March 7, 1965

I remember mornings when milk came in bottles
left on the front doorstep
when battles on the black-and-white news
couldn't match our imaginations triggered
by trains rolling down the tracks
headed from somewhere to somewhere
we knew the boxcars by name
listened to the warm steel rails
never had a clue that once the choo choos
carried human cargo
never heard a peep about what happened
that brutal Bloody Sunday March day
I was an oblivious five-year-old
it was the spring of salamanders
the Edmund Pettus bridge
in Selma, Alabama
light-years away
I'd never experienced racial hate
segregation, human degradation
I'm thankful I didn't get that brand
of education
I didn't know about Emancipation
how it's been ignored
by others on the other side of the law
I look around today
1965 doesn't seem that far away
I'm waking 'round in skin
and so is everyone else
that doesn't seem to sink in
with those who claim supremacy
asserting their authority
comes from above.

Richard Grahn

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Richard Grahn grew up a country boy in bucolic southern Wisconsin, and later on a secluded, sunset-lit bay in southern Maine. The 40-acre hayfield in Maine, bordered by shoreline and woods, fostered his sense of adventure and innovation along with his appreciation for nature. Later in life, these roots formed a deep relationship with art, poetry, and music. But, a casual writer for most of his adult life, it took a life-threatening combination of mental and physical illness to train his attention on the written word—both artistically and for its healing properties. Writing in earnest since 2017, his haibun and tanka prose works have appeared in many online and print journals, and anthologies including Contemporary Haibun Online, Haibun Today, The Haibun Journal, Ribbons, cattails, Sonic Boom, Failed Haiku, Atlas Poetica, Contemporary Haibun and others. He is the founding editor of two online poetry journals: Drifting Sands Haibun, and The Abstractaphy Initiative. He is the author of Longevity: Poems in the Key of Helen (Red Moon Press).