

POEMS by Paul Curry Steele

Poems in the form of Haiku by Paul Curry Steele

In the past, some boy
Sopranos were castrated
To keep their voice high.

The comic strip *Non
Sequitur* is the only
One I care to read.

Smoking cigarettes
Was a smart thing to do. He
Died of lung cancer.

The biggest mistake
I ever made in my life:
Getting circumcised.

Pigeons flying low
In a park or piazza
Land where bread was tossed.

A psychiatrist?
“Everybody has problems,”
My mother told me.

Jack, a bombardier
Whom I knew but briefly, died
Over Germany.

Marilyn Monroe’s
Body on an autopsy
Table: beautiful.

With few exceptions,
College athletes loathe and fear
English 101.

Fay Emerson. Who?
Blonde actress, married one of
The Roosevelts’ sons.

Western women who
Bleach part of their hair to look
Stylish . . . look freakish.

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Jean Harlow, before
She played a scene, rubbed ice cubes
Over her nipples.

My parents said “arsh”
Potatoes. They meant “Irish”
Or white ones, I learned.

More women than men
Attempt suicide. More men
Than women succeed.

“Christ of the Andes”:
Colossus on Sugarloaf
Mountain in Rio

Goethe and Schiller—
The younger man a lesser
Light— became fond friends.

Tomatoes cooked, we
Are now told, are healthier
For us than raw ones.

“If I ever told
anyone about it, he
would stop loving me.”

Are there gay people
In Heaven, I wonder, or
Are they all in Hell?

Our aging bodies
May come to crave pain pills, much
As children crave sweets.

At 20, I just
Missed going to bed with my
German professor.

I no longer go
To movies, am crippled and
Have to piss often.

Paul Curry Steele

A Foggy Night

A graceful, narrow band
of Oriental characters,
their color a matte blue-gray, coils
around his upper right arm.
Their meaning is unknown to him.
He remembers only a foggy night
and the brightly lit doorway
of a tattoo parlor.