

among floating duckweed



BRUCE ROSS



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Some of the haiku in this volume appeared between 1984 and 1994 in the following publications:

Brussels Sprout
Dragonfly
Frogpond
Haiku Headlines
Haiku International
Haiku Quarterly
haru no hana haiku
Ko
Modern Haiku
Mirrors
New Cicada
Piedmont Literary Review
Poetry Nippon
Wheel of Dharma

I would like to thank Murray David I would like to thank Murray David Ross for the *sumi* paintings accom collection.

spring chill --
on short legs the sparrow
sips from Lake Ontario

steady spring rain --
a tree takes shape
at dawn

cold drizzle . . .
the tulips lean against
the metal fence

a quivering branch
one moment after
the finch's flight

clear spring moon --
the dog sniffs at
the evening grass

light rain
the flowering forsythia reaching
up into it

trees
their clear reflection
in the muddy river

head bobbing up and down
the grackle walks up
the grassy hill

barren field --
April snow dusts
the tree stump

so many shadows
the small woods
in spring snow

early spring rain --
the mallards amble across
the melting ice

not minding one bit
a loon in the choppy waves
beyond the pier

wetland rain --
the swan is stock still
on the water

luminous spring moon --
the mallards sleeping
on Reilly Lake

sultry spring day --
a shower of pine nubbins
onto the walk

the spotted chest
of a perched hawk
. . . light spring rain

spring wind --
a sparrow pecks in
the dust

so brave
the small tree
in the flooded field

rainy pond . . .
standing erect one duck
waits on the shore

in the stillness
a magnolia blossom falls past
the lower branches

spring breeze . . .
a speck of dandelion fluff
rises in the air

early spring haze --
the crocuses just blooming
above the Charles River

spring twilight --
the purple sheen
of grazing cattle

the crow pauses
for the sun to pass
behind a cloud

cold April drizzle . . .
a little sparrow by itself
on the wire

spring dusk . . .
two kittens stare out the window
into it

last summer rain --
a crow shaking his feathers
on a maple branch

September wind:
the sunlit lily pad
bends in the air

dusk . . .
the dead tree's shadow
on the swamp

by the pond's edge
whir of a dragonfly
over tiny lily pads

summer mist . . .
the cows eat right off of
the hay truck

dried-out summer pond --
the heron lifts from a tree
at sunset

late summer wind --
the shimmering green wings
of the dead dragonfly

distant thunder . . .
a yellow leaf slowly spins
to the grass

quiet back road
the orange slug's antlers
are up

early summer morning . . .
a baby rabbit munches on
a patch of sunlight

gathering rain clouds . . .
the phlox by the roadside
already darkened

September twilight:
a seagull walks its shadow
across the sand

evening stillness --
the shimmer of raindrops
on the summer weeds

a red beaked swan
paddles down the Thames --
fluttering willows

on the dark porch
slowly now and then
one firefly

still summer morning --
the blackbird's feather
floats down

half on the earth
half onto the wet grass
morning slug

late summer dampness --
a chipmunk spins around
on the woodland trail

by itself
far from the shore
circle of bright river weed

approaching summer night --
a loon dives beneath
Indian Lake

morning sprinkles . . .
a whole slug family crosses
the country road

sunset . . .
rustling on the opposite bank
yellow wildflowers

old pond . . .
in the shallows, the plump kingfisher
asleep on a snag

into the high weeds
trotting one behind the other
the young red foxes

deafening thunder --
Queen Anne's lace standing
in summer rain

deer flies drone --
a brown-green frog leaps
into dry summer grass

a mallard beak glistens
among floating duckweed --
first October chill

autumn dawn . . .
the birds rearrange themselves
in the naked tree

autumn darkness . . .
the sound of spattering
before the raindrops

wind . . .
holding on with both feet
autumn crow

autumn mist . . .
one flawless sweetgum leaf
flat on the sidewalk

lamppost after lamppost
the pigeons squatting
in November rain

stillness
the chickadee's call above
the autumn stream

moonless autumn night --
the ducks quickly move away from
the dark pier

autumn mountain stream --
the white birch bark
unravelling

fall rain . . .
the muddy cows beside
the dilapidated barn

winding rural highway . . .
almost missed under the vines,
field of baby pumpkins

autumn morning --
the indignant duck splashes
out of the pond

a frog sitting
in Otterslide Creek --
submerged lake grass

icy fall morning --
the mallard in the center
of its ripples

steady autumn rain . . .
a leaf drops down to
the old pond

wide-eyed
on a late autumn branch
mewling squirrel

how strange!
the mallard's orange feet wagging
over its head

early fall pond . . .
after the frog's leap
wind in the rushes

the unfocused eyes
of the baby gray squirrel --
half-turned autumn leaves

autumn sunset . . .
perched among the last leaves
the restless crow

the loon's cry
at Burnt Rock Lake --
slow autumn clouds

autumn moon . . .
only in the far pasture
the night fog

a tiny kingfisher
plunges into pond water --
rising autumn mist

even on
the crust of first snow,
the yellow leaves

autumn damp . . .
a crow drinks from a puddle
in the hay field

November drizzle --
the squirrel's head beneath
the wet leaves

a crow caws into
the silent winter morning --
the lightest snowfall

December sunset --
all along the ridge, squirrel nests
in the empty trees

first snowstorm --
from everywhere the singing
of the morning birds

old winter oak --
all of the branches
as shadow

March dusk --
a mallard swims in the water
around the ice

frozen winter wind --
the deer tracks lead deep into
the pine thicket

chattering sparrow . . .
a speck of snow drops
from the low branch

winter fog . . .
the sudden smell of linden trees
in the cold night air

December chill --
wave after undulating wave
of migrating ducks

middle of the night --
an icicle glistens
in the dark pine

winter twilight:
the tinkle of the creek under
the snowy footbridge

bright winter sun --
a chickadee perched
on a dry weed

winter branches --
a dog barks at
the morning fog

heavy snowstorm --
the barren trees across from
the farmer's field

winter pond --
the bulrushes tilting in
light wind

winter sun . . .
the row of bird tracks
curve with the stream

tumbling across
the snow-covered roof
a dry leaf

winter dusk --
the sparrow shifts itself
on the pine

sunless winter park --
all the rhododendron leaves
drooping down

morning drizzle . . .
the long-necked mallard stares across
the frozen pond

still winter field . . .
the repeated bark of
a solitary crow

winter woods:
the mallard ankle deep
in the shallow pond

gray winter wind . . .
the branches stirring
behind the house

winter haze . . .
a bit of yellow cracker
in the crow's beak

winter lake --
the small breakers move toward
the frozen shore

morning rain . . .
the long black line
of winter ducks