

tion with the subject matter of the poems. A clean, stark typeface would lessen the hurdle to unpack the poems. Letterform is an important consideration, especially in micropoetry.

Overall Moyer does a good job with her stated intention: to find her voice and not be silenced. I hope this collection opens discussions on the trajectory of English-language haiku—its strengths, and limitations. I get the feeling that Kelly Moyer is just warming up to deliver more.

Home Again, by Rick Tarquinio (No place [Bridgeton, N.J.]: Odd Duck Press, 2023). 110 pages, 5" × 7¼". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. No ISBN. Price: \$20.00 from <https://ricktarquinio.bandcamp.com/merch>

Reviewed by Randy Brooks

*H*ome Again is Tarquinio's third collection. In this book he invites you to journey out into the world in the spirit of Bashō. While in the natural world, he also invites us to find ourselves at home in the constantly changing seasons. Perhaps his *ars poetica* haiku is this one:

to be that no one
Basho spoke of...
autumn road

When he ventures out to discover what's happening in this place at this time, he lets the haiku find him, not the other way around. The haiku is not about his ability to wrest significance out of the landscape. It is not about trying to use nature to express his inner struggles. He is not writing haiku that twist words around to show his facility with the language. He writes from a sense of wonder and seeks insights about being at home, again, in this ever-changing world in rural, southern New Jersey. This is evident in the title poem:

home again
 the dirt road stretching
 into moonlight

In March of 2021, Tarquinio's haiku were featured on the Mann Library's Daily haiku web site. In the introduction he explains his approach to haiku. "I'm a walking poet. The woods and farm fields where I live are the same ones I grew up in. Every morning and evening I walk here in search of little moments that sometimes, though rarely, become haiku. I jot them down as they occur to me, say thanks and move on. ... I'm less concerned with facts than truth and try to leave space for the reader to enter the moment. I prefer haiku where people are absent, implied, or remain in the periphery."

Home Again is organized by season, with each season indicated by a wood block print by his son, Matt. Here are two haiku from Spring:

April flurries	ripened wheat
the hermit's woodpile	white-tails wade
almost gone	the evening calm

In the first we imagine the flurry of snow that covers the "hermit's woodpile." Evidently the hermit had put away enough firewood to make it through the winter. The woodpile is "almost gone" but we also get the lingering hint that winter is almost gone, and the hermit is also, perhaps, an old man on his last legs.

In the second haiku we get a beautiful scene of the green winter wheat that will soon be harvested in early summer. The deer "wade" through the wheat which evokes waves of wind crossing the field. Ultimately this haiku is about both the deer and the poet sharing the calmness of the evening. No hurry. No worry.

This next haiku features another calm evening, this one in Summer:

evening fields
 an old John Deere
 cools in the shade

The tractor (and farmer) had a long day working the fields. Come evening, the tractor “cools in the shade” of the farmhouse trees. We can imagine the earlier heat in contrast. Mentioning that it is “an old John Deere” suggests that this is not a massive new tractor. Probably it does not have an air-conditioned cab. The tractor comes to represent the farmer cooling down after a good day’s work.

Two haiku from Autumn show the understated playfulness in his haiku. The first features the quiet of an empty nest home:

empty nest
a pile of leaves
no one jumps in

The second features the playfulness of a grown-up foolish enough to jump into a pile of leaves like a child.

harder now
the ground beneath
a pile of leaves

Here is a favorite from the Winter section.

the farmer’s daughter
a snow angel
beside her grave

Of course, this can be imagined several ways. The “snow angel” could be a small statuette covered with snow, or it could be someone’s impression playfully left next to the grave. Either way, the pathos of loss remains the same.

I will close with his outstanding 2020 Touchstone award haiku that appears in the Spring section:

pasture fence
where the paint ran out
a bluebird’s song

For Tarquinio, nature is not contained by humans. We may try to contain it or color it with our efforts, but ultimately, it is colored and celebrated best by “a bluebird’s song” that brings us *Home Again*.



BRIEFLY NOTED

Nick Virgilio: Collected Haiku, ed. Geoffrey Sill (Winchester, Va.: Red Moon Press, 2023). 372 pages; 6" × 9". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-958408-13-1. Price: \$30.00 from www.redmoonpress.com

Virgilio was a seminal figure in ELH’s first wave, so despite falling out of favor in later years, a review of his work is welcome. Enter Sill’s *Collected Haiku*, which gathers all published work, as opposed to previous collections *Selected Haiku* (1985, 1988) and *Nick Virgilio: A Life in Haiku* (2012). The sheer volume of haiku in the new work, some twelve-hundred by my rough math, includes famous poems as well as more mundane works. Every poet has published work that isn’t up to their highest standards, and Virgilio is no exception, so the need for a full collected works might be applicable to only the scholar who wants to examine how he repeated lines and /or themes—or for the reader unfamiliar with more than a few passing poems. However, at his best—which he often was—Virgilio was an exciting poet.