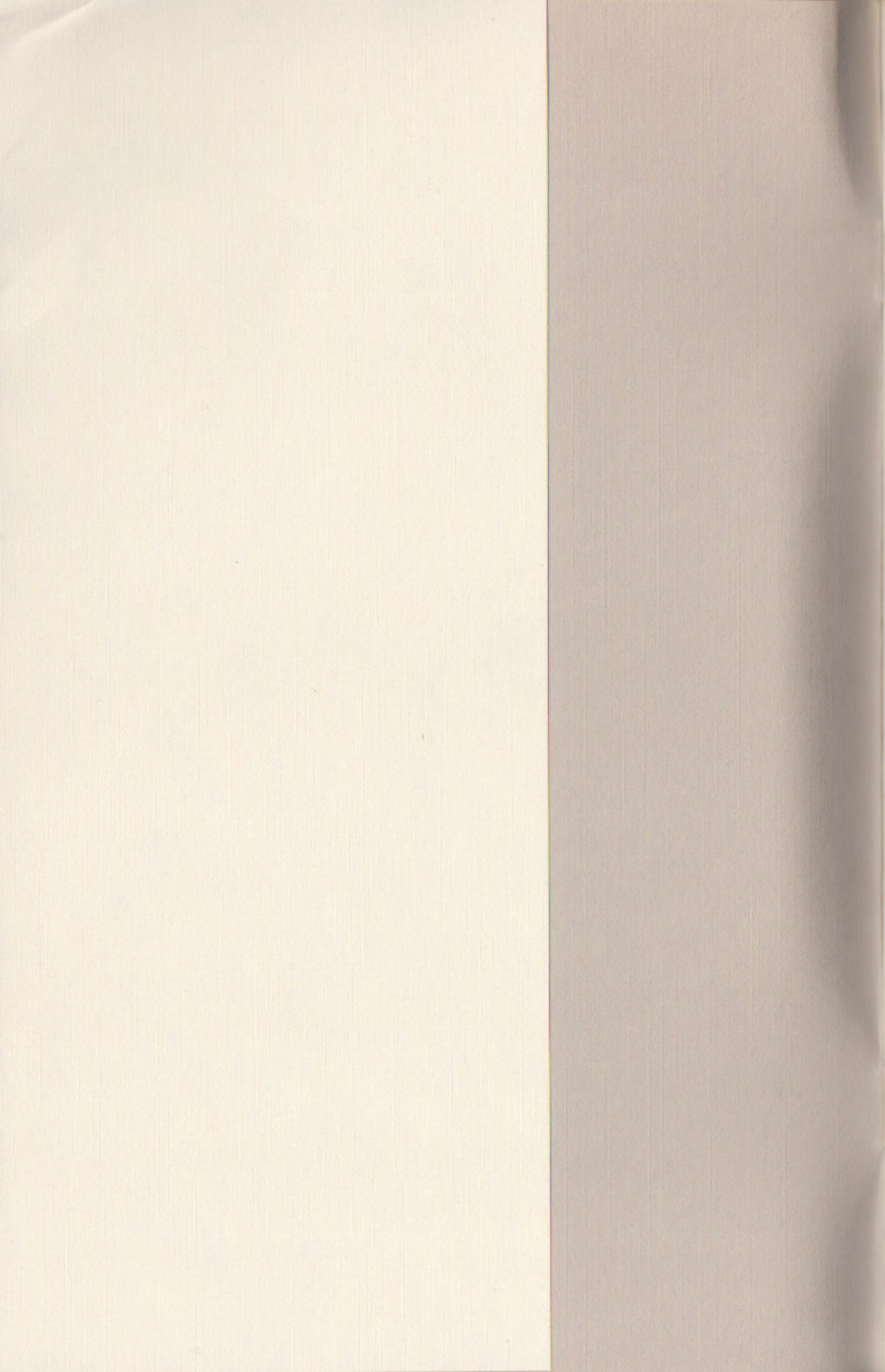


Frederick A. Raborg, Jr.

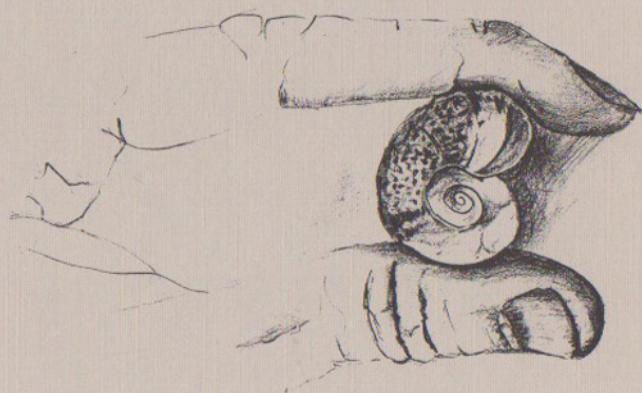
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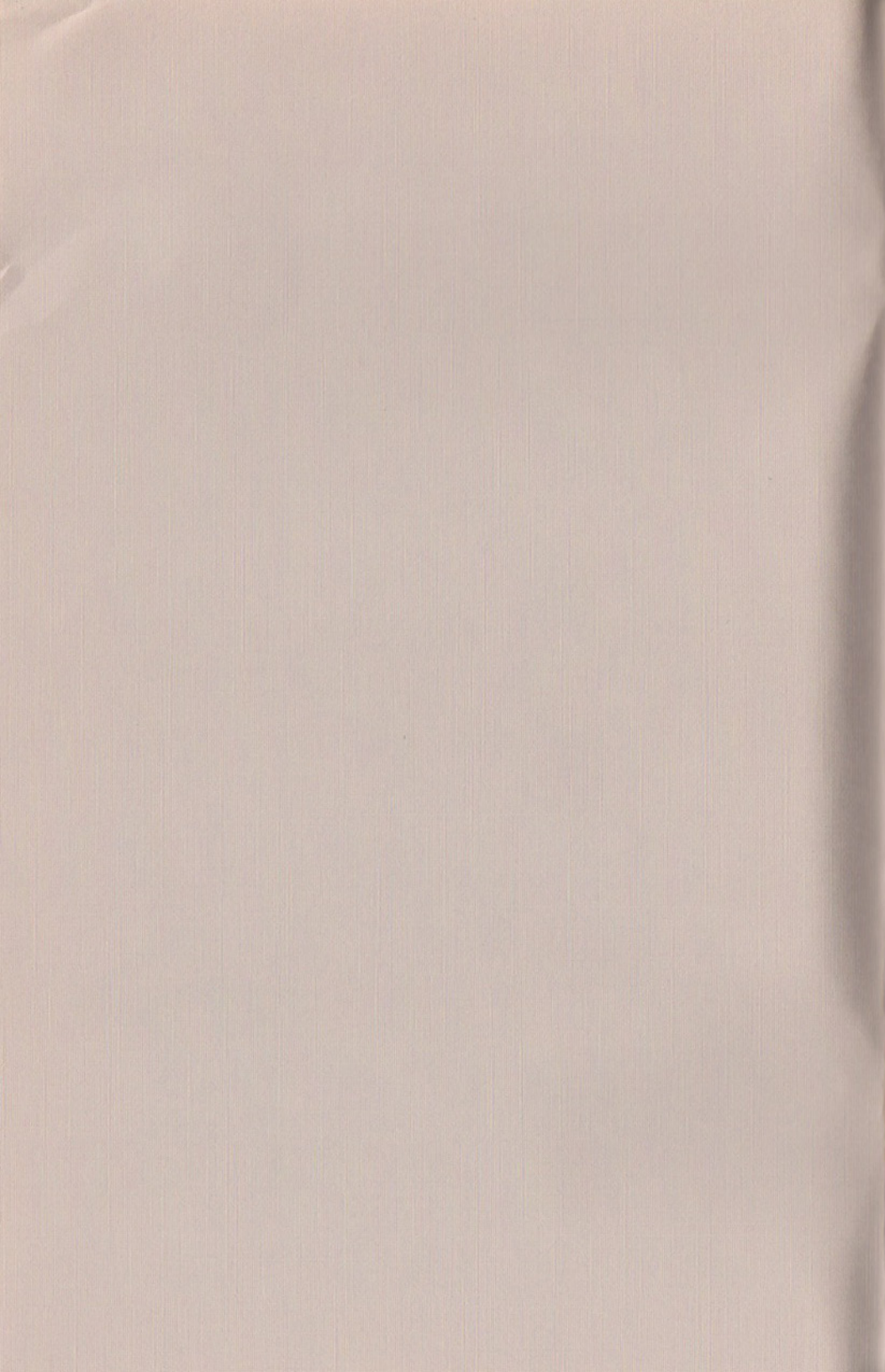






tule





tule

Haiku by
Frederick A. Raborg, Jr.



AMELIA
Bakersfield, California

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For

Nini

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everywhere the birds
stretch the country tree to tree
lengthening the dawn

Near Leeuwarden
little hooves on an old dike -
sails over the land

old organ pealing
in the Grote Kirk -
outside a bronze Mata Hari

Under cottonwoods
two wild rabbits, rump to rump,
nibble white clover

late snail drawing
silver slick across a stone
dies in its glitter

Baby sleeping near
old oak and maple stirrings
warm winds blowing Brahms

behind crossed white rails
brown colt, birth-slick, shuddering
close to its white mare

Where the plow ass brays,
the sweet unmolested straw -
up the road a school
wherein a clock is ticking,
scuffed shoes anxious for the play

in a crystal ball
eyes trace shapes which don't exist -
gypsy bracelets clink

In the small dark room
one bare bulb dangling ragged
on its cord, so still

where unborn tadpoles
tumble in their clustered eggs -
rolling Groucho eyes

Monarch butterfly
on a poinsettia
unfurling its wings

todo madura,
la boca se abre
por dulce goce

everything ripens,
the mouth opens
for sweet pleasure

cool, cool drink
waters running under stones -
koi in the pool

in the tule fog
acorns glisten on the palms -
woodpeckers knock knock

not far from the wine
squat men, rich from sold plasma,
watching the stars race

in the frigid wind
a single longhorn steer -
emptiness is white

Rio Bravo Sequence

Upriver lingers
the old geography of
winter's snowy coat

old stones in a wall the chink through which I see fresh
blood

Wolf pups lie gnawing
the bones from one bird's final
fluttering

red ripe currants flash in two cold eyes the green snake
coiling

That old elm still bends
with the weight of dead men hanged
from its youthful limbs

a mockingbird acts the magician a willow squeals on
morning

Beside the camper
two muddy boots retell
the deer's last drink

its belly alive caged snake draws the same lines skaters
skate

corrugated roof
rattles in a pulsing wind -
birds hang in the air

preening kingbirds bathe,
shake dry in cherry trees an
orchardful of song

silent ivory keys
old piano bench too full
of unsung singing

Rabbits jump and twitch
thicket rustling in the wind,
baying closing hounds

Near the barn, field flowers
dry and fragile in the wind
scattering their seeds

old women weeping
 leaning one toward the other
rain on the headstone

hard-knuckled fist
grips the highrisen I-beam
the rivet chatters

from an oaken frame
in the dead man's rented room
his corpse is grinning

rope-walking the drop
dark granite walls slip by me
stalactites reaching

dark young man resting
atop Kole Kole Pass--
sunshine on the cross

the air is fierce with
bass, drums, his skin-tight jeans
some horn

noon:
two gravediggers lean on death
for lunch

crescent moon
scything
the widow's web

desert winds move dust -
neck-deep in moonlight, watching
sun-bleached longhorn skulls

winnowing in wind
gray fur pricked on thistledown -
sun carves a carcass

tympanum of rain -
laserbeams of lightning flash
bassoons of thunder

snow on woolly coats
wild sheep herd grazing
sudden winter storm

Moonlight in the room
shines on blue porcelain eyes -
her discarded dolls

un vieux chien
qui s'en va avec son maitre,
la pluie les embroussaille an old dog
walks with his master,
tousled by rain

si douce me fut cette maison:
je voyais la ville
decroite sous la pluie this house was pleasant
for me: I could see the town,
smaller in the rain

les etamines dans cette fleur
s'oscellent a la recherche d'un pistil
pour les pollens stamens in this flower
lurch in search of a pistil
for its pollen

her index finger
touches perfume to her throat -
my nostrils flaring

jeweled plastic comb
pulling shine through tangled hair,
glinting in men's eyes

donnez moi une morceau de charbon
et j' enseignerai aux hommes -
les grains de puossiere en vent

give me a piece of
charcoal and I shall teach men -
bits of dust in the wind

quiet room -
the dominoes click
with the clocks

A lover's touch
mysterious as midnight
on the moon's dark side

Deserted playground,
clanging empty flagpole clips
key the sparrows' chirp

in a car at night
I think of cardboard boxes
where my life is stored

In Matsumoto

Wood as dark as night
hauled from high mountain forests
lines Crow Castle walls

Flowering plums thread
tsumugi under carved birch
trays of o-cha warmed

I sleep on thin mats -
opaque dreams rice paper caught
for morning laughter

Old calligraphists
share with all eternity,
brushstrokes so precise

Old monument to clans,
Crow Castle shadows reach
far across the moat

My thoughts are pigeons
fluttering with poetry
written on the sky

In Matsumoto
pickles in a sweetshop tempt
even patient men

in Greece stand ruins
worn and leathery
sun dries the figs

long is the shoreline
in old gray turtles' eyes
homing on the sea

old dinosaur bones
reassembled into beasts
a cockroach climbs

blown off sombreros
roll the empty streets
in search of dancers

pyracantha hedge
backdrop to his graying hair -
prickly thistles fly

in the dark a wolf -
off, a Basque sings sheepsongs
bones crack time

thirst
for water into which an
olive drops
drops

his soles grip gravel
crackles on the wooden floor
this last time going

a magazine left
on an isolated bench
grows flippant in the wind

The water moving
reflects the snow-ribbed mountains
where the sunshine gleams

rumpled sleeping bag -
warm morning fire in railyard,
old Bible torn

Morro Bay Haibun

Gray dawn, fog offshore -
wings and forked tail arrowing
grey tern circling fish

Morro Rock rises from the murmurous surf like the hump of a browsing brontosaurus. The fog undulates in smoky tufts, seeming to draw in upon itself, reluctant to touch the shore.

Mast and netless booms,
needles in the calm lagoon -
shrimper set for sea

A small, solid man with prematurely grey hair uses the morning hours to jog the beach, pulling his youth back into his soul. His hard muscles glisten sweaty, knot with power.

Bright red running shorts
variegate the sunshine,
shoes make the sands talk

When he reaches the weir on which runs the paved
road that girdles three-fourths of the rock's base, he
scrambles up the jagged rocks, lopes quickly across the
road and down the other side.

A wooden wharf groans
against an old boat for hire,
thick smell of bourbon

The fisherman and the runner are two divergent
stargazers caught up in the wind's strong calling. The
morning sunshine carves a new day deep into their sun-
etched faces. Two mock salutes, and

hot hands iron-gripped -
the sea charts know best their tubes,
great gulps of liquor

They stare at each other for a silent moment. It seems
the great bank of fog edges further from the shore, and
Morro Rock grows taller and humpier. Daylight brings
the gulls, cacophony in the sky.

They talk of the stars;
children build sand castles near
dancing fiddler crabs

aging Navajo
smiles sienna skin tightly
on his bony face

white in the night new snow all those new steps

outside the front door
muddy boots dry the day's walk
in the woods

Rose petals open
fragile cradles for the dew
that aphids nanny

Dried, an apple browns
and wrinkles a weathered face
dressed in red gingham

A salmon sunset -
shadow-blackened sunflowers
silhouette the sky

HAIBUN FOR RICHARD HUGO

In Skye, the old gnarled trees have turned their bark into the morning sun, as fat and round as all his burning anthems after Kapowsin's demise. The reservoir at Kicking Horse still reflects a mountain, crude self-portrait of the poet's form and mirror on their mutuality and swift clean reaches for the Grace of God.

The bass still tangle
in the reeds and, off, the whales
still sing to gulls

The eyes of all the girls who nourished him in stranded love affairs are still as white as oriental madness. He was a ship-shaped rock, a meteor that sails against the wingspan of the Cygnus searching for a planet where in landing he might glow again and scream into the night,

rides the nebula
we call the Horsehead, rearing -
he adds the wings

Ripley believed this great odd fact of Man, whose pen was often catacomb for old melanic howls, and his sad hoodlum's eyes took in the world, a vagabond, his words like slapping sandals down a tunnel through the belly of some existential church. His every word could spark a memory; each imagery, a sob;

his every line was
just the length of one good cry,
no handkerchief enough

youthful eyes read Tennyson in disarray
white
cups
coffee

each the other's flicker
moth and flame

peeling an orange
squirts
her giggles

in the dark
within an opaque globe
clear light

The Sunday psalter
on the sanctuary wall
singing to blunt chalk

"O"
fits the tongue
as gate between the teeth

hot afternoon one
housefly strolling on
the temperature

dressing for the luau

my tub is too small -
a native laughs while chopping
taro root for poi
my sarong feels heavy with
hand-dyed red hibiscus blooms

two large soft drink cups
stuck in the sand touch sticky rims
bees buzz for nectar

the jazzman with a horn
has a woman in his eye

He is the bellows;
she, the fire -
flames in the dark

in the twilight, bats -
silently a white owl slices
up the dark

Twilight. Sitting where
three sounds of music mingle
saxophones with talk

warm saki cup
lips
sip

time crumbles like a bite
of toffee
in a child's pink mouth

Japanese poet - silk
worm gnawing leaves in the night -
inks calligraphy



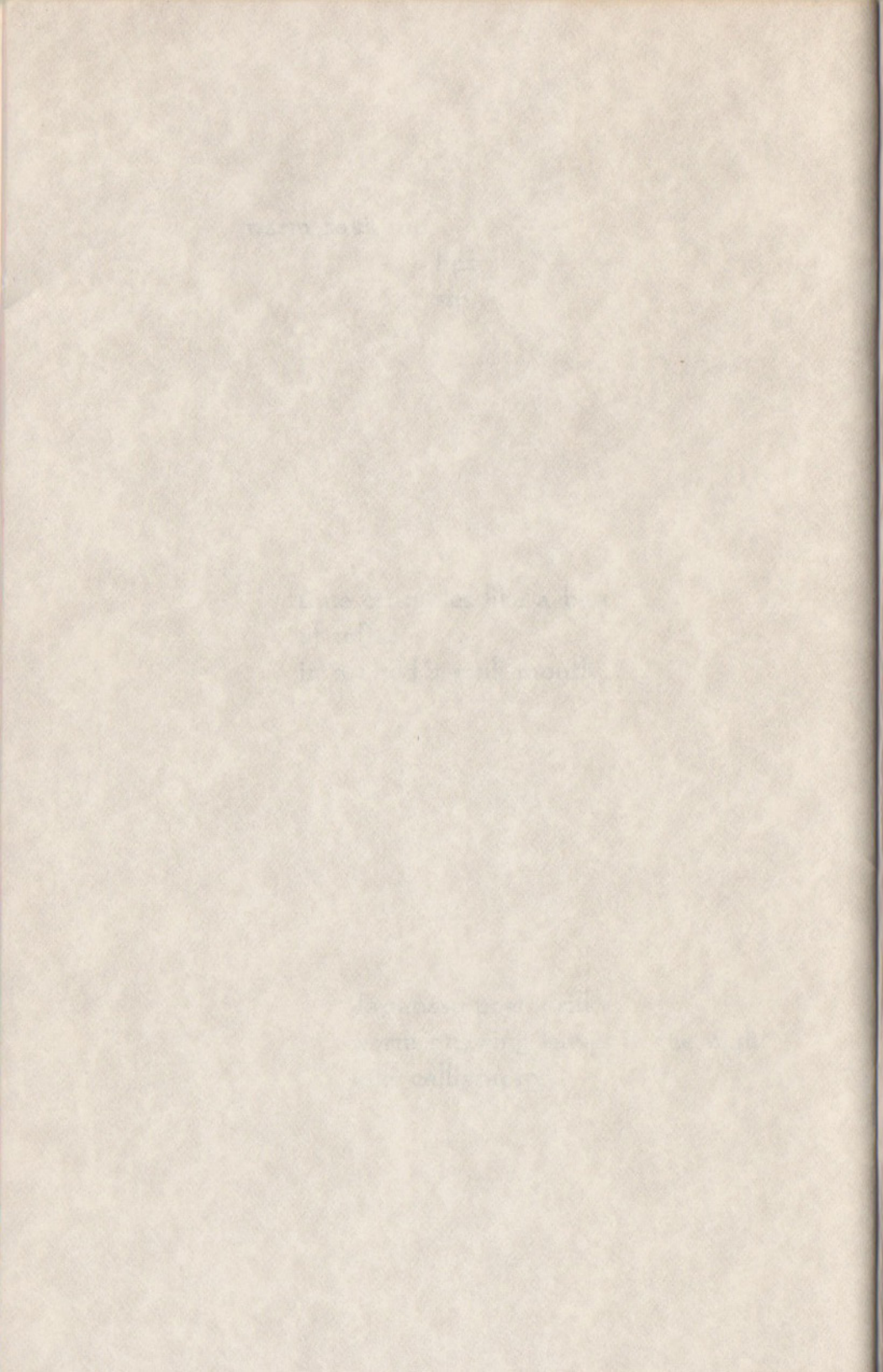
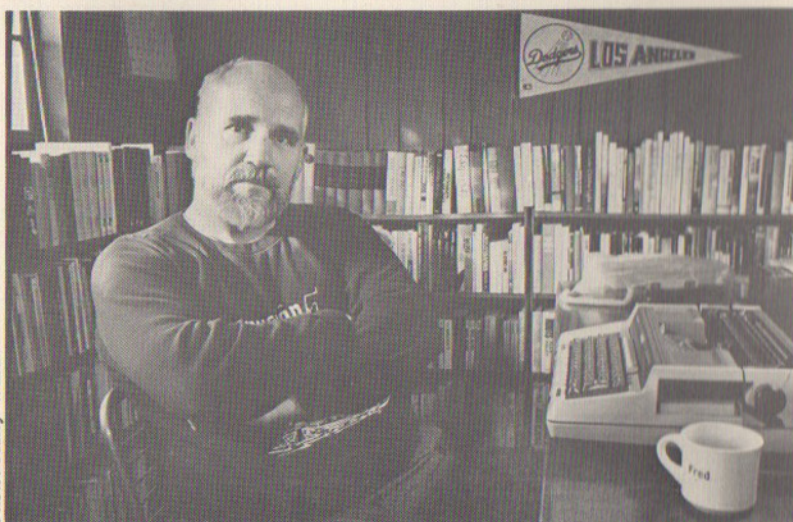


Photo: Harry Wilson



In addition to his haiku, poetry by Frederick A. Raborg, Jr. has appeared in hundreds of periodicals, including *Ladies' Home Journal*, *Westways*, *Tendrils*, *Portland Review*, *Pacific Review*, *Poetry Australia*, *Revista/Review Interamericana*, *Cimarron Review*, *DeKalb Literary Arts Journal*, *Epos* and *The Dramatists Guild Quarterly*.

His short stories, articles and plays have appeared in, among others, *Sports Afield*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Chic*, *Cavalier*, *The Richmond Quarterly*, *Dramatics*, *Old Hickory Review* and *Short Story International*.

As a journalist, he has been a continuing columnist and reviewer for *The Bakersfield Californian*, *The Bakersfield News Bulletin* and *The Portsmouth Star*. He has also contributed travel and opinion articles to such papers as *Los Angeles Herald Examiner*, *The Portland Chronicle*, *Grit*, and *The Oregonian*.

He has received many awards, including a *Guideposts* award, *The USA-Netherlands 200 Foundation Award*, and, twice, awards from the *International Thespian Association*.

He lives in Bakersfield, California with his wife, Eileen. They have six children.

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