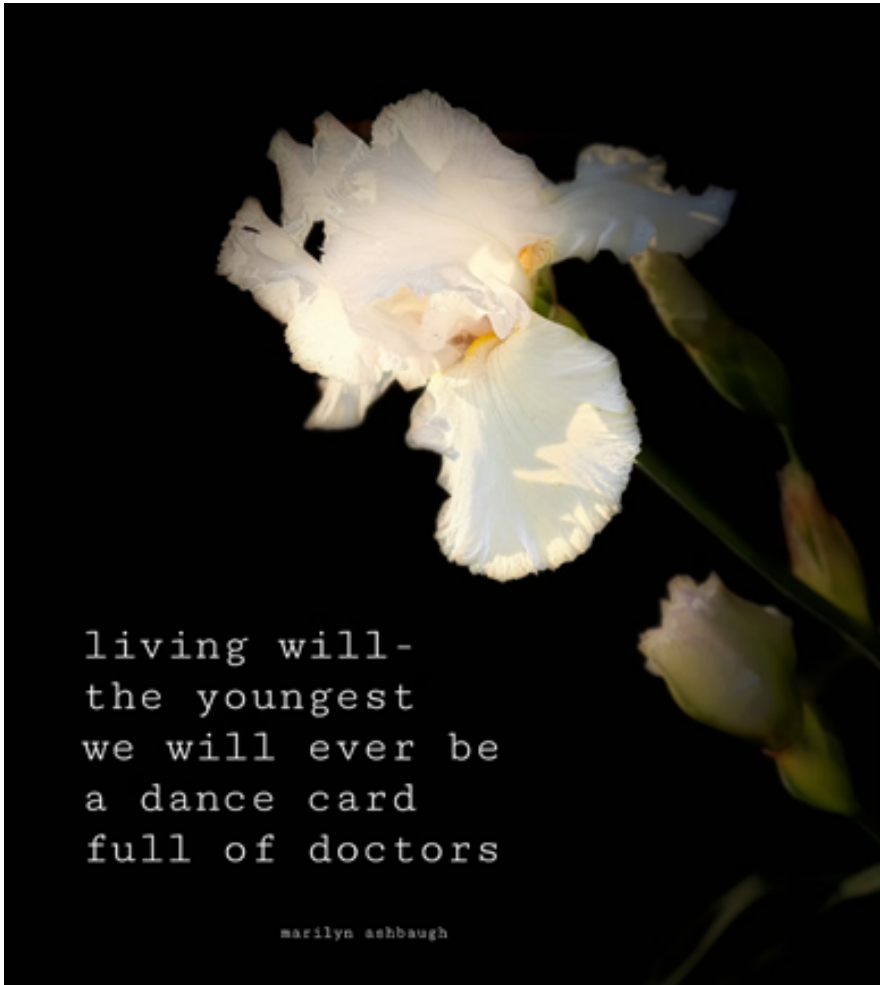


image and ku: Marilyn Ashbaugh

tanka

re-learning the art
of being a survivor ...
those tiny weeds
that flourish alone
on open pavements

Joanna Ashwell

holding hands
we walk each evening ...
is the green canopy
still nesting the dreams
we abandoned long ago

Kala Ramesh

the loud snores
of a man next to me
in the bus
cutting into my space
his widely-spread legs

Kala Ramesh

tanka

the singer's voice
rises from her navel
exploring depths
Ganga thunders to earth
through Shiva's matted hair

Kala Ramesh

pranayama
learning to lengthen
my breath
the reflection of swans
gliding on a still lake

Kanjini Devi

yet again
first responders bring you
back from the brink ...
by your bedside a bouquet
of lily of the valley

Kanjini Devi

tanka

thrilled to deliver
the news that I'm expecting
I pause on the steps
when suddenly
this stab in my belly

Kanjini Devi

gasping for breath
and I thought I was gone ...
the half-fogged brain
picturing the valuables
in the bank locker

Lakshmi Iyer

milkweed seeds
have the freedom to go
with the wind
why is it only me
cornered and tied

Lakshmi Iyer

tanka

cherry blossoms
fall on the heads
of picnickers
celebrating a life
gone too soon

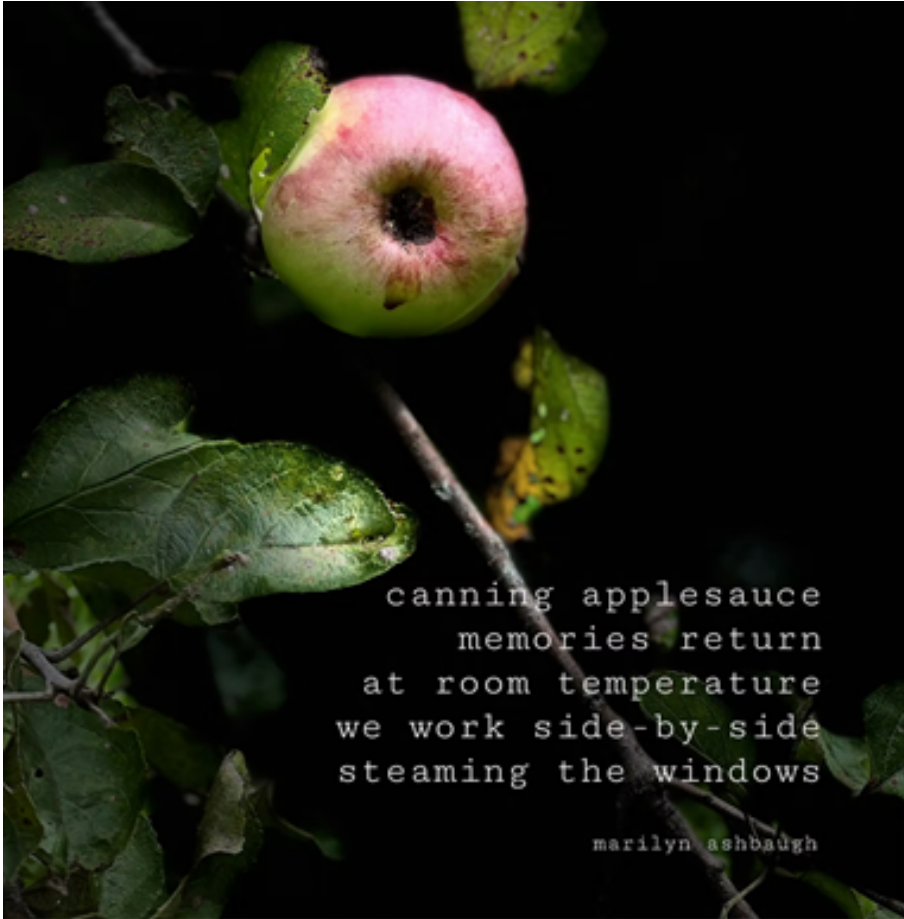
Lorraine Haig

claw marks
on the trunk of a semal tree
with beehives
our world full of people
eyeing others' hard work

Mohua Maulik

mother's passing
above the tall grass
dew obscures the view
of snow-capped Mt. Rainer
and your incensed altar

Nicholas Klacsanzky



canning applesauce
memories return
at room temperature
we work side-by-side
steaming the windows

marilyn ashbaugh

tanka

he says
you worry too much —
from the cauliflower
a worm
wriggles out

Nitu Yumnam

mango tree
heavy with fruit
yet mother keeps
the bruised ones
for herself

Nitu Yumnam

suddenly
its orange wings light up
in the morning sun
a butterfly flits off
a marigold flower

Padma Priya

tanka

the fledgling
opens its wings and soars
into the blue sky ...
a dream I let go of
comes back consuming me

Padma Priya

exploring the lanes
of an old part of town
at dusk
a pitch-black cat dashes
in and out of sight

Priti Aisola

the fern
curling inwards —
I huddle
within the folds
of your letter

Rashmi Buragohain

tanka

a cracked
horseshoe crab shell
brimmed with tidewater ...
the moon still pulling
at what the sea let go

Sandip Chauhan

office party —
on a dare, I join the dance
missing every beat
yet becoming the one
everyone remembers

Sathya Venkatesh

evacuation siren —
she folds the house
into a single bag
the dog remains outside
quietly watching

Sathya Venkatesh

tanka

late autumn —
i tear apart petals
into the wind
unable to name
what still burns inside me

Sathya Venkatesh

I tread
on eggshells
around you
why this caution, I wonder
when all is crushed anyway

Suraja Menon Roychowdhury

cardamom
scents the tea
as snow glitters
in the weak winter sun
we savor what we've brewed

Suraja Menon Roychowdhury

tanka

why do I
come back for more
a junco
pecking at the ice
in the birdbath

susan burch

steaming days
of the early summer
I borrow
the coolness of jacarandas
in her absence

Tejendra Sherchan



*in dreams
always running away
from something . . .*

*In real life however much I try
I can't run away from myself*

Pic/Tanka:Sreenath

Bryan Rickert
~

Impact

Glancing in the mirror to check her makeup, she swerves off the road, pinning my classmate to a brick wall at 40 miles per hour. As if death wasn't bad enough, her little brother has it worse. A few minutes earlier, realizing that he had forgotten his lunch on the table, he goes back in to the house to get it. For this reason alone fate spares him, but what never spares him is the life of survivor's guilt and anger.

teaching
my teenager to drive
the constant
hazardous conditions
between us

Dinah Power
~

History on Repeat

We often refer to ourselves as a 'Tribe'.

Indeed we come from 12 tribes, whose ancestors populated the far eastern shores of the Mediterranean Sea.

Survival has been the cornerstone of this tribe's existence.

There is no doubt that anyone of us who claims our Jewish faith has, at the very least, experienced slurs or snide remarks for being such, I can attest to this.

And here we are in the year 5,786, again one of the most hated people while only 0.2 percent of the world's population of around 8 billion.

history's weight
bears down
taking my breath
in vibrant bloom
spring time Calaniot

Jacek Margolak
~

The Leftovers

I told myself I wouldn't look. Around midnight, the screen glows with pictures from the party I skipped. Everyone is there, laughing in blurry, neon-lit rooms. My phone lies silent on the kitchen table beside a half-eaten pizza and a cold cup of tea.

typing a comment
then deleting it again ...
the muted television
casts long blue shadows
across my empty room

Jacek Margolak
~

The Old Orchard

We spent the afternoon clearing the dead wood from the western corner of the garden. The old apple tree we planted years ago didn't bloom this spring, its branches grey and dry. I wanted to cut it down, but you shook your head and leaned against its trunk, looking up at the sky. Some things, you said, are worth keeping simply because they survived the winter with us.

autumn wind
shaking the old apple tree
of its last fruit
we still share the sweater
with the loose thread

Jacek Margolak
~

Splinters

For years the broken handle stayed in the drawer, long after the hammer itself was gone. Some things survive only because we cannot bring ourselves to throw them away.

winter morning —
one nail remaining
in the wall
after the shelf
is taken down

Joanna Ashwell

Bed-Springs

It is as if every dream is wound into the curve of mattress and pillow. My body's silhouette is there between the duvet and the open air. What thoughts, memories, warnings and inspirations have played out here, forgotten often by morning. There is a petrichor upon my skin, some remembrance tattooed beneath the sun-glow. A fish out of water, floating beyond my iris. Is this what it means to exist? This back and forth pull between worlds, re-anchoring myself daily to earth.

this survivor's moon
a reflection in sky
almost there
every scar and bruise
ribboned with life



Kanjini Devi

Gone Too Soon

I wept at his funeral, a man I hardly knew. He was in the midst of leaving the city for a more harmonious existence with the land and was keen to attend my yoga classes. He had been thrilled he could have that opportunity in a place that is off the beaten track. We often spoke about the importance of being present, that yoga is so much more than asana practice. Having lived a fulfilling life as husband and father, he now yearned for santosha. I learned from his family he had a black belt in jiu-jitsu, and was both a bike enthusiast and an avid sailor.

in which direction
do the winds of change blow
be here now
my guru says
with twinkling eyes

Kanjini Devi

The Last Laugh

Amma does not want me; I feel it in my bones.

Where is Akka? All the other schoolgirls are wearing white shoes. Why did Appa get me black shoes? He's so angry about my twelve toes.

Everyone stares at my twelve fingers. My teacher yells at me. My eyes are so bad she makes me sit right in front of the blackboard.

I have to leave school. I don't understand tests.

Akka shows me how to use the stove, boil kettle, make tea, and cook. She sends me to a special school. My blind classmates are kind to me. The teachers speak nicely.

My younger brother should call me Akka, but he just calls my name. Akka says it's a beautiful name. She teaches me Sanskrit, I love sitting in lotus.

It's time to go. I have been lying in this bed for weeks now, I can hear the nurses but I can't speak, I can't see, I can't move. Akka is holding my hand.

slow and steady
a tortoise wins the race
some of us
are simply wired
for a gentler world

Kanjini Devi

Rescued

Have you ever been greeted by a hen?

Whenever I come home from work, she would sprint towards me flapping her wings. Though she was hand raised, her humans no longer wanted her, so I offered a home where others of similar fate are now living out their lives in peace. Amongst them, an ex-battery hen and a rooster that was nearly shot by his previous owners.

I recognize the sounds she makes when she wants to lay her egg. Unlike the others, she does not make a big announcement once she has laid. She also prefers to lone free range. I sing her a lullaby when she finds her perch, the same spot every night. She often has a massive drink before she trots up the steps that lead to the branches placed close to the top of the coop. She closes her eyes when I sing to her.

even as a child
always the odd one out
finding my tribe
five thousand miles
across oceans and mounts

Lorraine Haig

By a Thread

We return home via the long straight roads through the outback to see how ravaged the country really is. A foot hovers over the brake for the odd animal that can still stand and search for food. Then to the right I glimpse a field with green grass. There are twenty to thirty ewes fat and contented. Outside the enclosure a ram, skin and bone, barely standing. The fleece hanging from his frame.

in cool air
under a full moon
we feel
the unflinching rhythm
of the earth

Mona Bedi



Fading Shadows

loneliness
gathers in the dark
a shaft of light
carries the shape of you
in the dust motes

They say you only die once. I don't believe it. I died when dad passed away. Then again when mom died. A part of me wilted away when my pet Snowy left for the rainbow bridge. All through this my sister held me together.

hospice window —
winter sunlight streams
in through a crack
for a moment her withered skin
awash with gold

Seeing her succumb to the deadly C broke something in me and a part of me travelled with her to the other side.

withering dusk —
alone on my terrace
I see you
in a lone star that twinkles
many many light years away

Padma Priya
~

Will You Walk With Me Till the End

I remember asking my father if the argument I had with my brother was justified. He smiled and replied, "Where you can explain your case well, you don't need an argument. When you understand the point the other person is making, there is no argument at all. So it all depends upon where you stand between these two — arguments don't bring solutions; discussions do." I fondly think of my father at this sudden memory spurt and then let it go.

I hear the noise
of workers returning home ...
this autumn breeze
makes me tremble
longing for your company

*strolling through
the bustling sunday bazaar
more than
the commodities
it's the people . . .*



Pic/Tanka: Sreenath

Sathya Venkatesh
~

When the Hills Gave Way

In Wayanad, the mud had already chosen what to keep and what to take. In the dark roar of the night, little Hayan clung to a wire above the floodwater, while forty-day-old Anara survived in arms gone still. By morning, the hills were quieter, but the world had changed forever. Some children inherit land, some names; these two inherited survival.

hillside silence —
on a flood-stripped branch
two mynas settle
as though the whole ruined valley
still deserves a song

Sathya Venkatesh
~

Across the Distance

After you left for Dubai, the house learned your absence slowly. I stayed behind with your parents, your half-read books, the jasmine plant you forgot to water. Every night, your voice arrived through a glowing screen – tired, delayed, still gentle. Love, I realised, is not always staying together in one place. Sometimes it is enduring the distance without letting tenderness thin out.

monsoon night –
the jasmine by the gate
blooms unseen
its fragrance reaching me
where I wait alone

gembun with tanka

Amrutha V Prabhu
~

they say, "now I know what love is not"

one by one
i mend my broken things
meanwhile
he returns carrying tools
i no longer need

gembun with tanka

Mona Bedi
~

They say our soulmates are written in fate

evanescent dusk
surrounds my loneliness —
in the fading light
I yearn for the warm presence
of someone I have never met

gembun with tanka

Suraja Menon Roychowdhury

don't be such a drama queen ...

sea creatures
living in the brine
how do you cry
when drowning in sorrow
dying when you come up for air

gembun terbalik with tanka

Kala Ramesh
~

brushing away
insults thrown at me
day and night
I practice this
to the level of a fine art

an eagle drops and picks the twig again

Dear Readers
thank you for being with us.

See you once again on 22 July 2026
with many more fine poems
from our contributors!

Team: *haikuKATHA*