

FISH EYE

by Aubrie Cox

You're a handful sometimes. You know you'll probably be up all night packing. You're not sure you love your father anymore. Your head gets fuzzy sometimes. You don't know what's next. You don't feel pretty. You sometimes lose the courage to say what you mean out loud. You hope your students understand they should not have to pay for their education. You know your grandmother only loves you conditionally. You wish your middle school counselor hadn't seen right through you. You're too protective of your mother. You use too much tissue paper around your favorite books. You understand now what he meant when he said your arms feel like home. You didn't escape the stereotype of a child of divorce like you thought you had. You hope your best friend wasn't right when he said you were broken. You want to go home.

midnight rain
bubble wrap punctures
the silence

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I liked this Haibun best out of the two by Aubrie Cox because it told a lot more story than what was there. I felt like each line had its own separate story that was adding into the one big picture of her life. It went into detail, but not too much and still allowed you to create your own idea of what was going on. It also created a lot of emotions without directly stating them, which I found very interesting. I also enjoyed how the haiku fit with the story, but only slightly and only after reading the whole story can you kind of picture the haiku starting this spiral of thoughts. Alexis

I really, really liked Fish Eye. I like how it is a person talking, and thinking, to themselves. I liked how I could connect with it. It's always times when you're alone or just so utterly confused that everything hits you. Things that happened in middle school, your grandmother all hit you at the worst possible time. You feel like you're falling apart and more realizations just push you further into the ground. I like how the prose gives the haiku a different meaning and a different back story. When you just read the haiku, it could be about almost anything. Maybe a couple is unpacking into their first home and it's silent because they are so tired. Maybe people are driving to their new home and the bumpy road is causing the bubble wrap to pop. Maybe someone is moving into their first home by themselves and the bubble wrap reminds them of their loneliness and wish for more. But when put with the prose, the haiku is about a woman who is so confused and lost. The bubble wrap is puncturing the silence that is killing her, that is making her over think every single aspect of her life. The haiku connects with the prose in the sense that she is moving and will be up all night packing, but the haiku gives a different aspect of the scene and situation. Corrin

I loved this haibun because it showed all of the thoughts that go through a person's head when they are alone. Every thought and feeling they haven't had a lot of time to think about becomes prevalent. It does not make sense and nothing really connects to each other but all of the thoughts comes pouring in at once. It also speaks to how moving into a new place brings back a plethora of memories of good times and bad. However, I feel sadness from this haiku and haibun instead of happy memories. Even though I get a sad feeling, I feel like there is some hope that comes with moving to a new place. Erica

This haibun hits me right in the heart, as I can relate to so many of these synapse snapshots. I too come from a divorced family, and hate packing, am too protective of my mom, and usually am wanting to go home. Its hard when home changes so frequently, and becomes more of a concept than a place. The "midnight rain" line of the haiku brings to mind the packing all night, and the restlessness of the protagonist's mind space. The thoughts are hitting like pelting raindrops and appear/disappear with the verve of a bubble being popped. The bubble wrap are the thoughts puncturing the silence of his/her mind, but also is used in packing. Popping bubble wrap can also help release frustration, and most of all shows the character's popping of their own bubble. All these things they thought were true aren't anymore. When the bubble's gone, reality rushes in. It feels a bit different though, in the atmosphere especially; I get the oppressive feeling of a charged silence between fighting people, either the character is moving out from their lover's, or perhaps it brings it back to divorcing parents memories. Different too, is the way it talks of silence when the haibun is anything but. Nice contrast there, for sure. Like its quiet outside of the character's head, but not inside. Genevieve

The prose was choppy and blunt. It gave a strong point without over-explaining. This description reminds me of the pop of the bubble wrap; quick and to the point. The "midnight rain" set the tone to be more like a nighttime thinker pondering his or her past and then the bubble-wrap pop seemed to be a wake up scare indicating that reality is calling. The silence that finishes it however, was a sign of letting-go, which the prose didn't include. Katherine

Out of the two Haibun that were posted online, I liked "Fish Eye" the most. Even though it was harder to follow the "story" the author was trying to tell, it made the reader (me) feel as though I was the one who was experiencing the story. By using the second person point of view, it pulled me in, and made me feel as though I was the one who was supposed to be telling the story. Reading the Haiku actually made me feel more confident in the plot. Even though Haikus are so much shorter than Haibuns, I felt as though the Haiku told a better story, and painted a clearer picture as to what was going on. Lauren

The story of this was really intriguing and did an excellent job of provoking feelings in the reader. Not all of the situations presented could be applied directly to me, but aspects of some or all could. The haiku also fits very along very well with this story or memory because it is like the last paragraph of the story in just three small lines. The haiku is so vague that it allows the readers to finish writing the story for themselves and visualize the person sitting alone in the dark with the bubble wrap. The haiku itself is very good, I especially like the play on the word "punctures" because it affects the silence and the individual bubbles as well. Michael

This was my favorite haibun of the two. I thought it was really interesting that the author started each sentence with "You." By saying "You," it seems that the author is talking about someone else, especially after the first sentence. However, after you get a few sentences into the haibun, you realize that the author is most likely talking to him or herself, and the characteristics they have. I like how the haiku did not directly state the situation the author is in, but you get the feeling that they are thinking about some melancholy situation they may be in by the use of "midnight rain" and "silence." After reading the haibun again, I imagine the silence that he or she is sitting in, packing their things and thinking about their situation of dealing with their parent's divorce. Whitney

TROLL

by Aubrie Cox

Life under a bridge is renowned to be that of a troll, and that it is. Floods on occasion make the home a bit wet, but a little mold and algae never hurt anything. Fresh fish daily, a billy goat if lucky; however, this is not prime real-estate—it's just beneath the price of a cardboard box. Stones wedged together with natural mortar arch overhead and shade the muddy water so that one can barely see the fish going by. They come up to the surface, their fishy mouths gaping, gasping for air; their glazed eyes never see wanted hands, or fishing rods coming for them. (I hate fishing rods, by the way.) Trash is littered everywhere—lost treasures from passerbys. Rain matters little when every spring the neighborhood gets carried downstream.

wagon over head
rubble plops in
the cracked teacup

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The haiku at the end of the prose really emphasized how crappy the life of the troll is. As a fictional character who usually is at least a little mischievous, trolls' living arrangements don't often get much attention or sympathy. In her prose, Cox goes into the daily hardships that these trolls experience, but it does not evoke a real feeling of sympathy until the haiku. The haiku puts you in the troll's shoes, forcing you to empathize with a character you usually brush off. The casual fantasy reader wouldn't consider the hardships of living under the bridge in filth and squalor, just as much as they wouldn't think about how the poor trolls can never find peace at home. Overall, the haiku is what made me actually care about the prose. Cori

I like this haibun by her because she incorporates nature and life in it. She uses good details to describe the fish and the water stream in which they are in. I like how she appeals to the human senses of touch and sense. She goes from describing what is going on, to inputting some of her own voice in it which changes it up at the end. She also has the ability to incorporate everyday life in this haibun as well which is nice. She appeals to the reality in which we live in by just mentioning the simple things that we don't think of ever. Emilio

I enjoy this haibun because it starts off making me think that it would be an ideal place for a troll to live in a fairy tale, but then it goes on to show all of the pollution that the real world leaves under the bridge. This pollution of the trolls home and everything after the first sentence is very melancholy, which is the direction that they she took the haiku at the end too. The cracked teacup reminds the reader of the troll's house under the bridge, but even without the backstory it leaves the reader with a kind of empty feeling. Jacob

I feel that the prose truly turned the haiku around. By first pointing out that a troll is the character here in the haiku helps me out because I kind of felt that it was just some rubble falling into a cup, yet the cup belongs to a salty troll. Yet, this gives meaning and feeling to the haiku. The troll does have a place to live, yet it is not luxurious. He has food to eat, but it is fish from a polluted stream. I feel that by giving presence to the troll, we can see what we do in life that we take for granted every day. We do not truly appreciate the things we have at our fingertips because we can never see it from a hurt person's perspective. The troll delivers the point that the author was trying to get across to perfection, at least in my mind. Joe

This haibun titled "Troll" was something different than what I usually read in this haiku class. I like how the idea of a troll is expressed before talking about what it is like to be living as a troll under a

bridge. I do not fully understand the purpose of the haibun is, but I guess it interesting to see this perspective. The writing style in this haibun is also interesting, as it is very choppy, and a lack of focus. After reading this haibun, all I really feel is the want to take a shower. Noah

Initially, I figured the poem would describe a troll. I thought maybe it would connect to the prose with more visual clues. Instead, it added more to the scenery. The prose describes "lost treasures" that surround the troll's home, but until the haiku is added, it's hard to imaging what kind of items would be left lying around. I especially appreciate the words "rubble" and "cracked", because they add to the broken style of "cardboard box" living. The troll doesn't live in a very nice place, and you get that idea from the prose, but not until the haiku does the entire picture really make sense. Taryn

I enjoyed the story that went along with this haiku. When I was younger I loved to read books and articles about mythological creatures. The story read just like a fact sheet for a troll and the descriptive words used were chosen quite well. I enjoy how the story starts out describing a troll under a bridge and then moves to describing the bridge and so on. The haiku tells a story about a wagon crossing over the bridge when a cup falls over the bridge. Maybe the troll grabs the teacup. Tyler