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Island Haikus

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Calabash: A Journal of Caribbean Arts and Letters is an international literary journal dedicated to publishing works encompassing, but not limited to, the Anglophone, Francophone, Hispanophone and Dutch-speaking Caribbean. The Journal is especially dedicated to presenting the arts and letters of those communities that have long been under-represented within the creative discourse of the region, among them: Aruba and the Netherlands Antilles, Maroon societies, and the Asian and Amerindian societies of the region. Calabash has a strong visual arts component.

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Calabash: A Journal of Caribbean Arts and Letters

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Susan Brennan

ISLAND HAIKUS

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The cocoanut groves
haunt the hot island breezes:
a song of dropped fruit.

Night clouds shroud the moon.
A black-green sea flutters wild.
Dark rum sand shivers.

Yellow and orange
butterflies rest in the palms.
His hands blaze my skin.

Sting-rays chase a girl.
Her mouth, full of mango, screams.
She clings to the dock.

Vermillion pink blooms
and orchids sprout through mangroves.
Your voice is so clear.

Sailboats slip by slow.
The moon lights their wings. The reef
steers the captain's aim.

Her lipstick is fresh.
She waits on a white paint dock.
His boat cuts down waves.

The puma is shy –
sleeping on her long cold branch.
She won't be fooled twice.

Punta breaks our hips,
sweat shines from an open palm,
I am his rhythm.

Birds whittle in dawn.
I can't remember how much
I forgot to love.

Boat winds lash my hair.
My face stings from the sharp spray.
Go faster, I say.

His black coral eyes,
his fire coral fingers;
between us, oceans.

No words for the sky.
The ocean bleeds its dark ink.
My fingers stained blue.

Palm leaf shadows shake
like his shoulders when we danced.
He's not coming back.