

I loved the plain-speaking place-making, the domesticated lyricism of this haibun. 'From my bedroom window on these dry winter mornings I see a coating of heavy/ frost... spreading out across the river-flats of the valley below'; 'Because no rain has fallen lately, the birdbath is empty'; 'Now we are at winter's reasoning with the/ pruning almost done'. I am not a haibun practitioner, but this one seemed to fly: each stanza of verse glossed and yet transcended the prose poem it arose from and anticipated the next. And the poem travels nicely from morning to night, from birth (waking) to death ('wood fires at night ... last year's dead fruit trees'), from Daphne's midwinter hopefulness to the more forlorn hope for first apples ('when will they be here?')

I admire the undemonstrative diction and quiet confidence of this poem. It was, itself, a place I couldn't shake and still can't distinguish from the mood it put me in.

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