

Zen Koanhead

A Senryu Collection

by John J. Dunphy

For Jim KACIAN -
J. J. Dunphy
2/28/09

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Second Reading Publications
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*For Aunt Dot and Uncle Joe,
who gave me this life I love.*

the mechanic's grin
slowly broadening
as he peers under my hood

pure improvisation
the jazz musician completes
his tax return

class reunion
the ex-football team captain's date
handsome in his tux

the jazz musician
three straight marriages wrecked by
his sax life

pure improvisation
the jazz musician completes
his tax return

wet footprints
in a U-turn
on the diving board

the jazz musician
three straight marriages wrecked by
his sex life

class reunion
the ex-football team captain's date
handsome in his lux

pure improvisation
the jazz musician completes
his tax return

after the race
my sweat
still running

aging flower child
now just his custom hair piece
blowin' in the wind

my barbed
so heavy
with dust

wet footprints
in a U-turn
on the diving board

fifty staring eyes
the hunter sips brandy
in his trophy room

after the race
my sweat
still running

my barbells
so heavy
with dust

with bowed head
I ascend the church steps —
first bifocals

snow on the moon
a drift covers
the outhouse door

our child's 'wow'
still echoing
through the museum

school play
mother silently mouths
each of her child's lines

during the campaign
even his sign in my yard
looking to the right

Civil War reenactment
both armies flee
the thunderstorm

our child's 'wow'
still echoing
through the museum

school play
mother silently mouths
sentimental lines

moving day
the heaviest boxes filled with
her diet books

during the campaign
even his sign in my yard
leaning to the right

during the campaign
even his sign in my yard
leaning to the right

used car lot
the kung fu master
kicks tires

moving day
the heaviest boxes filled with
her old books

IRS audit
examiner keeps chuckling
without looking up

after her performance
the stripper's sunburn
still peeling

Used car lot
the kung fu master
kicks tires

porn film theater
graphic sex
five seats to my right

Civil War reenactment
from one of the corpses
ring of a cell phone

tee ceremony
golfer shimmies and sways
before taking his swing

Georgia courthouse lawn
two rusted cannons
pointed North

New Year's Day
my champagne glass bubbling
with Alka-Seltzer

Civil War reenactment
from one of the corpses
ring of a cell phone

Georgia courthouse lawn
two rusted cannons
pointed North

Civil War reenactment
from one of the corpses
ring of a cell phone

New Year's Day
my champagne glass bubbling
with Aka-Serzer

walking on egg shells
a friend enters
my organic garden

Georgia courthouse lawn
two rusted cannons
pointed North

my clothes
so seedy
after a woodland hike

distancing herself
the geologist's daughter
takes astronomy

yard sale
everything her ex left behind
twenty-five cents each

first date after divorce
his finger almost touches
her doorbell

distancing herself
the geologist's daughter
takes astronomy

all dressed up and nowhere to go
my atheist friend
in his coffin

first date after divorce
his finger almost touches
her boob

second honeymoon
couple spend a week at
Viagra Falls

leaving the bar
I stumble on the doorstep —
first bifocals

the psychoanalyst
still nodding 'yes'
in his sleep

about the author

John J. Dunphy's haiku, senryu and other haiku-related poetry have appeared in numerous English-language journals and magazines. His verse has been translated into French in translation journals. He has written free verse poetry as well as sci-fiku, a new literary genre that pairs the haiku format with science fiction subject matter.

books and publications

His poetry chapbooks include *Welders Fading Away* (Puddinghead Press, 2005, ISBN 1-55938-409-9) and *Stellar Possibilities* (Sam's Dot Publishing, 2006). He is the author of the non-fiction books *Lewis and Clark's Illinois Volunteers* (Second Reading Publications, 2003, ISBN 978-0-9741642-0-5) and *It Happened At The River Bend* (Second Reading Publications, 2007, ISBN 978-0-9741642-1-2). Dunphy has written hundreds of articles for national and regional magazines and newspapers.

He runs The Second Reading Book Shop in Alton, Illinois with the assistance of several on-site staff.

alarm clock
still ringing
through its ten-story fall

the psychoanalyst
still nodding 'yes'
in his sleep

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His poetry chapbooks include *Old Soldiers Fading Away* (Pudding House, 2006, ISBN 1-58998-409-9) and *Stellar Possibilities* (Sam's Dot Publishing, 2006). He is the author of the non-fiction books *Lewis and Clark's Illinois Volunteers* (Second Reading Publications, 2003, ISBN 978-0-9741642-0-5) and *It Happened At The River Bend* (Second Reading Publications, 2007, ISBN 978-0-9741642-1-2). Dunphy has written hundreds of articles for national and regional magazines and newspapers.

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local media

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"John Dunphy brings a fresh eye to old forms with his clever senryu. These new poems are amazing for the imaginative way they simply and humorously depict everyday life."

— Jane Henderson, Book Editor of the St.
Louis Post-Dispatch

"John's senryu (an ultra-brief type of poem) contain more than just a wry take on life: they're like the alarm clock poem which is featured in this book. Each senryu will not only help kick-start your day, but keep a smile on your face!"

— Alan Summers, Writer and founder
of *With Words*

"This collection simply stands on its own. Dunphy is a master. His work is original, even, and strong!"

— Stanford M. Forrester, Editor of *bottle
rockets* and past president of the Haiku
Society of America

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