

These little poems are written in the style of the Japanese Haiku. Haiku is made up of three unrhymed short lines of 17 syllables, with the writer presenting an image, and also conveying an emotion about the image. Among the classical Japanese poets, the subject matter was specifically nature and contained a season word, denoting the time of year the poem takes place. Contemporary Haiku poets have extended the subject matter beyond things that are limited to season, plant or animal.

I like Haiku as a form of writing because it is a challenge to be limited to an exact form, and to depict a story in a few words which implies as much by what is unsaid as by what is said.

Ruth Wilson

WINTER

Forlorn old scarecrow.
Forsaken in winter field.....
Faithful to his post.

For winter breakfast
Blackberry jelly on toast.
Memory of thorns.

Such utter stillness
Creeping cat-like through the house..
Echoes of summer.

Here on mountain top
I squat like Hindu Swami..
Broken ski buckle.

Of that heart were cold
When mirror says you are old..
And his eyes confirm.

First day of the year!
Not even a sparrow track..
New snow on old snow.



SPRING

Strident, cawing crow
Breaking the frosty stillness
Marks Spring's arrival.

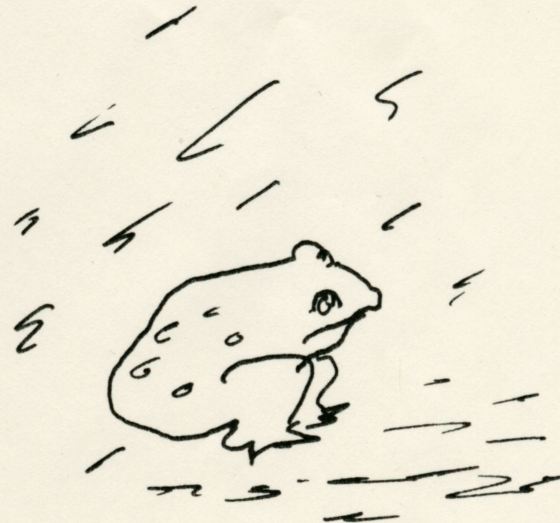
Spider weaves her web
Unmindful that tomorrow
Is my cleaning day.

Entering greenly
Into wetness of spring rain
Gleefull old bullfrog.

Where once grew lilacs
So purple, fragrant and gay
Now stands this gas pump.

On this grey spring day
As cherry blossoms shiver,
Smell of fresh, hot bread.

Here am I secure
Behind heavy door of oak.
Distant song of lark.



SUMMER

Spiteful peonies!
While I was away, they bloomed
For neighbor's pleasure.

Sitting in darkness
Sweet smell of honeysuckle..
Sting of mosquito!

While scolding my son
The rainbow faded away.
Such an empty sky!

Quiet, my children!
Your father studies the stars.
Defiant bullfrog.

While eating supper
In angry silence, we heard
The thrushes singing.

In fragrant blossoms
The butterfly seeks nectar
While shadows lengthen.



Autumn

What a nice surprise!
First a flaming tree, and now
A glowing carpet.

Frail delicate stem,
All its petals have fallen..
Fragrance everywhere..

Slowly lifting fog..
A light in neighbor's window..
Why did we quarrel?

Beautiful these leaves
On my freshly swept carpet..
Carefree little son..

Old man in the sun..
Falling leaves cover his hat.
Dream on, Grandfather!

Oblivious to
The world's cruel frustrations..
Serene rising moon.



MUSING ON MRS. WHISTLER MUSING

(Ruth Wilson)

For Mothers' Club, April 29, 1982

There she sits, against the wall
Dressed in black, and that's not all;
Folded hands, a cap of lace,
Demurely poised, calm of face.

Was she a contented wife,
Did she nothing rue in life?
Were her hidden fantasies
Woven into tapestries?

Did she see herself in dance,
Or in mission work in France?
In ballet, or a teacher?
Did lure of travel reach her?

Did she ever walk the dog
Or sprint on a morning jog?
Had she dared to spread her wings-
My! There are so many things!

Bridge, stamps, swimming, hiking;
Bowling, skiing, crafts, biking;
Sailing and photography,
Art, parapsychology.

There is ALWAYS real estate
A ship's captain, or first mate.
How about a lady painter,
Or a church's warden sainter?

-2-

I can see her in her jeans
At a table writing reams.
Did she ever burn the toast
Or forget about the roast?

Her thoughts, what were they about?
If her son had been a scout,
Oh! the possibilities
To stretch her abilities!

'Stead of lounging in that chair
Slowly graying in her hair
This offspring of Adam's rib
Should have started women's lib.

Seeing her there, chaste and pure
Spaced out, passive and demure,
I find it hard to believe
She really did her son conceive.