

Poems in the form of Haiku by Paul Curry Steele

The mustache Charlie
Chaplin wore in his films was
Not hair but greasepaint.

In the U. S., most
Male babies are circumcised;
In the UK, few.

Gingerbread covered
With warm lemon sauce is a
Very fine dessert.

Father bought a new
Car every two years, always
Another Hudson.

A hanged man's penis
Stands up and out. He loses
Control of his bowels.

The basenji dog
From Africa is noted
For having no bark.

Father said nothing.
"My little sugar dumpling,"
Mother would call me.

Our living room had
Two double sliding pocket
Doors of golden oak.

He "streaked" (ran naked)
Across the football field at
A big game. Caught, jailed.

The older child stabs
The hated younger child to
Death with sharp scissors.

The plastic fake trees
Seen in countless waiting rooms
Need no care, fool some.

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My psychologist
Lost his license for carnal
Play with a client.

Plain yellow cake, warm
From the oven, eaten with
Butter and cold milk.

Chauncey: an ancient,
Old-fashioned, formal name now
Seldom given boys.

I don't believe in
Spiritualism. The
Dead are quite silent.

Yet I read accounts
That almost compel belief
In the dead stirring.

Hay-Adams House is
A small, upscale hotel not
Far from the White House.

On Election Day,
Nell sits on her front porch till
Someone buys her votes.

At Clifton's coffin,
Mother thought he opened one
Eye and looked at her.

Our dog Bobby ran
Loose and chased cars. He got run
Over by a car.

He stares directly
And fixedly at the sun
Until he goes blind.

My cousin Tillman
Browning went down with his ship,
The *Arizona*.

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I learned that you can
Hang yourself from a doorknob.
I don't yet know how.

The cat bore her wee
Kittens on old clothes lying
Back in a closet.

Dark hair parted in
The middle, Virgin-style: the
Duchess of Windsor.

Mother soaked raisins
Overnight before adding
Them to cake batter.

Summers, when a child,
I would stay for two weeks with
Our kin on Cow Creek.

Freshwater pearls, once
Irregular, now are shaped
Perfectly and sold.

The Book of Knowledge
Told me that Santa Claus was
Really my parents.

Some Chinese women
Wear long dresses with a high
Collar and slit skirt.

On Mother's Day one
Wore a fresh red rose (Mother
Living) or a white.

My slight heart murmur
Kept me from being drafted
Into the Army.

Some male models are
Now shown "beardy," with some days'
Growth of dark whiskers.

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Mother often sat
On the front porch stringing and
Breaking raw green beans.

Elizabeth Anne
Cunningham was my sister's
Best friend in high school.

The Duke and Duchess
Of Windsor had two dogs (pugs)
In place of children.

Mother liked to bake
A pineapple upside-down
Cake set with cherries.

For years I have read
About cheese fondue but have
Never eaten it.

The traditional
Ballads my grandfather sang
Were lost when he died.

None of his children
Wanted them. They liked music
On the radio.

Though Mother liked "nice"
Dishes, she had no passion
For antique china.

I made a pencil
Drawing of Jo Ann's head. I
Think it is quite good.

Selective Service:
What a cunning term that was!
Now there is no draft.

A new mode in art:
Soft sculpture. Cloth, foam rubber,
Flexible plastic.

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Celebrate Christmas?
No. I have not done so since
1943.

Mother was skilled at
Using the sewing machine.
She often made clothes.

I like parsnips cut
Crosswise into disks, which are
Sautéed in butter.

I appreciate
Ramps for disabled persons
Instead of steep stairs.

Scratches and bites from
Cats can turn deadly, I have
Read. I like cats less.

Mr. Burns in our
Advanced Latin course later
Tried to pick me up.

My sister-in-law
Louise said that Sybil "could
Not hold her liquor."

Mother bought me a
White portable radio,
Which I used for years.

Effexor XR:
Psychoactive drug. It keeps
Me sane and alive.

Of a lesbian
Pair, one may be mannish, the
Other feminine.

Shakespeare might not have
Liked me, but I think he would
Have understood me.