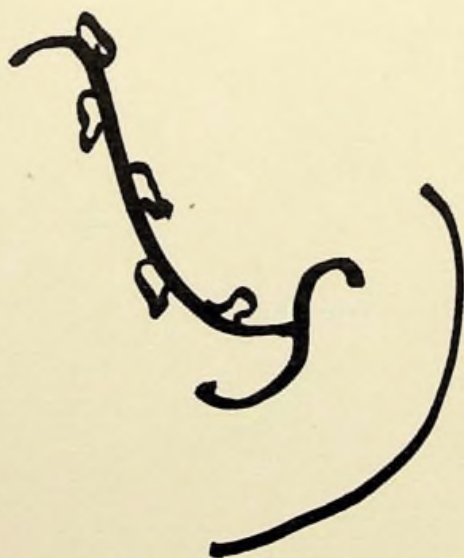


BRUSH STROKES:

Haiku & Original Illustrations



By
Thomas J. Braga



To Jim
With

My Best Wishes and

BA

BRUSH STROKES:

Haiku & Original Illustrations

Tom

Plattsburgh

July 30, 2008

By
Thomas J. Braga

Dr. J. W. Smith

June 1881

My dear Sir,

24

BRUSH STROKES

For the purpose of the

Dr. J. W. Smith

Philadelphia

July 20-1881

Dr. J. W. Smith

Northeast Printing Company & Distribution

Plattsburgh, New York

Printed in the United States of America

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Library of Congress
Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Braga, Thomas J.

Brush Strokes: Haiku & Original Illustrations



To
Bruce,
Jim
and
Robert



sparrow's child
out of the way, out of the way!
the stallion's coming through

ISSA (1763-1827)

the station's coming through
one of the way out to see
the station's coming through

(1821-1821)A221

To

Bruce

Jim

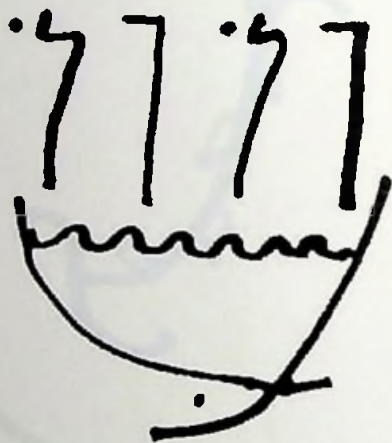
and

Robert

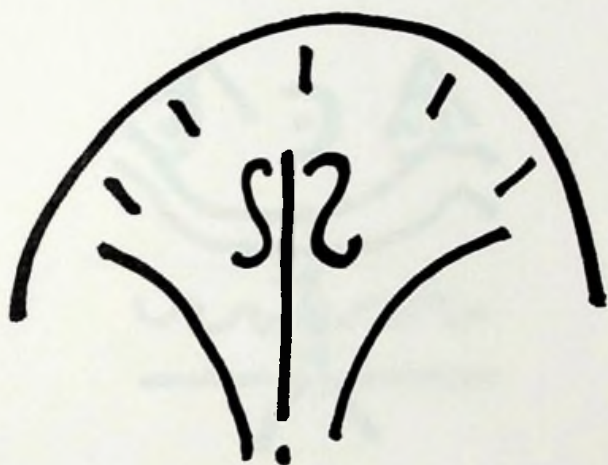
Light's buds hide, seek:
young bugs leer, await
Lady Sunset



Up and out, up and out
green sprouts, earth's pots
aprons off—outside



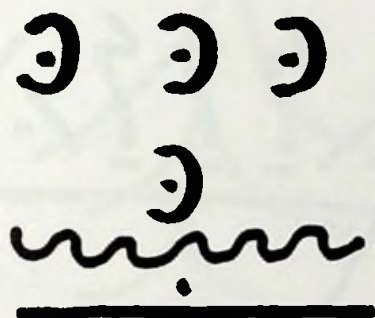
Waiting for the resurrection
forsythia parades—
her fronds, sun's mirrors



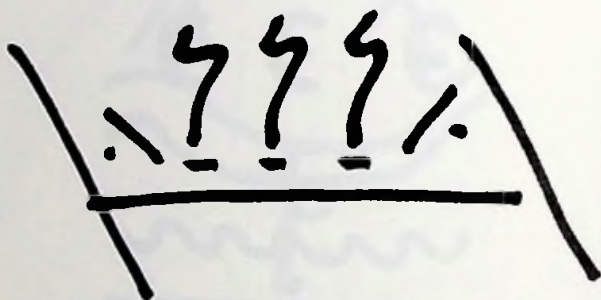
April powder
smudges faces—
clowns in trees



Beds and beds of red
poppies gone astray—
coverlet



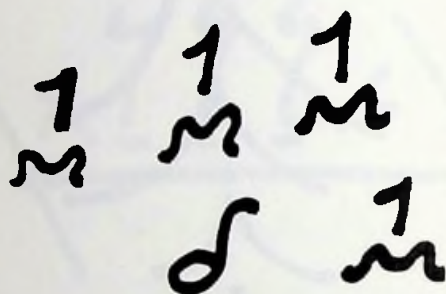
Lilacs on stage
a dress rehearsal
actors naked



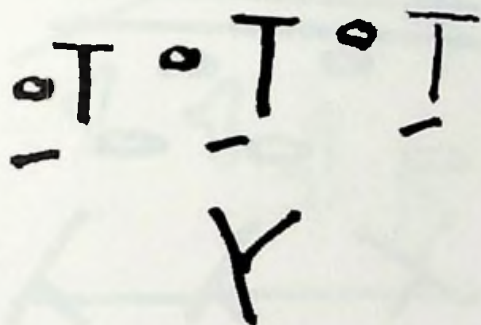
Spring back and forth
crowds of lilies—
I want to smell



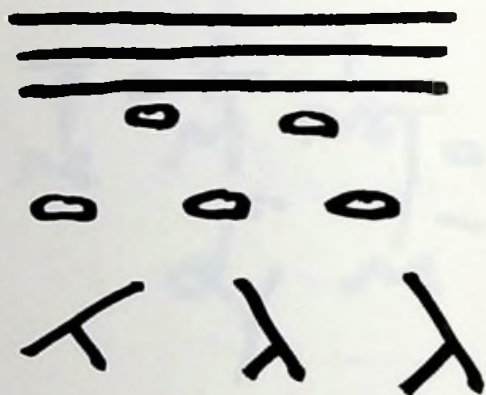
Spring rain
taps on petals—
tone poem



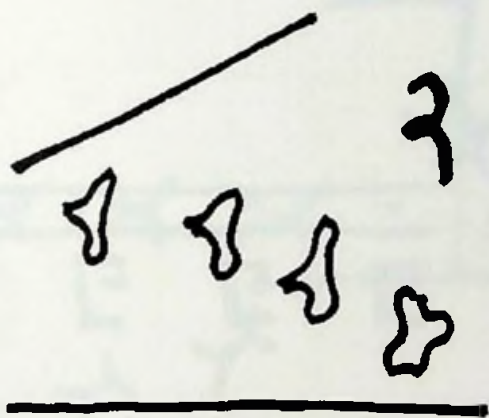
Dig, sow, water—
so many seeds
pull me away



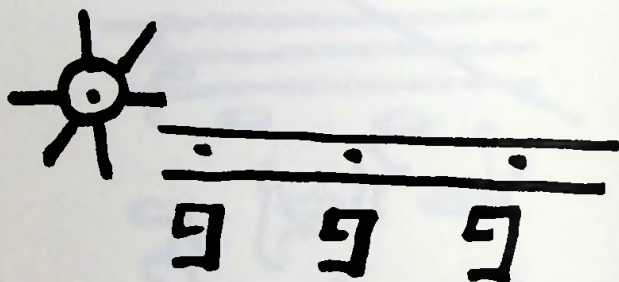
Clear the fields
seeds nesting
crows watching



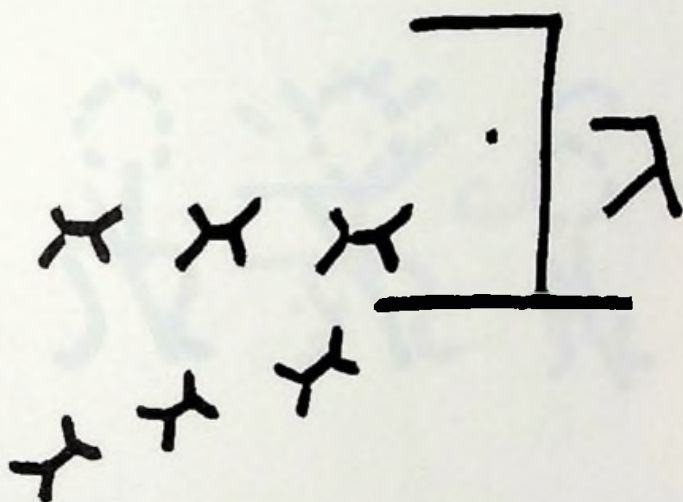
Blue light
soft reflections—
this spring only leaves



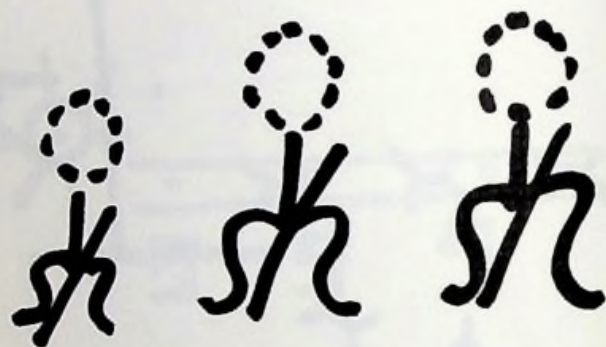
Black and green
field's delight—
the sun on and on



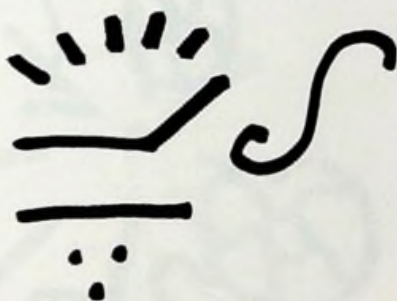
Ants en masse
come calling at my door—
nobody home



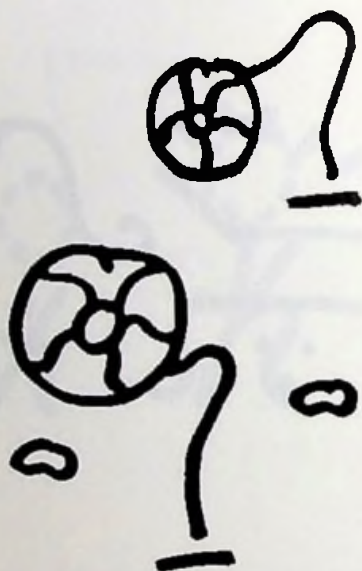
Light rain
licking stems—
blossoms ahead



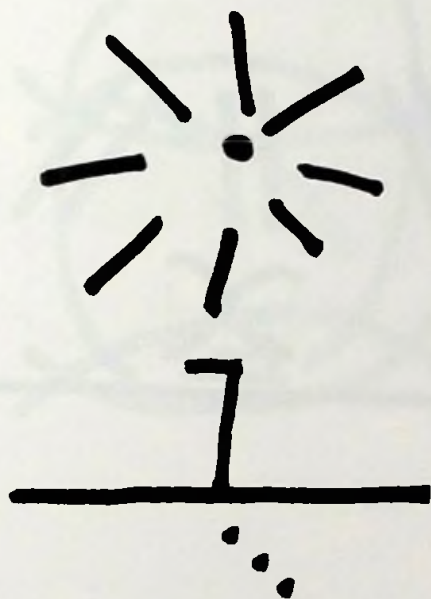
Chickadee
shimmering birdbath—
where to now?



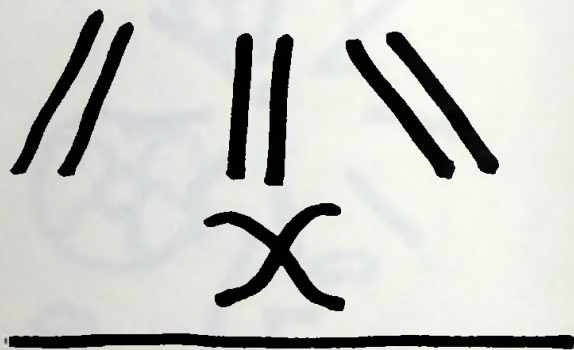
First light
droopy-eyed pansies—
take your pills!



Noon
clover still asleep—
sun tugging at my dreams



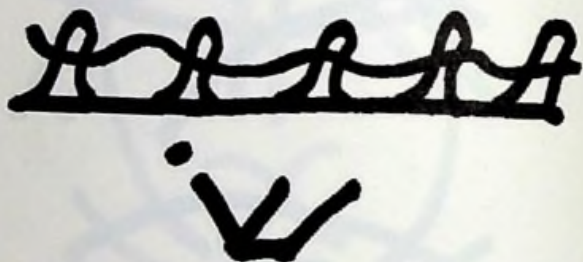
Long sunbeams
shadowy rays—
sadness on the table



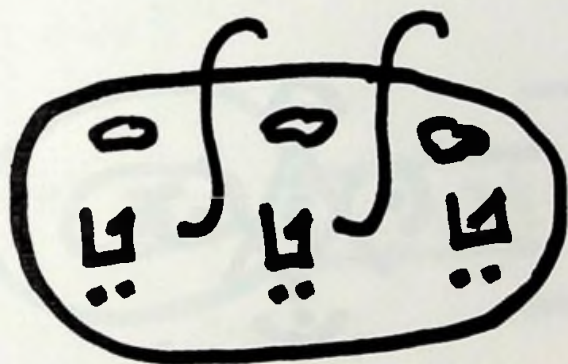
Old green bucket
filling up with spring rain—
rusty winter nails



Streams overflow
crocus drown—
again the pain



Tiny blots of green
yellow reeds bobbing—
fingers nesting

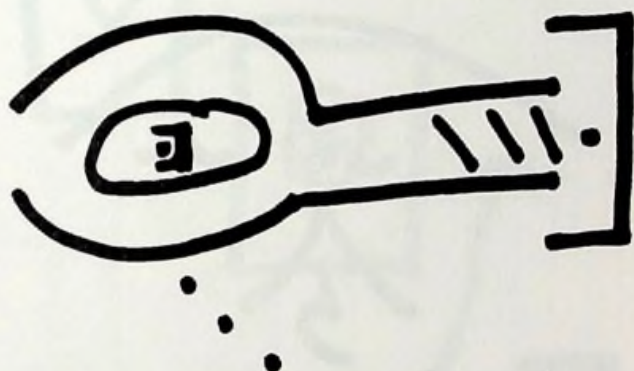


Magnolia
half weeps, half smiles—
what a tease!

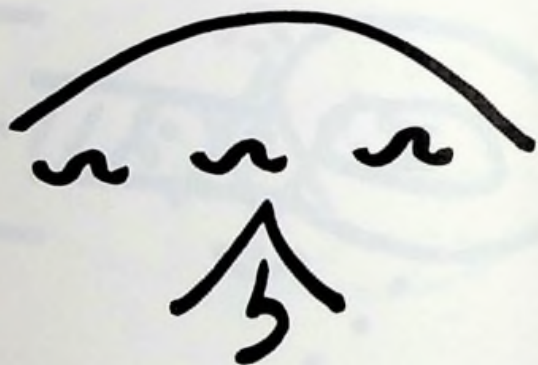


Missed steps
dancing to a blue guitar
“Brothers in Arms”*

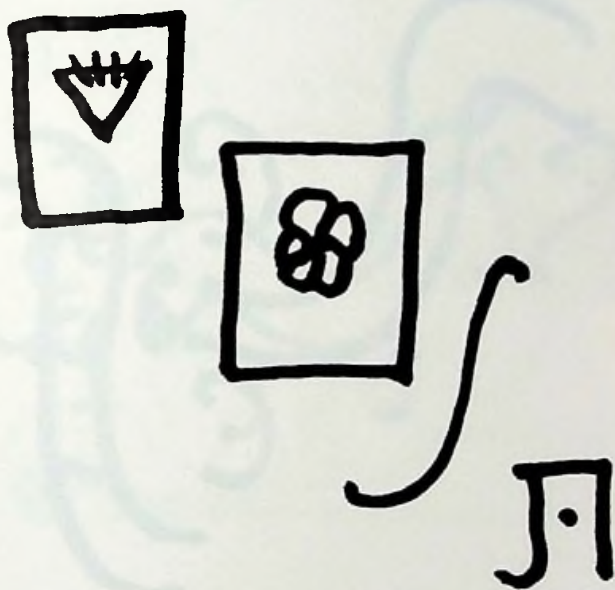
*a song from the group Dire Straights



April umbrella
smelly worms in the grass
life upside down



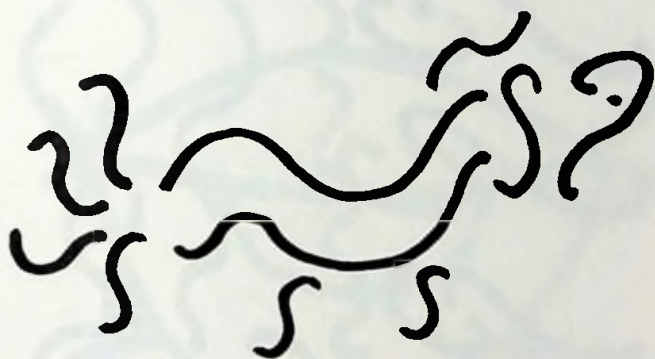
Carnations on a page
roses on a poster
spring revolution



Muddy paths
yellow-green shoots—
dirty thoughts



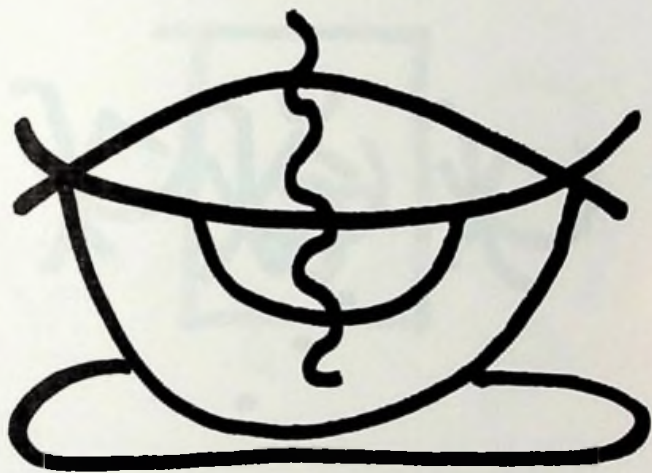
Barnyard stillness
light flickers
then the rooster crows



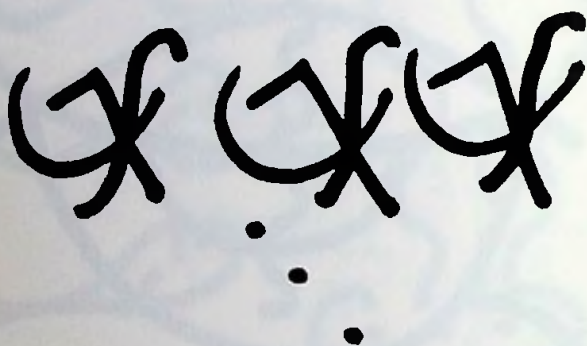
Incense burning
memories upwards
flowers genuflect



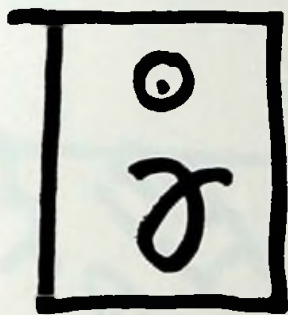
Black hot coffee
eddy in lusty pools—
cinnamon spring in my mouth



Peeping azaleas
begin to speak—
no, not yet!



Frisky robin
can't stop chirping
noisy life without a mate

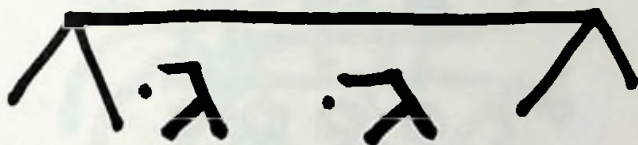


Night
closes one more spring—
irises undress

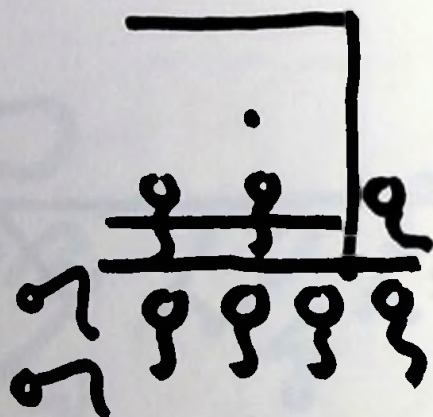
○
17/4 . 17/4 . 17/4

Vernissage
deux oiseaux sur un toit
quel bruit!

Exhibition
two birds on a roof—
what noise!



May Day
violets on my doormat—
so many callers



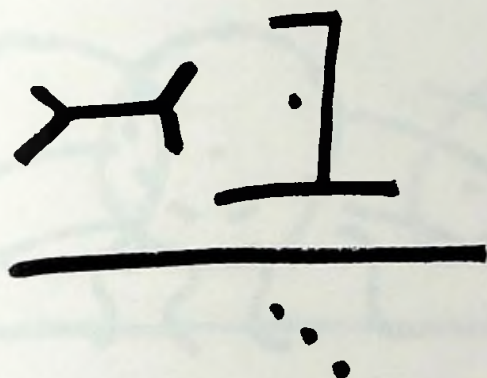
Thick black ink
zigzagging strokes
drunken writer



May's sieve
strains out gray—
rainbow's call



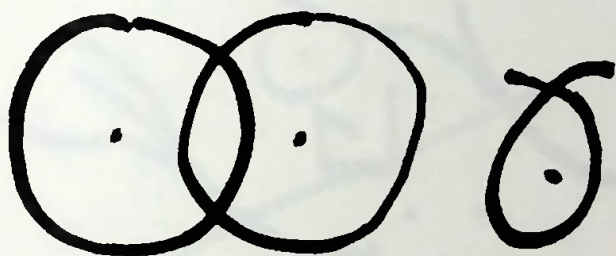
When I stare
the ant stops, doubts its fate—
life runs away



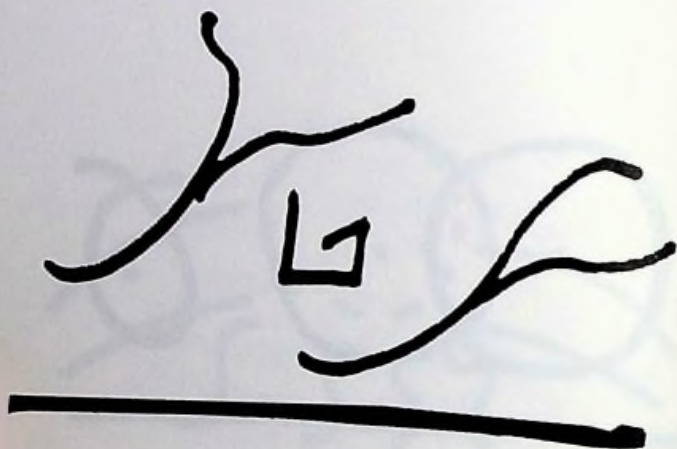
Sun
not yet risen
shadowy tendrils



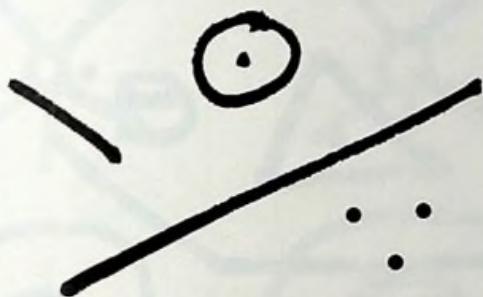
Not yet green
not yet dark
fresh face



Pink-orange quince
flaunts her charms—
spinster



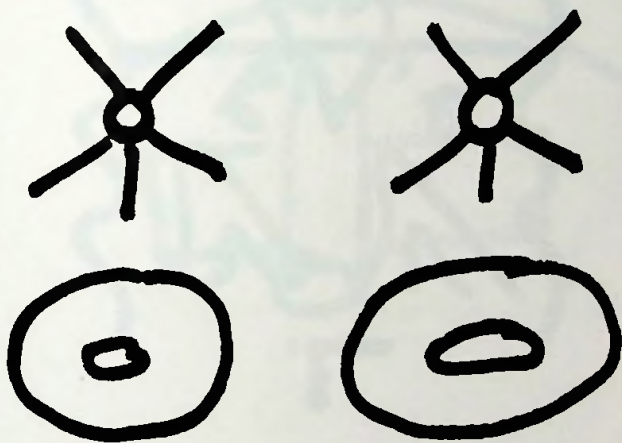
Noon runner
doesn't stop to chat—
verse payback



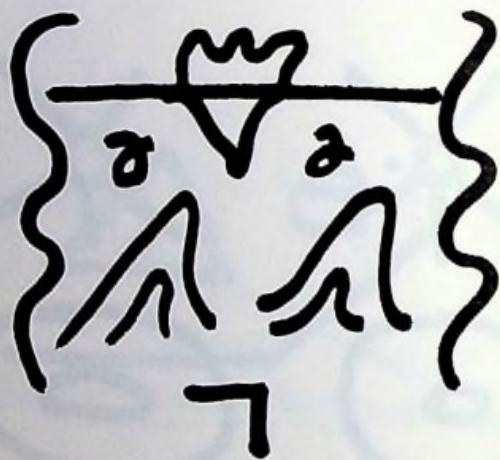
Lady moth
clings to my sweater—
wooly loneliness



Scratching, scratching
chickens complete their work—
omelets



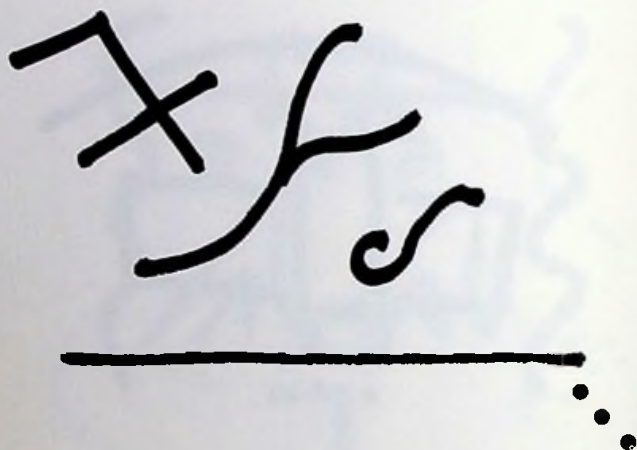
Celebrating Mass
daffodils bow, genuflect—
incense's acolytes



Pink hope in spring
morning sets my table—
empty vase



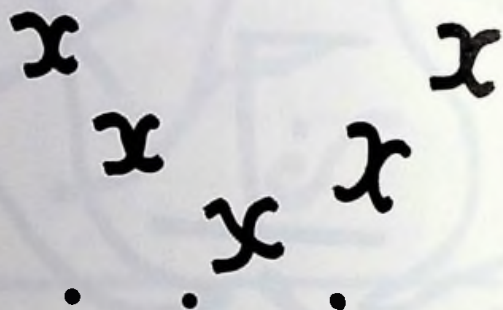
Pulling on a worm
robin doesn't see cherry blossoms—
disappearance



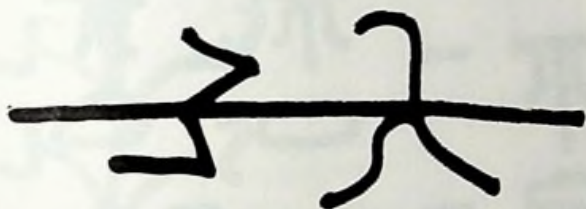
Fresh mint
seduces all with her green—
open the door!



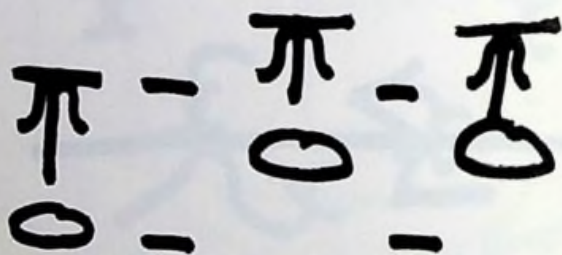
Duck pond—
tiny feet swimming in haste—
no trace, nowhere



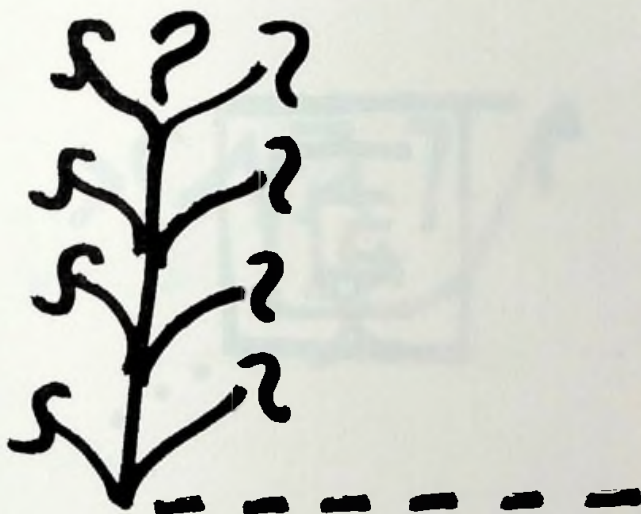
Black fly
still on a vacant floor
stomped nothingness



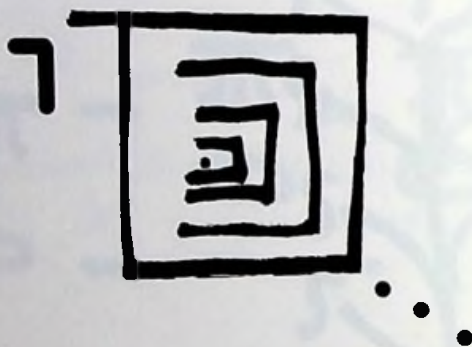
Dandelions
stand guard in the grass—
headless warriors



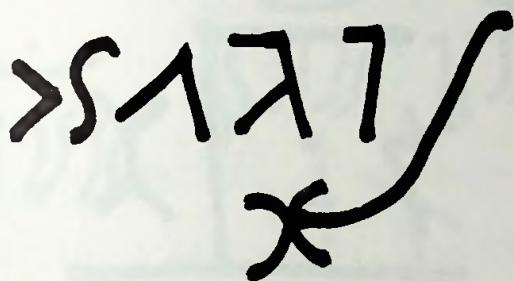
Mauve hyacinth
with her many lovers
fade away



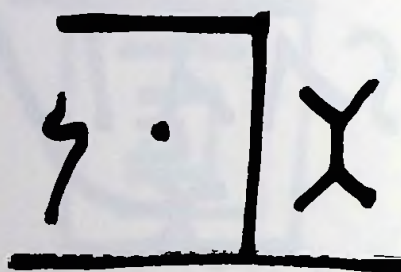
Black strokes
crisscross many white pages—
no more paint



Spring's obsessions—
dig, weed, mound, push up—
my hoe rebels



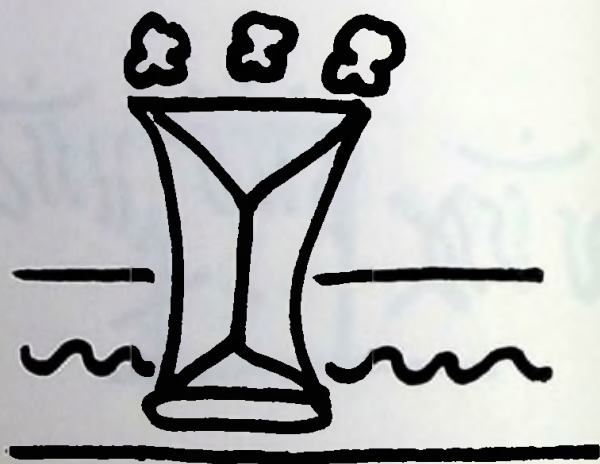
Yellow jacket
inside my house—
don't mind me



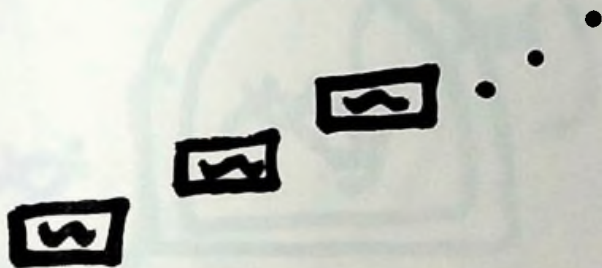
Fools laugh
red salvia smile in the harem—
garden's smirk

Handwritten calligraphy in Arabic script, likely a translation or poetic rendering of the English text above. The script is arranged in two lines, with the first line containing three groups of characters and the second line containing two groups. The characters are stylized and fluid, typical of modern Arabic calligraphy.

Greenhouse child
flower flexes her blooms—
vase showcase



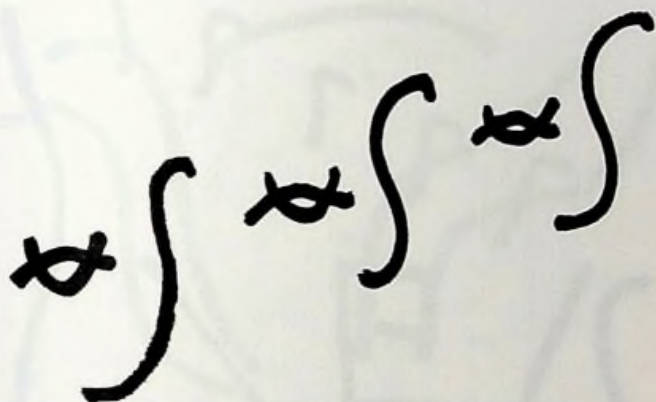
Bus wavering
seats bouncing
bumpy voyage to eternity



Songbirds
in a green cage sing
my lingo



Wild grass
what nests you conceal
what secrets



Purple spots
violets, lilacs, hydrangeas—
even my hands



Rabbit
under broad juniper
fate's hideaway



Cactus
you stand tall, alone—
desert Don Quixote



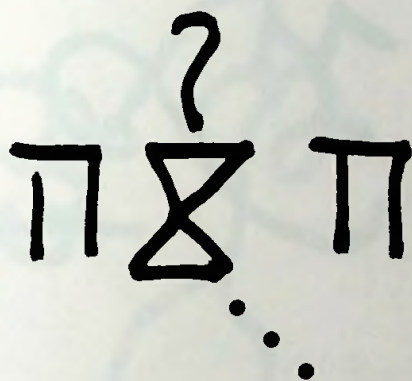
Amaranth
your leaves invade my garden
motley scarecrow



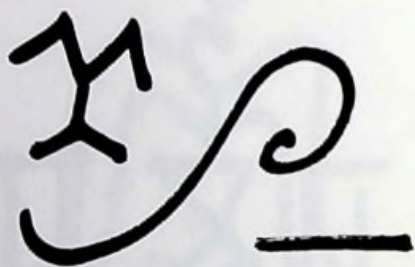
Wet wipers
damp view
green raincoat



Bird feeder
someone's ex voto—
seeds scattered afar



Mosquito
ponders his next move
I wonder when



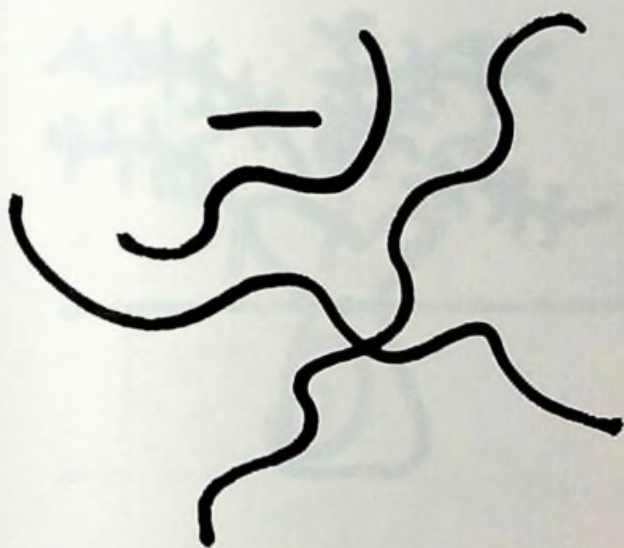
Morning glory
shows me her colors—
what a flasher!



On a leaf
ladybug will stain her future—
she is not alone



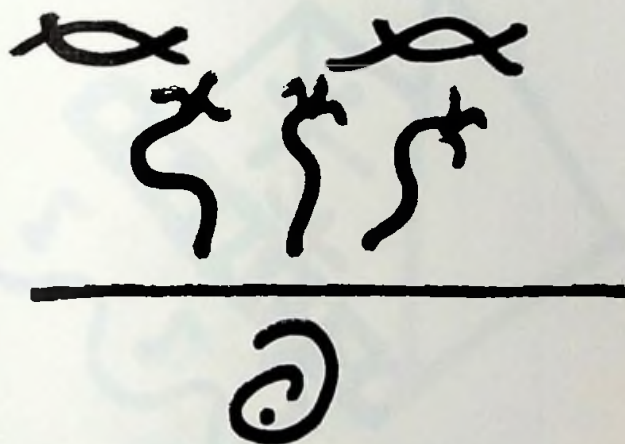
He says "hi"
she says "how are you?"
spring thaw



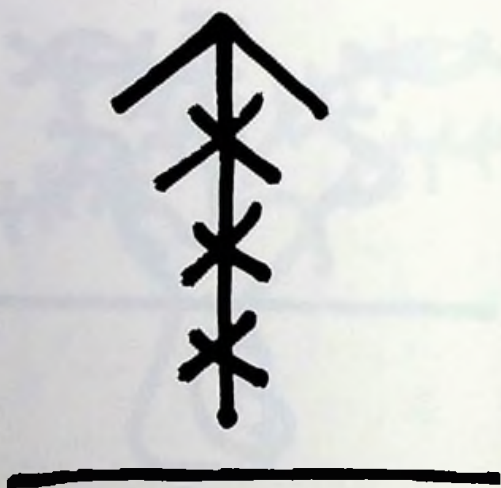
Spirea
in white formal attire
bridal bouquet



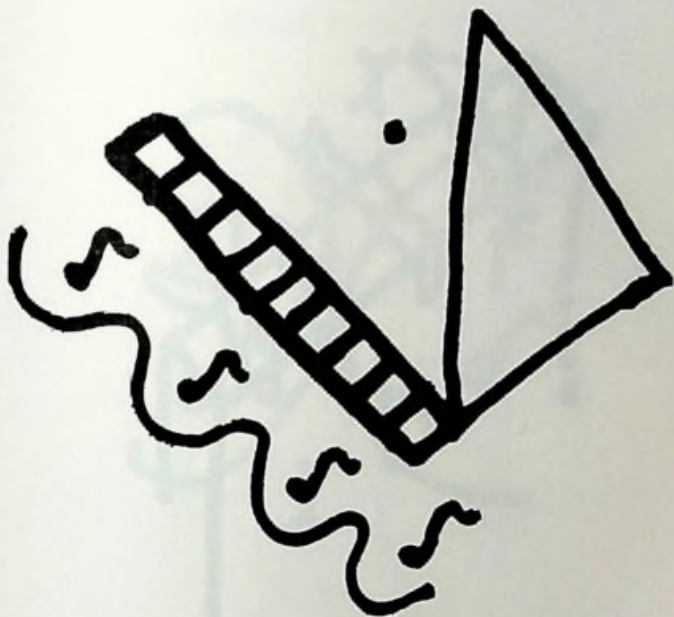
Weary eyes
the garden will still be there
when you are blind



Pine
so young, so comely—
your needles so erect



Chopin
spring night on the keys—
light rain polonaise



Ivy
why don't you grow?
unfriendly wall



Spring
tiny running feet—
birds' bolero



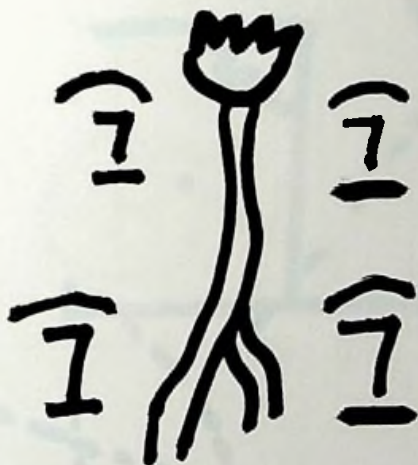
Le printemps
cet enfant vert clair
qui sent la terre

Spring
this light green child
that smells of dirt



Monsieur Tulipe
à la canne rouge
surveille son harem

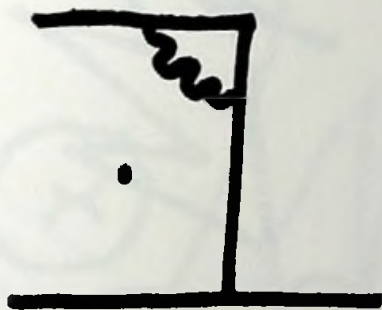
Mister Tulip
with his red walking stick
keeps an eye on his harem



Sea gull
away from his flock
stares then flies away



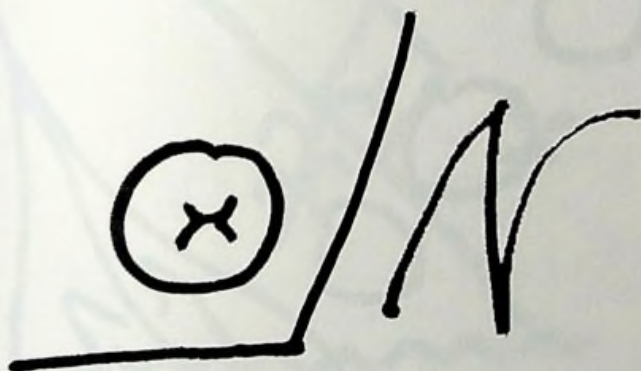
Cocoon
what will you unravel
in my house?



Orange-yellow
birds of paradise
are you for real?



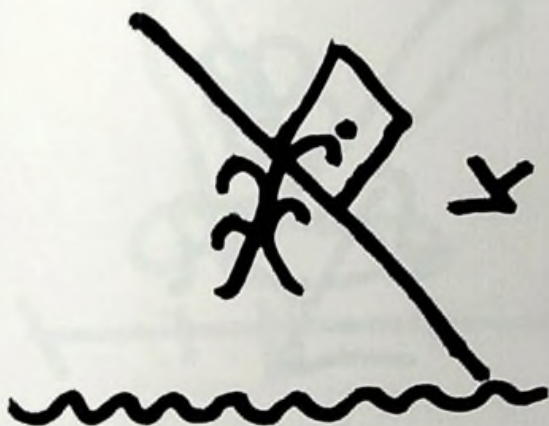
Apple
ants will also eat you
at my side



Rocks
boulders tumbling down—
green avalanche



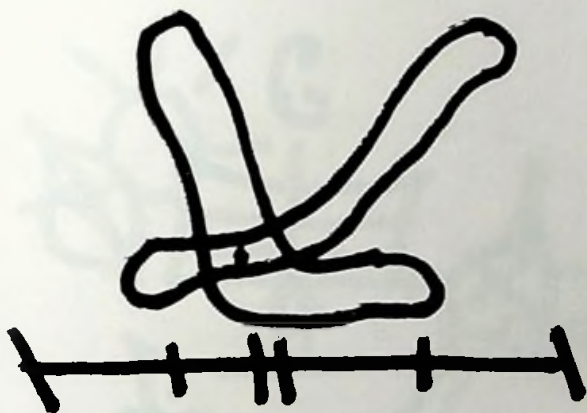
Knocking
at my door, nature enters
it's too late



One rose
alone in a decorated vase—
leaves' desire



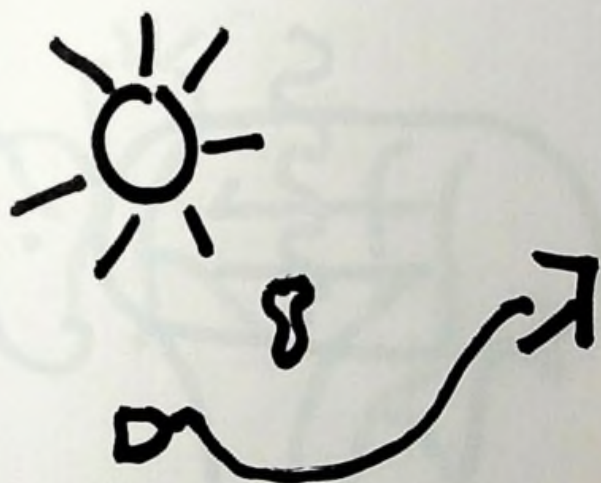
Hand in hand
vines hide their love—
verse-feet



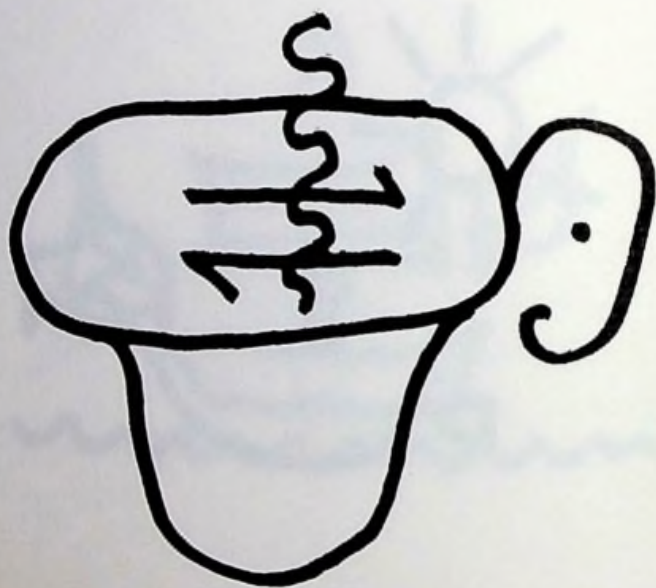
Books on a shelf—
old leaves, new leaves
bon voyage



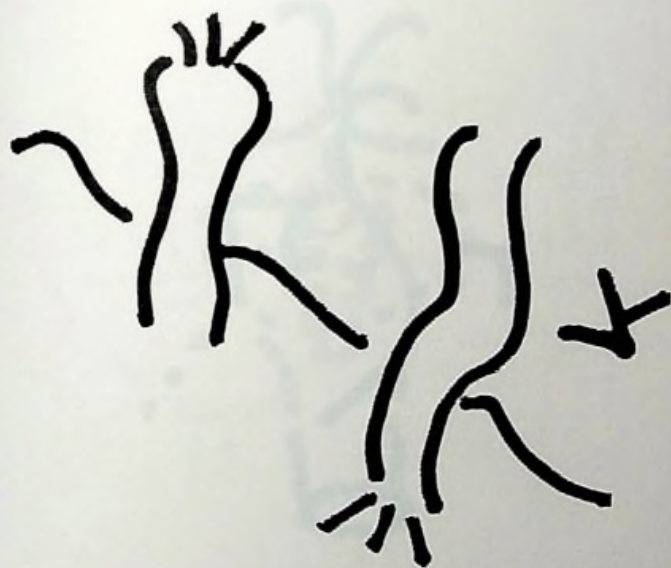
A little worm
peeps at May in the sunshine—
my hoe continues



Customers in and out
cups and cups of java
barista wide awake



Hands up
hands down
spring has his way



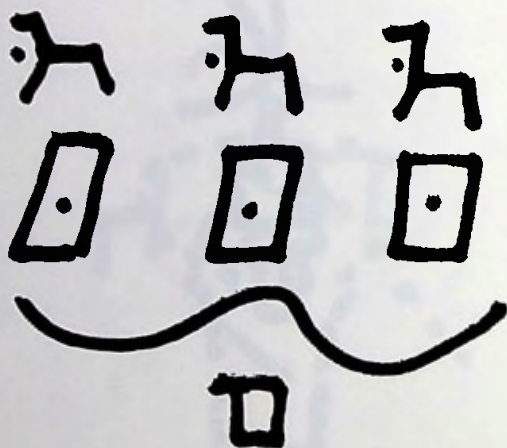
An empty seat
next to my silhouette
for all eternity

॥२॥...

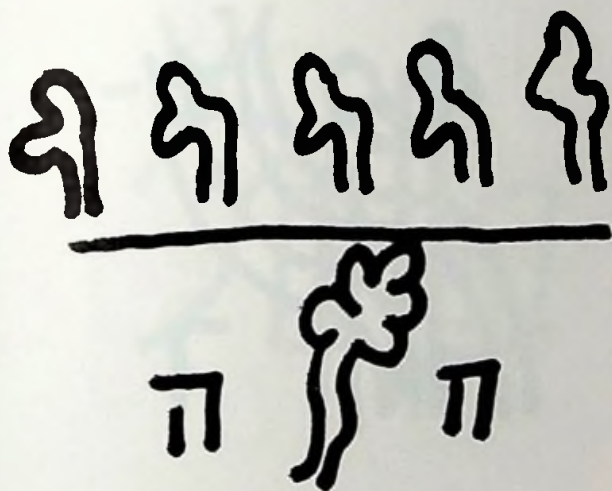
Spring frost
puny grapes on the vine
my wine glass half empty



Waiting for April seeds to grow
May crows form a line—
June wake



Lilies in a row
blow their trumpets—
Queen Rose appears



Weak knees
on strong-willed crutches—
piggyback therapy



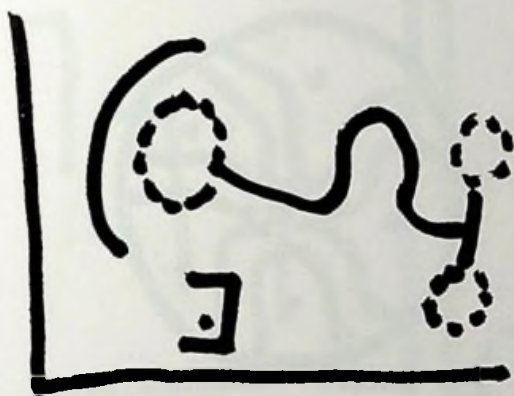
Before morning
before sunshine
bring back my scrapbook



June bugs
haunt my souvenirs—
last year's stains



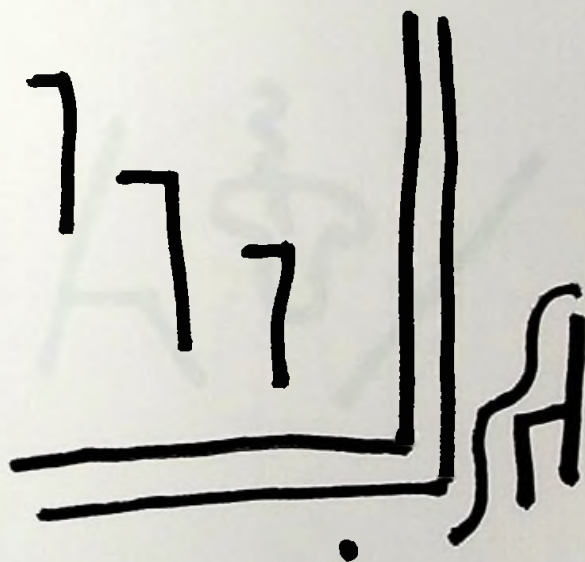
Rusty tricycle
in a dusty corner—
my son's red youth



Hands all around
a dance and a vigil—
steps in memoriam



Hotel room
sunny window seat—
refuge from home



In white silence
waiting for the doctor's report
I sip jasmine joy



Original of the
manuscript of the *Book of the
Mysteries*





About the Author

Thomas J. Braga, professor emeritus of French, was born in Fall River, Massachusetts in 1943. After graduating from B.M.C. Durfee High School in 1962, he received his B.A. in French and the Modern Language Award from Providence College in 1966.

The recipient of an NDEA Fellowship, he earned his Ph.D. in French literature at Rice University in 1970. He taught at California State College, San Bernardino and Plattsburgh State University of New York where in 1980 he initiated the Campus Poets Series as a forum for local poets.

In 1998 he retired from teaching and presently resides in Plattsburgh, New York.

In addition to *Brush Strokes: Haiku & Original Illustrations*, he has published ten (10) other books of poetry, *Portingales* (1981), *Chants Fugitifs* (1981), *Coffee in the Woodwinds* (1990), *Crickers' Feet* (1992), *Borderlands* (1994), *Two Luso Lyrics* (1994), *Litotes* (1997), *Motley Coats* (2001), *Inchoate: Early Poems* (2003), and *Amory: Six Dialogues and Six Poems* (2006).

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Robin Nelson