

The background of the entire page is an abstract, textured composition. The upper portion is dominated by deep blue and black hues, which blend into a vibrant orange-red at the bottom. The texture is grainy and painterly, with visible brushstrokes or pigment splatters. A horizontal band of lighter orange-red color runs across the lower third of the page, serving as a backdrop for the title and author's name.

distant virga

allan burns









# distant virga

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⌋ distant virga

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For Theresa



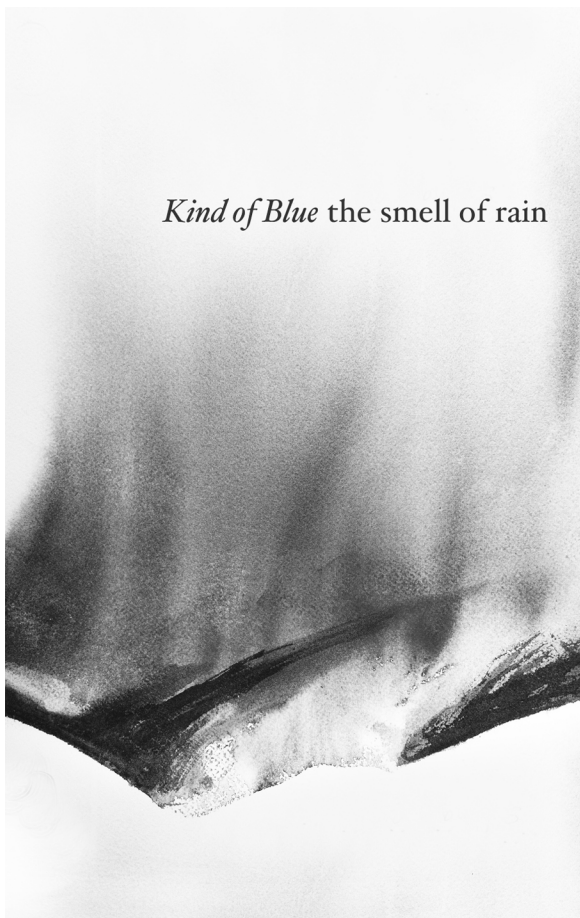




distant virga



*Kind of Blue* the smell of rain





source of the creek  
a kinglet's  
breeding song



glacial potholes  
a shrike returns  
to the cholla





the dog's path  
less straight  
than the path



starlings whistle  
from a gnarled tree  
Shakespeare's birthday



a pewee keeps calling  
the deep roots  
of weeds



around the conifers spring





headwaters  
the dipper's shadow  
follows its call



suicide point  
the bridge's cables vanish  
into mist



grassroots campaign  
cottonwood seed drifting  
everywhere



if the rocks could speak rust-colored moss







if the rocks could speak rust-colored moss



rucksack  
in tall grass  
the scent of honeysuckle



Arcturus  
a pinecone glows  
in the campfire



a willow reveals  
the underground stream  
Dharma Day





the heron gliding on yesterday's rain



tones of the gorge  
the river cutting  
deeper into time



K-T boundary  
on the sandstone bluff . . .  
a rock wren calls



climbing in shadow —  
the canyon rim  
brightly lit



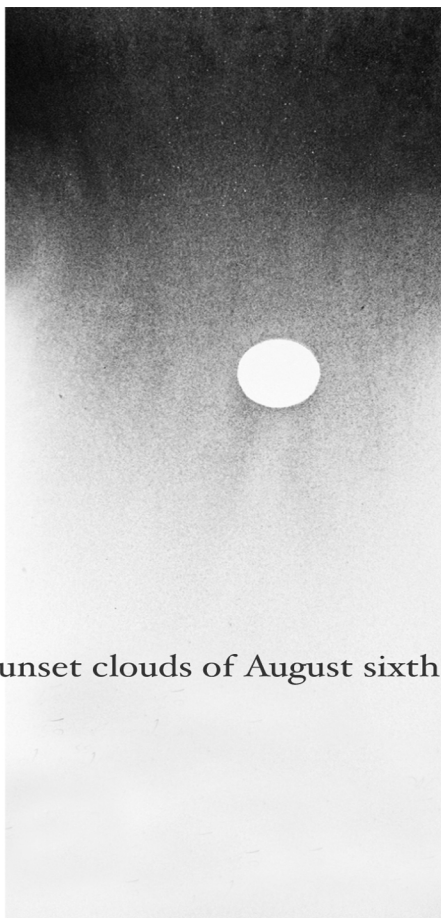


final ascent  
a stonechat lifts  
from the heather



jagged scree  
a goshawk pierces  
the treeline





the sunset clouds of August sixth



Comanche grassland  
ruins of the mission cast  
the only shadow





dry creek bed  
a saddled horse passes  
without a rider



distant virga  
the ranch dog's eyes  
different colors



some marsh through the trash



T-junction  
this way to the stone circle  
that to wild blackberries





blackberry brier  
an old boundary post  
clawed by bears



high-tension wires  
hum above the prairie . . .  
a few drifting clouds



the flycatcher's wheeep  
last sliver of sun  
on the ridge



bridleway twilight  
the windswept manes  
of wild ponies





leaflight





anywhere sun  
finds the creek  
water striders



the lake they drained  
amber eyes  
of the osprey



shadows of clouds  
a trail marker felled  
by a boulder





my father's broken worry stone



into autumn distance the blindman's blue eyes



a red-tail's echo . . .  
the reservoir the color  
of surrounding pines



carillon bells  
a wedge of cranes  
flying south



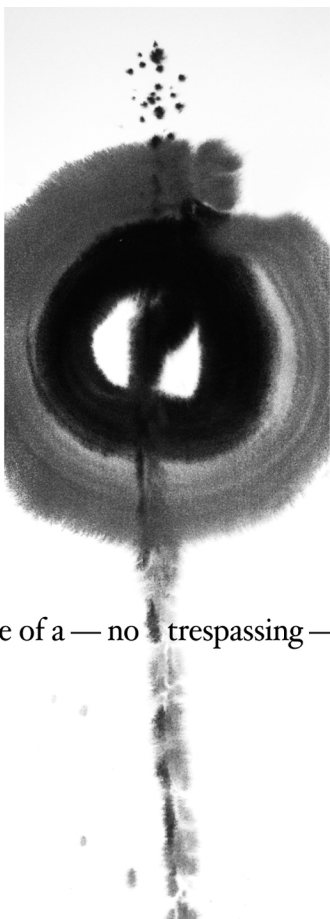


sunset chill  
a coyote withdraws  
behind a headstone



moon shadows  
buddha  
and buddha





black smoke of a — no trespassing — life



early dusk  
a nuthatch works the cracks  
between garden stones





out for stars . . .  
the horned owl  
also out



winter-golden grass  
bent to the wind  
to the ways of deer



snowflakes—  
a few drifting upward  
before they fall



after  
stacking  
oak  
the  
lightness  
of  
aspen





blinding ice  
my saw releases  
the scent of pine



the cat's sprawl  
firelight creases  
each book's spine



half-lotus  
the slow degrees  
of dusk



coyote choir  
we wake beneath  
next season's stars

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

⌞ ALLAN BURNS is a freelance editor who created the Montage anthology for The Haiku Foundation. He lives in the Colorado Rockies with his wife Theresa.

⌞ RON MOSS is an artist and poet who lives in Tasmania, an island state of Australia. His haiku and related poetry have been widely published.

## AUTHOR'S ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

All these haiku were published previously in *Acorn*, *bottle rockets*, *Frogpond*, *The Heron's Nest*, *Modern Haiku*, *A New Resonance 6* (Red Moon Press), *Notes from the Gean*, *Presence*, *Roadrunner*, *South by Southeast*, and *Wisteria*. My thanks to the editors and to John Barlow, who provided valuable suggestions on an earlier draft of this collection.









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“Allan Burns’ haiku transport the reader into the sacred ground of life found in landscapes where earth is holy and wildlife thrives. Wit, heart, and intelligence color each carefully wrought poem with keen and sensitive observations. The poems in *distant virga* belong in every nature lover’s hand, backpack, or library. This collection is a gem.”

—Marian Olson



“That Allan Burns values a healthy balance between humanity and the rest of nature is abundantly evident in this, his first collection of haiku. He is finely attuned to subtle interactions, especially those found at play in wilderness settings. Moreover, Burns exhibits an excellent feel for disjunction. As a result, I readily intuit the associations he makes and enjoy the emotions evoked before my mind can intervene. The revelations presented in this fine collection are often as surprising as they are delightful.”

—Christopher Herold

