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The Daily Haiku: Australia

Cathryn Stone

Hello from Tasmania, the island state of Australia. I've written bits and pieces all my life. I've written poems, short stories and even songs, and have done that on and off for years. I've mostly kept them to myself although occasionally shared them on Facebook or Instagram.

I've had multiple sclerosis since at least 1984, maybe earlier. Amongst other things, it affects word retrieval and use of language. In about 2016 my brain forgot how to write cursive so to try and force it to learn again, I had the idea to invent my own written language. It's actually a substitution cipher, which I called Stonic script. I wrote using that script every day for many months. Eventually I remembered how to write cursive again but I still use Stonic script for all my journalling.

Back in 2018 I had a dream one night that I could speak another language called Atucani (that doesn't actually exist in real life) and when I woke up I could still speak some so I recorded it and have been slowly adding to it since then. I have deliberately made writing part of my life as I was afraid that multiple sclerosis might affect it even more.

In September 2020 I started a 'post-it note every day' creative challenge and wanted to incorporate writing, so I hit on the idea of using haiku. I'd never written any before but felt that these little bite-sized pieces of writing might work to challenge me without being too mentally taxing. The more I did, the more I enjoyed it! They looked kind of unfinished when written on a post-it note so I started adding funny little drawings to them and now get as much enjoyment from the drawings as from writing the haiku. I suppose that makes them more like haiga than haiku. I tend more towards a non-traditional style. At this stage, I don't want to put too much pressure on myself, so they are mostly light-hearted.

Finding The Daily Haiku group has been such a blessing! Meeting people in real life is very difficult due to some of my symptoms, but being able to meet like-minded people in this group is wonderful. Over the last few years I have become increasingly isolated but now I feel like I'm connected to people again. There is such a variety in style and experience in the group, and everyone is so encouraging and supportive. One of the best things to happen is that my husband has also found a creative voice using haiku.

It's very hard to choose just a couple of haiku to show here. These are some of my favourites.

Haiku

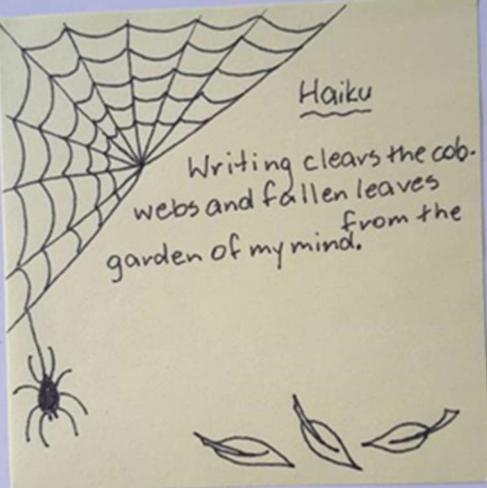
A persian carpet
of red and gold, floating by
on Autumn breezes.



C. Stone
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Haiku

Writing clears the cob-
webs and fallen leaves
from the
garden of my mind.



Haiku

Deep in the forest
the sound of falling water.
Breathing deeply. Peace.



Haiku

The paths in the deep
corners of my mind lead to
unexplained mysteries.



Haiku

A whole galaxy
of emotion contained in
solitary tear.



C. S. S. 2020

Haiku

In down-deep of night
the sleep fairies plant story
seeds in all our dreams.

