

**The Six Poems Nominated by the Origami Poems Project**  
(Listed Alphabetically by Title)

**Blood Moon**

I don't know where the moon will rise tonight,  
or exactly when, but the Bridge to Nowhere  
is lined with cars as I approach the  
edge of a mountain,  
and people sitting in lawn chairs or  
adjusting flashy cameras on tripods  
as a peach sunset trumpets a crescendo  
and the sky curls over in a gray blanket  
enabling stars to dance across night's stage  
while lights lining the ridge of the mesa  
sparkle an ancient celebration and

we stand, a united tribe of strangers  
breathing night air, and awe and

I don't know how to find my balance  
suspended, between science and magic.

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**Peg Quinn © 2016**

– from her OPP microchap, *Moon Shadows*

**I am brief**

All night the drone of the highway schooner  
scraping black ice off country roads floats  
in unsteady light and swirl of snow colliding.  
How can weather be scoured away when  
a blue mist sulks for hours in the orchard,  
lingering over tracks of deer and opossum  
that have uncovered icy windfalls?  
To survive, one must be aware – coyotes'  
glossy breath staggers beneath pines–  
their baleful cries echo– rungs of sound  
climbing higher and higher. . .  
What's missing? A soul's departure  
only noticed by one of us.

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**Garrett Phelan © 2016**

– From his OPP microchap *Standing where I am*

## Parting from Wang Wei

(after Meng Haoran)

These quiet days are ending  
and now I must leave.

I miss my home's sweet grasses  
but will grieve at parting – we've

eased each other's burdens on this road.  
True friends are scarce in life.

I should just stay there alone, forever  
behind the closed gate.

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**Robert Okaji © 2016**

– From his OPP microchap, *No Eye But The Moon's*

## Sonnet # 4

We've got seven-hundred cans of black beans,  
about ten thousand gallons of water,  
a Faraday cage for an EMP,  
and chickens out back that we can slaughter.  
We've got an armory in our basement  
and bug out bags hidden on the back porch  
together we'll be ready to face it,  
when, inevitably, worst comes to worst.  
Still, I can't prepare for my greatest fear,  
as sure as the economic collapse,  
when our love eventually disappears  
and we're part of a long forgotten past.

Even though death makes the effort absurd  
love means defending what can't be preserved.

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**Donald C. Welch III © 2016**

– From his OPP microchap, *The Post Atomic Sonnets*

***The Blue Earrings***

For months I've kept the universe  
in a box. It happens.

I get tired of infinity  
with its sapphire eyes

staring out at me  
from behind mirrors.

But today when I slip on  
all that sea, that sky

everything immense  
seems a little

lighter, as if nature  
isn't so in-your-face

endless after all—  
or maybe I've just gotten

used to the idea of  
this big wavering life

being so damn brief.

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**Lori Lamothe © 2016**

– From her OPP microchap *endless after all*

### Three Strikes

1.

#### Petals and Shadows

I didn't see the shadows  
until I zoomed in tightly,  
brought the lens and eyes down  
to the strands of darkness  
staining each and every white  
petal. One could not be without  
the other. Sisters holding hands,  
the pure one more prominent,  
the earthly one so shy. Hidden  
but ready to be discovered.

Let the violin's high note announce  
the dance and the cello's mellow  
tones carry the tune. Watch the sisters  
twirl like black and white dervishes,  
twirl until the sky darkens, until  
they stagger and fall to the ground  
petals beyond their time.

2.

#### Holding On

The roller coaster car inches up  
the steep hill. Our eyes question  
blue skies. Hands linked, we anticipate  
the terrifying thrill. But as we reached  
the apex and viewed the wrenching  
drop, our stomachs groaned, our hearts  
shook. Then gravity and machinery  
shot us down. Took our breath away  
as we loosened our grip on the lap bar,  
then grasped each other, inseparable  
we thought until you and so many  
more were no more. Now I cling  
to what remains-- out of love  
and fear. Hold on tight  
until my knuckles turn white.

3.

A Steep Climb

I once scrambled to the top.  
Leapt from rock to rock.  
Sped over the trail's snags.  
Sang jubilantly atop the summit.  
Was kin to cloud and sky.

But in time the hill became  
a mountain, the path, overgrown,  
armed with thorny bushes  
that rip the skin and shifting  
rocks that steal steadiness.  
I hesitate at the trailhead, a dark,  
small opening in a tall thicket.  
My backpack, crammed  
with yesterdays' troubles,  
bends my back and desire.  
"Perhaps another day,"  
I mumble, to the mute boulders.

*Come, sit under the fig tree.  
Thoughtless and open, feel the sun's  
warmth, hear the wind's wordless song.  
Touch the breathing soil beneath you,  
See and know the unending sky.  
Picture yesterday's grief, tomorrow's  
anxiety as a tangle of knots untied.  
What is stirring muscle and bone?  
What recedes; what comes forth  
from the shadows?*

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**Bill Sullivan © 2016**

– From his OPP microchap, *Three Strikes*