



SENKA

Carrow De Vries



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To my wife Billie, who has put up with me
for forty nine years.

When we were younger

we sat real close together

to feel each other.

Introduction

Now we are all little sw. won.

I have always been interested in people and what we do. I don't like to write anything in form, but I found it so constricting. I needed more room, so I tried the Tank's form and found it suited me.

Acknowledgements go to:
Piedmont literary Review,
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and The Windless Orchard.

These Senka are all written in 5-7-5-7-7
syllables. I do it just to show that it can be
done, but I feel that a short line, then a little
longer line, then a short one, then two longer
ones is all right. What if a line is a couple
of syllables short or to long. We do it in
Haiku all the time.

A copy of Senka can be obtained by sending
\$2.00 to me. My address is:
2661 Portland St. Apt. 6
Eugene, OR 97402
agin-noon senka nus ent

Carow De Vries
yuan has kointh eworg taen ent

tuab ent, enlard uuo no

taews uuo thiw seim, seye sbuols

tuab denekald ni maeli theeth thiw

Introduction

I have always been interested in people and what we do. I tried to write in the Senryu form, but found it to constricting. I needed more room, so I tried the Tanka form and found it suited me.

I sent them to editors and they came back: this is not Tanka. I did not mean them to be. So I called them Senka and sent them out again. A few were accepted. I took Sen from Senryu and ka from Tanka. Senka. I think senka shall be used because they fill a need.

These Senka are all written in 5-7-5-77 syllables. I do it just to show that it can be done, but feel that a short line, then a little longer line, then a short one, then two longer ones is all right. What if a line is a couple of syllables short or too long. We do it in Haiku all the time.

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2661 Portland St. Apt. 6
Eugene, OR 97405

Carrow De Vries.

When we were younger
we sat real close together
to feel each other.
Now, we still sit the same way,
but just to hear us better.

Coffee spilt from spoon
into sink looks a birch leaf
stem end to leaf tip.

Wetmark of leaf on sidewalk,
leaf blown away by the wind.

The sun climbs noon-high,
the heat grows thick and heavy
on our brains, the dust
clouds eyes, mixes with our sweat,
white teeth gleam in blackened dust.

Musical family;
each plays different instrument.
The father dying:
to die with music is best,
Play on! They did and he died.

John killed his mother;
went to the young and new priest
to confess his sin.
Pray Three Hail Marys my son
and please don't do it again.

Dad! He didn't shout
TIMBER! Well what did he yell.
He chased us yelling,
you little son of bitches
stay the hell away from here.

Me superstitious!
'course not! Don't be a damn fool.

I could never be:
yet, every morning I read
the day's doing for Cancer.

A wild rabbit eats
of the bitter bark of plum
with corn field close by.
Such a crazy wild creature,
she says, sipping black coffee.

In a green pasture
under an old maple tree
a lad in red shirt
sleeps pillowed on black shoulder
of reclining cudding cow.

Red fed the old swan,

she would not eat from others.

Then Red moved away.

In rage she beat her head on

the dock until she was dead.

Betty is famous

for the misused words she slings.

Now she wants to build

a condition on her house

to contend over the well.

She's not party dressed,

but small daughter answers door--

early arrivals.

Daughter looks surprised and says,

don't come in, I'm not here yet.

Old woman goes through

the trash cans on town's main street;

I think it right sad.

My friend says, she's got more dough
than you'll make in your life time.

The trunk is sinking--

then the branches disappear.

the house sinks slowly.

She runs out, watches it go:

Birth of Florida sinkhole.

TURKEY BUZZARDS ON THE STEP ROOF
OF THE COUNTY COURTHOUSE IN MIAMI

The snow birds have gone,
winging their way to the North,
the cracker birds stay.
The county folk are glad, but
even now some get plastered.

We kids roamed the woods
for a bird's nest evergreen
to have for Christmas;
now we search the gas stations
each year and have not found one.

You can hardly keep
from looking backward, watching
the furrows turning.
Like water flow, or music,
it could go on forever.

The town's Red Garter
offers beer and wine half price
9 to 10 A.M.
for unhappy unemployed
until they become happy.

Jake Potts bought a suit
for his brother's funeral;
made him look so good,
after the service, he went
and had his picture taken.

Speeding over glass--

in the corner of my eye,

apple tree in bloom;

was there a car accident,

or was it apple petals.

We catch a green frog,

stick a dried grass-straw up him

and blow him up good;

he tries to go down, we laugh;

after many tries, he does.

I was a farm girl.

Went to Chicago to work.

Stayed twenty five years,

but every year come April,

I filled my bath tub with dirt.

Betty has her way
with words; we were on music--
I heard it plainly--
I don't care for violin,
but dearly love the fiddle.

Reflections ripple
from the hull of the sail boat
forming lots of lines
for music compositions,
or the writing of haiku

Atheist Vergil
gets rid of a persistent
Christian Minister.
Says, I must tell you I am
Unitarian.

Betty is known here
for the words she misuses;
I was so surprised
one day on learning she warms
her feet over the transom.

John died mid-winter;
we put him in the parlor
which was unheated,
but he soon began to stink,
so we got hold of a truck,
loaded him on it
and with help from the neighbors
dug snow for one mile.
We put John in the tool house
and come spring-thaw buried him.

O.K all you kids,
no marring the snow in front,
play in the backyard.
O Mon you're such a big nut.
No, it's the poet in me.

This crowd is noisy
as a clattering of teal
as we hike inland,
but ah I am so quiet
because you are not with us.

Far away heat waves;
we kids run to put fire out,
shimmer moves ahead--
We reach where we first saw waves,
there is no fire to stomp out.

Fritillaria!

Imperialist! too yet

and it smells of skunk.

Koning's Krone, the Dutch call it.

Like absolute might, it stinks.

We sit down to eat.

He says, let's pray together.

I say, we don't pray.

We'll start while you are praying.

He has not returned to us.

Mother sick to death;

her dominie comes to pray

and asks permission.

She says, if it will help you.

He thinks, says, no and does not.

My wife she's nursemaid
to man with the consumptin'.
Doc' is there somethin'
to that there catchin' business,
my wife's awful raw-busted.

There is her mistake.
She points to square in the quilt
that is upside down.
Why should there be a mistake.
'cause only God is perfect.

John leaves to get drunk;
Jane worries and knits all night,
tires, and goes to bed.
John comes home staggering drunk
and rips her evening's knit.

Motorcycle ride

on a sunny autumn day

accelerates me.

Sun and shade spots on the road

from row trees makes me dizzy.

Like absolute night, it stinks.

He walks the highway

with two huge bags on his back

for picking up cans,

Says, the cans pay for my beans

and keeps me off of Welfare,

I stomp a cockroach

so hard my big toe nail turns

from pink to all black.

How could I get violent

over a harmless cockroach.

Mother gets the last
of the old russet apples
from the dark cellar.
They are shrunken and wrinkled,
tough to peel, but nice flavor.

Nell comes down the road
with raincoat and umbrella
hanging from her arm
to the prayer meeting for rain;
her faith more than all others.

A big man comes in,
arm full of huge dahlia blooms,
reds, yellows and pinks,
puts one bloom on each table,
sits down and orders coffee.

Sebring is jealous
of its neighbor cities who
have tourist sinkholes.
Alongside the Library
they are digging a deep one.

He looks different.
It's the tie. The day we wed
he said he'd never
wear a tie again. He didn't.
On her sad face trace of smile.

Huge schools of blackfish
"Darting in and out of glint"
candle fish also.
The calm sea off Port Townsend.
Many thanks Richard Hugo.

My father's longee
frozen stiff on the clothes line;
mother takes it in,
stands it up in a corner,
slowly it thaws to the floor.

We were very poor;
dad kept a great big garden
and bought navy beans.
Many years later I learned
that we fared better than most.

She lost her needle--
he gets up to help her search,
but he is annoyed.
She is always doing that,
but he looks sympathetic.

The bronze Road Runner
you sent me sometime ago
makes me want to start
running down the road to you
in Phoenix, Arizona.

The old cat asleep
is dive-bombed several times
by a mocking bird.
Is the cat really asleep?
Do both know it's all harmless.

Wilfred is self-taught;
paints in his farm's old corn crib,
shows in the drug store.
Says, it is much easier
to paint them than to sell them.

Swerving to the left
to avoid a lot of glass:
a bad accident?
Looking back, a boy spading
ice and water from the ditch.

I get real pleasure
from knowing that my Senka
have found their own way
a little into the world,
but I am content at home.

Swerving to the left
to avoid a lot of glass
a bad accident?
Looking back, a boy spending
ice and water from the ditch.

passing the old and
isn't larvae become-avoid it
bird ginkgo a by
?passing yellow the old
Do both know it's all harmless.
I get real pleasure

from knowing that my books
have found their own way
a little into the world.
but I am content of home.
I wrote sure and in words
release them at it, says
ment lies to what ment thing to

