

One Hundred Two Haiku

by Bart Marshall

1

Motionless heron
in still morning shallow.
Death comes with no warning.

2

Startled awake, utterly still.
I am the trees,
roiling without wind.

3

Baiting the hook I draw
my own blood.
I catch a fish and let him go.

4

The dream of my self,
no longer believed,
continues unattended.

5

The locust tree that breaks my ax
is where the eagle
lights at sunset.

6

Hidden cove, old trees.
A rotted pier, a sunken boat.
Brown hawks circle.

7

Slack tide at noon.
No wind, clear water.
It is my own self holding still.

8

Always running to
or running from,
arriving is not possible.

9

Dark endless ocean,
swallowing God.
My boat is small and built by hand.

10

Tire swing, still, on the
grandfather tree. My dead
child's dog startles my hand.

11

Being dead, I am
as I've been since birth.
Life is not possible here.

12

Solitude and silence
call me like a mother.
Where is my answer?

13

When not sitting quietly
doing nothing,
I hurry to return.

14

In silence, my own voice
begs me to listen.
Where is it calling from?

15

Not knowing who I am,
I live life as if.
Death is not fooled by this.

16

Straining to hear emptiness,
I am impatient
with interruptions.

17

Snow trees, morning stove.
Deep in old firewood
burrowed insects burn awake.

18

Something inside strains
to speak and be heard.
What is it I have to say?

19

The pen, the hand, exist
within me. The thoughts,
the words, come of their own.

20

Against all odds,
it seems, I am.
No reason for it, yet here it is.

21

Quietly being with
nothing to do.
What could be better than this?

22

The silent witness,
not doing, not caring,
is whom the world obeys.

23

That face looking out
of the mirror I hold –
who does he think he is?

24

Fresh sheets,
the sound of spring rain.
For a moment I forget I'm dying.

25

Advance into fear.
Fight for surrender.
Defeat is your victory.

26

Always, the relentless insistence
of the Obvious
to be known.

27

Sudden calm.
There is no reason to believe
I will live out the day.

28

Every moment the world
is created from scratch.
This is not a metaphor.

29

There was never a time
before this.
I have never lived except ... Now!

30

Experiences are so brief.
Does it really matter
what they hold?

31

Abandon all words.
Without words, what would
there be to understand?

32

A book falls from the
shelf and opens. It does not
say I am chosen.

33

No memories or time.
I hurtle through place
on the stillpoint of Now.

34

The wonder is I am at all.
How can I complain
about details?

35

Good man, bad man –
does it matter? I hope not.
I am the worst man I know.

36

I cross with care
the ice-fringed stream.
Falling is unwise so far from home.

37

After a hard-fought defeat,
an all-day rain.
Forgiveness brings light.

38

Old dying friend,
arms thin as fingers,
asks how my children are doing.

39

Hidden gestures of
secret kindness
dissolve worlds and create anew.

40

Forgive your enemy,
but do not let on.
Victory will court you.

41

Just now, alone,
cloistered by rain,
on a porch overlooking water ...

42

Old cove of childhood, here again.
At the moment of looking,
fish jump.

43

To fight or bow
is seldom clear. I ask,
“Which will strengthen my heart?”

44

Swirling trees with no wind.
Agreement
after long misunderstanding.

45

A good man deflects credit,
shoulders blame.
Why do so few embrace this?

46

The thrill of existence
is unknown
to the Creator of all things.

47

Dark morning house,
quiet open windows.
Coffee, and the scent of Truth.

48

Pancakes and eggs
in an all-night diner.
The waitress touches my hand.

49

How strange he is,
this one who thinks he's me.
Where does he go when I sleep?

50

When it is time to
write and no poetry comes,
you must change your life.

51

Spring days in January.
Daffodils and spirits
are fooled to life.

52

In stillness, songs
of the ten-thousand things
sung by a lone mockingbird.

53

Night wind at the window,
an old lover's voice.
I make my confession.

54

Cold sun, thin winter sky.
Shards of razor-edged light
assemble the world.

55

Night winter rain,
my daughter hours late.
The sudden phone stops my heart.

56

Long black night of unstoppable
thought. Sleep never comes.
Dawn grays the sky.

57

Bare woods, sharp shadows.
The lines of the world
intermingle as branches.

58

Thinking and doing,
I live out my scarce days.
Ceasing, I erase death.

59

Churning out dreams,
unearthing desires,
the flywheel holds momentum.

60

At dawn I rise to the day.
Night comes, it seems,
but a few thoughts later.

61

I am, therefore thought happens.
From Nothing, a thought,
therefore I am.

62

For a moment of glory,
years of work.
Better to glory in work.

63

Fearful and worried, I am old.
Lost in laughter,
I am yet unborn.

64

Distilled thought, frozen glimpse,
plain statement of truth –
Haiku are not hidden.

65

Good friends no longer young.
How grateful we've become
for the privilege.

66

When I die,
the world dies with me.
In consciousness alone it exists.

67

Unending fear, lust,
toil and devouring.
Hell is not elsewhere.

68

After death we are remembered,
vaguely,
by others who soon perish.

69

Thinking of the battle conjures fear.
When fighting the battle,
there is neither fear nor thinking.

70

The aching beauty
of this poignant world
is felt only by contrast.

71

Life dissipates
and is forgotten.
How can it be of consequence.

72

True gratitude of heart
does not bargain,
or ask for further mercies.

73

The dam has burst.
I no longer look outside myself
for anything.

74

The world is not viewed
through the one with eyes.
To see clearly, what a thing!

75

Knowledge breeds with
knowledge and multiplies.
Truth awaits your emptiness.

76

Sitting quietly, doing nothing.
Thoughts come or don't come
as they please.

77

Without technique, only sit.
Meditation
teaches meditation.

78

Choose carefully your words.
Even great poems and sutras
pollute silence.

79

Masters say, "Look within."
But where is within
when there is no without.

80

It is not two,
the stark Absolute,
the softness of oblivion.

81

As everything I am and know
perishes,
who is the witness?

82

Religions feed ignorance
in God's name.
The Truth is best sought elsewhere.

83

Dark morning window,
lighted room. Looking out
I see only within.

84

Sudden emptiness of mind.
He has vanished,
the one who is not God.

85

Simplify desires.
Fulfillment comes from
recognizing you are full.

86

The pain I endure,
and enjoy,
is all in the service of vanity.

87

Warm winter wind, so unexpected.
I forget my complaints,
and breathe.

88

Child of my child,
so perfect and true, what brings
you to these arms and heart?

89

Do without expecting.
Receive without claiming.
Everything comes.

90

Empty mind,
gazing between, not at,
sees Nothing with great clarity.

91

Advancing age means little.
I am growing old,
but becoming young.

92

To stop completely
and only be
flings wide the doors of perception.

93

The one who stands behind
and merely watches
has taken center stage.

94

Father, forgive me.
I am but a sick and whining child
in your house.

95

Quiet days are best.
There is a tyranny to
special occasions.

96

Too busy for haiku,
I write one anyway.
It looks much like this.

97

No history or future.
All there ever was or will be
is Here.

98

Open window,
trees faint-tipped red.
Just this, and winter is forgotten.

99

So many lists
of things to fix and do,
so few moments of clear life.

100

If the world is not real,
which it is not,
why bother to improve it?

101

Once awake,
does it really matter whether
the dream was good or bad?

102

Grey morning, wet spring trees.
The seeking of Truth
is what keeps it hidden.