1. Time

by Gay Fawcett

I’m afraid I’ll fall but she lifts me from my walker
And plants my feet on the floor.
“I’ve got you,” she smiles. “You won’t fall.”
Back and forth across the rug
With strong fingers wrapped round my tiny hands
Until she lets go—baby steps!
Next time I won’t be afraid.

“I’m afraid I’ll fall,” I whine as she removes training wheels
And helps me onto the bike.
“I’ve got you,” she chides. “You won’t fall.”
Round and round the yard
With strong hands on the seat
Until she lets go—two-wheeler!
Next time I won’t be afraid.

“What if I fall?” I plead as I put on the skis
And ease into the lake.
“You won’t fall,” she says. “I’ve got you.”
Hanging on for dear life
With strong hands holding me up
Until she lets go—water skiing!
Next time I won’t be afraid.

“I’m terrified of failure,” I confide
As we pack the trunk.
“You won’t fail,” she whispers. “I’ve got you.”
Four years away from home.
Righteous hands praying
Until I’m done—college degree!
I’m no longer afraid.

“I’m afraid I’ll fall,’ she says to me
As I help her to the car.
“You won’t fall,” I promise. “I’ve got you.”
Frail body, confused mind
Skinny fingers in a desperate hold.
Time is short —soon she’ll let go.
God, I’ve never been so afraid .

12/31/09
Oh Gay, what a wonderful tribute. It’s honest and comes from where you live. Everyone will relate to these memories and those of us who have dealt with or are currently dealing with aging parents will understand exactly what you mean about the role reversals that come toward the end. How lovely. Thanks very much for starting us off with a poem that sets the bar so high.

Happy New Year!

David

Gay, This brought tears–I see myself in every verse. I’m so proud of you!

Margaret
This is lovely, Gay. My mother has been spending the last four weeks with me, and I see her in nearly every word of your poem. Thanks for sharing this.

- Edit Comment

By: Tricia on January 1, 2010 at 7:48 pm

Reply

Tricia,
Isn’t it cruel irony that the memories sustain us even as they are robbed from our mothers?
Gay

- Edit Comment

By: Gay Fawcett on January 1, 2010 at 8:27 pm

Beautiful. I love seeing each stage and its subtle shifts and sameness. Thank you for sharing this.

- Edit Comment

By: Yousei Hime on January 2, 2010 at 11:41 am

Reply

Wow, Gay, you held me from first line to last! The refrain lines accumulate power as the poem progresses — great work!

- Edit Comment
By: Steven Withrow on January 2, 2010 at 2:12 pm

Reply

2.

Gay
Beautiful, moving poem.

- Edit Comment

By: Jan Gallagher on January 1, 2010 at 3:09 pm

Reply

3.

David and All Others

Happy New Year 2010

- Edit Comment

By: Jan Gallagher on January 1, 2010 at 3:09 pm

Reply

And a very Happy New Year to you, too, Jan!

Here’s to many fine adventures in 2010.

David

- Edit Comment
ABSENCE OF TIME

Once upon a time
when I was young,
during summer time,
days were never ending.
Swimming and hiking
were special pastimes.
No school bells ringing.
Star watching to midnight,
a break for lunchtime,
and a little nap was allowed.
Oh, for the days of peacetime
when friendships endured,
and dreaming wasn’t wasted time
during my youthful years,
when I thought life, was timeless.

By Mary Nida Smith

Happy New Year, Mary Nida!

I can always count on you to share a new poem with us. Many thanks for this one.
I love your trajectory. I too wish “for the days of peacetime/when friendships
endured/and dreaming wasn’t wasted time.”

All the best,
David

- Edit Comment

By: davidlharrison on January 1, 2010 at 3:16 pm

Reply

Mary Nida,
What a wonderful poem. I still look on my childhood summers with great fondness. You have done a fine job capturing those feelings here.

- Edit Comment

By: Tricia on January 1, 2010 at 7:49 pm

Reply

- Edit Comment

Tricia and David I am glad you enjoyed my poem. Fun-loving, and carefree days of our youth remind us we are never too old to have childhood fun.

- Edit Comment

By: Mary Nida Smith on January 2, 2010 at 9:48 am

Without the weight of adulthood, youth is definitely timeless. Thank you for sharing this.

- Edit Comment
By: Yousei Hime on January 2, 2010 at 11:42 am

Reply

Mary Nida
You have captured some of my childhood as well.

- Edit Comment

By: Jan Gallagher on January 2, 2010 at 2:08 pm

Reply

This is such a nice song of nostalgia. Thanks for sharing!

- Edit Comment

By: Steven Withrow on January 2, 2010 at 2:14 pm

Reply

Oh, what a lovely reminder of our childhood. I especially love the line: “when I thought life, was timeless.” Very nice!

- Edit Comment

By: Linda on January 8, 2010 at 10:22 am

Reply
Gay, what a poem. We all live with so many fears we have to overcome. Thanks you. Have a Happy, Healthly New Year and to all who join us in creating poems this year.

- Edit Comment

By: Mary Nida Smith on January 1, 2010 at 3:16 pm

Reply

Once again, a tough act to follow with the already submitted poems!

HOW LOVELY

Cat sleeps
and sleeps and sleeps
and sleeps, not knowing,
or caring, that time
is passing.

Cat wakes
to str-e-t-c-hhh,
drink, eat, excrete
play, groom, prowl.
Then back

she goes
to circle round and round
until finally tucking
her head into her
chest she closes

her eyes.
Cat sleeps and sleeps
and sleeps. How
lovely to be
a cat.

A happy, poetry-filled New Year to all!
Thanks, Diane,

Anyone who has owned a cat can relate to this one. Sometimes I wish I could sleep as easily or wake as completely as a cat!

David

What a fun poem. One has to admire the ease a cat takes in living.

Diane
Thanks for the glimpse of a Cat’s day. Fun.
I don’t know what it is about cats — but they are so inspirational to poets. From Carl Sandburg to T.S. Eliot to Diane Mayr, poets can’t resist their charms. And I’m glad for it.

–CAT LOVER ALERT–
Posted a little haiku story with illustrations yesterday (requested by a fellow blogger). If you like cats, please take a look and enjoy.

Diane,
A peaceful poem to balance the agony of mine. Thank you.
Gay
I just remembered this poem from PIRATES. I didn’t include it in the final collection although Dan Burr sketched a great picture of a pirate dying of scurvy.

LAST WISH

Wish I’d . . . never . . . come aboard . . .
Wish . . . I’d . . . stayed at home . . .
Wish I’d chose . . . ta settle down
Instead a . . . wishin’ . . . ta roam
Wishin’ . . . ta be a . . . sailin’ man . . .
Wishin’ a . . . pirate’s . . . way . . .
Wish . . . I wasn’t . . . dyin’ . . . here . . .
Wishin’ . . . for . . .
one . . .
more . . .
day . . .

- Edit Comment

By: davidlharrison on January 1, 2010 at 8:47 pm

Reply

Nice. The “whishing” makes me hear his final gasps more clearly. Thank you for this.

- Edit Comment

By: Yousei Hime on January 2, 2010 at 11:45 am
Hi there, Yousei,

Thank you for joining us. I look forward to your comments and contributions, and thanks for the plug on your site.

David

- Edit Comment

By: davidlharrison on January 2, 2010 at 11:48 am

Nice. We need to read it all. Thanks

- Edit Comment

By: Jan Gallagher on January 2, 2010 at 2:12 pm

Hi Jan,

David
Where is “PIRATES” available?

- Edit Comment

By: Jan Gallagher on January 2, 2010 at 2:14 pm
Many bookstores will have PIRATES in stock and all can order it. A growing number of school and public libraries will have copies too.

David

- Edit Comment

By: davidlharrison on January 2, 2010 at 5:21 pm

Jan,
I got Pirates from Amazon.com
Gay

- Edit Comment

By: Gay Fawcett on January 3, 2010 at 11:26 am

I never thought of pacing a poem like this — what a great way to capture the voice! I tried a sailing poem myself this month.

- Edit Comment

By: Steven Withrow on January 2, 2010 at 2:17 pm

Reply

Steven,

Sometimes it’s an effective technique. Here’s a good example by Arnold Spilka.

THE TURTLE
the turtle
takes . . . one . . . step
. . . and . . . then
a-n-o-t-h-e-r.
. . . then he . . . slow-ly
. . looks . . . around
. . . . . . and says,
“I don’t . . .
. . know . . . why . .
I . . . . . . . b-o-t-h-e-r.”

- Edit Comment

By: davidharrison on January 2, 2010
at 5:38 pm

9.

Time to pull
your act together
Make something
of your life, how clever
Time to find
your way, however
you can.
Time to begin
again.

- Edit Comment

By: Sidney on January 1, 2010
at 11:42 pm

Reply

My initial response was, “Oh man, that’s too close to home to like.” It is a definite
echo of my thoughts for how this new year should go. Thank you for putting it so
aptly into words.

- Edit Comment
Sidney,

You speak for all of us! Time to begin again. This is the year we’ll get organized, put matters into the right perspective, write more and better, get something published, and find time to relax and bit now and then.

Thanks!

David
10. By: Steven Withrow on January 2, 2010 at 2:18 pm

Reply

[...] If you write poems, you should think about showing off on David L Harrison’s Blog. [...]
The River
sunrise
ferries people
from town to town ever
flowing on to eternity
and night

By: Yousei Hime on January 2, 2010
at 11:48 am

Reply

Yousei,
This reminded me of Mary Jo Fresh’s blog. Isn’t it amazing that so few words can convey a message so profound?!
Gay

Edit Comment

By: Gay Fawcett on January 2, 2010
at 11:53 am

Reply

Gay, Thank you. I’ll try to find that blog and take a look. I think that is my favorite aspect of haiku, cinquain, and other short forms–creating clear and visual meaning with as few words as possible. But we definitely need much more detailed and expansive forms to give us character and loss as you did in your beautiful poem. Thank you for your words.
By: Yousei Hime on January 2, 2010 at 12:02 pm

Yousei,

I love your poem. What a lovely metaphor. Perfect form for the thought.

Thanks for sharing!

David

By: davidlharrison on January 2, 2010 at 11:54 am

David, Thank you for your complement. I’m afraid my brain wouldn’t let it go at bed time, and the ‘ornery thing finally worked it out about 3:45 this morning, with a few naps in between. Thank you for the opportunity.

By: Yousei Hime on January 2, 2010 at 12:00 pm

I love the image of sunrise as a ferry — you’ve expanded my sense of everything with that. Thanks, Yousei!
By: **Steven Withrow** on January 2, 2010 at 2:19 pm

Reply

Steven, Thank you. There is nothing better than knowing one helped someone else to grow, even a little. Glad you liked it.

- Edit Comment

By: **Yousei Hime** on January 2, 2010 at 3:12 pm

Yousei
The flow of life.

- Edit Comment

By: **Jan Gallagher** on January 2, 2010 at 2:19 pm

Reply

Jan, That is it. You see it clearly. Thank you.

- Edit Comment

By: **Yousei Hime** on January 2, 2010 at 3:13 pm

Yousei,
You prove how powerful a few words can be with this poem. I look to read more over the next twelve months.

Kathy

- Edit Comment

By: kathytemean on January 4, 2010 at 4:22 am

Reply

- kathytemean,
  Thank you for your praise and your encouragement. I am so glad you recommended David’s blog. I definitely plan to be here through all of 2010.

- Edit Comment

By: Yousei Hime on January 4, 2010 at 8:33 am

13.

The plug . . . you are welcome and deserving. I am happy to be here and am loving everything I see. My aunt says, “Hi.”

- Edit Comment

By: Yousei Hime on January 2, 2010 at 11:51 am

Reply

- I was looking for an e-mail address for Pansy but must have lost it sometime back. Please tell her hello for me and wish her a Happy New Year.
THE TIME SHIP
By Steven Withrow

I boarded August Twenty-Ten
That silver ship at Chronos Key.
I’m sure of this, but then again,
It might have been another me.

I signed ship’s log as second mate,
Just nineteen summers to my name.
I perfectly recall the date—
It’s Time itself that’s not the same.

The captain read my duties clear:
To chart our course, night’s watch to keep,
To rouse her crew should bearing veer,
To hail and interrupt their sleep.

We sailed twelve cycles undisturbed,
A glancing headwind at our prow.
Our compass slumbered unperturbed,
Until we reached the Straits of Now.

I stalked the crow’s nest, falcon-eyed,
Regarded marvels in the Stream,
Saw dwarf stars dawning on the tide
And dying there, a sailor’s dream.

Our minds stretched thin, our lives pressed short,
We drifted, time-tossed, toward our berth,
A startling, unfamiliar port,
Though all signs told us this was Earth.
On shore leave, as I write this poem,
The calendar reveals “LV.”
We’ve landed on the sands of Rome.
We’re stranded: Fifty-Five B.C.

And Julius Caesar, six years hence,
Will cross the mighty Rubicon,
And we’ll bear witness, present tense,
Before our Time Ship journeys on!

By: Steven Withrow on January 2, 2010
at 2:09 pm

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I can’t wait for the sequel! Fun writing!

By: Diane Mayr on January 2, 2010
at 5:20 pm

---

Nice job, Steven. I like the way the first five stanzas roll along on a sea we can recognize until the transitional sixth stanza warns us that we’re in for an unexpected ending. Julius Caesar indeed!

Thanks for sharing your fertile imagination once again!

David

By: davidlharrison on January 2, 2010
at 5:46 pm
Steven,
I agree. A sequel is definitely in order. What a delightful poem. It could make an exciting story for young readers too. Thank you for sharing this.

- Edit Comment

By: Yousei Hime on January 2, 2010 at 7:52 pm

Reply

Steven
Love The Time Ship!
Time travel in a neat poem.
Hope you had fun in the new Roman adventure.

- Edit Comment

By: Jan Gallagher on January 2, 2010 at 2:25 pm

Reply

David and Adult Poets posted here.
I appreciate your work.
May I have permission to share these poems with THE QUILL AND INK CLUB in Marshfield, MO on Wednesday 6 January 2010?
Please let me know. If you do not e-mail permission I will not print and share.
Thanks,
Janet Kay Gallagher
herbnjan28@yahoo.com
http://gardenbyjan.blogspot.com
Jan,

I don’t mind your sharing our poets’ work with your writing group if they don’t. This hasn’t come up before so I’m not sure how to handle. The blog itself is public so I suppose you could show that, and if you can show the blog, maybe it’s also okay to make a copy for the same purpose.

Does anyone have words of wisdom on this?

David

David, poems, small articles and photos on my blogs are protected by a copyright and they can only be use by the permission of the blogger-me. They can not be used for personal gain by viewers. They can be used or published when credit is given to the owner of the blog or to the author of any poem used. As far as I know comments are not copyrighted, but belong to you who owns the blog. This is what I understand it to be; the same for material on a website and on a blog. Please someone correct me if I am wrong.

Mary Nida Smith

By: Mary Nida Smith on January 2, 2010
at 4:54 pm
Jan,
I'd be honored to have my poem shared with your students.
Gay

By: Gay Fawcett on January 3, 2010
at 11:29 am

Reply

Steven, I enjoyed the sailing journey you took me on of realism and fantasy. It was a great ride.

By: Mary Nida Smith on January 2, 2010
at 4:40 pm

Reply

I give permission for my poem to be used. I think it’s implied that the poems in the comments belong to the creators. Perhaps David, you should put up a little notice stating “For any poems submitted through Comments on this site, the copyright belongs to the poem’s author and may not be used without permission.”

By: Diane Mayr on January 2, 2010
at 5:18 pm

Reply
Diane and Mary Nida,

Thanks for your quick and helpful responses. I agree that poems published on my blog are protected. By giving Jan permission to share them with her writing group I don’t think that gives away any rights or protection on behalf of the poets who created the works. In all cases, proper credit should be given.

David

- Edit Comment

By: davidlharrison on January 2, 2010 at 5:52 pm

Reply

19.

Thanks you David. I don’t believe any writer cares if their work is read or shown or published as long as the author is given credit. Enjoy my poems and comments Jan. Encourage you friends to join us.

- Edit Comment

By: Mary Nida Smith on January 2, 2010 at 8:21 pm

Reply

20.

Only January 3rd and wow – what poems!

Checking in to read. . .

Gay, you made me cry.

Mary, you gave me some relief from the tears.

Diane, you made me want to be a cat—so I could have total relief from the pain and sadness I was feeling. Your poem was like a little refreshing meditation moment for me.
Sidney, thanks for the reminder that I can start again, right now! (Perhaps I will start again as a cat?!) 

Yousei, this is so beautifully brief, and profound. Even with the reminder that darkness will come, your poem is very soothing.

Steven your language is so rich, as always. I enjoyed this journey . . . the images are great. The Time Ship is such a great name. I am currently reworking a poem/story called The Boat Clock.
I think you have given me some inspiration to finish it. It’s not the first time you have inspired me! (first “time” lol!)

Thank you David and Poets!

Best to you all in 2010.

Mimi

By: Mimi Cross on January 3, 2010 at 10:57 am

Mimi,
Thank you for words. I love brief strive for profound, but the latter is often difficult to capture with so few tools. I am very glad you liked it.

By: Yousei Hime on January 3, 2010 at 11:50 am

21.
A haiku in response to the word prompt of “time”.
hands of the clock
move with a ticking rhythm -
the room is still

By: catgirlslovehaiku on January 3, 2010
at 5:19 pm

Nekochan,
Lovely haiku. Did you see the cat poem in the earlier comments?

By: Yousei Hime on January 3, 2010
at 8:25 pm

Dear Nekochan,

I guess I meant to tell you that I enjoyed your haiku but never did. Forgive me. I’m having a good time reading everyone else’s comments and forgot to post one of my own. A good haiku is hard to come by in the English language so I’m glad that you are one of our guardians.

David

By: davidlharrison on January 5, 2010
at 8:30 am
Love your haiku! It’s amazing what 3 short lines can convey! Great job!

- Edit Comment

By: Linda on January 8, 2010 at 10:18 am

Reply

22. [...] January’s “just for fun” activity is to go to children’s author David Harrison’s blog and … [...]  
- Edit Comment

By: Correspondence.org - What’s Hot Week (Jan 3, 2010) on January 3, 2010 at 5:40 pm

Reply

23. 

Wow! I was reading Tracy Kidder’s new book Strength in What Remains. It is the story of a young man who survived the genocide in Burundi. He had just visited the room where he was hiding when the killers came. The book had become so intense I needed a break so I came here to read new posts. This haiku expressed perfectly the picture in my head of Deo standing in that room!

Gay

- Edit Comment

By: Gay Fawcett on January 3, 2010 at 7:19 pm

Reply

Gay,
If you get a chance, you should visit catgirlslovehaiku’s site. She has many great
haiku. My favorites are her portraits of different women, character fleshed out by their wardrobes.

- Edit Comment

By: **Yousei Hime** on January 3, 2010 at 8:28 pm

Reply

- Thanks! I’m headed there now.
  Gay

- Edit Comment

By: **Gay Fawcett** on January 3, 2010 at 8:46 pm

24.

Wow! All these poems in the first three days of January – Amazing! All of you make me want to jump off the cliff and try to write one myself. Love reading all of them.

Kathy

- Edit Comment

By: **kathytemean** on January 4, 2010 at 4:27 am

Reply

- Go Kathy!!!! Write one. Join the fun.

- Edit Comment
By: Yousei Hime on January 4, 2010 at 8:35 am

Reply

25.

Looking forward to reading it Kathy!

   ○ Edit Comment

By: Mimi Cross on January 4, 2010 at 1:09 pm

Reply

26.

Because you asked for a sequel…

THE TIME SHIP, part 2
By Steven Withrow

Six years I lived in ancient Rome,
Disguised within a Roman shell.
I learned their tongue, their rites so well
It might have been my only home.

And Captain Baxter robed her ship
In costume of a common barge
And sensibly gave me the charge
Of chronicling our temporal slip.

Like Plutarch, I’m recording lives
Of storied leaders in their prime.
My syllables will sound through time
If any part of this survives.

Death of Crassus, Pompey’s wrath,
Watched Caesar seize the Senate floor,
Which buried Rome in civil war—
An Empire in the aftermath.
Now five years on, a legionnaire.  
We march toward cold Britannia,  
With slaves from brute Germania,  
To settle Celtic troubles there.

I’ll carry armor, shield, and spear  
Until my due to Caesar’s done,  
And all I owe my ship is won,  
And we’re back in the chronosphere.

Our destination next is set  
On Egypt’s Eighteenth Dynasty  
In Thirteen-Thirty-Four B.C.—  
The past’s my future, don’t forget.

I wonder if I’ll play the role  
Of Tutankhamun’s nursery-mate,  
Or if I’ll draw a harsher fate  
And they’ll embalm my sailor’s soul.

Wait…breaking news along the line:  
Great Caesar’s death by traitor’s hand.  
Such shock…no one can understand,  
For no man’s view’s as long as mine.

By: Steven Withrow on January 4, 2010  
at 2:34 pm

Reply

Woohoo! I love this. I think my youngest would like it too. He’s a big Percy Jackson fan, so ancient Greece and Rome are very appealing to him.

By: Yousei Hime on January 5, 2010  
at 12:26 am

Reply
27.

Thanks Steven! You’re a masterful poet!
Gay

- Edit Comment

By: Gay Fawcett on January 4, 2010 at 2:52 pm

Reply

28.

Steven,

You are accumulating fans and we have expectations of future episodes. For now I’ll join Gay in applauding this second effort with its clever memoriam stanzas and classic voice. Great!

David

- Edit Comment

By: davidlharrison on January 4, 2010 at 3:04 pm

Reply

29.

Wow. powerful poems all around. Congrats and it’s so early in the month.

- Edit Comment

By: Beth Carter on January 4, 2010 at 3:36 pm

Reply
30. The Essence of Time

Time is of the essence for doing things I adore.

Time stretches into eternity for those tasks I abhor.

Oh, Father Time, I’m pleading please give me a little more

But only if I’m enjoying myself, not if I’m performing ghastly chores.

Ha! Beth, I’m chuckling and loving your poem. Boy does that ever ring true!

Thanks for sharing!

David

By: davidlharrison on January 4, 2010 at 3:39 pm

Reply
Big smile. Thanks, David. Glad you enjoyed my poem. See if you like the second one. (I’m supposed to be writing my novel, though.) Easily distracted it seems…

- Edit Comment

By: Beth Carter on January 4, 2010 at 3:41 pm

Good one Beth! I’ve got a big smile on my face . . . clever, funny, to the point and TRUE.
Best,
Mimi

- Edit Comment

By: Mimi Cross on January 4, 2010 at 8:08 pm

Reply

Thanks, Mimi. That means a lot coming from you!

- Edit Comment

By: Beth Carter on January 4, 2010 at 8:27 pm

Lol. True on so many days. Thank you for this!

- Edit Comment

By: Yousei Hime on January 5, 2010 at 12:27 am
NEVER ENOUGH TIME

Tick tock.
Tick tock.

Quick shower
Coffee on the run.

Check my watch
Race to work.

Car won’t start
Chaotic mornings

Finally arrive
Slide into home.

Time: my essence.
Time: my enemy.

By: Beth Carter on January 4, 2010
at 3:39 pm

Wow! You even took “time” for a second poem. I am impressed!

This is another example of how a few well selected words can condense a day into a few seconds of reading pleasure. Beth, I appreciate your participation.

David
By: **davidlharrison** on January 4, 2010 at 3:42 pm

**Reply**

Beth,
The tick tock and short lines made me feel like I was running right alongside you! nice!
Gay

- [Edit Comment](#)

By: **Gay Fawcett** on January 4, 2010 at 7:13 pm

**Reply**

Thank you, Gay. I appreciate that very much. Your poem was amazing. It made me smile and also tear up since it reminded me of my dear grandmother who passed away in August.

- [Edit Comment](#)

By: **Beth Carter** on January 4, 2010 at 8:29 pm

Another truth. Interesting, connecting self to time. We really like to think we are untouched by it, don’t we. Thank you again, this time for making me think.

- [Edit Comment](#)

By: **Yousei Hime** on January 5, 2010 at 12:29 am

**Reply**
Yousei, thank you for your comments on both of my poems. Greatly appreciated!

And…I loved your compelling, short poem. Great imagery.

Edit Comment

By: Beth Carter on January 5, 2010 at 1:46 pm

Aww. Thanks. I appreciate you for giving all of us this fun, creative outlet.

Happy 2010, poets!

Edit Comment

By: Beth Carter on January 4, 2010 at 3:49 pm

Reply

6-word wonder AND a poet. You’re an inspiration, Beth.

Edit Comment

By: V. L. Gregory on January 13, 2010 at 6:28 pm

Reply

The Clock
Tick tock, tick tock goes the clock, in minutes it measures them, it chimes by the hour’s.

It’s up to you how you use them, it seems when we’re through there have been so few.

It knows nothing of a mortals plight, knows not wrong from right.
Tick tock through the long – long night.

In it’s world there is no season, no love, no rhyme or reason.

It cannot feel with passion or pain, in the clock world days are ever and ever the same.

Tick tock, Tick tock.

By: DeLane Parrott on January 4, 2010 at 6:26 pm

Hi, Delane, and welcome!

Great minds frequently run in the same channels of thought. I did a tick tock poem once but it was for two voices and meant to be humorouos.

I’m glad you’ve joined us!

David

By: davidlharrison on January 4, 2010 at 6:36 pm

The clock is a rather dispassionate observer. Rather unfair. There is a challenge. Let’s see someone make time a participant!
34.

I find it interesting that my sister sleuth, (Beth) and I have chosen to begin our poems with exactly the same words! Awesome minds think alike.

By: DeLane Parrott on January 4, 2010 at 6:31 pm

Reply

Delane, I’m so glad you submitted a poem. And it is amazing that both Sleuths used “tick tock.” 😊I really like your poem.

By: Beth Carter on January 4, 2010 at 6:37 pm

Reply

35.

Steve you’re amazing!!

Okay I am going to finish my poem The Boat Clock Book. It’s a story/poem, but I think it’s “time” to get it done—Steve had inspired me—and it does have the word “time” in it.

David does this fit close enough to the rules of the game? My poem is not inspired by the word “time” but this blog has inspired me to finish it! That’s sometimes harder than
starting a new one!
It’s all about time/seasons.

Best,
Mimi

By: **Mimi Cross** on January 4, 2010
at 8:11 pm
Reply

---

Mimi, that works for me. We’re eager to read your poem when you have time to finish it.

David

- Edit Comment

By: **davidlharrison** on January 4, 2010
at 10:16 pm
Reply

---

Yeah Mimi!!! Strike while hot, and all that!

- Edit Comment

By: **Yousei Hime** on January 5, 2010
at 12:32 am
Reply
Great. You wouldn’t believe how long I’ve been working/not working on this! I am so glad to have something to motivate me to finish! Thanks for the encouragement, I’ll post it as soon as it’s done—probably 2 minutes before the January cutoff, lol!

By: Mimi Cross on January 5, 2010 at 10:58 am

I’m working on my “real” time poem but I hope you’ll enjoy this medley for now.

A MEDLEY OF TIME
David L. Harrison

Vacation from the Back Seat
(couplet)

Front seat time is faster by far
Than back seat time in a vacation car.

How to Eat Ice Cream
(triplet)

If you don’t eat it quicky,
Ice cream time is sticky,
So licky, licky, licky!

Without Watches
(quatrain)

When cavemen told their dates
They’d have them home by eight,
How did mothers tell the time
To know their girls were late?

The Inevitable
(limerick)

There once was a rooster named Mott
Who hated arising a lot.
He had no alarm
But lived on a farm,
Which explains why he died in a pot.

time
(haiku)

delicate white flakes
mounding gently on my lawn –
snowman smiling time

David

* Edit Comment

By: davidlharrison on January 5, 2010 at 12:23 pm

Reply

I used to take poetry so seriously. It never occurred to me until much later in life (I can be very slow) that Dr. Suess was a great poet. Fun, humorous poetry is the best. I love serious, dark, even sad. But at least right now, let’s have more sunshine and laughter. Thanks for your poems, David.

* Edit Comment

By: Yousei Hime on January 6, 2010 at 11:35 pm

Reply

Yousei,

You raise a good point for discussion. The literary world typically considers writers of serious, big picture issues as “serious” writers. By implication, no one else is. Which includes most children’s writers. Children’s writers in general and poets in particular are considered by many to be less than equal members of the writing community. Humor is
also suspect. So where does that place the children’s poet of humorous poems? You guessed it. On the other hand, what sort of poetry do children love? Humor. So children’s poets sometimes feel as though we can write “seriously” to appeal to grown-ups or write funny poems that their readers like. Anyone want to comment on this?

David

- Edit Comment

By: davidlharrison on January 7, 2010 at 8:42 am

Gay

- Edit Comment

By: Gay Fawcett on January 7, 2010 at 12:41 pm

I agree with Gay. There needs to be a balance, and not just for young readers. I’ve also taught, and one of my primary goals was to instill at least an awareness of, if not encourage a love of language. I think a study of poetry is one of the best ways of doing that. One can tell a decent story without agonizing over each word. Poetry demands precise words, wonderful words, the perfect word. Besides, it is so coooooooool when you get it right.

- Edit Comment
By: **Yousei Hime** on January 7, 2010 at 1:02 pm

Yousei, Gay, and everyone else who wishes to speak to this issue, I propose to dedicate the whole post on January 9 (Saturday) to this subject.

I’ll copy and relocate these initial comments from you to the new post.

Please let others know that we’ll share opinions on poetry for children, including the value and place of humor.

Thanks!

David

- [Edit Comment](#)

By: **davidlharrison** on January 7, 2010 at 1:14 pm

I look forward to this important discussion. David, it reminds me of the piece you have: Sometimes Almost Desperately: The Role of Poetry in the Lives of Young Children.

Gay

- [Edit Comment](#)

By: **Gay Fawcett** on January 7, 2010 at 1:34 pm

38.

David,

Seems like “real” poetry to me! I laughed out loud at the lymerick. Thanks!

Gay

- [Edit Comment](#)
By: Gay Fawcett on January 5, 2010 at 12:48 pm

Thank you, Gay!

Early this morning I finished a new picture book manuscript and needed something to do. I wrote all five of the time poems in an hour or so with little revising. By this afternoon I’m sure I’ll be embarrassed by them.

David

- Edit Comment

By: davidlharrison on January 5, 2010 at 12:53 pm

39.

Embarassed? Hardly!

For the little bit of participation I’ve done on this blog I’m getting the feeling that it’s pretty risk-free. We can all participate without feeling embarassed or feel the need to compete. Others, would you agree?

Gay

- Edit Comment

By: Gay Fawcett on January 5, 2010 at 1:10 pm

Gay,
You are absolutely right. This was never meant to be anything but fun. Even the voting at month-end can turn into a bit of a free-for-all when someone’s friends round up a posse to get out the vote. My thinking is that the more votes we get, the more likely we are to encourage others to join the party.

David

- Edit Comment

By: davidlharrison on January 5, 2010 at 1:48 pm

Reply

40.

David, I loved yours! How fun. And I appreciate how you labeled them since some of us are still learning. My favorite was The Inevitable followed closely by Without Watches.

Gay, I agree. I view this as a creative outlet, a learning/thinking process, and a meeting of artistic minds much more than a contest. This is one challenge I hope to enter each month.

- Edit Comment

By: Beth Carter on January 5, 2010 at 1:38 pm

Reply

Thank you, Beth,

Glad you enjoyed the labels as well as the poems. I was trying to see how quickly my mind could discover different ways to express time. It really helped me limber up!

By the way, my wife Sandy voted the same way you did.

David

- Edit Comment
Wow! What a great bunch of poems. Sci-fi, cats, inspiration and nostalgia, pirates, haiku and more. Such diversity! Here’s my addition to the mix.

Unfinished Journey

Time passed, and Pangea crumbled into a puzzle of drifting continents. The great flood washed the world clean and dinosaurs were dealt a crushing blow.

Time marched on. Ice slid south carving a canyon. Civilizations rose and plague and war tore them down. From the wreckage, a Renaissance.

Time traveled. Old World war fronts and New World nations blossomed like flowers. Democracy grew, Hiroshima fried, and men stood on a far away moon.

Time flies, but only for men living a lifetime in the blink of Time’s eye. But Time waits
for no one.
Time goes by.

Barb,
You have certainly added to the breadth of this month’s time-inspired poetry! I feel like I just enjoyed a history lesson. Imagine pulling everything from Pangea forward into one compact poem! Quite a feat. Well done!

By the way, the poem I’m working on also goes back in time but only 70 million years or so.

David

I really enjoyed this. I recently read about Pangea in my son’s science book (don’t remember that from my middle school years). I was proud I knew what it was. 😊 Thanks for this poem!

By: Yousei Hime on January 6, 2010
at 11:39 pm

Reply
Hi David, As soon as I saw the word of the month, I remembered drafts of two kids’ poems I wrote ages ago. They’re not polished, but I had fun writing them.

Hoping to write a new one this month to share later, though.

Best,
Laura

Saving Daylight?

I woke at six a.m. today,
Sun had chased fall night away.
Why was it light?
Mom stopped to say,
“’Cause we turned back the clock.”

I don’t pretend to understand,
Time turns back at our command?
Is this a trick
my mother planned?
She likes the turned-back clock.

It’s lighter now for work outdoors,
bus-stop waits and drives to stores.
At 7 a.m.,
It’s, “Time for chores!”
That stupid turned-back clock.

But after school, the sky is dark.
I cannot see the endzone mark
No touch football
in the park.
I hate that turned-back clock!

Gotta Go!

There’s just no way that time is right.
I’ve crossed my legs. I squeeze them tight.
Scratch, click, pause. Scratch, click, pause.

The second hand stands frozen, still.
School ends at three. It’s twenty ’til.
Scratch, click, pause. Scratch, click, pause.
I bounce my leg and clench my teeth
Press against my chair beneath.
Scritch, click, pause. Scritch, click, pause.

Finally, it’s three ’til three.
I tap my hands and bounce one knee.
Scritch, click, pause. Scritch, click, pause.

Bbbbrriinnnnnnnnng!

It’s time! I’m free! Don’t be so slow!
“Move it, kids!
Teacher’s gotta go!”

Greetings, my friend, and Happy New Year.

Laura, I love the humor and surprises in these poems. I wasn’t expecting the teacher to be the one in pain! I would venture to say that it was the voice of experience.

I really like the refrain in the first one, changing slightly to fit the need in each stanza. Good writing!

Can’t wait to see what you share next!

David
Thanks, David. I felt like I was cheating since I once again shared previously written poems! But one of my poetry goals this year is to be more active in community poetry stretches, including yours. So hopefully the next one will be a new one.

And yes, that was the voice of experience. I taught in a portable classroom in Florida, and I drink a lot of water all day, so…

:>)
Laura

- Edit Comment

By: laurasalas on January 5, 2010 at 4:52 pm

These are great! I’m certain my boys have complained about these very things. What fun to read. Thank you for sharing them!

- Edit Comment

By: Yousei Hime on January 6, 2010 at 11:41 pm

Reply

Thanks, Yousei! And your comment made me remember that I need to come back soon and read everyone’s poems:>)

- Edit Comment

By: laurasalas on January 7, 2010 at 12:33 am
Laura,
Fun poem! I wonder how many of today’s kids wouldn’t get the “scritch, click, pause”? When I read this I could visualize that big clock rimmed in black hanging above my teacher’s desk.
Gay

By: Gay Fawcett on January 5, 2010
at 4:17 pm

Reply

Thanks, Gay. You know, I’ve been surprised on school visits at how many schools still have those black-rimmed clocks. But you’re right. They do seem to have finally found a way to make them quieter:>)

Laura

By: laurasalas on January 5, 2010
at 4:51 pm

Reply

44.

Where’s the Undertaker?
By K. Thomas Slesarik

When death came calling and souls took flight, ‘twas much to the undertaker’s delight, society’s dregs (a hideous lot), the ghoulish caretakers of graveyard plots.
As time rolled by, by sheer attrition, they became known as mere morticians. You’ll find them now in private sectors, listed under “Funeral Directors.”

By: K. Thomas Slesarik on January 6, 2010 at 10:16 am

Hi Thomas!

What a hoot. I’ve always wondered how that particular branch of human endeavor originated. Thanks for setting the record straight, just in time.

Welcome!

David

By: davidlharrison on January 6, 2010 at 10:44 am

I never thought I’d laugh about morticians, but this was great. Thank you so much. Really enjoyed everyone’s poems today.
This is great. Another entertaining, fun poem. Thanks for sharing.

- Edit Comment

By: **Beth Carter** on January 7, 2010
at 1:00 pm

45.

David,
Thanks for the warm welcome. For 2010 I thought I would post on a few blogs and kind of connect with other poets. Such a diverse and talented bunch.
Ken
p.s.-The “K.” in K. Thomas Slesarik stand for Ken

- Edit Comment

By: **K. Thomas Slesarik** on January 6, 2010
at 9:04 pm

- Reply

Ken, thanks for supplying the first name. Good luck with your plans to explore more blogs in 2010. That sounds like a worthy resolution. I keep meaning to do that too but haven’t made much progress.

David

- Edit Comment

By: **davidlharrison** on January 7, 2010
at 8:29 am

- Reply
Hi all
Interesting day.
Breakfast with the Ladies.
Canceled THE QUILL AND INK CLUB.
Library closed when School is out for Snow Day. Have to share the poems next week, At the WEEKLY WRITER’S GUILD. The Sheriff Roy Cole has been cancelled two times now.
No DSL Modem for four days. Got it today and after three hours or more got it working. At 34229/80000 Words 43% Done
started 30000/80000 on our JANO Count
I am looking forward to writing my Time Poem.
Good Night

By: Jan Gallagher on January 6, 2010
at 11:42 pm

Reply

Thanks for the report, Jan. Sorry things didn’t work out this week.

By: Yousei Hime on January 6, 2010
at 11:45 pm

Reply

Good luck, Jan. Thanks for your updates and hope you get that computer under control quickly.
Jan,

Sorry about your computer woes! I’ve been lucky lately but at the moment Sandy is struggling with the details of getting a new laptop up and running. We’ll both be happy when she gets it done!

David

Once Upon a Time
by David L. Harrison

100 million years ago, give or take a few – when dinosaurs ran around stamping and screaming and scaring small mammals – there lived a wasp with a sweet tooth, which is to say the wasp preferred sugar water to more traditional diets of spider juice and grub goo.

What caused this curiously altered taste is a mystery. One can’t chalk it up to good judgment, considering a brain the size of this period.
Call it signs of the time:
time for blooming angiosperms,
time for bees,
time they got together.
The obliging wasp and its progeny 
eventually produced a bee.

A little bit wasp but mostly bee, 
the nectar lover got busy 
sucking sweets and impregnating 
coquettish blossom plants 
by wallowing in their sticky seeds 
and spreading them around.

Tsunamis of pollen-bearing, 
insect-toting plants covered the land. 
Some have said the dinosaurs, 
strangers to hay fever, 
developed allergies that left them 
vulnerable as sitting ducks 
(to borrow a figure of speech from a cousin) 
and ill-prepared for catastrophes lurking 
on future horizons.

This probably never happened, 
hay fever I mean, 
but you have to admit 
that a sneezing T-Rex – 
a toothy island stranded amidst 
a relentless sea of blossoms 
while serious bees buzzed its head – 
would be something.

And who among those first men, 
tens of millions of years hence, 
would have risked a finger 
under T’s twitching nostrils 
to utter an approximated “gesundheit”? 

When I see a bee, 
sometimes I wonder if its ancestors – 
still carrying carnivorous wasp-lust 
in their genes –
took on the big guys armed with 
the latest technology, 
and won.
David,

Just a tiny grammar note: In line 1 of the second-to-last stanza, I think “whom” should be “who” since it’s the subject of the verb phrase “would have risked.”

- [Edit Comment]

By: Steven Withrow on January 7, 2010 at 12:25 pm

Reply

Steven,

I’m grateful for your eagle-eyed catch! The correction has been made.

Thanks,

David

- [Edit Comment]

By: davidlharrison on January 7, 2010 at 12:36 pm

Reply

What a fun, interesting poem. I love it when I learn something and am entertained at the same time. Well done. And good luck with your bee book.
Thanks, Beth,

I love it when I get double mileage from the same research. When I was working on the book about the first people to migrate to this continent, I took so many notes about glaciers and glaciations that I finally wrote a book on that subject too.

David

Beeeeelightful. 😊 My husband raises bees. (Thus we have ample honey—woohoo!) Because of his obsession, I found out that most of the bees in the hive are female. Yes! All those worker bees are girls. The boys are just there to impregnate the queen, and that only early in the life of the queen. Amazing, huh?

David, I love this idea that allergies were the beginning of dinosaurs’ downfall. Little ole mankind better watch out. This was so fun to read. Thank you.

By: Yousei Hime on January 7, 2010 at 1:11 pm

Reply
Hi Yousei,

I’m glad to meet someone else with an interest in bees. I keep honey on hand for my frequent quick lunch of peanut butter and honey sandwiches with milk. Hmmm.

I hope you and your husband will like my book about the history of the honeybee when it comes out next year.

David

- Edit Comment

By: davidlharrison on January 7, 2010 at 1:25 pm

Yousei and David

My friends and I went to a beekeeper for sting therapy. It help greatly. Yes, Bee Stings hurt, but when you are having a lot of pain all the time a sting for a short time is no problem. Our friend was trained to do this therapy and was president of the (bee) A… Society of America. Not remembering how to spell the A word for bees right now. I hope you will cover this also in your book.

- Edit Comment

By: Jan Gallagher on January 9, 2010 at 6:36 pm

David — WOW! Such a simple subject, and you’ve fascinated me.

I am in awe of your ability to write verse that has the casual candor of a conversation — or a personal essay — and the lyric compression of a poem.

- Edit Comment

By: Steven Withrow on January 7, 2010 at 10:23 am
Hi,
I find myself trying to understand the meaning of “lyric compression of a poem.” Is it like “color” and you just have to know it when you see it (or in this case hear/feel it) or are there some specific things to consider? I’ve noted that many folks who come to this blog have a lot of technical mastery and I enjoy studying the structures of the poems. I have trouble finding the scaffolding in free verse and blank verse. Any thoughts would be helpful or send me to another book. I’ve enjoyed many of the ones mentioned here so far! Thanks. Liz

Liz,
I’ll let Steven explain his meaning of lyric compression, but I’ll add my thoughts. In Easy Poetry Lessons that Dazzle and Delight, the book I did with Bee Cullinan, I provide brief descriptions of three major categories of poetry: lyric, narrative, and dramatic. Lyric poems are generally related in a personal style that might — in some instances — be set to music; narrative poems tell a story or describe events and actions; dramatic poems essentially set the action into motion as in a play. (That’s simplified but gives an idea of how the types differ.)

All poetry compresses language in order to get its message across in fresh, memorable ways that distinguish the form from prose. My poem about bees combines lyric and narrative qualities with the compression that keeps the free verse from slipping into prose.

We’ll see if Steven agrees or had something else in mind.

David
Thanks for clarifying my statement, David. Yes, that’s more or less what I meant by “lyric compression.”

Many of the sentences in David’s bee poem course over many lines without pausing (they are “enjambed” rather than end-stopped), and this, along with their somewhat breezy tone, helps give them the quality of conversational prose.

But these same sentences are packed with such rich syllable sounds and half-rhymes — “spider juice and grub goo”/“blooming angiosperms”/“relentless sea of blossoms”/approximated “gesundheit”, etc. — and these sound combinations are important not just for their sense, but for their harmony and disharmony alone. Also, the line endings help to bring attention to the connections between sound and sense.

This attention to “the sound of sense” (Robert Frost’s phrase) slows my reading pace and makes me linger on certain images. Good prose can do this as well, but poetry sets up a chain of like and unlike sounds that is, as I said, intensely audible. You can feel the insistent rhythms, hear the lingering echoes and glancing digressions. You can sing it, you can even dance (in your mind) to it.

Robert Pinsky has an excellent little book called THE SOUNDS OF POETRY, which I highly recommend to anyone interested in poetry. Another great one is Ted Kooser’s THE POETRY HOME REPAIR MANUAL.

That’s the essence of poetry for me.
David and Steven,
Thanks for your help!
Liz

- Edit Comment

By: liz korba on January 9, 2010
at 2:35 pm

50. WOW! Steven said it all. Great piece of work. Fascinating! Did you discover all this information and thoughts when you were writing your latest book about “Bees?”

- Edit Comment

By: Mary Nida Smith on January 7, 2010
at 10:35 am

Reply

Hi, Mary Nida,

Indeed I did. One never knows where the next poem may germinate. I’m eager to get the bee book to market but, alas, it isn’t scheduled for release until next year.

David

- Edit Comment

By: davidlharrison on January 7, 2010
at 10:38 am

Reply

51. Steven,
Thank you. I’m glad you enjoyed my effort. A while back I was researching the honeybee and was fascinated by its ancestry and overlapping history with dinosaurs. I didn’t expect to write a poem about it until I sat down to consider how I might treat this month’s word challenge.

David

By: davidlharrison on January 7, 2010 at 10:36 am

Reply

Sheesh! I leave home and my computer for a few days and look what happens. All I can say is … WOW! What a lovely lot of poems.

I wrote a poem today in the form of Shadorma (six lines, syllable count of 3/5/3/3/7/3). Time just happened to make an appearance.

Days X-ed out
counting time until
you come home
boots worn, heart
heavy with tales you cannot
tell—I hate this war

but love your
resolve, the courage
with which you
serve again
and again, no sacrifice
too small—what a price

By: Tricia on January 7, 2010 at 8:16 pm

Reply

- Edit Comment

By: Beth Carter on January 7, 2010 at 9:08 pm

Reply

Wonderful tribute to both sides–those left and those serving. Thank you for this.

- Edit Comment

By: Yousei Hime on January 7, 2010 at 10:15 pm

Reply

Tricia,

Thank you! A very different treatment of time and what an agony it can be to those serving and to those waiting. There are so many stories in this month’s word!

David

- Edit Comment

By: davidlharrison on January 8, 2010 at 8:22 am

Reply

53.
My first time here David, and I got to you through Yousei, my mentor in Haiku writing. She encouraged me to submit my first attempt, hence the following:

Hope you will like it.

Century-old elms  
Indurated to endure  
With nature and time

I blog at [http://intelclub.blogspot.com/](http://intelclub.blogspot.com/)

Thanks so much!

Amity

Good for you Amity. Courage and a nice first haiku. Proud of you.

By: **Yousei Hime** on January 7, 2010  
     at 10:16 pm

Thanks Yousei for bringing me, but I feel so little, what with a bunch of real poets here…?

But anyways, it’s a nice experience and hope sometime later, I can write one which is better than this. Looking forward to a great time here!

Love you dear Sis!
Dear Amity,

Welcome! A lot of good poetry is being written and shared this month, including your expressive haiku. Thank you for contributing to the January challenge. I hope you’ll join us often as one of your resolutions for 2010!

David

Thanks so much David…yeah, i will try that as a new year’s resolution, to be active here, anyways, it’s just a once a month prompt!

Do check ur mail. I’ve responded to your request already.

Have a nice day David!

Amity
Thanks Beth. It ends rather abruptly and feels unfinished. Perhaps that’s okay, but it feels like it needs one more stanza.

- Edit Comment

By: Tricia on January 7, 2010 at 9:14 pm

Reply

Wow! So many great poems this month. When I thought of the word “time,” this is what came out. I couldn’t get the formatting to work the way I wanted it to, but here goes.

Thirty-Two Cents

You handed me
thirty-two cents
and sent me to the store.
I was seven and wanted
to make you proud.

I paid for the milk,
thirty-two cents,
and cupped my hands
carefully around the chilled bottle.

I hurried home like you told me
taking a short-cut through the alley—
a narrow gravel path
where a thick wall of prickly bushes
blocked the sun on one side
and a gray stone church
stood empty on the other.
That’s where I stumbled
and fell.

Glass, milk, blood, splattered
on the ground around me.
Wiping away my tears, I
pulled myself up on my knees,
and looked at my mess.
How could I tell you—
I failed again.

When you met me at the door.
words spilled out of my mouth—
my first lie,
but the truth
was already in your eyes
your dark eyebrows pointed down
like two accusing arrows,
“That was my last thirty-two cents!”

Mrs. Beasley had witnessed
my fall from her window
and called you with her report.

You sent me to the chair—
to think about my crime
to think about wasting
thirty-two cents.

I forgot about that for years.
Then today your grandson
told me he lost part
of his lunch money again.
“How much?” I grunted.

Looking up at me with tears
in his big blue eyes, he said,
“Thirty–two cents, Mom.”

thirty-two cents

By: Linda on January 7, 2010
at 9:16 pm

Linda, what a good reminder that time doesn’t forget but can sometimes forgive.
The surprise ending packs a wallop that offers the reader a chance to decide what
might have happened next. Thanks!
David

- Edit Comment

By: davidlharrison on January 8, 2010 at 8:42 am

Reply

Oops, I typed in the ninth stanza incorrectly. : ( I was making changes as I went along. Oh, well, here’s the correct version. Thanks!

Thirty-Two Cents

You handed me
thirty-two cents
and sent me to the store.
I was seven and wanted
to make you proud.

I paid for the milk,
thirty-two cents,
and cupped my hands
carefully around the chilled bottle.

I hurried home like you told me
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stood empty on the other.
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and fell.

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your dark eyebrows pointed down
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my fall from her window
and called you with her report.

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to think about my crime
to think about wasting
thirty-two cents.

I forgot about it for a long time,
then today your grandson
told me he lost part
of his lunch money again.
“How much?” I grunted.

Looking up at me with tears
in his big blue eyes, he said,
“Thirty-two cents, Mom.”

thirty-two cents

- Edit Comment

By: Linda on January 8, 2010
at 10:14 am

56.

Linda, That was stunning. What a haunting memory. Amazing the scars we carry, hoping we are not passing them on. Thank you so much for this.

- Edit Comment

By: Yousei Hime on January 7, 2010
at 10:19 pm
Thank you, Yousei. The poem wasn’t meant to show anger toward my mother, but instead a moment in time that affected our relationship. I hope it didn’t come off as too negative. Have a great weekend.

By: **Linda** on January 8, 2010 at 10:16 am

Linda,
I didn’t think you were angry, just hurt. Your poem reminded me of the awful power of words, when I’m usually concentrating on the wonderful aspect. All it takes is being overwhelmed in a moment to say something we could regret for a lifetime. It is a very good poem. Thank you, thank you for it.

By: **Yousei Hime** on January 8, 2010 at 2:05 pm

Timely Advice
By Ken Slesarik

Toby’s tattered Timex
told terrible time
so why he sold his Seiko
I’ll never know.
But I won’t soon forget
his timely advice,
for he turned to me and said
“wait a minute”.

By: K. Thomas Slesarik on January 8, 2010
at 1:39 am

Ken, Another very enjoyable poem. I really like your sense of humor. The alliteration makes it so fun and echoes the sounds of watches of the past. Thanks for sharing this.

By: Yousei Hime on January 8, 2010
at 7:50 am

Good morning, Ken,

Thank you for another bright smile, this one at Toby’s expense. If those first two lines don’t set a record for alliteration, they should be in the running! Glad to have you with us.

David

By: davidlharrison on January 8, 2010
at 8:59 am

58.
Father Time

Imagine what might be someday
If Father Time on holiday
Left all his work to surf great waves.
(Not only clocks would misbehave.)

Oh what if turkeys pulled a sleigh
Through clear blue skies on Labor Day?
And Santa’s Reindeer made up rhymes
For Valentines at Easter time?
As Bunnies quickly said, “Adieu”
(Now needed for Thanksgiving stew!)
Bright Jack-O-Lanterns, they’d ignite
As firecrackers Christmas night
And force the Fourth Day of July
To be a quiet day – oh my!

Could all of this somehow take place
If Father Time refused to face
Another week without a break
Another year always awake
Another second keeping clocks
All moving on – tick tock, tick tock!?

I think we may see trouble great
If one day it becomes our fate
To live when Father Time says, “Done!”
And STOPS… to go and have some fun!

By: liz korba on January 8, 2010
at 12:09 pm

Liz,
I love this poem. It sings to me! Maybe if Father Time took a break to have some fun, some of us workaholics would join him! Clever ending!
Gay
By: Gay Fawcett on January 8, 2010 at 2:15 pm

Reply

Liz,

What a novel approach to our word of the month. It seems altogether fitting that Father Time himself should play a role in our offerings. What would we do if Time ran out on us before we ran out of time? Interesting thought!

Thanks!

David

- Edit Comment

By: davidlharrison on January 8, 2010 at 2:21 pm

Reply

59.

Rabbit for Thanksgiving . . . gulp. Oh, ah, . . . turkey is much better. I hereby vote for an annual Father Time holiday, a week at least. Anyone else second the motion, anyone . . . please!

- Edit Comment

By: Yousei Hime on January 8, 2010 at 2:08 pm

Reply

60.

Time, is it friend or foe?
This is my first time on this website. There are so many of you above this box. Gay (at the very top) I had to go away and cry. My mother is now dependant on my care. For me it was the use of present tense that made it so much closer and more painful to read.

A few days ago I had a go at writing a Haiku. They say that they’re supposed to reflect your feelings within the moment of writing them and so…

Chemo nurses rush.
Time crawls round the clinic clock.
We fade into chairs.

Dear Rosalind,

I appreciate your poem very much. Watching our parents and other elderly loved ones struggle and feeling so helpless is a painful time of life and difficult to put into words. Thank you for speaking for so many of us.

David
Hi again, Rosalind,

I hope you will add a comment to today’s blog discussion about children’s poetry and humor’s place in it. We need to hear from writers in other parts of the world and I would love to get a perspective from England!

Thanks,

David

---

Rosalind,
I think you have captured both the heart of haiku and your own heart in this verbal moment. Thank you so much for your courage in writing and sharing it.

---

By: Yousei Hime on January 9, 2010 at 4:29 pm

---

Rosalind,
Your Haiku moved me, I’m sure, for the same reason my poem made you cry. “We fade into chairs”–what a poignant description of how we feel as we sit and wait for the inevitable. Thank you.

Gay

---

By: Gay on January 9, 2010 at 7:19 pm
Time
By: Erin McMullen

Time rushes by me.
Never stopping, never waiting.
I just want time to slow down and listen to my wishes.
I need more time with my family and friends.
More time for me and my mental well being.
Then I realized.
Time doesn’t listen.
It is not one running out my clock.
Stop blaming, stop faulting.
I must slow down and enjoy the time I am given.

Hi Erin,

Many thanks for sharing your poem here where everyone can read and enjoy it. I think your message is a good reminder that we all need to slow down now and then. (I almost said from time to time.)

Speaking of time, another day has rushed by. Or was that I doing the rushing?

David
Erin,
I see so many of my own wishes expressed in your poem. It all comes back to making time, right? Thank you for this very thoughtful poem.

- Edit Comment

By: Yousei Hime on January 23, 2010
at 12:08 pm

Reply

63.
Erin,
Very insightful. I like the way you start by claiming time is rushing, and then come to the realization that time is actually neutral. It’s you that is rushing! That’s a lesson many of us need to learn. Thanks for jumping right in with a poem on our first day of class!
Gay

- Edit Comment

By: Gay Fawcett on January 11, 2010
at 9:15 pm

Reply

64.
Hi everyone, I haven’t checked-in for a couple of days and so many good poems and comments have been added. Thanks for the comments on my poem. It is wonderful how we encourage each other. Time is endless when it comes to writing poetry. Check my blog to read my winter poem. http://marynidasmith.blogspot.com

- Edit Comment
By: Mary Nida Smith on January 12, 2010 at 10:03 am

Nice poem, Mary Nida,

I always enjoy your site. You have been so good to support my efforts with your contributions, comments, and encouragement.

Thanks!

David

By: davidlharrison on January 12, 2010 at 6:38 pm

Your winter poem was lovely. I saw my first “diamond dust” a few weeks ago. Winters wonders still fascinate me (Texas born). Thank you for sharing the link.

By: Yousei Hime on January 23, 2010 at 12:14 pm

Thank you, David, for all your support and for inviting me to your blog when you started. I feel I am in a circle of friends.

Mary Nida
Tick, tick, tick. The metronone measures my time
As I play lullabies for the babies:
Feed them,
Bathe them,
Love them.
Relentless, its rhythm never skips a beat
Until they’re toddlers, wobbling and tottering on their feet.

Drip, drip, drip. The rainshowers measure my time
As I search out rainbows and treasures:
Frogs, worms,
Mud holes,
Laughter.
The cadence continues through Summer’s short day
Until they’re in school, growing and learning—even in play.

Rah, rah, rah. Hoopla and cheers measure my time
As I sit on the sidelines watching:
Prom night,
College,
Marriage.
Still, the pace never slows through Autumn’s chills
When grandchildren’s whoops and antics—the house, again, fills.

Tick, tick, tick. The metronone measures my time
As I play melodies for Tabby:
Sweet songs,
Joy strains,
Comfort.
Undeterred, the beat sneaks into Winter’s throe–
And, in my rest, time will continue. I’ve been blessed, I know.

By: V. L. Gregory on January 13, 2010 at 4:16 pm

I love the rhythm and flow of life in this. The use of details. It feels steady and welcoming, even knowing the end of the poet's own time. This is so nice. Thank you for sharing it.

By: Yousei Hime on January 23, 2010 at 12:17 pm

Hello, Virginia,

That’s lovely. Thank you for sharing your thinking through poetry about the all-too-brief time we are given to dance on the stage. There is a rhythm to your poem that soothes me and helps me accept each season as it comes.

David

By: davidlharrison on January 13, 2010 at 4:32 pm

Deja Vu…..

old creaking joints
skin drawn tight
across skinny bones

lips once soft, smooth
pulled slightly apart
reveal yellowed teeth

hideous form caught in time
indurated, it blinks while dreaming
of tea party’s and lacy pink dresses

feeble, mind dull, it stops and grins again
my face, it’s face slid from it’s once firm place
a face that shadows me

useless, feeble, slow when once I know
yes, once I know I ran deer footed
and laughed, laughed out loud

when once I wore those lacy pink dresses
and danced the night away
trailing soft summer flowers

By: Melanie Bishop on January 13, 2010 at 7:04 pm

Dear Melanie,

Congratulations on your new poem. My own mother, now 97 and staying in a place where she is surrounded by very senior citizens, lives in a world you describe so touchingly. At rest, many of those faces look weary and sad. Only when they become animated in conversation do I catch a glimpse of them as they were. Your poem brings back so many images.

Thank you,
What bravery to look in the face of time! I found myself held by regret and memory. Thank you for this.

By: Yousei Hime on January 23, 2010 at 12:20 pm

Reply

TIME
By Reta Stewart Allen

January. The word is TIME.
Poets, listen to the call:
Even a tardy little rhyme
beats a chance of none at all.

Famous folks had lots to say
about the Time we have—or naught.
“Lost time is never found again,”
said Ben Franklin in deep thought.

“Time is money,” Ben said, too.
And William Penn would coin a verse:
“Time is what we want the most,
but it’s what we use the worst.”

Tennessee Williams saw Time as
“the longest distance between two (spots).”
Henry Thoreau described his Time:
“the stream where I go a-fishing, (lots).”

You may have Time upon your hands,
or need some Time to write a rhyme,
but when you want to spice things up,
remember…it is Thyme!

By: Reta Allen on January 14, 2010
at 1:28 pm

Well there’s my old friend Reta!

I am impressed that you sought the council of wise and witty folks from history to help tell your timely tale. Good on ya’!

Thanks for the mid-day smile. I was ready for one!

David

By: davidlharrison on January 14, 2010
at 2:25 pm

Reta,
This was an absolute delight, filled with so many goodies. Thank you for spicing up my day. 😊

By: Yousei Hime on January 23, 2010
at 12:22 pm
Love Only Leaving

Fifteen seconds . . .
Thousands of miles.
The ironic hand of fate,
One last smile.

He was my dream come true,
Now that’s all shattered and broken.
I hold on so tightly,
To words once spoken.

Soul mates, how laughable,
“Joined at the heart,”
Everything we shared
Rips me apart.

One wish,
That tomorrow would come now.
One wish,
To be rescued somehow.

Pain, confusion,
My life comes to a halt.
Pass out the blame,
Fate holds the fault.

The simplicity of love,
The dream we all chase,
For one more kiss, one touch,
One caress of the face.

Living for love,
For no other reason,
Time will only tell,
If it was true love,

Or love, only leaving.
Hi Genia,

I’m glad that you joined us. Your poem speaks from the heart about separation and the testing of love. Only time will tell . . .

Thank you for adding another dimension to our word for January.

David

Genia, 
I love how there are so many faces of time in this–shattered moment, trapped in time, painful days, hoping for future. Thank you for this sincere poem.

Genia, 
So glad to see you here! I enjoyed reading your writing so much last semester. I just knew you would love this site. The ending of this poem is very insightful. Hope to see
more of your poetry here again next month!
Gay

By: Gay Fawcett on January 18, 2010
at 7:34 pm

Reply

72.
TIME IS FOR HUMANS
There was a, “before time began.”
Time was made for man.
No need to keep track, before him, the milleniums just ran.
At first, day and night were enough.
Wake in the day and sleep at night, it was not tough.
People learned to tell the differences in the sky, dawn and twilight, moon and stars.
Sun dials to tell where the light fell.
Clocks the time to tell.
There will be an end of time.
The millenium will continue to run down the line.

By: Jan Gallagher on January 20, 2010
at 9:29 pm

Reply

Hi Jan,

Thanks for reminding us that we’re the only ones who insist on counting time and attempting to keep track of it. Learning to tell time in various ways may have been one of the greatest inventions of the human race but it won’t outlast us.

David

• Edit Comment
Jan,
I had forgotten that our view of time has changed so much. Very clever. Thank you for this.

- Edit Comment

By: Yousei Hime on January 23, 2010
at 12:27 pm

73.

Hi Poets, hi David, here’s mine!

Thanks to you all, I have finished this poem/book/story I have been working on for, well, I really don’t want to confess how long, but it feels like forever.

My question to you is: IS it finished? Any real criticism on any element of the poem would be extremely welcome. Thank you!

The Boat Clock Book

It’s a cold winter morning,
As silent as the night.
Nothing is moving,
Nothing is in sight.
Our yard, on the cliff
Above the bay is white.

White buries the gazebo,
The garden lost in snow.
The water peeks up
From the bay below.
Waking quiet waves,
The sunrise says hello.
Looking out of my window,
Everything is frozen.
Time has stopped, it waits;
A clock that’s broken.
A conversation
Without a word spoken.

I sit and watch the water,
Two birds, our maple tree . . .
As the sky lightens
I look towards the sea.
Pale lemon sunlight.
The harbor is empty.

Then it comes, I see it now!
The first boat of the year!
A plow on the bow,
First on the frontier.
Crunch crack! Hear the sounds,
The icebreaker draws near.

Ice boats, different colors,
But all are made to clear
Paths through ice and snow.
Spring will soon be here.
Here comes a red one,
A ferry at the rear.

The icicles have melted.
The spring sky is pastel.
The harbor, empty.
Nobody can tell,
A clock is ticking;
Nature rings a bluebell.

Then one gray, late March morning,
The harbor is alive!
Marina opens!
The first boats arrive.
Tall masts, clean white sails.
Herons soar, ospreys dive.

Another and another.
Tick tock, tick tock, tick tock.
One plus one plus one,
Listen! The boat clock!
Count now, that’s three boats,
But there’s more at the dock.

The dock at the marina
is full of eager boats.
Distant navy pier,
Longest on the coast.
Back to the harbor,
Where boats anchor and float.

The boats come to the harbor
Days lengthen, there are more.
Summer brings boaters
To the blue bayshore.
Boats come in . . . go out . . .
The harbor mouth, their door.

One hundred in the harbor.
A sudden spring storm grows.
Storms come up fast here,
A wild, wet wind blows.
Sailors know weather
Will keep them on their toes.

So many more boats floating,
Summer’s not far away.
Can’t wait for boating!
Oh no, can’t today!
Don’t sail in lightning!
Don’t go down by the bay.

When the stormclouds have passed by,
Wild winds no longer blow.
Air is fresh and clean,
The sky starts to glow.
I look above me,
And I see a rainbow.

At first the rainbow is faint,
Then the colors get bright.
Archway or doorway?
A palette of light,
Changes for sunset,
So soon, it will be night.
Next day, warmer, water, calm,
Time to go out sailing!
Learn the bay’s lessons,
Please pass, no failing!
Little boats floating
Some tipping, some bailing!

Long and lovely summer days,
The sky and bay both blue.
Golden afternoons,
Me here next to you.
Nothing gold can stay,
Have you heard that is true?

And so the weather changes
And fall is on its way.
Summer storms come first,
I guess that’s okay.
Things will always change,
On anybody’s bay.

Every storm is different,
Of this you should take note.
Nor one ship alike,
Except, each must float.
If they do not then,
Hurry, call a tugboat!

Quick storms, the water still warm,
The air, left damp and cool.
Haze, mist. Ghosts, water.
Boats still, in the pool.
Reflect, upside down.
Who, you ask, will they fool?

A coast guard boat, tanker ship,
The view—like a painting.
Vessels in all shapes,
Ferries commuting . . .
Storms don’t stop these boats,
Just not safe for sailing.

The sun sets on the season,
The tall trees lose their leaves.
The harbor, empties.
Cruise ships sail the seas.
Summertime farewell.
There’s a nip to the breeze.

As the fall days get shorter,
I get up with the dawn.
The weather is fine,
The boats, mostly gone.
Tick tock, the boat clock
Slows down its rhythmic song.

The distant sunlit city,
Sky scrapers shine like fire.
See the last sailboat?
They’re down to the wire!
These few early birds,
Show us their strong desire.

Let’s end the year with sunrise
So ending is a start;
So we don’t finish,
So we never part.
Turn back to page one
Hear the boat clock’s ticking heart.

Dear Mimi,

Wow! I’m in awe of where you live and can easily follow along as you gaze out over your yard, down the cliff to the waves, and beyond to the city and further to the open water. You must feel at one with nature from such a wonderful vantage point!

Thank you for sharing your full year of observations and reflections. I like your rhyme scheme. In layout, I could see the first four lines of some stanzas on one page and the final two on the opposite side to help build anticipation for the reader.
One of the strongest elements, I think, is when the first boats appear and the last ones depart. Telling the seasons by the boats is a unique idea, especially when described from the top of the world on your cliff.

David

- Edit Comment

By: davidlharrison on January 22, 2010 at 9:35 am

Reply

Mimi

Beautiful. I saw it clearly in my mind. Will be waiting to see it with illustrations. Will you do them or someone else?
Do not hold onto this be sure and get it out in the public.

- Edit Comment

By: Jan Gallagher on January 22, 2010 at 6:56 pm

Reply

David and Jan thank you so very much for your kind comments.

I am going to do a revision of The Boat Clock book, you all have inspired me!
(Nothing new there!!!( David your ideas are great, just great. Thank you again.

Jan I actually have photographs, a year’s worth of photographs that I think capture the seasons, the boats coming and going, and especially changes in the light. I think I have always thought of the photos as place holders, that maybe one day I’d be able to collaborate with a painter. I have always imagined watercolors . . .

Thanks again everyone, I know this was a long one!
Mimi,
Perhaps long in coming, but worth the wait. My only suggestion is to find a place or two to repeat the “Tick tock, the boat clock” type line earlier in the poem. It will remind the reader that presence of boats indicates the passing of time. I really like this and can envision some amazing art going with this story. Thank you so much for finishing it and sharing it!

By: **Mimi Cross** on January 24, 2010 at 10:10 pm

Thank you Yousei, that is an excellent suggestion!

I think I do have to do a bit more on this, although I have done so much. I’m so glad I posted it here.

Thanks again.

By: **Yousei Hime** on January 23, 2010 at 12:36 pm

Gasp!

Poets,
Isn’t it amazing how, as soon as you see something you’ve written somewhere other than on your computer, you see the mistakes that you’ve overlooked a hundred times?

Corrections on my poem, (which is really a picture book) are as follows:

With not a word spoken. Should be: Without a word spoken.
And fall is on its way. Should be: And fall is on its way.
Slows down it’s rhythmic song. Should be: Slows down its rhythmic song.

Sorry about that!

By: Mimi Cross on January 21, 2010 at 10:59 pm

No problem, Mimi. I made the corrections.

David

By: davidlharrison on January 22, 2010 at 8:45 am

Thank you David!

By: Mimi Cross on January 22, 2010 at 9:12 am
Well, it looks like all of you have inspired me to try my hand at this. Any suggestions on how to improve it, would be great. Kathy

My Polka Dot Sky

Robin and Redbird, Sparrow and Jay
Over the fields went winging their way.

Out of the meadows, down from the sky
Over the rooftop’s they slowly fly by.

Back from the south to bask in the sun
To romp and to frolic till daylight is done.

They darken the sky and brighten my heart
T’is a beautiful scene of heaven made art.

They never cease, it seems to me
They’re in the sky, they’ll always be.

Happy and joyful the whole day thru
Trials and worries, never in view.

God made it this way, it will always be
A beautiful polka dot sky for me.

Robin and Redbird, Sparrow and Jay
Over the fields will still wing their way.

Out of the meadows, down from the sky
When my rooftop is gone, they’ll still fly by.

Kathy,

I am so glad to see you join us with a poem! You’ve been holding out. I quite agree that the beauty and rhythms of nature will remain long after our roofs are
gone. Thank you for a lovely poem that makes me, too, glad for Robin and Redbird, Sparrow and Jay.

Now I’m eager to see your next one!

David

- Edit Comment

By: davidharrison on January 23, 2010 at 2:53 am

Reply

Yippee! That was great! Birds are something so many of us watch and enjoy. I know my mother loves the hummingbirds that feed in her small garden. I like how you connected the birds to the eternal, not the seasons as one would expect. So glad you posted. 😊Thanks.

- Edit Comment

By: Yousei Hime on January 23, 2010 at 12:41 pm

Reply

Hey Kathy! Great to “see” you here! Love that phrase, “Robin and Redbird, Sparrow and Jay.” It sounds spritely, the way birds are. Their names and the way you have put them together makes me see them.

Now we will expect you each month!

- Edit Comment

By: Mimi Cross on January 24, 2010 at 10:01 pm

Reply
There was a time when I didn’t need you
and it seemed you didn’t want me
We lost ten years but it never mattered
We were happier without each other it seemed

When things got really bad I turned to others
And you made your way alone
I thought you wanted to ruin my life
And destroy my happy home

When you hate someone so much you over look
How thin the line really is
It’s funny what would bring us together
Just in time for all of this
There were nights I wished you would die
So how can you unmake a wish

Hello Adrienne,

Thank you for joining us and adding another dimension to the nature of time. We do indeed change our minds and relationships over time.

How often I’ve wished I could unmake a wish. I suppose we all have.

David
Hi, I enjoyed the poems that followed Mimi. But, Mimi, have a deep fondness for your poem for I love the coast of Oregon and Washington. The boats coming and going took me back to Manchester, Washington, on the shores of Puget Sound. Watching the comings and goings on Puget Sound, one does not need to watch TV. The beauty before one’s eyes was all we needed.

Mary Nida Smith on January 23, 2010 at 6:34 pm

Thank you so much Mary! And yes, tv is so over rated isn’t it? When we have the whole world to watch . . . Lol!
Best to you.

Mimi Cross on January 24, 2010 at 10:02 pm

Adrienne,
Wow. Knowing who this poem is about and what the situation is now, your poem made my heart ache. I wish you both well. Perhaps you have “unmade a wish” by the relationship you’ve mended.
Gay
Bedtime once again
Breather for the weary mom
Lather, rinse, repeat

Lather, rinse, repeat
Always ‘nother dish to wash
‘nother laundry load

‘nother laundry load
One more pair of pants outgrown
Cannot stay little

Cannot stay little
Too much eating going on
Mom’s work never done

Mom’s work never done
Another story to read
Work worth the reward

Work worth the reward
Time passes so so quickly
Love my family

Claire,
I enjoyed your poem very much. Your rhythm, choice of words, and repetition combine to remind us of what moms go through for the sake of their little ones. Thanks for sharing this. I’m glad you made it under the wire for January!

David

- Edit Comment

By: davidlharrison on January 24, 2010 at 12:39 pm

Reply

80.

Claire,
I’m glad to hear your poet voice! The repetition of lines reminds me of how monotonous motherhood could be at times. But the final stanza reminds me…it was all worth it!
Gay