

Early Haiku

by John Wills

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Marlene Mountain

HAIKU

ARS POETICA

The way they skitter
down the dusty wall
lizards scratch this old haiku.

SPRING THAW

Beneath the ragged coat
a dirty shirt--
the meadow's Jake the Hobo!

LAMENT FOR SATURDAY

Butterflies are blowing
down the wet spring roads.
Children sulk in doorways.

MAERCHEN

In the faery gardens
ghosts of the nightingales
sob for Rapunzel.

IN THE TREETOPS

In the upper woods
an ambushade of tanagers:
two suns lifting.

PUPPET PLAY

This tented world *shines*
and all its tangled ~~wires~~--
"Good morning, Punchinello"

SPRING BONNETS

See the orange butterflies:
Gaudy bonnets
for our Lady Susans.

LONELINESS

In Autumn
down the sullen sky the geese:
How desolate these marshes!

EVENING STROLL

The moon takes pity
on my loneliness
and drops a friend beside me.

WOOD SCENE

A maple leaf upon
the forest pool:
the fairy's red gondola.

CACOPHONY

November's voice
above the smoky woods --
is hoarse with coughing crows.

WINTER PACT

Mockingbird
Mockingbird! I make peace
with you. Your profanity
for my breadcrumbs.

DESIGN

Inside the kitchen
women plucking geese.
Outside the snowflakes falling.

SNOWSCAPE

In all this whirligig of white
only the scratch of fence,
the scribbled woods.

DIME NOVEL

A flash of oars
and dock lights quiver.
Pianos jangle from a red saloon.

SONG OF THE DEIST

Hear him, Mama Mary O:
The wood thrush chanting
in his blue cathedral.

FROM THE WINDOW

How the children
playing on the lawn
incarcerate the sunlight!

ALTERNATIVE

Orioles in plum blossom:
Pull the drapes
or wipe my smarting eyes.

~~XXXXXXXX~~ PRAIRIE SUNSET

Puddles in the country roads:
As lurid as ~~those plumes~~
~~as Chanticleer~~ *the scarecrow's button eyes.*

AUF WIEDERSEHN

Down September afternoons
blossoms and butterflies
chase each other.

DENOUEMENT

Through drifting leaves
she saunters down the ~~road~~ ^{lane}.
Wry quintets play Schumann.

HOMAGE TO BONNARD

Eulalie, emerging
from the pool,
resurrects the blue hydrangias.

SPRING FLUTIST

Tartini trilling in high hedges--
Ho for the
Carolina wren!

SPRING AMOUR

All these mosses damp with dew.
And your breath on my cheek,
oh wanton wind.

PAGLIACCI

Like any clown
I walk the tented world,
one eye on the ringmaster.

MOONRISE

Hear Earth sighing
this May night,
her lover's lantern glancing through the woods.

CASCADE

Among the rocks
the water pools and pools:
Herons, stilted, wading down.

DRAGONFLY

awake
Behold!
Look! the darning needle
is stitching yellow pads
upon the river.

SUSPICION

Like gingerbread
this cottage in the woods.
A slattern stirring porridge.

TO A RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD

Never ride cattails
over green ponds,
nor o ka lee at me again!

THE PARANOID AFIELD

Jays snickering from
tree to tree behind me,
I walk the leafless woods.

EVENING DRIVE

A country road.
The splashing of our wheels.
A thousand moons aqiver.

NOSTALGIA

Pumpkins moulding in the grass
And where is golden
Cinderella now?

MORNING AFTER

This buttercup
atilt with dew:
beneath, a blowsy fairy snoring.

STUBBLEFIELD

Grasshoppers riding the pasture weeds
in snuff-brown coats
like unblown seeds.

SPRING RIVALRY

The red azalea bushes:
how these cardinals
vie for our attention.

May Night

That quarter moon there
floating down the hill--
a feather from my pillow.

DRY SEPTEMBER

Lizards scatter in the leaves.
Old men, impassioned,
~~wander through~~ the woods.

THE ROMANTIC: ABED

In the salad gardens after rain
the radishes are purpler
than your nipples.

FINALITY

The fox squirrel pulls his tail
in after him
and claps the door ~~on~~ Autumn.

FROM THE CASTLE

A candle trickles down
the sleeping snow:
the young moon at her window.

FEBRUARY: AT THE FEEDER

Brother Chickadee swirls in
to make me love
the winter snow again.

SPRING FLOOD

He bends his head
to nose the streaming clouds:
the white horse in the meadow.

MAYTIME

A glimmering sprig
of cherry bloom:
this parasol I bring you.

BLUE SUNLIGHT

Freckles on the morning sun:
So blue these buntings in the rosy air.

ANOTHER SILENCE

A crayfish scuttles
off across the sand
and sets the moon atremble.

RAISON D'ETRE

There are ^{h!}no wars tonight.
Only the ~~lilac bush~~ *flowering plum*,
the piping frogs.

BELLA DONNA

See the woodland rose
admire herself:
this oak leaf cupping water.

BROOKSIDE

Along the pebbled stream
a speckled trout--
his shadow flees before him.