

Haiku by Ginema

translated by Eric Selland

translator's note: I was asked to translate these two haijin (the other being Tadato Nakatsuka) for the Tokyo Poetry Festival held in September 2011. They were amongst a fairly large and eclectic group selected by organizer Natsuishi Ban 'ya. As far as I know, the poets themselves chose the haiku to be included. [Here are some photos](#) taken from Ginema's performance.

Ginema

I have been participating in the haiku magazine *Mononofukai* since 1996. I began writing pieces little by little, and gradually became more deeply involved. To tell the truth, I'm a "low-grade" haikuist who has never done much proper study of haiku. I come from a family where bloody things like murder and suicide have been unceasing, and this produced an environment ripe for "underground haiku". I have been performing regularly in the "Solo! Haiku Live" readings started by *Mononofukai* since 1998, where I continue to explore the possibilities of haiku reading.

I'm basically just a hick from the remote countryside of Shikoku island . . . ain't got nuthin', got nuthin' to lose . . . low education/low income; bug-eyed and scaly skinned. My bug-eyes and the creases between my brows are my most charming point . . .

夜啼き石

The Night-Crying Stone

川へ行け石を喰え

Go to the river! Eat rocks!

大男おっちんじまって蚊もはらえねえ

The huge man, dead as a doornail – can't brush off the mosquitoes now

指を吸ってよ月夜の犬みたいに

C'mon, suck my finger! Like a dog on a moonlit night

赤痣にデンデン虫よ恋しいか

Oh snail, do you long for the red birthmark?

漆喰から昔の男を呼び戻す

From the plaster, calling back an old boyfriend

逢えぬ夜の熟柿を吸う冷たさよ

Oh coldness sucking the ripe persimmons out of the night we cannot meet

[Translator's note: "ripe persimmons" means waiting it out or biding one's time]

約束は足の小指に結びけり

Tied a promise on my little toe

痩せ犬があたしの背中に生えてくるの

A scraggly dog grows from my back

村興しの末の子供だ

A child who is the result of village development

誰かいただろうスイカの縞が証拠だ

Someone's been here – the proof is in the watermelon's stripes

先祖代々粘着紐の家系なり

They're a family that's stuck to things for generations

[Translator's note: Literally “adhesive bonding”]

眠ってはならん母が糸を吹く虞がある

Mustn't fall asleep – mother might start spinning yarn

縫い針が奥歯に挟まる彼岸かな

The equinox – a sewing needle wedged between my molars

畦道で失くしたおへそが痛いよお

The belly button I lost on the path through the rice field hurts

激しく生きたミミズが激しく腐っていく

The earthworm that lived with intensity – now intensely rancid

足も無い手も無い虫の歌である

There's an insect song without feet or hands

私のペニスは車輪だと思っていました

I thought my penis was a cartwheel

蜂を抱く 深く私を刺して下さい

I embrace a bee – oh thrust your sting into me, deeply

山影は月夜の兄の喉仏

Mountain shadow - my elder brother's Adam's apple on a moonlit night

夜融ける貴方を口にふくみたし

Tried whistling – you in the night that melts

救われた命だから倍にして薄めねば

A life that has been saved should not be diluted twice over

帰るたび乾いたミミズが落ちている

Whenever I go home there's a dried up worm fallen on the ground

実刑はデキモノが広がる夜の自慰とする

Prison sentence – self-stimulation of night on which an abscess grows

子殺しがペンペン草を撫でにけり

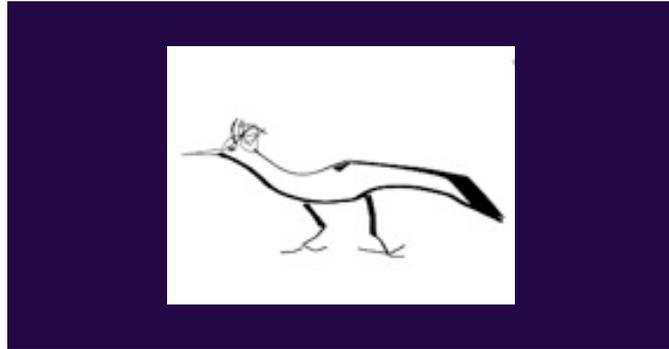
Infanticide caresses the shepherd's-purse

どうしても砂地がいいというカニに見せたい花があった

There was a flower I just had to show to a crab who insists on sand

生まれつき甲羅がついている 神よ私を信じますか？

I have a shell I was born with – oh God, do you believe me?



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