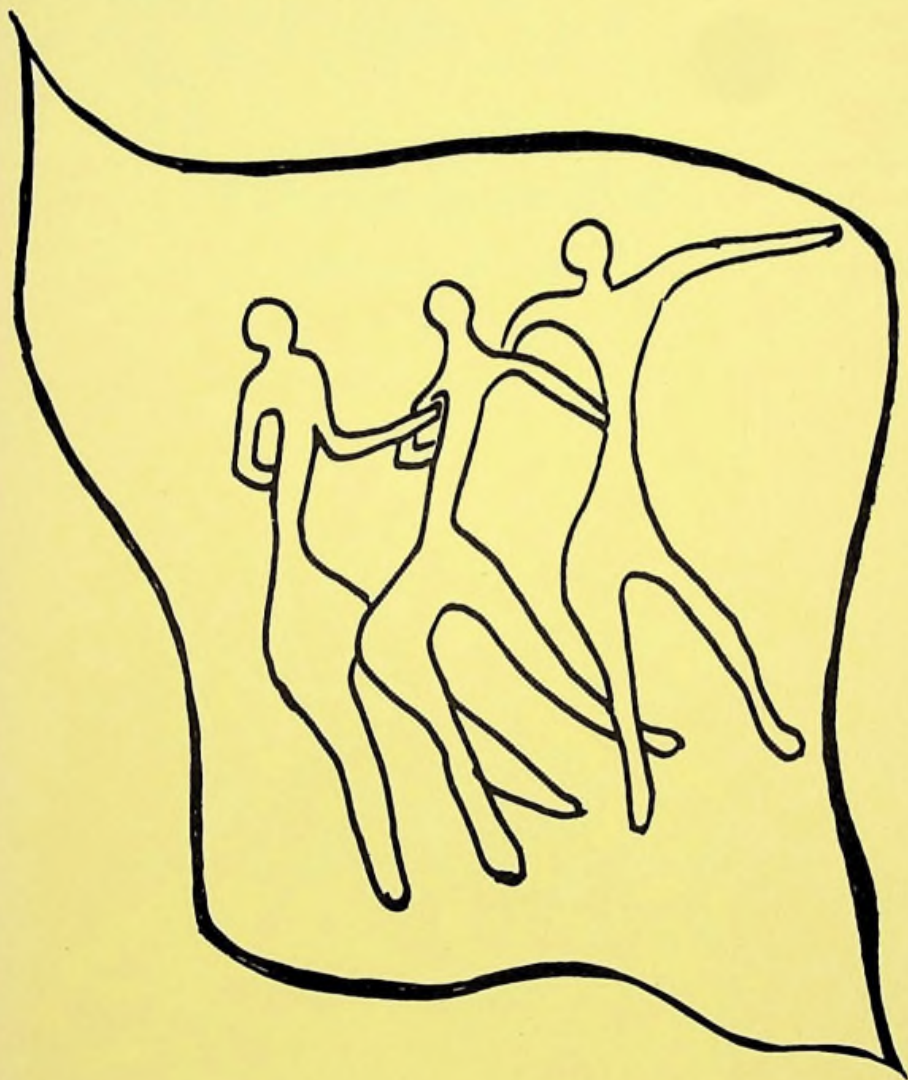
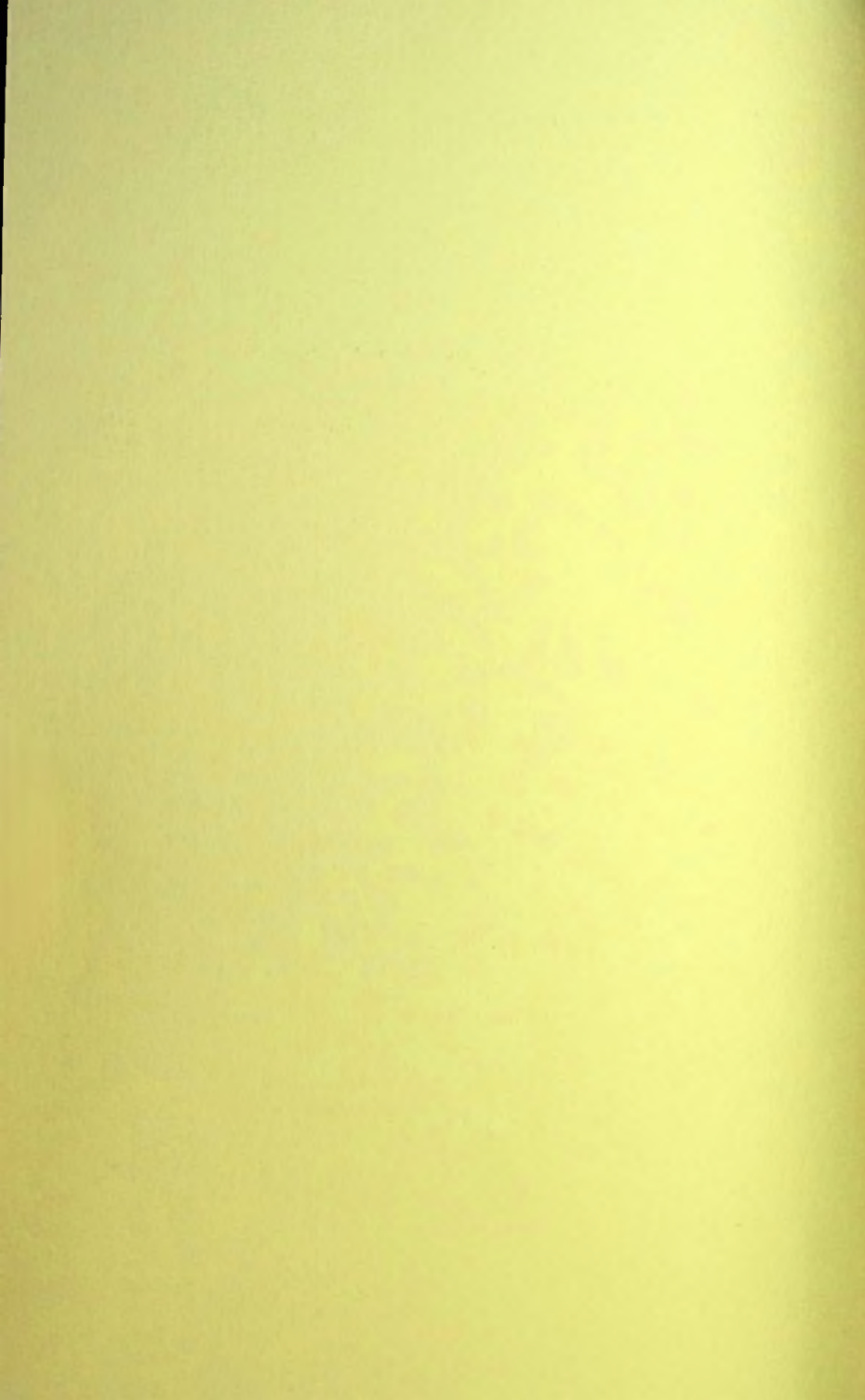


A Shadow in the Wind



Herb Barrett



\$ 3.00

A Shadow in the Wind

Haiku & Senryu

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Published by
Seagull Publishing Inc.
21 Augusta St. Hamilton, Ontario. Canada L8N 1P6

Printed by
International Press — Hamilton

Canadian Cataloguing in Publication Data

Barrett, Herb, 1912—
A shadow in the wind

Haiku.

1. Title. 11. Hamilton-Wentworth Creative Arts Inc.

PS8553.A77S52 C811'.54 C83-098664-2
PR9199.3.B37S52

Cover by Herb Barrett
drawings by the author
& Tim Brunwoski (The Jester)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Cicada
Wind Chimes
Nimbus
Frogpond
Poetry Toronto
Transition (Anthology)
Mamashee
Origins

& some unpublished

for Alice
Brian
Gail
Beverly
& Karen

in that order

At the full moon
missiles
waiting to bloom

First day of spring
an unexpected storm
bends the tulips

On the snowdrift
footprints
of last night's prowlers

Remembering friends
no longer here —
March wind

A batch of old poems
rain on the window —
spring cleaning

Spring morning —
the perfume of lilacs
follows me indoors

The day my mother died
wilted roses in a vase
and April just beginning

Soft spring rain —
naming every miracle
would take a lifetime

Kites gyrating
high in the blue —
acrobats on tightropes

A disturbing daydream —
peace comes with April
and the world can't cope

Scattering debris
on the millionaire's lawn —
March wind

An accusing finger
approaching —
tornado funnel



Switching off the soaps going to the laundromat

Punctuating a dull lecture campus quater chimes

Converting to a new religion she's promised Paradise

Incessant rain goldfish pout in tank bottom

An unemployed youth outside the computer center

Family quarrel old skeletons dragged out

A gray misty shroud dulls the autumn colors

After a divorce she writes a best seller

The Second Coming near he says passing the plate

In the silence of God computers speak

Another birthday wine glass in hand & arthritis

Leaving the Shrine a bird shits on my head

Between summer lulls birdsong police siren

Thanksgiving Day half the world hungry

Moonless night your lips gleaming

A perfect haiku our first kiss

In the catacombs skulls stare at electric lights

Among the odors of last night's party empty bottles

Midday heat in stillness the willow shivers

Just past the cemetery a car junkyard

A reluctant sunset night stalks the valley

Family tree rags to riches alimony to divorce

A love affair the poet his first published work

Wearing snow helmets late chrysanthemums

FULL CIRCLE (a sequence)

Asleep in a chair
my father is a boy again
with his father

Down generations
father to son, son to father,
bearers of the seed

Deep furrowed face
his mellow voice
singing the old songs

Red letter day
perched on his shoulder
to watch a circus pass

Almost ninety
he outlived
friends and enemies

My father gone —
his beloved books
a fitting epitaph

Summer morning —
in a field of poppies
a monarch butterfly

After evensong
the sexton lights a cigar
and farts with reverence

In the rose arbor
building its own trellis —
a red spider

Under the viaduct
scrawled graffiti
. . . and Jesus Saves

The plummeting plane
a fist of fire —
unfinished prayers

Vacant church
awaiting the coup de grace —
urban renewal

Lolling on park benches
the winos grin
at the preacher's fire & brimstone

School's out
a passing sprinkler
launches paper boats

From high branches
morning birds scold
the paw-licking cat

A rocky peninsula
pointing
at the running sea

After the Bach recital
emerging into evening
of cold spring rain

Time in the attic
sorting through books
too old to keep or give away

Up tight in traffic —
a flock of ravens
by-pass the freeway

A jet's trail
leap-frogs the sun
into evening

Dusty hollyhocks
lean over the park fence —
old people dozing

The decaying house
taken over
by weather and weeds

A centipede
motionless on the ceiling —
August heat

Easter Sunday —
another death
in Belfast

Out on the lake
a lone sail
plowing the blue hills

Silently
the fog
silences the city

Done with creation
a falling star
... disappears

As if nothing had mattered —
my old home
... the wrecking crew

Leading cows to pasture
in morning mist —
the thrum of unseen wings

Stonehenge in moonlight —
the pole star has shifted
... the mystery remains

A cadaver
on the dissecting table —
breath of the air conditioner

Restless spring night —
not knowing about love
cats make love

At sunset
skyscrapers
pillar the sky

Inconclusive argument —
we leave by the door
we entered

Morning sunlight
playing crisscross
on the clock's face

Leaving the Mayan temple
an iguana stares impassively
from a crevice in the wall

At the flower show —
prima donna roses
ignoring each other

Abortion clinic —
babies
. . . an endangered species

STEELTOWN HAIKU (a sequence)

Near the mills
the echo
of many footsteps

Changing shifts
in morning fog —
silhouettes in headlights

Dipping
into the industrial smog —
a rainbow

Above the blast furnaces
it too is red —
this smoky moon

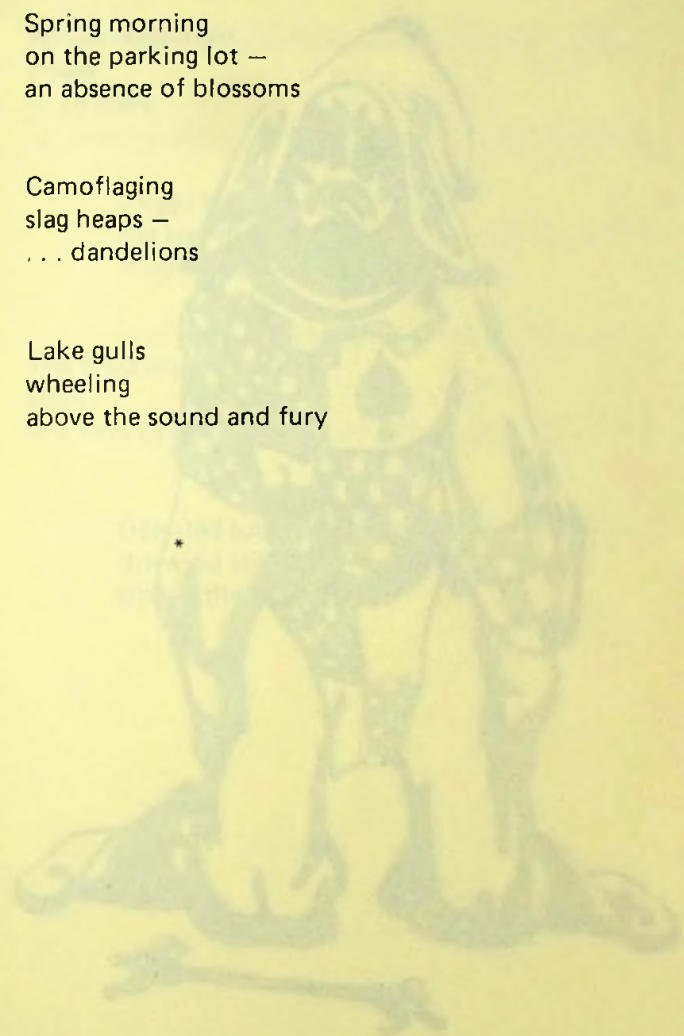
Molten slag
crackling harbour ice —
mid-winter night

In the body of Vulcan
muscles of iron
veins of steel

Spring morning
on the parking lot —
an absence of blossoms

Camouflaging
slag heaps —
... dandelions

Lake gulls
wheeling
above the sound and fury





A jester mourning the death of laughter

Winter moonlight
frozen
in an icicle

Foggy morning
the traffic
following its halos

The dead end street
stops
in a field of goldenrod

Deserted summer cottages
the wind still plays
among the fallen leaves

Once my childhood playground a mall
During the funeral the widow eyes her old boyfriend
At the garbage site birds & people scavenging
Giants striding through wheatfields hydro towers
After rain the ants return to the dead beetle
Aging ingenue the actress marries again & again

City park the general's statue bombed by birds

Country churchyard among the markers a condom

The scent of her still old love letters

Rubbing elbows sparrows in winter trees

At the flea market old relics new owners

The harvest-time sun takes a breather at noon

Empty moonlight
in empty rooms —
the dust moves undisturbed

At the Martyr's Shrine
lake gulls resting
on stations of the cross

Morning post —
junk mail in the box
and a June bug

Punk rock band —
the acne
and the agony

New window drapes —
among the blue flowers
a brown moth

Late November day —
the swollen clouds
pregnant with snow

After the divorce —
the unmade bed
one hair curler

In my mother's kitchen
many cups of tea and friends
sipping

New Year's Day —
on my desk
last year's bills

January thaw —
still that winter fly
circling the window

Skirting thin ice
on a late winter day —
the hunter and his dog

At the farm
we explore the barn —
and each other

Clinging to bare branches
ravens ride out
the winter storm

At the poetry reading
six people —
we listen to the rain

As the poet reads
wind rattles windows —
we suck peppermints

Old recluse
her cats and clutter
oblivious to time and neighbours

Armageddon —
our Leader's
final solution

Early fall
in cottage country —
the beaver works overtime

On the garden path —
a cicada
dragging its dead mate's husk

At the vestry meeting —
haggling over finances
under the crucifix

Its back bent
in a snowy field —
the old walnut tree

Winter night
a scarecrow figure passes
down the street

Abandoned depot —
rusted rails
going nowhere

Religious gift shop —
statuettes of saints
made in Taiwan

Smoke spirals in the bush
the tang of maple sugar
stirring the sunlight

Wilting
in the prolonged drought
. . . even thistle

Visiting my father
for the last time
Don't forget to write, he says

Pianist in the bar
playing sentimental tunes
the dissonance of the drinkers



Bare branches bridging sky supporting snow

Sudden awakening sounds not heard before

After nightmares thinking of Auschwitz

Frail old lady with her swollen legs

First light a bat on the window curtain

Alone in the snowy woods old trapper & his cabin

Veterans at the Cenotaph & the last autumn leaves

Neighbours more friendly most of them broke

Deja vu politicians & their promises

In & out of my dreams illuminated clock

The aroma of apples your nipple in my mouth

Living where they choose tax free birds

Hamilton harbourfront a labyrinth of foundaries

Inside her I pulse the metronome of love

A radar eye scanning my thoughts full moon

Paroled he plans another rape

Artillery sleet peppering gunmetal ground

A sleepless night not a sheep in sight

Amid laughter in children's eyes the clowns

A November day gloomy as a bat cave

Bees switching off their buzz saws winter break

At the funeral parlour kleenex & free coffee

Crossing the street with the autumn wind

A meteor lost in the spring night

The poppy's red mouth
gaping
to swallow the sun

All night it snowed —
this morning
the world on my shoulders

Colour of amethyst
the temple ruins glow
once more in the sunset

Not only on Hallow'een —
each full of the moon
brings forth devils

In the Aztec museum
priceless artifacts —
a poor indian stands beside me

Slicing into a cantaloupe
its seeds
tiny embryos in a womb

In the leafless woods
a huge hawk watching
from a tall blue spruce

Autumn is announced!
a last gathering of robins
before take-off

In mining country
prospectors
seduced by rocks

The comet —
lonely marathoner
between the stars

The mass murderer
safe behind bars
pens his memoirs

Planted by pioneers —
orchards and vineyards
inherit urban sprawl

Tired after a journey
opening the door
to a purring cat

Summer meadow
sun warm on my back
our breath moving the grass

Watching a 1930's movie
the voices of lovers
long since dead

A bluejay
complaining —
the empty nest

Only half finished
my wife's afghan quilt
warms me already

In the frothy wake
of a gray schooner
. . . gray gulls

The lighthouse
lifts its slender whiteness
to the rising sun

The red peony
opening her secrets
to the honey bee

Battling the gale
in and out of clouds
birds confetti the sky

A sightless eye
on the shoulder of the road
lost headlight

Hanging limp in the rain
a line
of bikini briefs

In a box of geraniums
on a high rise balcony
an earth worm

With each passing spring
thinking more
of springs past

Curled in a chair
green eyes watching —
cat and I communicate

At the mortgage burning
the church organ
breaks down

Old year ending —
waiting the countdown
. . . punch drunk revellers

Last of the flower children
gone to seed
in the old people's home

Preaching sacrifice
the evangelist
drives a limousine

Rainy morning
the cat
brushes a yawn off his face

Peering at microbes
in the lab
. . . the silence

Sprawled on a street corner
surrounded by the curious
... an epileptic

Driving back to the old town
unchanged
the scent of cedar

In the monastery
a secret consistory
of mice

Snowflakes, so many
but every one
with its own identity

In the psychiatrist's office
a girl reads Playboy
the clock ticks & ticks

Deserted beach
along the sandy shore
gulls leave footprints

On the subway
expressionless faces
. . . too brightly lit

Walking to work —
vomit in the street
and a set of dentures

In the temple
a squat Buddha . . .
unlike the original

Bright winter morning
across drifted fields
snowfence shadows

In the middle of a thought
unexpectedly
a dead friend looks in

Bored with video
we turn to our first love
. . . books

Before heaven we walk in a world of strangers

Prayers & candles smoke someone sneezes

Within the confines of a canvas creation

Inside the mystery book a squashed mosquito

The ghetto child dreams of a journey to Mars

Northern development dead lakes deserts of stumps

The wealthy patron
snips a ribbon
at the welfare housing unit

Summer morning in the park
behind the litter bins
a derelict slumbers

In my neighbour's backyard
the blind man plays ball
with his seeing eye dog

A shadow in the wind
the colour of NOW
limned by darkness

