



EFSL E ENGLISH HAIKU ANTHOLOGY 2020

RESULT

[As a part of EFSLE English Haiku Anthology to be published in a Three-Dimensional Digital Book from Switzerland]

We are happy to announce the result of the haiku contest as well as to release the final selected haiku for our upcoming English Haiku Anthology. EFSLE has initiated this project to launch an anthology of English haiku for the participants from India and the SAARC Nations in the form of a three-dimensional digital e-Book which is entirely a new concept and a very good amalgamation of an art form and the technology. Haiku could be read as moving objects in 360° angles in an app, known as MORE AND LESS: Flying through a Three-Dimensional Book, that has been conceptualised and designed by Marc Lee and Markus Kirchhofer from Switzerland. The Judge, Kala Ramesh, a veteran haikai, has selected 21 haiku out of 65. We have received haiku from India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. The inclusion of the SAARC Nations was an idea of our judge Kala Ramesh to foster this beautiful art form in the entire SAARC world. The Project Coordinator, Rishikesh Kumar Singh, Founder-President and Director of EFSLE, has been pulling out all the stops to promote and elevate this art form. The proposed e-Book will be released by end of June 2020. It's a proud moment for EFSLE to launch the world's first 3D e-Book of haiku.

This haiku contest proved to be a challenging one as it restricted the poets to write for certain themes such as Urbanization, Indian Species in Danger of Extinction, Ethnic Minorities in India, Globalisation and Digitalisation and Population Growth. According to our judge, this was unique as specific topics like these rarely occur in haiku! However, we have received entries under each theme.

Here we present the three winners of the haiku contest with the remarks of the judge- Kala Ramesh. Further the rest of winners' names are also enlisted.

The 1st prize (₹15,000) goes to:

**powdered pangolin scales
the smell
of a dead warrior**

- Priya Narayanan

Kala: To be honest I had to Google pangolin scales, but once I was armed with all this knowledge, each line and each word seemed to talk volumes.

Let's take the first line:

powdered pangolin scales

Pangolin scales, like rhino horn, have no proven medicinal value, yet they are used in traditional Chinese medicine to help with ailments ranging from lactation difficulties to arthritis to cancer. The scales are dried and powdered and then made into pills. Though pangolins are protected by an international ban on their trade, they suffer from illegal poaching and trafficking. The figures are staggering.

Now we come to the winning Ls 2 & 3:

the smell
of a dead warrior

Though many think of pangolins as reptiles, they are actually mammals. They are the only mammals wholly covered in scales, which they use to protect themselves from predators in the wild. If under threat, a pangolin immediately curls into a tight ball and uses its sharp-scaled tails to defend itself. While well-equipped to defend against natural predators, they are easily caught by poachers, who simply pick up the animals when they roll into a ball.

I was reminded of this beautiful poem by D. H. Lawrence:

Mountain Lion

So, she will never leap up that way again,
with the yellow flash of a mountain lion's long shoot!
And her bright striped frost-face will never watch any more,
out of the shadow of the cave in the blood-orange rock,
Above the trees of the Lobo dark valley-mouth!

And I think in this empty world there was room for me and a mountain lion.

And I think in the world beyond, how easily we might spare a million or two humans
And never miss them.

Yet what a gap in the world, the missing white frost-face of that slim yellow mountain lion!

And so the 1st prize goes to this powerful and most poignant haiku. Each word is measured and nothing is misplaced or redundant. My deepest regards to the haijin who gave voice to the urgent need to protect this endangered species.

The 2nd prize (₹10,000) goes to:

**kodava bride—
the scent of rain in sun-filled
coffee blossoms**

- Rashmi VeSa

Kala: A Kodava bride is from Coorg, a district in the state of Karnataka in South India.

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What surprises visitors coming from outside into Coorg is the absence of the Brahmin priests and rituals that solemnize a typical Hindu wedding. Instead, prayers are offered to ancestors before a sacred lamp and the wedding ceremony is guided by elders whose blessings are sought. It is these simple but meaningful acts that make a Coorg wedding unique.

Next two lines come as a surprise:

the scent of rain in sun-filled
coffee blossoms

Coorg is coffee country that looks beautiful during spring. The coffee trees at this place have lovely white blossoms all over, filling the coffee estates with their lovely aroma, jasmine-like, soothing to the senses.

Isn't it time to have our own Coffee Blossom Festival like the Cherry Blossom Festival?

The 3rd prize (₹5,000) goes to:

**world wildlife day
the sheen of snakeskin
in a window display**

- Indra Neil Mekala

Kala: Coats, bags and footwear from 100% handmade genuine exotic cobra snakeskin is what it's all about. Why do we assume that the animal world is there only to serve us – the human race? When are we going to wake up from this deep slumber? Will Covid-19 be a turning point to make us believe in this maxim – live and let live?

Including the above three winning haiku total 21 haiku are selected for the proposed anthology. Here is the complete list of the haiku:

1. Priya Narayanan
2. Rashmi VeSa (2)*
3. Indra Neil Mekala (2)
4. Sanjukta Asopa (2)
5. Lakshmi Iyer
6. Srinivasa Rao (2)
7. Sanjay Kumar Sanan
8. Ajaya Mahala (2)
9. Neha R. Krishna (2)
10. P. Rajakumar Sivan
11. Minal Sarosh (2)
12. Kashinath Karmakar (2)
13. Priya Parthasarathy

**It indicates that two haiku of the particular poet have been selected for the anthology.*

EFSLE congratulates all the winners and the selected poets!