

Third Prize \$25

home from hospice—
your empty cup
in the sink

*Karin Hedetniemi,
Victoria, BC*

Second Prize \$50

hometown
I hear the river
call my name

*Jacquie Pearce,
Vancouver, BC*

First Prize \$100

suspecting mine
is the placebo . . .
January moon

*paul m,
Inlet Beach, FL*

Honourable Mentions

(in no particular order)

January—
I borrow a book
of spring poems

*Ana Drobot,
Bucharest, Romania*

spring moon—
on her thumbs, the dents
of knitting needles

*Indra Neil Mekala,
Rajamahendravaram,
India*

long walk with a friend
picking stories
from blackberry bushes

*Karin Hedetniemi,
Victoria, BC*

a pine
among oaks
the family we choose

*Jennifer Hambrick,
Columbus, Ohio, USA*

Judges Notes:

HM: January—

Such optimism in winter doldrums! A pleasing detail is that the book is *borrowed*, underscoring connection, itself an optimistic choice. Spring has come early in this poem.

HM: spring moon—

When the moon shines through undrawn curtains, we see those dented thumbs, a sign of passionate devotion to one's craft. We observers feel a relationship to the one knitting late into the evening.

HM: long walk with a friend

It is a pleasure see and feel the shared joy of picking blackberries together. The extra joy is the stories these friends share, perhaps told each other before, with new stories added in, all of them savoured.

HM: a pine

The image of trees represents the person and their relationship to their family. Surely the person is a pine rather than an oak. Does the pine "choose" its oak family? Their pine family isn't their choice.

Third Place: home from the hospice

We each bring our own experiences to haiku, and for me this poem reminded me of my dad and the two months he spent in hospice before he died. I remember the phone call from my mother to say he had passed away. I imagined my mother alone in the house they shared. As she walked around the house, she would have seen

not his cup but many other reminders of his presence. At first we might read “home from hospice” in a positive way, that the dying person has recovered and returned home, but this momentary possibility receives a twist of reality when we see that it’s someone else who has returned home without a loved one, and that empty cup symbolizes how empty the person must feel.

Second Place: hometown

This poem brings to mind Margaret Craven’s novel, *I Heard the Owl Call My Name*, set in BC. In the Kwakiutl First Nations tradition, the owl’s sound was a harbinger of death. Here, though, we have a river rather than an owl. And in contrast to the owl, the river is perhaps a harbinger of life rather than death. The setting of the hometown suggests that the person in the poem is visiting after having been away because that river has been calling the person’s name, drawing them home. Even when home, one can long for home, just as Bashō longed for Kyoto even when in Kyoto.

First Place: suspecting mine

Where does this poem take you? The moon suggests a variety of cycles, and for those of us in the northern hemisphere, January sets us in the middle of winter in the cycle of seasons. What does this mean in the context of a medical trial? And why is the person in the poem taking part in such a trial? The poem’s openness to possible

answers plays a significant part in engaging us. Perhaps there’s a disappointment here, in a wish for true healing from an experimental drug yet fear in the suspicion that such healing won’t be coming if all we’re receiving is a placebo. The moon suggests light, and possibly hope, but January may suggest the darkness of despair, and this echoes the uncertainty of whether one is receiving a possibly life-saving drug . . . or maybe just a placebo. Perhaps few of us done clinical trials, but we can still empathize, because, for both writers and readers, every good haiku is a poem of empathy.

Our 2022 Judge: Michael Dylan Welch

has been investigating haiku and related poetry since 1976. He cofounded Haiku North America (HNA) in 1991 and the American Haiku Archives in 1996. He founded the Tanka Society of America in 2000, the Seabeck Haiku Getaway in 2008, and National Haiku Writing Month (www.nahaiwrimo.com) in 2010.

The Betty Drevniok Awards are held annually. It was established by Haiku *Canada* in memory of Betty Drevniok, past President of the society.

Submission Guidelines: Haiku Canada Website:
www.haikucanada.org

Contest coordination, layout
and image by Pearl Pirie
Production: Mike Montreuil

The Betty Drevniok Award 2022



"January moon"

