



River Stones

Garry Gay

Preface

As a very visual person, I have found the qualities of haiku to be in keeping with my unusual way of looking at the world. I am an observer. I overlook very little that goes on around me. This for me is a way of life. I capture the things I see both as a photographer and a writer. There is an immediacy about both art forms that I am drawn to — the here and now and the grounded reality of a personal experience. More than just recording my world, I interpret both the deeper meaning and contrasts of the subtleties of my interrelationship with nature. Who I am is in direct relation to how I see my place in the environment of which I live. I seek to discover the quiet places where I can reflect — and have moments of awakening.

The RIVER STONES collection came about from my desire to create a tight selection of some of my favorite work. The process of fitting certain poems together into one collection so that it would showcase my style as a writer was an important consideration. I wanted my work to have a certain flow, yet room to breathe as well. In it are the quiet places, and the subtleness of discovery.

—Garry Gay



Saki Press
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ISBN: 1-893823-01-6

Hole in the clouds
just the right size
for this full moon

Wet hay field
the smell
of twilight

Hiking
into the clouds
the view within



Morning glory—
wrapping itself in the blue
of twilight

Low valley fog...
the birth steam of a new calf
in the morning light



Autumn rain—
the merry-go-round's music
drifts through the empty park

The trail forks...
taking the one
with wild flowers

Autumn deepens
an empty snail shell
explored by an ant

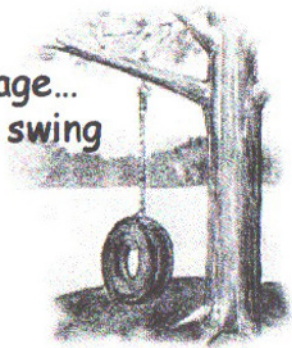
River Stones
along the garden path
wet with dew

Unfamiliar road
yet I recognize
the night jasmine

Over the railroad tracks
the slow motion
of a snake

Along the trail
trading one walking stick
for another

Bald tire
still getting good mileage...
as a tree swing





Used book store;
the cat moves quietly
among dead authors

Antique map
an ant travels
the old slice route

Aged-mirror
a little forgiving
in the autumn twilight

Burned out street lamp
crossing over
into moonlight

Hopscotch
all the squares
fill with leaves

Deep autumn
a light rain
on an uneven trail

Twilight
grows ripe
among the pumpkins



Fading light—
the snake slips out
of its skin

To cheat
the echo...
we whisper

Marsh wind—
the whole flock
changes direction

Clouds passing
I walk behind
the homeward cows

My traveling hat—
another heron feather
added to the brim



Wild roses
drop their petals
in the roadside ditch

A dark sea
another star
sets in the mist

Weight lifter
slowly lifting
the tea cup

Old moon
I share your light
with a friend in Romania

The shape of clay
before
she makes it something

Snowflake's fall
into the darkness
of the tuba

Reflected
in the sword's blade
soft summer clouds



New snow

the path you made last night
has gone with you

Snow so deep
only the red flag
of the mail box

North star—
poking the embers
with the walking stick

Slowly ...
the scarecrow
becomes the snowman

Publication Acknowledgments

Some of the haiku in this collection first appeared in *frogpond*, *Modern Haiku*, *Woodnotes*, *Press Here*, *Still*, *Mirrors*, *HNA Anthologies*, *Albatross Magazine*, and *Wind Chimes*.

Many have also won honors and awards: *River Stones* Hon. Men. 1997 San Francisco Int'l Haiku Contest; *Unfamiliar road* Iga-Ueno Bashô Festival 1997; *Over the railroad tracks* 2nd place 1997 HSA Harold G. Henderson Awards; *Along the trail* 1st Hon. Men. 1996 San Francisco Int'l Haiku Contest; *Low valley fog* Highly Commended 1995 James W. Hackett Award; *Autumn rain* 1st Hon. Men. HEA Int'l Haiku Contest; *The trail forks*— 1st place 1995 Nature Company Haiku Contest;

Autumn deepens Hon. Men. 1994 HSA Harold G. Henderson Awards; *Hole in the clouds* 1995 Brussels Sprouts Editor's Choice Award; *Morning glory*— 1987-88 Japan Airlines Haiku Contest; *Fading light*— 2nd place 1998 The Tallahassee Writers' Association; *To cheat* Runner up STILL Magazine 1998; *Marsh wind*— Special Award 1998 SBS Shizuoka Broadcasting Award; *Weight lifter* 3rd place HEA Int'l Haiku Contest; *Snow so deep* 3rd place 1995 HPNC Int'l Haiku Contest; *North star*— Hon. Men. 1995 Nature Company Haiku Contest.

About the Author

Garry Gay was born in Glendale, California, 1951. He received his B.P.A. degree in photography in 1974. He has been a photographer by profession for the past 24 years. He started writing haiku in 1975. Greatly influenced by Bashô's *Narrow Road To The Deep North* he has steadily written haiku over the past 23 years. He is one of the co-founders of the Haiku Poets of Northern California. He became their first president from 1989-90. In 1991 he was elected as president of the Haiku Society of America. He is the creator of the poetic form called a *Rengay*. He also is the author of *The Billboard Cowboy*, *The Silent Garden* and *Wings of Moonlight*. He currently lives in the California wine country, in a small town called Windsor, with his wife Melinda and daughter Alissa.

RIVER STONES collection was typeset in 14 point Comic
Sans MS font on an Acer PC and 600 dpi HP printer by
Kari Masoner. Published in a limited chapbook edition
by Saki Press, Normal, Illinois, 1999.



Saki Chapbook #1

ISBN: 1-893823-01-6

A Virgil Hutton Haiku Memorial
Award Chapbook Contest Winner



Saki Press
1021 Gregory
Normal, IL 61761