

Poems in the form of Haiku by Paul Curry Steele

When a child I loved
To walk with an umbrella
Through all kinds of rain.

Mother treated me
To an applesauce cake on
Each of my birthdays.

I played with and prized
The dolls in our house left by
My older sister.

Mother persuaded
My father to let me take
Piano lessons.

I love snow but hate
To have snowballs thrown at me
By fun-loving boys.

Uncle Clifton's boots
Had a complex aroma,
Oddly pleasurable.

I loved to ride in
The rumble seat of a car,
Blown about by winds.

My cousin Jo Ann,
Who rarely saw a movie,
Made me watch them twice.

Bill MacNemar would
Whistle expertly as he
Walked home late at night.

In the cathedral
Of poetry there are some
Praying mantises.

Many autumn leaves,
Fallen, I find beautiful.
They do not keep long.

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Extremes of heat and
Extremes of cold test human
Ingenuity.

I used to think I
Liked fall best, but now I like
Sweet spring much better.

There was a tintype
Of my mother when a girl,
But it has been lost.

To my surprise I
Found chopped spinach just out of
A can delicious!

A song will haunt me
For hours or days. At present
It is "Old Dog Tray."

Pretty girls abound,
But magnificent women
Are not so common.

The thick and glossy
Cowrie shell is matte inside,
A delicate blue.

A heavy word is
Homosexuality,
So polarizing.

Miss Clark, my fourth-grade
Teacher, gave me a bath when
I went to her house.

It is hard for me
To let the past go, to stop
Berating myself.

Sweet pea: old-fashioned
Climbing plant with sweet-scented,
Pale-purple flowers.

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I repeatedly
Check to see that I still have
My keys and wallet.

I stood all evening
And all night on a bridge with
Thoughts of suicide.

THEIR HEADS TWISTED OFF!
The tabloid headline intrigues
The deludable.

Bright tiger lilies
Brought indoors I arrange in
A dull pewter vase.

A man may carry
His suit coat over his right
Shoulder on hot days.

My mother once felt
Like throwing herself under
A moving coal train.

Color gladdens life.
My red telephone charms me
As black ones did not.

I am in awe of
Handsome young men in sandals
With perfect toenails.

Macbeth badly done
Makes you wonder why a group
Extends itself so.

Some six million Jews.
Some twenty million Russians.
The Russians get less.

I was not the type
Of son my father wanted,
Which I knew in part.

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Who will keep the seeds
So that no cultivated
Flower disappears?

I am glad to have
A good knowledge of German,
Which is much misprized.

I have had scattered
Sex but no emotional,
Close relationships.

The old estate where
We lived in Virginia was
Known as Coverley.

After the bars closed,
I would walk the streets till dawn
Wanting a lover.

Sesame seeds and
Chickpeas (garbanzo beans) I
Eat with much pleasure.

I rarely go out
At night. There is more danger,
And I don't see well.

Tennessee Williams'
Sweet Bird of Youth I saw on
The stage. Impressive!

I have had sex with
Two young men who would not get
Completely naked.

I have learned never
To loan money to any
Person anytime.

He kept exclaiming,
"We're making babies tonight!"
His partner was gay.

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I saw *Medea*
Starring Judith Anderson
While at Virginia.

He could no longer
Read books on mathematics,
Which had been his field.

He wanted to die
By starving himself to death
At age twenty-two.

Why he shot himself
In the face he could not say.
It happened quickly.

He kept to himself.
At our meals he said nothing.
He wanted no one.

I fell victim to
Entrapment by the Vice Squad:
Handcuffed, put in jail.

The D. C. jail cells
Teem with pale and aggressive
Cockroaches unchecked.

I saw Maria
Callas and heard her sing in
Washington, D. C.

Our Methodist church
Has been remodeled to look
Episcopalian.

Sturdy typewriter:
My Royal portable bought
In 1950.

I got infested
Three times with crab lice, loathsome
Bloodsucking creatures.

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Then perfectly still,
My mother's face had, I thought,
A stately beauty.

At her grave one day
I sensed her spirit had left.
I never went back.

Two shocking victims:
Reporter Daniel Pearl and
Gay Matthew Shepard.

I did not find out
Until late what the penis
Was for and could do!

Lab tests run disclosed
A few gonorrhea cells.
Two shots in each bun.

Facing a killer
Must be dreadful. The question:
Will you die or live?

He wants a clone made
Of a son who died. He still
Has a living son.

I have seen Henry
Fonda, T. S. Eliot,
And Thornton Wilder.

When it comes around
No one else knows, no one says
"Happy Birthday, Paul!"

I have no car. I
Walk or go on a bus or
Hire a taxicab.

I am greatly touched
By the sensitivity
And kindness of men.