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### Time and Space Haiku

Time and space answer each other. Space asks about time, and time answers her, giving her a glimpse into where she came from, and vice versa. It's the most important affair we've ever seen. I've always been fascinated by their relationship, but also by each of them individually. The celestial bodies that exist in space are topics that cannot be written about enough, and the study of their existence and life can easily be compared with many things that occur every day on our planet and in our personal lives.

A more academic way of approaching this topic is the study of Astrophysics. The goals of this area of scientific study is perfectly explained by the NASA official website as "we seek to understand the universe and our place in it." So, I've decided to focus my essay on the topic of space and time as a theme in haiku. Specifically, the question I'm seeking the answer to is: how do humans parallel celestial bodies, and how do space and time interweave in writing? I selected my haiku from the anthology *galaxy of dust*, the red moon anthology of English-language haiku edited by Jim Kacian and the red moon editorial staff.

end of summer  
teaching kids to count  
from lightning to thunder

Alexey Andreev, GOD, 9

I learned to count the seconds between lightning and thunder to learn how safe I was from the storm outside when I was little. Counting these seconds, instead others such as the ones making me wait to take cookies out of the oven, made me feel more human, more connected to the storm, and more connected to what is past it. The author begins this haiku with the time of the year, which sets up the picture of cooler nights and the way the storms begin to move in, signaling Fall is anxious to arrive. Then he goes into the description of teaching kids instead of just doing it himself. It's human teaching human. The kids are probably scared, and this could be a device to distract them from the scariness of the storm and make them apart of its process.

This ties in with my theme of space and time more in the time way, and the human aspect of this scientific voyage. It's the now, the place we've ended up after everything, starting with the Big Bang. This is our place in it, counting from thunder to lightning in late Summer. How did we get to this?

starlit night  
she traces the spot  
my razor missed

Robert Beary, GOD, 14

What does a starlit night have to do with tracing the places he missed with the razor? The night sky is filled with billions and billions of stars, more than you can comprehend. In fact, the amount of stars we can see tell us so much about our universe and how much we can see of it, and its age. Our universe is infinite, expanding and getting less dense every second. We know there are billions of stars in the sky, so why is night sky so dark? If the light of every star reached us, our sky would be as bright as it is at noon all the time. Starlight would fill every centimeter of the sky. But we know our universe is ancient and gigantic because there are stars whose light has not reached us yet. Light travels so fast, so if it travels that fast, imagine how far away those stars must be. For the stars that we can see, how long have they existed for? If they had to travel so far to greet us, they must be so old. There are stars we can currently see in the night sky that might have already died out, but they're light is still traveling to us, still striving towards our solar system.

But, for some reason, this all ties in with a boy who missed a spot and a girl who loves him for his imperfections anyway. Outside the sky is aglow with history and stardust, but their love is so strong that the only universe they're focused on is the one that is in the other. The stars make everything seem so small, and I think that's the point of this haiku. It is juxtaposing human beings to stars. Missing a spot with your razor is really no big deal and comparing it to the stars makes it seem even smaller. But it is the main subject of the haiku, and I think the author is trying to say that the little things are what matter in life.

redwood silence from a different century

Cherie Hunter Day, GOD, 22

The redwoods remind me of space for a multitude of reasons. Firstly, because George Lucas utilized them in creating the planet of Endor in *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi*. But also, the redwoods are ancient ancestors that look out over land that has been changing for years, changing right in front of them, but they have stood timeless and ageless. This reminds me of the stars, how those old, gaseous bodies have shone for hundreds of years on the same ground that I walk on. My ancestors looked at those stars. I think there's something special about time-defying things, how they survive through generations and don't listen to death.

The author compacts this haiku into one straight line. I think this is to symbolize the continuity and ongoing linear growing of the redwoods. Redwoods are their own time machine, standing as silent observers. The author mentions their silence as though you can hear what they aren't saying, probably because once you see them you are speechless. I love how she ends it with "a different century." Closing it with the time mark, bringing that century to meet this one. She does not specify which century, though, leading us to believe it was too long ago to count.

gibbous moon  
my ear on the curve  
of her belly

Angelee Deodhar, GOD, 24

The gibbous moon is a little less than a full moon, but a little more than a half moon. In this haiku, the other is referring to the belly of a pregnant woman, and someone is putting their ear closer to the child inside, maybe to hear it kick or to display affection toward the mother. The moon has long been intertwined with women. Often, writers will gender the moon and refer to it as "she" and "her." The moon has also been thought to have something to do with the timing of women's menstrual cycles. While this has not exactly been proven, many take it as fact. Opening the haiku with "gibbous moon" brings time into the scene. This is a phase of the moon, and phases of the moon signify change and seasons passing. I love how this poem, and the person speaking in it, weaves together the moon and the pregnant woman. They place her on the same level as the moon, beautiful, glowing, always undergoing change, and admired.

half moon...  
the women missing  
from history

Rebecca Drouilhet, GOD, 26

Rosalind Franklin was the woman that was crucial in discovering the double helix structure of DNA. Katharine Johnson, Dorothy Vaughan, and Mary Spencer were crucial to the space race. Henrietta Lacks was a patient whose cells were taken, duplicated, shared, and tested on for years without knowledge or consent of the family, but has been crucial in development of modern medicines and the HeLa cell. Margaret H. Hamilton was the female Apollo Computer Programmer on the Apollo 13 mission that developed and programmed the technology that was instrumental in the mission. Throughout history these women have

been erased, pushed out of the spotlight, and faced hardships for their efforts and contributions to important scientific studies and missions completed.

“Half moon” is an excellent way to describe our STEM history, missing half of the souls that made humankind what it is today because they were overlooked. Our step on the moon may have been one giant leap for mankind, but surrounding it was a stumble backward for gender equality. Katie Bouman is the woman that led the development of the software that produced the first ever picture of a black hole. The number of posts and articles I read commending her for her work was a stride in the right direction.

lingering moon...  
the bleats of one valley  
answered by the next

Claire Everett, GOD, 28

Sometimes we see the moon during the day, glimpses of night where it shouldn't be, a ghost from yesterday. The first line, “lingering moon,” reminds me of that, the moon during the day, refusing to leave. I believe the different valleys answering each other are night and day, day calling the night and the night answering the day with the moon. This also draws into what I wrote above, about time answering space and vice versa, but here, space is answering space in the time technically not allotted to one of them.

ceasefire—  
a soldier comes home  
wrapped in moonlight

Arvinder Kaur, GOD, 39

Where sunlight is more awakening and uncovering, moonlight is peace. It is a blanket of comfort and protection. This soldier is coming home wrapped in this cleansing, beautiful light. Unfortunately, the tone of this haiku is sorrowful, and we're meant to assume that the soldier is not only coming home in moonlight, but an American flag as well. He has died in the line of duty, but is finally, safely coming home in the worst circumstances. The author tying in the moonlight signifies that the soldier is at peace, though, that he is not in any pain anymore.

The moon is a serene thing to so many people, and all throughout literature, is depicted as a protector and keeper of those it shines on. It is also seen as a cleansing and refreshing thing, so the soldier is no longer in pain through these assumptions. It is a sad haiku, but it is also a consoling message.

starlight  
past intruding  
on the present

James Lautermilch, GOD, 42

The light from stars that reaches us, the little pinpricks we see in the sky once it gets dark, is old light. It's the light from past stars. Those stars emitted that light years and years before it reached us, when our ancestors were alive, during a different century, and is only now reaching us.

“Past intruding on the present” is an accurate way to describe this. This reminds me of a more aggressive description of transcending time that was written about in Cherie Hunter Day's haiku about redwoods. The redwood's silence is more of a lingering presence transitioning from century to century. Here, the stars are invading our time, almost as if they aren't wanted.

as they were as we are starry night

Roland Packer, GOD, 58

I love comparing people to stars. We're made of the same thing as stars; iron, carbon, oxygen, and many other elements, exist in us. We are stardust. Some people think that soulmates are people who come from the same star, and you're drawn to that person because you're made of the same stuff.

In this haiku, the author is comparing themselves and their generation to past generations, and then commenting about the stars in the sky at the end to draw in a comparison of how stars exist throughout centuries and grow and die just like people. But, some of these stars have shone on multiple generations over a span of so many years. As the redwood haiku, this haiku is one line, and is this way for a specific reason. It's another symbol and comparison of the linear, continuous timeline of humans and space, and how they interweave.

sleepless night  
the sky full of  
mathematics

Stephen Toft, GOD, 73

There is so much math to be done in the sky. One example is of the pulses of light that stars give off. Each pulse, their length, and how many times they pulse within a specific amount of time reveals how far away that star is. The first human computers at Harvard discovered and mapped these pulses and were able to learn how big our universe was. This material was then used by a man named Hubble to show us how big our home is. Some people look up at the sky and see lights, our STEM involved ancestors looked up and saw equations and ways to map out our galaxy.

This person cannot sleep, so they are looking up at a night sky that is filled with questions and mathematics. They see the equations in the sky. Or, they see their problems, issues to be figured out and rearranged. They cannot fall asleep because of it, but they are looking at a sky that makes their problems seem incredibly smaller.

deep winter  
pockets full  
of hands

Kevin Goldenstein-Jackson, GOD, 30

You can study all the constellations, galaxies, and stars that you want. You can ask the questions necessary for exploration and take steps every day towards the answers of where we are, how we got here, what else is out there, and if we're alone. You can improve technology and document every occurrence and explore the depths of time to search for answers others glazed over earlier. But, in the end, this is what it comes down to. People. You can focus on what is out there, but if you do not focus on what is right in front of you, you are going to miss out on exploring the most important part of being alive. You can explore the galaxies that exist in the person right in front of you.

Maybe this is the person you share a pocket within the Winter. When it is freezing out, I want to keep my hands covered in my pockets. But I also always want to hold my person's hand. So, we share a pocket. This haiku reminds me of that, of the people that are important. I feel like that is the point of astrophysics. To answer the questions about what has brought such important things into our lives.

How do we, as humans, parallel and juxtapose objects in space? Humans can really be compared to

anything in space. Whether it is women and the moon, shaving and starlight, or the stars and our ancestors. We, as humans, are infinite, just like our ever-expanding universe. We leave our mark on this universe just as the stars and everything surrounding it leave their mark on us. In order to write this way, though, we need to realize we are as great as these beings that exist in space. We are worthy of comparing ourselves to supernovas, stars, planets, moons, lunar eclipses, and even blackholes if necessary.

How do authors connect space and time to each other in their writing? Well, it is hard to write about one without the other. Stars sometimes feel like they are the definition of time, how their light takes so long to reach us, how they have reached through centuries to get to us, touching everyone along the way that have come before us. So, when talking about space, time almost comes along with it. Time, on the other hand, can be on its own without space, but does remind us about it. It connects us greater to the human aspect of it, how we live through time and ignore it or waste it or cherish it successfully. But there is still always so much more to learn, so much to explore, and so much to write about, and as Ronald Reagan said to the nation in 1986, "Nothing ends here; our hopes and our journeys continue."

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