

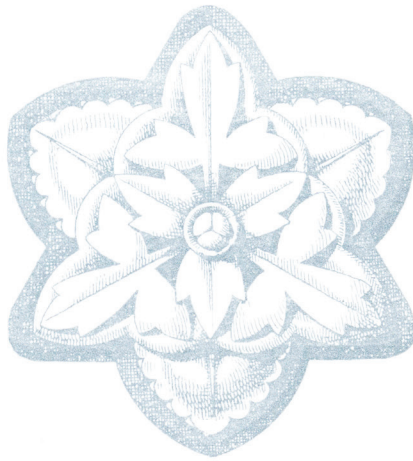
North Lake

Ce Rosenow



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by Ce Rosenow



Mountain Gate Press

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Afterword © Phyllis Walsh 2004

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For my brother, David



Spring

thru birdstart
wingdrip
weed-drift

of the soft
and serious —
Water

—*Lorine Niedecker*

the water's surface
broken
a fisherman casts in the rain

thinning mist —
more of the heron
revealed

lake shore reeds —
the stillness
of the heron's legs

clear and cold —
the reverberating splash
of the coor's dive

my yard
my neighbor's yard
camellia blossoms fall into both

morning drizzle
falling gently into moss
camellia blossom

crocus
bud

its
tremble

beneath
rain
drops

floating
in the flooded yard
first cherry blossom

widening with the sun break
sky-blue reflection
on the lake's surface

shoreline breeze —
curls of green paint
on the wooden lawn-swing

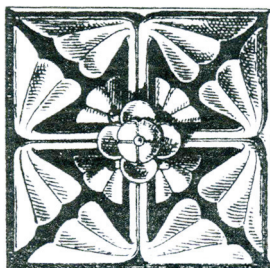
shaking out the throw rug —
sweet gum leaves
turn with the wind

garden gloves —
last year's grass stains
in their creases

early heat
steam where the sprinkler
hits the patio

twilight stroll
garden violets
becoming more so

still unopened
single tulip
beneath the waxing moon



Summer

in
shadows
out

of
the heat

not
waiting
for

word

—*John Martone*

mini
a
ture
rose

dew
drop

on
its
petal

pulling weeds
from the azalea bed
rising smell of damp earth

rolling waves —
otter's head
bobbing between them

billowing clouds
head to its chest
the sparrow's stillness

limbing the fir —
eagle's perch
falls to the ground

afternoon breeze
brushing the water lily
dragonfly

first time this year
easing my body
into the lake water

baiting the hook,
his fingers gleam
with fish oil

cleaning trouyt
in the late day heat —
blood beneath his nails

last rays of sunlight —
savoring the taste
of a salmon berry

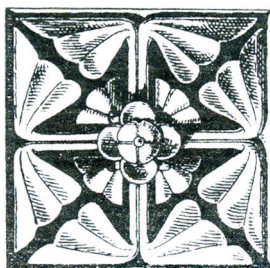
deepening with nightfall
waves
against the fishing boat's bow

Fourth of July
sparks and reflections of sparks
shower North Lake

star gazing —
the floating dock creaks
beneath our weight

dog's bark
filling the night air
scent of honeysuckle

single cloud
half the moon
below it



Autumn

Water is
a shrine

Earth is
a shrine

Air is
a shrine

Fire is
a shrine

We are
offerings

— *Cid Corman*

lingering heat —
grebe's empty nest
rising, falling

slicing peaches
with the old paring knife —
her arthritic hands

year after year
the patch of wild mushrooms —
the same woven basket

wind in the pampas grass
the rowboat strains
against its mooring

wooded path
cool breeze stirring
the snake skin

rustling leaves —
the flock of sparrows
reverses itself

rain drops
softly to the ground
fir cone

striking a match
to another candle —
All Hallow's Eve

whiff of sulphur
from the cold hearth —
distant thunder

chopping onions
on Thanksgiving Day
hard rain against the window

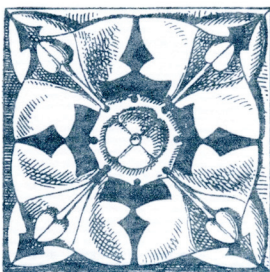
after the storm —
my neighbor's empty boat
adrift on the lake

autumn chill —
drawing the axe
against the whetstone

starry night:
the Shetland bites into
another apple

on the tree
on the ground
apples in moonlight

pinioned between the firs
harvest moon



Winter

No paths. Just remembering that the geese return.

—*vincent tripi*

icy wind
the crow flies
toward dawn

light snowfall
scattered white
of the ring-necked duck's bill

with each wind gust
bonfire smoke
trails after the skater

power outage —
vanilla candles
dripping wax

reminiscing
late into the night
warmth from the wood stove

Christmas Eve —
hanging her ornaments
without her

missing you —
windows rattle
with the wind

withere reeds
in the frozen lake,
the year ends

first
sky
stars
fad-
ing
into
dawn

adding a pine log
to the year's first fire —
distant fire crackers

retracing my steps
on the snowy path,
bird tracks in my boot print

New Year's Day
shoveling the walkway —
his worn-out coat

lake's melted center
from it the last buffleheads
taking flight

the shoreline at dusk —
another day passes
without Canada geese

waning moon
the slow drip
of icicles beneath the eaves

Afterword

North Lake, a collection of haiku which follows the seasons, conveys the feel for a place which has shaped the poet, Ce Rosenow. She is not only a sensitive observer—star gazer, birdwatcher, wildflower enthusiast—but interacts with the natural world she inhabits there.

She swims in the lake, gardens, discovers bird tracks in her boot prints. It is often the dailiness of activities in this place that creates the poet's bond to it—pulling weeds, shaking throw rugs, fishing, preparing food. Her senses remain responsive to its sights, flavors.

Although her haiku reflect distinct moments, there is a sense of continuity here, the sense that some of these moments recur: the patch of wild mushrooms, last year's grass stains on the garden gloves. Some of the moments take on the quality of rituals, especially those of holidays. Warmth from the woodstove, All Hallow's Eve, firecrackers.

While there is a quiet love for what is experienced in this place, it is not idealized. There is recognition of losses and the pain they evoke. From the sparrow's stillness to the loss of a loved one, and Christmas Eve without her, we sense the poet struggling for acceptance. It is the ongoing rhythm of the seasons that sustains this haikuist; that she invites us to share.

Her personal sense of place is identified in specifics such as the flavor of a salmon berry and buffleheads taking off from the lake's melted center. Yet it is this very uniqueness experienced at North Lake which creates universal feelings of joy, ordinariness, loss, and renewal.

Poems quoted by other poets (Cid Corman, John Martone, Lorine Niedecker, and vincent tripi) reinforce the sense of place in this collection.

The reader comes to feel North Lake is not only an appealing place to visit in these haiku, but to embrace in one's own inner space.

— Phyllis Walsh

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—from the Afterword by Phyllis Walsh



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