

#FemkuMag



#13

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An e-zine of Women's Haiku

June 2019

issue thirteen

Editor: Lori A Minor

Cover art: Lori A Minor

a note from me to you

This issue has made me speechless, so I don't have much to say because I think these poems speak for themselves. The only thing I do want to say is thank you to every single person who told their story. We speak for women everywhere, especially those who aren't able to speak for themselves. They might not be able to have a voice, but we do and together we will scream until we are heard. Together we can and will fight this.

In the back of this issue you will find a Femku feature by Tzetzka Ilieva, commentary on two selected haiku, a special announcement, and dedication.

Thank you for accompanying me on this journey to erase stigma and raise awareness for women everywhere. We are making HERstory.

*Stay radical,
Lori A Minor, editor*

biopsy moon
the hoot owl haunts me
all night long

our relationship
at an impasse
summer solstice

Deborah P Kolodji

*I remind myself
my body is my own
desert rose*

*thunder
the first time
he hit me*

*when I love you
means I own you
black roses*

*frost warning
the burn of his palm
on her face*

Christina Sng

Attic Room: a Tanka Drama in 4 Acts

Act I

*Rough hands rip
a butterfly nightie.
Red blots dot
the white sheet
on my sister's bed.*

Act II

*Beware all men
father son brother.
They can't help it,
Mother says as she
scrubs my sister's bed.*

Act III

*Night after night
in their double bed
Mother sleeps the sleep of the dead.
On her pink sleep-mask
white poodles prance.*

Act IV

*It was a bad dream
but what does it matter,
now he's dead, Mother says
and why does your sister
never visit, never call.*

publication credits:

Cultural Weekly: Roberta Beary Three Poems (12/13/17)
<https://www.culturalweekly.com/roberta-beary-three-poems/>

anthology credits:

#MeToo: A women's poetry anthology (Fair Acre Press, 2018)
Unsealing Our Secrets: A Short Poem Anthology About Sexual Abuse (Jade Mountain Press, 2018)

Roberta Beary

*no play-dates
or scheduled layovers
@humantrafficking*

*Hedgerow, Issue 99
December 2016*

scattering night dreams of winter adoption

*Prune Juice, Issue 27
March 2019*

*bone moon
the ululations
of mothers*

*Wild Voices
Spring 2017*

Jan Benson

*fathers shed
the sunlight
through the cracks*

*fathers shed
the laughter
in the garden*

*fathers shed
the things
I don't remember*

Joanne van Helvoort

tumbleweeds
we must not speak
of this

3rd Place, 2017 Penumbra Haiku Competition

*lilac buds
no one notices
the bruises*

Haiku Canada Review 10.1, 2016

*thirteen
her first boyfriend's
hard slap
some of our memories
are burning brands*

Bright Stars Tanka Anthology 5, 2014

*he gasps
at the ragged scars
upon my back
remnants of that night
they tore off my broken wings*

The Bamboo Hut 1.3, 2014

at the corner
of poverty and despair
an Indigenous girl
is found in the river
I weep, I weep

Neon Graffiti: Tanka Poetry of Urban Life, 2016

Debbie Strange

*dating site
less and less names
to call my son*

*my flat breast
fear of paired objects
in his house*

his first his last shelter refugee`s unborn baby

*king midas
everything I touch
turns out to be shit*

Irina Guliaeva

night breeze
you again give me
shivers

Vessislava Savova

intimidation -
fearing the silent threat
knowing he means it

excuses to the moon and back

winter's eve fire
started with
his love letters

broken
yet beautiful -
kaleidoscope

after he left
the garden
thrived

Roberta Beach Jacobson

that night...
combatting
the replays

summer night...
efforts to eradicate
self-blame

nursing wounds
from words. . .
nightingale song

the new 'good ole days'

climate change
the devaluation
of women
45 years after the rise
of Sarah Weddington

climate change
the deforestation of
women's resources
45 years after their
provision... by law

Claire Vogel Camargo

*slow motion -
purity of a flower dies
behind unmade makeup*

*moviola -
muore la purezza di un fiore
dietro al trucco disfatto*

*cold shiver -
the stalker's voice
everywhere*

*brivido freddo -
la voce dello stalker
in ogni dove*

Maria Teresa Sisti

weathered wall -
our once found love
flake by flake

the pain of not lasting long between my thighs

stained panties
his maps
taking us nowhere

Benedicta Gyepi Garbrah

*child
lying
hand
to
mouth*

(Moongarlic, 4, 2015)

*past the strip club
beneath the neon drizzle
an abandoned umbrella
shimmers red
as the night closes in*

(Little Purple Universes, pub. Angela Leuck, 2011)

*young woman, pregnant
on the list for cattle shed
waits in a doorway*

(Psychopoetica, December 1997)

*full moon
remembering how not
to turn the other cheek*

(mirrormoon, original plus press, 2010)

m (') n e

(Noon, 13, 2017)

Helen Buckingham

*crop-top
those two inches of her waist
blamed for his actions*

*nightfall
a splash of red
between doll's legs*

*summer camp
I tell my daughter about
good and bad touch*

(Me too anthology, March, 2018)

*family picnic
an uncle shows me
his hidden snake*

(Me too anthology, March, 2018)

torn burqa
they say the girls in short skirts
ask for it

*Burqa is an enveloping outer garment worn by women in some Islamic traditions to cover themselves in public, which covers the body and the face.

(Equiverse Space, 2018)

Vandana Parashar

domestic violence
the seed
mass shootings
the blossoms
garden of death

old glory
at half mast
every minute
twenty assaults
by partners

his three-piece suit
once bulletproof
momento mori

strangulation
then her stroke
hospital visits
to the staff his charm
oozes like blood

his priest's collar
becomes her noose
gag order

Marilyn Ashbaugh

his hand where
my husband's should be
office visit

pap smear
if only
I was a boy

birth control denied

domestic abuse
taking the hit
like a girl

preacher's wife
no choice but to be
a mother

Tia Haynes

mammogram images overshadowing my self-identity

deep inside my purple bruises echoing rain

*cold rain
taps on the window
after his departure
she feels a sharp pain
in her empty womb*

*the shards
of a dollhouse window
after war
she collects the remains
of her childhood*

*deep wrinkles
on her forehead
reshaping
the purple scars
of her hardship*

Hifsa Ashraf

*child bride
magnificently adored
her fragility*

*damask roses
the impertinence
of our wars*

*piercing gun —
the scars she needs
to stay alive*

*psychiatric ward
firmly attached to the bed
her memories*

Eva Limbach

*another worm
wriggling into Eve's Apple . . .
rape*

*lightning
breaking the night in pieces
his heavy fists*

Anna Cates

*I see your words
without hearing
...the slow drip of honey*

*turbulent seas
wash over her
living nightmare*

watching you rise—she cringes

Wanda Amos (HaikuWANDArings)

bruises
under soft locks of hair...
the empty night

Haiku, Tre versi di luna crescente

snail slime...
the trail of those eyes
in the décolleté

withered hands
raise a little dress...
torn white lily

Elisabetta Castagnoli

spring fog
her life
in shambles

Maria Concetta Conti

a thread of light-
a woman mends
his scars

Angiola Inglese

blackberry moon
the clench
of his fists

dream-eater
her nibbled down nails
have nothing left to give

woodpecker
he picks
at my faults

black-eyed Susan
I should have left him
the first time

Failed Haiku Senryu Journal, 1 September 2016

the wind
punches a paper bag
against a wall
the red-raw places
and bruise-black holes

*Blithe Spirit, Journal of the British Haiku Society,
Vol 28 number 3, August 2018*

Martha Magenta

tug of war –
when will you
realize
that my vagina
doesn't belong to you

a cat
clawing at me –
this urge
to hurt you
back

shrugging
your shoulders –
what a good
reason
to cheat on me

he goes off
on another
angry tirade
where's a hazmat suit
when you need one

Susan Burch

*strained couple
in the cafe bar
summer raging waves*

*rendezvous. . .
yesterday's rose bud
deflowered*

Christina Chin

*choosing a sperm donor—
father says it's not natural*

*my first
self-administered
hormone injection—
today the mountain
looks lower*

Corine Timmer

night train
he moves
under me

cloudy skies
the day lily hugs
her stamen

birdsong along the way hangover

Erin Castaldi

dark moon
his shadow subdues
me too

taught not to
speak up after he puts
his hands on her...
grains of sand shift
against the tides

invasive weed
the speculum enters her
a second time

Fertile Crescent
the seeds of female
infanticide

sex trafficking
moonlight shuttered
behind the blinds

Cyndi Lloyd

unripe fruit
he plucks
her innocence

sex slave
her body now a temple
of violations

the freedom **she** gets
to be what ~~s~~**he** wants
puppet strings

concave, convex
my reflection shaped
in society's image

no plus one . . .
they reduce me
to half

Theresa Okafor

*broken t.v. screen
he silences her
laughter forever*

*still a kitten --
she's forced to have
her father's baby*

*cutting the flowers
before they bloom
No should mean No*

Jeaunice T Burnette

*gagging on
his name
my rapist*

Unsealing Our Secrets: A Short Poem Anthology About Sexual Abuse, May 2018

*counting inventory
he leans into me
with an erection*

Unsealing Our Secrets: A Short Poem Anthology About Sexual Abuse, May 2018

a church steeple harpoons the moon forced childbirth

*Sonic Boom's Annual Senryu Contest 2018 - Second Place
republished Under the Basho, Poet's Personal Best, September 2018*

*missed moon
he takes what he wants*

From the haibun "Reap." Jellyfish Review, May 2019

Robin Anna Smith

the tango
that isn't a tango --
date rape

slug slime...
you can't
smears my dreams

unwelcome tongue
down my throat..
even though
his wife cannot see,
she probably knows

wild violets
brushing her cheek
the shadow of a bruise

Selected Poem, 2018 Sharpening the Green Pencil Haiku Contest

Theresa A. Cancro

*wild roses in bloom --
femicides don't stop*

*alone...
in the delivery room
no one notices
of his alexithymia*

Karoline Borelli

uprooted my body's right to be human

netflix and the chill of his touch

*mighty oak-
exposing himself
to women*

*sickle moon
mom tells me why
I can't meet grandpa*

Lori A Minor

Femku Feature

women and God by Tzetzka Ilieva

*my mom mentioned it only once while preaching i should be extra careful
who to trust we women she said are woven to be pro-life yet sometimes we
have to do it that's why God has given us the strength we have and the tears*

*bible sunset
a trojan falls
out of my baby girl's purse*

Commentary on Robin Anna Smith's monoku

it's not me he punches the window in anger

Troutswirl, The Haiku Foundation Blog, February 2018

Commentary by Lori A Minor

This is one of those pieces I had to read a few times to fully digest. The first time I read this ku it was a punch in the gut. The second, third, fourth, and so on I was able to break it down into several layers that helped me take it all in.

The first thing I notice is the whole "it's not me, it's you" attitude behind it. Clearly the narrator is not the problem, "he" is. It seems like a possibility that the man mentioned has been dealing with his anger and frustration for quite some time and has most likely hit the narrator before. Or, maybe he hasn't. Maybe he breaks down and hits everything but the narrator when he is angry.

I love that in this piece the relationship between the narrator and "he" is unclear. It leaves the reader open to put themselves in the shoes of "me". Is the narrator male or female? Is "he" a boyfriend, husband, father, friend, etc.? Literally anyone who has been abused can put themselves in this situation.

The next part I'd like to discuss is the window, which is incredibly symbolic. Windows are used as protection from the outside. In this ku, clearly the window being available to take the hit protects the narrator. There's also this idea of the window providing a different perspective for the reader as an outsider looking in at the situation.

This haiku is the perfect example of the cycle of abuse, especially in domestic violence and brings much needed awareness to situations just like this one. It works perfectly as a one-liner as you can read it over and over, emulating that cycle. You can almost break it up when you read it as "it's not me / he punches the window..." or "it's not me he punches / the window..." No matter how many times you read this beautifully written piece, you can just keep digging deeper and deeper.

Commentary on Tia Haynes' haiku

naked oak
still standing
after the rape

First Place, 2018 Johnny Baranski Memorial Haiku Contest

Commentary by Lori A Minor

This is a stunning example of the use of juxtaposition and linking and shifting within the same poem, so I'd like to examine the technical side as well as the endless emotion the ku radiates.

Tia creates a beautiful juxtaposition between the naked oak and the survivor of a rape (naked oak) (still standing/after the rape). The oak tree is strong and mighty, just like those of us who have survived what seems like an impossible event to recover from. Although it seems like an eternity, we do recover and we keep standing tall no matter where we are in the healing process. "standing tall" is such an interesting and exquisite word choice for the middle line because it creates the perfect link between lines one and two, only to shift away in line three. When you read the first two lines, you expect line three to close the poem by another reference to the "naked oak standing tall", but when you read that third line and realize the poem's true context, it swings full force. To me, the nakedness of the oak represents not only nudity in the literal sense, but our very essence being stripped away by the rape, leaving us with nothing but raw, emotional and physical trauma.

Poems like this are incredibly *necessary* for everyone. It's *necessary* for the poet to heal, *necessary* for other victims to realize that not only are they "still standing", but they are not alone in their trauma or healing, and it's *necessary* for anyone who has never found themselves in this situation, so they may understand the impact of sexual trauma. Victims, regardless of this trauma, prove to be stronger than we give ourselves credit for and no matter how many times we are kicked down, just like the oak, we rise, stand tall, and persist.

The Second Annual Marlene Mountain Memorial Haiku Contest

This contest will be open from July 5-15 and is for women, including non-binary and transwomen.

Guidelines:

*Please submit only two poems per poet to **mountaincontest@gmail.com** between July 5th and July 15th. Please put CONTEST in the subject line.*

Poems must be unpublished, without any posting on social media. This is to provide total blind judging.

There will be first place, second place, and third place winners, who will be notified by the 20th and will appear in the July issue of #FemkuMag. Winners will also receive e-certificates.

The Marlene Mountain Memorial Haiku Contest will be judged blindly by Lori A Minor

This issue is dedicated to every woman who's suffered, whether it be emotionally, mentally, physically, or sexually, to the women who supported us during our trauma and healing process, and to every woman fighting for her right to be human. May we stand tall for those who can't always get up.