



Eight Shades of Blue

HAIKU by
Denis M. Garrison

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snowdrifts
by the dyer's hut
eight shades of blue



Introduction

This little volume, *Eight Shades of Blue*, contains my published haiku, including those in the crystalline form, and a few tanka from the years 2000-2003. During that time, I also published several items on the issues surrounding the writing of haiku by western poets. One is included here: *The Need for Experimentation*. Likewise included here are the earliest prosody for the crystalline and the first revision to it. All my own crystallines from the period also are here. The crystalline is a western couplet in seventeen syllables, an analogue form for the widely used 5-7-5 tercet haiku form.

Not only my more traditional haiku follow, but also a number labeled “Haiku Noir.” I have reprinted here the editorial policy of the 2001 webzine, *Haiku Noir*, which I edited and published. It describes noirs in some detail.

I hope you find enjoyment in these pages, that my poems give you pleasure and, perhaps, a new insight or two. Thank you for reading!

Best wishes,
Denis M. Garrison

The Need for Experimentation

Reflections on Western Poets Writing Haiku

When an art form is adopted by a different culture than that which originated the form, it becomes the new culture's own property and it is made over in the cultural context which it has entered. There are, in every case, many from the original culture who demand adherence to their tradition, but it is futile. It is always futile to attempt to control what one has given away.

It is a delicate balance that one must strike. One must not discard the past in ignorance, but one also must not be constrained by the past. One must assiduously study the rules of poetics and then ignore them. The rules of poetics are not for writing the poem; the rules are for forming the craft of the poet. Every time a poet puts pen to paper, poetry is reinvented - or should be!

There is, of course, paradox in this view, but paradox is the natural condition of humanity driven by base desires and lofty ideals. The orthodoxies about haiku: the haiku moment, haiku mind, objective correlative, purely objective imagery, etc., etc., all fall before the onslaught of paradox and ambiguity.

For what haiku poets of the older Japanese tradition were seeking to accomplish with their haiku, the traditional haiku poetics are necessary and appropriate. For modern poets in Western languages who wish to emulate the same kind of poetry towards the same ends and with the same philosophic underpinnings, those same traditional haiku poetics are, likewise, necessary and appropriate. However, for modern western poets who find in haiku the greatest value in its crystalline brevity and in the rigor of condensation to a lyrical minim, adherence to the traditional haiku poetics is both inappropriate and needless, since those poetics are intrinsically inconsistent, even incompatible, with English poetic tradition.

To the degree that each poet (or group or school) follows their own values and poetics, there is not any one group which is "correct" and others which are "incorrect." Artists are free and cannot be constrained by scholastics. On the other hand, to the degree that some poets set themselves up as arbiters of all haiku, including haiku in English and other western languages, then artistic politics enters the arena and "right and wrong" become an issue.

Western poets are intrinsically unencumbered and unobliged by the eastern traditions. They work within their own cultures. Western poets who essay haiku nevertheless need to study the original traditions and understand them as well as they may, and must respect those older traditions even in the breach, because to do otherwise is to rebel out of ignorance, which is inherently wrong. If a western poet is to write haiku, and if that poet is going to go beyond the traditional boundaries of the art form, then she or he had better know where the boundaries are. There is no merit in freedom

by virtue of ignorance.

Furthermore, for the western haiku poet, assuming that the poet has indeed studied the original tradition as suggested above and moved beyond it, there is also the ongoing utility of examining anew the craft aspects (the “tools”) of the original tradition in order to discover new and more culturally relevant (in the poet’s culture) ways to accomplish the ends of those tools. For example, while some wish to simply discard the idea of kigo (season-words), others might not. Kigo have changed substantially before. From setting the moment of composition, they have mutated to set the context of the content of the haiku. Now, in an age when many cultures are not agrarian, use of the seasons for context-setting on an exclusive (or nearly-so) basis is questionable. So, there is growing interest in new directions for kigo - including internationalization of natural kigo and consideration of keywords which are not rooted in seasonality. Continuing experimentation with such poetic tools is firmly within the English poetic tradition, certainly, and probably many others’ as well. Choice within freedom, as against doctrinaire constraints - that is the goal.

Haiku Noir

The following is the Editorial Policy posted by the webzine, Haiku Noir, which published two issues in 2001. It remains the main definition of haiku noir.

Haiku Noir is a new variety of the ancient poetic form, haiku. Haiku noirs exist at the farthest end of the spectrum of subject matter, dealing with that which is not generally considered to be proper subject matter for the classical haiku; for example: tragedy, loss, sorrow, depression, madness, terror, horror, anger, macabre humor, anti-heroism, crime, passion, the underworld/subcultures, squalor, eros, science fiction and fantasy.

FORM: We are developing a new kind of haiku, not in the classical form, so the rules are substantially simpler. For our editorial purposes, a “haiku noir” is a tercet (3 line poem) in which the first and third lines are from 1 to 5 syllables while the second line is from 1 to 7 syllables. Thus, the classic 17 syllable form (5-7-5) and the even more popular English forms which use from about 10 to 14 syllables (e.g., 3-4-3, 4-5-2, 4-5-3, 4-5-4, 4-6-3, 4-6-4) are all acceptable. There are no rules with respect to capitalization, punctuation, use of complete sentences, fragments, phrases, or clauses. However, excessive use of marks (e.g., !!!!! and &*#@*&) is definitely frowned upon. There are no prohibitions with respect to metaphor, simile, rhyme, direct address, questioning, etc.. There are no “season words,” “cutting,” or “juxtaposition” requirements. In summary, the only form imperatives are that the haiku noir must be a tercet with no more than 17 syllables, distributed 5-7-5 or less.

SUBJECT MATTER: The poetic value of haiku noir is in communicating complex and difficult material in the most brief and crystallized poetic form, the haiku of seventeen or fewer syllables. This necessarily entails using the most concrete language

in some instances and the most ambiguous and suggestive language in other instances. This is a tremendous poetic challenge and one of the great attractions of writing haiku.

Showing the beauty to be found on the dark side, showing how our joy is rooted in sorrow, how our ecstasy is found beyond pain, is another great challenge. The defining purpose of the haiku noir is to create in the reader an emotional response which falls at the darker end of the spectrum of human experience. It is in this that haiku noirs are most different from classical haiku. Keywords which help to define the scope of the subject matter of haiku noirs include: tragedy, loss, sorrow, depression, madness, terror, horror, anger, macabre humor, anti-heroism, crime, passion, the underworld/subcultures, squalor, eros, science fiction and fantasy. On the other hand, there is at this end of the spectrum a great deal of human experience about which we do not want submissions at Haiku Noir, and keywords for those subjects that we don't want include: smut, pornography, scatology, banality, obscenity, hate speech, and anything that is simply disgusting. You may find that haiku noirs make you uneasy, even creep you out or turn you on, but they must not be disgusting or filthy. We repeat: Do NOT submit pornographic haiku. Because this can mean making some contentious value judgements, we emphasize that Haiku Noir reserves absolute editorial discretion in selecting poems for publication in Haiku Noir.

Prosody for the Crystalline

DEFINITION: The “crystalline” is a new haiku analogue; a seventeen syllable couplet that assimilates as much as possible from the Japanese haiku tradition into the English poetic tradition. A primary concern for the crystalline is the euphony of the verse.

GUIDELINES: The grammar (inflections and syntax) of the lines, which usually comprise one or two sentences in a couplet, should be relatively straightforward and natural. Unnaturally abbreviated or telegraphic grammar is to be avoided. The traditional omission of “understood words” is permissible (e.g., “Catch me.” rather than “You catch me.”).

Initial capitalization of the first word of a sentence, a proper name, etc., should follow common usage; do not capitalize the first word of the second line solely on the basis of its position. Terminal punctuation also should follow common usage. The versification of the poem into two lines, that is, the couplet form itself, serves the function of the Japanese kireji or cutting word.

All traditional English poetic devices (including, but not limited to, metaphor, simile, alliteration, assonance, consonance, onomatopoeia, allusion, rhyme) which can be used to advantage within the other rules and the set prosody are permissible. In such a short form, verbosity is to be avoided. Poets should strive for highly condensed and concrete imagery that enhances perception and understanding.

Transparency of meaning need not diminish the depth of poetic resonance.

While immediacy is highly desirable and, therefore, the present tense is normative, use of other tenses is not at all prohibited.

PROSODY: A crystalline is, ideally, a couplet of exactly 17 syllables. A couplet may be “regular” or “irregular” depending upon the symmetry of the lines. A regular couplet’s syllables are distributed 8+9 or 9+8. Other distributions are “irregular” but entirely acceptable if the verse works best divided unevenly.

A regular couplet is not inherently better than an irregular couplet. It is more important that the lines break where they should (remember the principles of kireji). The crystalline’s syllabic limit is consistent with the common western definition of haiku as a “seventeen-syllable poem.” A regular crystalline may be iambic or trochaic tetrameter, with or without one excess unstressed syllable, but a completely regular beat can be boring. Writing to a metrical formula will, predictably, yield formulaic, unsatisfactory, verses.

The harmony or beauty of sound that has a pleasing effect to the ear is achieved both by the selection of individual word-sounds and also by their relationship in the repetition, proximity, and flow of sound patterns. This is euphony, more important than strict metrics. Skillful word selection to modify the rhythmic pattern, i.e., modulation, is desirable.

LINKING CRYSTALLINES:

A crystalline is an untitled couplet, either a complete poem or a stanza, which follows a strict syllabic verse form, as described in the previous paragraphs. Several crystallines may be linked together as stanzas of a larger poem. In line with the renga tradition behind the development of haiku, alternating crystallines by different poets may be combined in a single poem.

This is not to debar a single poet writing a linked poem, which is entirely permissible. In any such linked crystalline, each couplet must be autonomous, able to stand on its own, yet each couplet must be closely related to its following and preceding couplets; the internal links are substantial so that the whole poem has a poetic unity.

The rhyme scheme for linked rhymed couplets should have sufficient variety to avoid a cloying effect. Three adjoining couplets should not use the same rhyme. Some sample rhyme schemes for linked crystallines include: aa bb cc aa bb cc; aa bb bb aa cc dd dd cc; aa aa bb bb cc cc; aa bb cc bb dd ee ff ee. These are only samples; many other combinations exist.

Also, please do not take these examples to mean that linked crystallines must include 6 or 8 couplets. While 2 couplets (viz., a quatrain) is obviously the minimum, there is no necessary upper limit. The poets need to be able to recognize excess and limit the poem appropriately. Remember, rhyme is not required for a crystalline, but also is not prohibited.

KEYWORDS: The use of keywords (e.g., kigo and analogues thereto) is desirable in order to most succinctly establish a couplet’s context, whether the context

is a natural surrounding, time of year, or day, or phase of moon, a manmade surrounding, or even a situation.

The success of a poem's keyword depends upon whether it conveys essential information to the reader; it is not dependent upon compliance with a poetic canon of keywords, kigo, etc.. Nevertheless, the poet may be well-advised to consider canonical keywords and kigo precisely for their potential utility.

CONTENT: It is in content that the more fundamental difference from traditional haiku will be found. While traditional haiku value direct observation with the greatest possible degree of non-subjectivity, subjectivity is permissible in a crystalline. The poet's response to the object is admissible. The poet's thoughts and feelings are admissible.

The content of the poem is not of greater importance than the beauty of the language. As stated at the beginning of this article, a primary concern for the crystalline is the euphony of the verse. Now, content is of great importance also, but not so great importance that the beauty of the verses should be sacrificed.

That having been said, poets are advised to keep the haiku tradition in mind, to consider natural elements for each couplet, to consider the poetic value of objective imagery, and to consider the concept of the poem as objective correlative of the emotional and perceptual content which the poet wishes to communicate to the reader. Poets are also advised to keep in mind other haiku techniques such as juxtaposition for resonance and the "third effect."

In summary, three major characteristics of haiku, in western estimation, are the seventeen syllable limit, the kireji (cutting word) and the kigo (season word). The crystalline form incorporates all three of these characteristics. Furthermore, the haiku traditions of natural subjects and of objective imagery / the "objective correlative" are highly valued, albeit not enforced.

This new form is named the "crystalline" because the core value of the form is the highly condensed and concrete imagery of the couplet, transparent in its accessibility. The fact that the name breaks down to "crystal - line" is serendipitous.

Prosody of the Crystalline in English Verse ***A Revision of the Prosody – April 1, 2002***

This couplet variant is named the "crystalline" because the core value of the form is its highly condensed and concrete imagery, transparent in its accessibility. The fact that the name breaks down to "crystal - line" is serendipitous. A primary concern for the crystalline is the euphony of the verse. The technical criteria are really very simple. The hard part, the fun part, the real art, is developing a good ear for a euphonious verse. Nothing works here except practice. Of course, for those who are already accomplished poets and have highly developed ears for a pleasingly modulated line, the challenge may be simply in fitting a lovely line to this strict form.

A crystalline is a couplet, titled or untitled, rhymed or unrhymed, seventeen syllables in length, consisting in two lines of either iambic or trochaic tetrameter, with

very minor variations permissible. The couplet must have exactly seventeen syllables, with deference granted the poet for dialectical variations in pronunciation.

The couplet must be complete in itself, not dependent for its meaning on additional stanzas. Even when linked (see below for linking), such autonomy is definitive for the crystalline form.

The couplet should consist in one or two sentences. Initial capitalization of the first word of a sentence, a proper name, etc., should follow common usage. Do not capitalize the first word of the second line solely on the basis of its position. Terminal punctuation also should follow common usage.

An essential is natural English diction, carefully modulated for euphony. The harmony or beauty of sound that has a pleasing effect to the ear is achieved both by the selection of individual word-sounds and also by their relationship in the repetition, proximity, and flow of sound patterns. This is euphony, more important than strict metrics. Skillful word selection to modify the rhythmic pattern, i.e., modulation, is desirable. The grammar (inflections and syntax) of the lines, which usually comprise one or two sentences in a couplet, should be relatively straightforward and natural. Unnaturally abbreviated or telegraphic grammar is to be avoided. The traditional omission of “understood words” is permissible (e.g., “Catch me.” rather than “You catch me.”).

All traditional English poetic devices (including, but not limited to, metaphor, simile, alliteration, assonance, consonance, onomatopoeia, allusion, rhyme) which can be used to advantage within the other rules and the set prosody are permissible. In such a short form, verbosity is to be avoided. Poets should strive for highly condensed and concrete imagery that enhances perception and understanding. Transparency of meaning need not diminish the depth of poetic resonance.

Crystallines may be linked by one poet or by more than one poet. A crystalline in such a sequence is an untitled stanza, which follows a strict syllabic verse form, as described in the previous paragraphs, that is, several crystallines may be linked together as stanzas of a larger poem. Alternating crystallines by different poets may be combined in a single poem. This is not to debar a single poet writing a linked poem, which is entirely permissible. In any such linked crystalline, each couplet must be autonomous, able to stand on its own, yet each couplet must be closely related to its following and preceding couplets; the internal links are substantial so that the whole poem has a poetic unity.



Haiku

above the hot spring
steaming ice clad hemlocks drip
five monkeys bathing

cabin in the snow
fragrant wood smoke curls above
hot kettle whistles

setting in hedgerow
red sun tangled black branches
ah, the flaming snow

bravely in the breeze
wave these soft blue flags in shreds
irises full-blown

black flocks of grackles
flow into white southern sky . . .
here comes the north wind

wet warm breeze
snow melt swells misty brook
blue crocus bloom

swinging from wing tips
two vultures twirl a funnel
in remnants of fog

in low scudding clouds
a diving hawk disappears . . .
there she is again

last night a deep snow
on the porch rail this morning
two owls side by side

remembering
hovering over the stream
a dragonfly

at this ancient well
the old bucket handle shines
deep and green the moss

gone two years
now she finds his note
weeping widow

first kanji drawn
the dam is breached and
ink flows

peach petal on snow
my Jane would have been
ten today

dew dampened boots
torn letters litter bridge
mourning wind

garbagemen have left
cans lying in the gutter—
crows inspect the job

snowy sidewalk
amongst many footprints
one red mitten

this cool gusty day
yellow crocus petals fly
to the street below

my pregnant daughter
walking in her peach orchard
beautiful in bloom

amber wheat field
knee-deep and wind-waving . . .
quail burst into flight

forsythia and
daffodils crowd the roadsides—
Maryland yellow!

out in today's trash
broken exercise machine
box crutches came in

in the deepest cold
great temple bell tolls thunder . . .
shattered ice tinkles

tile roof icicles
hang close to the frozen ground
sunlit crystal cave

cold white lunar light
ice-curtained cliff reflection
captive earth bound moon

ice floes and debris
white water raging torrent
fish stay deep today

hanging flower pots
all rimmed with icicle rings
empty house wind chimes

below ice clad cliffs
trackless snowfield fills the gorge
wind-shrieking, birdless

landslide overgrown
hundreds of six-foot pine trees
Christmas tree forest

yesterday was warm
on the frosty windowsill
a frozen hornet

beneath the snow
gurgling spring fed brook
no cold can tame it

sparrows gather
within blue gray smoke
chestnut fragrance

soft whimpers
of three dreaming dogs
still at hunt

the half-seen swan
and black water moat
her white arm

glazed ice forest
under grey cloud shrouded sky
the silence deepens

piercing the snowbank
last year's forsythia
has begun to swell

overhead the honks
of homebound geese in rows—
muddy bog underfoot

through empty branches
the pale sunlight falls—
green lily shoots

today's thunderstorm
sheets of rain drum on the roof—
the elms full of birds

maple and pine forest
wild iris in the clearing
puff clouds fill the sky

bachelor's button and
Queen Anne's lace shimmer—
heat waves blur the road

high blue sky hot sun
chiggers in the deep green grass
salt taste on my lips

ring-necked pheasant
flees in sinuous flight—
dry field of pumpkins

cool breeze flutters through
scarlet and golden maples—
woodpecker tapping

hard winds all night
now ragged morning clouds
fly east in the grey sky

pine harvest fragrant
on the cutting cold breeze—
children pick holly

china tinkling
music of silverware
fragrant leek soup

in the cowbarn
milk buckets steaming—
cats arrive

back alley
milk truck and local cats
dawn parade

sunny spot
old dog sleeping—
boneless!

in the coffin
her childhood photo
ragdoll embrace

in mismatched clothes
stopping anyone to talk
widower

three silent crows
old maple treetop
frigid dawn

from northwest
herringbone clouds advance
unstoppable

in the blue saucer
orange slices and a pear . . .
Bach floats on the breeze

scattered on wet floor
peanut shells and damp ashes
one woman dances

empty parking lot
traffic lights—red, green, unseen—
swing in rising wind

wave-tossed mast rocking
back and forth across the moon
tied up at the dock

tiny fawn waits
beside the silent doe
the huge sky darkens

these old hands
soft and supple in duskligh—
these tired eyes

marble monument
all their sweet names are blurred
roses frozen hard

young mother
kissing her baby's cheek
apple blossoms

night wind in the trees
and through the house front to back
all the chimes tinkling

resting in stars
cold blue-haloed moon
fills the night sky

the day she died
she walked among the blossoms—
her tears of joy

old empty church—
worn out kneelers resting
under layered dust

in the holly tree
nesting dove murmurs softly
warm breeze on my cheek

on a heap of pearls
there rests a treasure box filled
with cherry blossoms

on folded paper
found in this volume of Blake—
a single haiku

howling wind dies down
the morning calls of songbirds
fill the ragged trees

a tramp in my field
gazes at migrating geese—
so homeless and free

grey winter sunrise—
perched along the scarecrow's arms
six ravens huddle

east wall in ruin—
morning-glories spill through
with the rising sun

the ridge road
winds down the dark valley—
a porch lamp glows

dusty mare's-tails blown
along the old country road—
shrill of a blackbird

snowdrifts
by the dyer's hut
eight shades of blue

red pagoda
in swirling snow
the muffled gong

moss on its shingled bed
reaches the tall pines
fragrant morning

bits of trellis
deep within its coils—
grandfather's vine

old icicle
golden in the sun glistens
and weeps

2 A.M.
sitting in her chair
the silence

in this silent valley
woodsmoke and bacon scent
nearly home

boots crunch the snow
shovels' clanking echoes
her tiny weight

hollow wind
in the naked woods
scent of coming snow

fireplace flames
glint in mouse eyes—
cat's soft snore.

knee deep in
this icy brook
my vision clears

chimney smoke
caught by the wind
endless flock of grackles

grandfather rakes leaves
from the courtyard of his hut—
deep in golden woods

white fire in treetops,
the moonrise in tanglewood—
an owl's waking call

the salmon run
fighting the flow
an elder throws his net

cemetery dawn
footprints in hoarfrost
unbearable cold

storm-tossed bay
dark jade in last light
no ship today

in a pool of light
the last boat in unloads
catch of the day

moonless night
the blind wind sings
in edgeless sky

the creaks of wind-tossed elms - swinging shadows

crocus everywhere—except over her grave

Still there in their eyes,
the rainbow shines still brighter—
gone beyond winter.

Sequence: September 11th

blue sky sunny day—
how is it the darkness lurks
on the horizon?

sights before unseen
and sounds never heard before—
new world born in flames

after the attacks
we deal with water damage—
oh, so many tears!

Sequence: September 11th

my missing legs, they
put the lie to “phantom pain”—
heart-piercing towers!

the sleeping giant
wakes from his bed of comfort
and takes up his sword.

riding the west wind
through smoky plumes, countless flags—
dark Mars approaches

Haiku Noir

back home after work—
on my fresh-painted front door
a bloody handprint

their promises are lies—
there's no one in the mirror
again today

now at my arm's end
a gnarled and scaly claw—
when did that happen?

peering from the street
the mailman must know too much
he'll have to go too

this caveman rhythm
our common pulse more needful
than water or salt

driving home again
after hours of one way talk
suddenly, hot tears

roundness in my palm,
silky smoothness drives my blood
and, ah!, the rough spots

this ancient face
lit by the eyes of a child—
it's time to shed

explosive autumn
now, as below, so above
meteor shower

caught in wind-carved ice
on this distant nameless peak:
an empty Coke can

dug-in in Da Nang—
studying history's
most ghastly lessons

T'aichung morning show—
Chinese fighters dogfight
over CCK

North Korean seas
bow-spray rakes the flight deck crew—
bone-cold and ice-strafed

flight of the Habu—
reports of UFOs
flood the base switchboard

Hiroshima hellfire:
could this crucible yet forge
new katana?

etched in memories—
in stone walls by the death light,
red chrysanthemum

decades later,
night terrors still fester on
moonless nights: round eyes!

dead-end alley
darker than vacant sky—
yowl of a cat

stone still
on the church steps—
no one's son

homeless no more—
the soles of his shoes
white with frost

yellow police tape
crackles in cold wind—
patch of red ice

mown roses
in this madman's garden—
a hard rain

ice-fisherman
frost-brittle line still
in pale fingers

shelter trash can
filled with ripped-out labels
and assorted IDs

tank ruts
crisscross the field—
haiku from hell

fire in the sky
thunderous cataract of
tears

one in grief
nations weep for their
champions

your heat on my thigh
up from the depths
boiling springs

zoo mothers
clutch their babies
both sides of bars

rock strewn dusty moon
rising on the horizon
the water planet

web generation
surprise—the election flamed
in the chad room

in the boiling smoke
ten million shrimp feed in waves—
scarlet seaworm sways

sun bright orange-red
pillow lava in the surf
swells and darkens

crossing the sea floor
lobsters march in line to their
dark destination

deep crystal cavern
resplendent in lantern lights—
still there in the dark

hanging from a cord
totally dependent
trembling neophyte

Tanka

I wish I could forget.
So many times I've tried, like today,
to lose your memory.
Straining to go blank,
I see only you.

When you touched my cheek,
although you could have walked away,
I knew it then: even if I
never feel your touch again,
I am yours.

A fireman's helmet in a house in Queens,
placed carefully on the mantel,
ringed by photos.
But, in the driveway,
there's just one car.

Crystallines

1

Day so bright, shadows seem like night.
Cool veranda, dark within the light.

2

Buried at sea, our helmsman slips beneath the waves.
Flying fish take flight.

3

Dead calm twilight sea.
A dolphin leaps from black into the rosy blue.

4

Suddenly quiet, she gently hangs up,
touches her father's photo.

5

On her letter is one last teardrop
that marks the end and blurs her name.

6

Glittering black lake tonight,
bright butter moon, your stunning yellow light.

7

In the treetops, the fireflies wink on and off.
Distant thunder grumbles.

8

The graveyard's frozen hard.
We must wait for spring to thaw both ground and grief.

9

In golden grove, leaves slide down sunbeams,
a migrant bird's strange trilling song.

10

Windy, wintry day, the dead leaves fly.
No birds will try this pallid sky.

11

Deep sleeping branches garner strength.
Ice clad, they dream of April glory.

12

Late winter sky, lonely miles from you.
The spruce hills turn a darker blue.

13

The mural on the mall's facade is
festooned with butterflies at rest.

14

At the bottom of the wishing well,
a thank-you note lies bleeding ink.

15

Whippoorwill wakens to the full moon
rising clouds of delicious gnats.

16

Rain-soaked barnyard's a muddy bog,
but amidst the muck, blooms marigold.

17

This primeval sea of prairie grass
is grackle-peppered ... bison-strewn!

18

In banyan roots enwrapped,
the granite Cross glows in the midst of lilies.

19

Turtle shell found on grandma's grave:
vacant, yet it bursts with violets.

20

Amid myriad choices,
we value voices who sing us a song.

One Summer Day

Sequence, 21-27

21

From twisted sheets the new day rises,
low sun dispelling fever dreams.

22

Watering my garden - with the green
in the mist and steam, my rainbow.

23

In bright of day, mad dogs and I
in maple-shade together lie.

24

New mown grass, wild onion scent
console me through this torrid afternoon.

25

Ice tea pitcher breaks a beaded sweat.
Steaming, we welcome thunder's threat.

26

Under soft black sky, the dark hills,
the air filled with fireflies' fairy lights!

27

In the still night air, the ebbing heat
provokes the gray tree frogs to sing.



28

Dazed, in the doctor's office;
the foreign sound of laughter in the hall.

29

When she comes in, the whole room fades and
becomes mere background for her eyes.

30

Green streak through desert drab;
forty feet below, a lightless river runs.

31

Dawn forest afire - a lavender sky.
No time for beauty today.

32

Motionless in high sun,
I watch a thistle-seed ride the westward breeze.

33

Vintner's terrace dapples in warm rain.
What fragrance from the mingled wine!

34

Black emptiness from the North Star to Orion -
night clouds' silent flight.

35

In the clearing, a heap of vultures.
Watching at woods' edge, a lone fawn.

36

Dirt brown hillside beneath a gray sky;
two cardinals fly up the hill.

37

Tulips of a dozen colors
wave gently in time with the cool breeze.

38

Perched upon each forest hilltop,
houses in clearings with valley views.

39

Chasing away the neighbor's cat -
my lawn is full of young birds walking.

September 11th

40

The dead and missing, countless souls -
not one - no, none! - will be forgotten.

41

Highland cattle cooling down in the stream bed
ignore the jumping carp.

42

A pitcher of iced tea sweats on the tablecloth;
the wet circle spreads.

43

Low sun at late day; finally, a breeze.
The lake glitters at its touch.

44

Harvested fields - the sight is bittersweet this year.
Mother loved harvest time.

45

Below wind-whipped overhanging bank
the rainbow trout swim slowly now.

46

The downstairs floorboards groan
when everyone comes home for the holidays.

47

Your smile, so secret in the dark,
is betrayed by your moon-flashing eyes.

48

Ebb tide turns and surges ashore.
Meadow abloom glistens in sea mist.

49

Waiting for her at the clinic.
Windows writhe with rivulets of rain.

50

Above the maple full of songbirds,
two spreading contrails slowly drift.

51

Worming my way westward,
I devour herds and flocks—I pass fertile fields.

Greybeard loon goes laughing down the lane
astride a gust of passing wind.

Sea Story

Sequence, 2, 3, 53-64

53

Sailor's cliff-top home, with widow's walk,
is damp-dark on the seaward side.

54

The village schoolyard's oak-lined lawn
is sea-fragrant in the onshore breeze.

55

Sailor embarks before first light.
His whimpering dog stays on the wharf.

56

The ship's wake, spreading and fading,
curves slowly out to the horizon.

3

Dead calm twilight sea.
A dolphin leaps from black into the rosy blue.

57

Waves, rolling waves, waves rolling, rolling;
the swinging cabin lamp keeps time.

58

A soft bed shared; flowers in a jar;
farewells: another shore leave ends.

2

Buried at sea, the helmsman slips beneath the waves.
Flying fish take flight.

59

In a distant port,
a young man and his poor mother curse Sailor's name.

60

This final leg of his last voyage,
Sailor carves several scrimshaw gifts.

61

Home appears high on the horizon.
The widow's walk is empty, dark.

62

His dead wife's sister puts a teacup
in Sailor's old rope-hardened hands.

63

Reflected in his milk-blue eyes,
the sea is still in the cold, cold gaze.

64

His cliff-top home and its widow's walk
are damp-dark on the seaward side.





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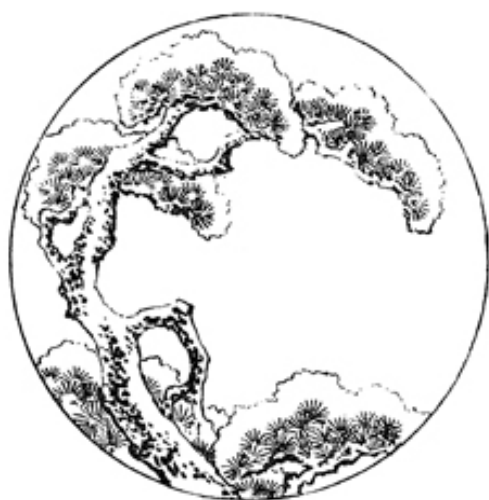
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Eight Shades of Blue



About the Poet

Denis M. Garrison, born in Iowa in 1946, has lived all over the United States and in Asia, North Africa, and Europe. Garrison lives with his wife, Deborah, near the Chesapeake Bay and Baltimore, Maryland. A 1974 university graduate in English Literature from Towson, where he edited the literary magazine and chaired the Towson English Association, Garrison taught creative writing for Johns Hopkins University's Free University. His poetry has been published in *Poetry Scotland*, *Nightingale*, *Verse Libre Quarterly*, *Talisman*, *Stirring: A Literary Collection*, *Rustlings of the Wind*, *World Haiku Review*, *The Writer's Hood*, *In Buddha's Temple*, *Short Stuff*, *Poetry in the Light*, *Poetic Voices*, *Haiga Online*, *East Village Poetry*, *World Haiku Association*, *Frozen Wind*, and others, and in his 1975 chapbook, *Port of Call and Other Poems*. Denis Garrison edited *Haiku Harvest*, *Ku Nouveau*, *Haiku Noir*, *Amaze*, *Templar Phoenix*, *Haiku Cycles*, and *Gunpowder River Poetry*. Besides his work with polystanzaic cinquain forms, Denis Garrison has created two new poetic forms. First, the crystalline has become a popular analogue for innovative haiku poets. Garrison's crystallines are included in this book. Second, the nautilus has a mathematical basis in the Fibonacci sequence and the Golden Mean.



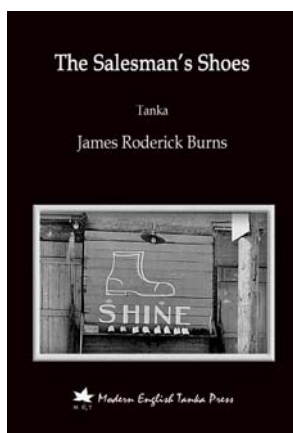
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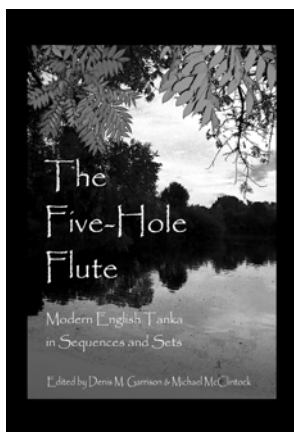
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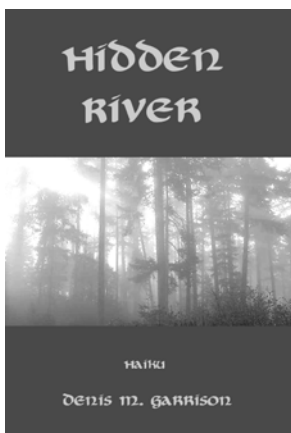
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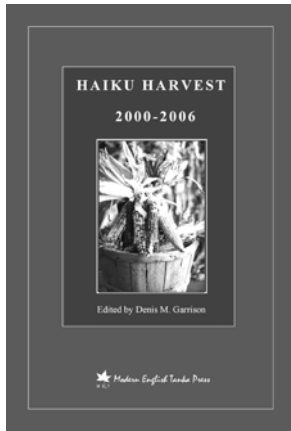
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