

## From My Bed on Dry Winter Mornings

From my bedroom window on these dry winter mornings I see a coating of heavy frost, white and gleaming, spreading out across the river flats of the valley below. Or, if the cloud cover has been dense for days, a thick mist will align itself across the horizon and lie in wait down there, for the sun. I wake in my warm bed to singing birds, joyous that their day has begun. Do they remember yesterday as I do?

winter frosts  
sometimes reach my window  
soon Daphne's fragrance

Because no rain has fallen lately, the birdbath is empty. The potted plants, all outside, on the terrace, will need watering once the sun melts the frost from the grass surrounding the house. Some plants in pots enjoy winter, the icy water, but would perhaps prefer to be planted in a more southern garden where snow might fall.

as buds are swelling  
I see pink-white promise.  
the Daphne's blush

Local birds don't mind winter. They fly from tree to bush and seem to find other places for bathing besides my empty bird bath. There is a river nearby that rises and falls almost with the tidal changes of the sea. Here, floods happen regularly, but usually in the summer and autumn season. Now we are at winter's reasoning with the pruning almost done.

amongst potted plants  
searching for water  
a thirsty currawong

Fruiting is finished. We rest, put up our feet. All the snakes have found safe havens and are sound asleep. The sheep still have their woolly coats on. And we wear layers of clothes and keep musing about springtime, daffodils, wattle, and the first, sweet, apples of the new season. When will they be here? Soon?

wood fires at night  
burning coals behind glass doors  
last year's dead fruit trees

*(The haibun began its life as diary notes and is the combination of two poems: a prose poem and haiku. The form was popularized by the 17th century Japanese poet Basho. Both the prose poem and haiku typically communicate with each other).*

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3<sup>rd</sup> Prize, National Poetry Awards 2013