

TIME'S BARTER

Haiku and Senryu

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nine days of rain:
what use the crowing
of a cockerel?

mizzly afternoon:
the relay calls of roosters,
and then, a rainbow.

green pears on green leaves—
simply-clad village girl,
inherently lovely.

creepy caterpillar,
when did you become
these flying colours?

wife's promotion and transfer—
life's
bitter-sweet-bitter things...

midsummer night—
the moon, a snake boat
fishing stars.

deep forest—
columns of charcoal smoke
hazing the sky.

Cherra's deep jungle—
a thunderous river raging,
a living root bridge.

autumn sky spreading
heaps of cotton wool—all set
to make winter rugs.

effervescent milk
filling a deep gorge—
Likai Falls in summer.

at forty-three
even a slight smile is hostile
to my youthful looks.

pears, plums, black cherries:
for how long, when iron rods
are pointing at the sky?

fresh green leaves atop
an orange tree—white atop
my head, also fresh.

self-authored volume
newly arrived—I begin by
smelling the stories.

green soldiers
stripping the hillside bare—
grass caterpillars gorging.

last haiku of Bashō—
alone
facing a blank page.

winding road by a river—
jingling church bells?
a smithy.

heating, hit; dipping, hit—
iron, shaped by fire,
shaped by water.

never knew bulbuls
feeding at dawn, noisy as
Khasi funerals.

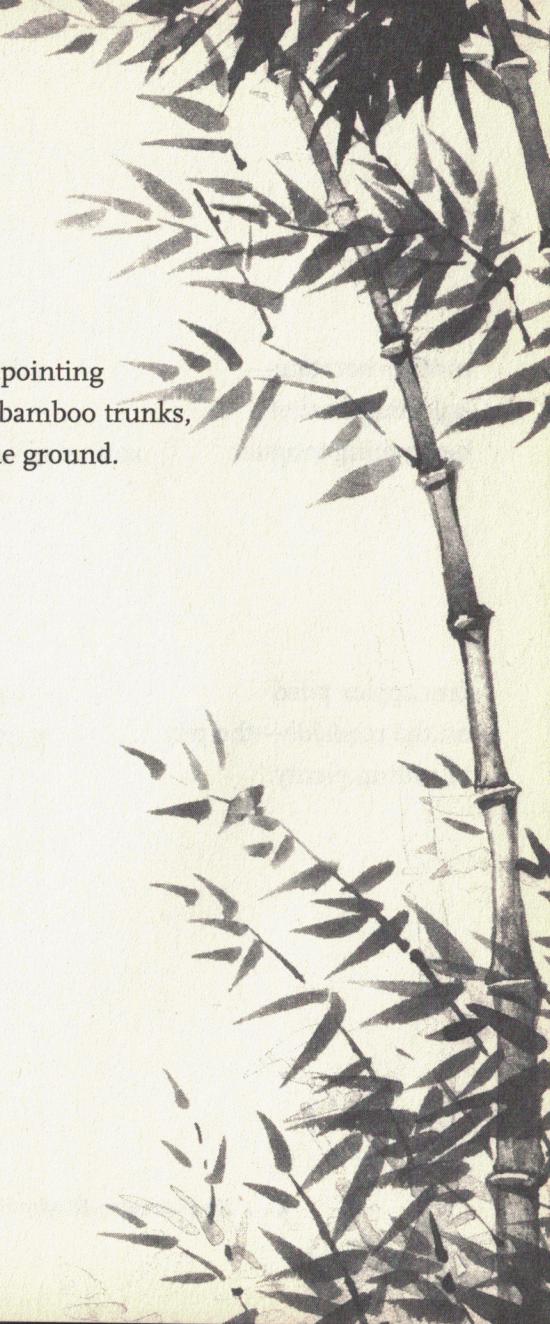
rule-the-roost gridlock—
cars don't have a death rate,
only birth.

fortunate mismatch—
wife
not reading poems.

wind chimes tinkling—
how sweetly, when she calls,
the telephone rings.

bamboo shoots pointing
to the sky—old bamboo trunks,
heads bent to the ground.

windy night—
feverish
till sunrise.



mother berating—
lightning flashes,
her lashing tongue.

pineapples piled
on the roadside—the pity
of rotting plenty.

daughter's birthday:
a 'death day'?
neither cakes nor greetings.

blustery evenings—
cold fed unendingly
on sneezes.

wind clamouring—
a drunk on the roadside
won't let me sleep all night.

that blue light behind
dark clouds, whose world, luminous
above this night gloom?

evening on a hill—
even the sun can be cupped
in these tiny palms.

autumn leaves falling—
time's barter, dreadful
for humans alone.