

CRESTWOOD LAKE

New and Selected Haiku Poetry

By **Bernard Lionel Einbond**



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Crestwood Lake

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We are grateful to our father and husband for the gift of Crestwood Lake. We thank our father and husband's friends Eileen Allman and George Braman, our editor Jim Kacian and our grandmother and mother Rose Chayt Saxe for all they have done.

—*Aaron, Julia and Linda Einbond*



Soffietto Editions

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A Reflection

The sweet spring night
Of cherry blossom viewing
Has ended.

Basho

Some say time heals. I rather think it forms a scar, covering the wound and preventing it from being constantly exposed. Reading my friend's poetry, I am both aware of his spirit and reminded that he is gone. His poems are so like him—terse, yet intensely personal. His eye for detail, his fine tuning of everyday events of life, make haiku his perfect vehicle.

His wife and children, in collecting and putting together this second posthumous volume of his poetry, have preserved his sensitivity and quiet power. In the cycle of the seasons, in the repetition of refrains, and in the sheer joy of living expressed in these poems, they have rekindled his memory. As in *The Tree As It Is*, each poem speaks clearly and forcefully. The whole unfolds like a tapestry. He was able, through the prism of his poetry, to embrace the varied colors of life. We, his devoted readers, can do no less.

George Braman

A Retrospective

Bernard was a classicist, his intellect, temperament, and education at harmony within the artistic traditions he embraced as poet and teacher. *Crestwood Lake* is his last gift to us, the gleanings of his brilliant mind shaped to the demanding form he chose for his art. Each haiku is its own world; an echo or repetition merely reminds us of “the rose at each moment/a different rose.” Like the Hudson River flowing outside his window, the haiku are “each moment different.”

Yet beneath this rich variation lies the simple constant Bernard celebrated in his opening three haiku: the love that passes from generation to generation, from his adoring parents to his beloved wife Linda and their children, Aaron and Julia, so joyously welcomed. Such love may be described but not measured in seasons. The poet’s “spring never ends”; the years of marriage are “an endless summer”; the profound love for a “son and daughter—/just the way they are” exists in a never-ending present. Even future generations are anticipated at Crestwood Lake: “the children grown up,/waiting for their children/to come feed the ducks.”

To read Bernard’s collection of haiku is to be miraculously in his company again, delighting in the observations of his keen eye, admiring the musical precision of his language, and meditating on the wisdom he generously shares with us. It is to miss him a little less—and much more.

Eileen Allman

for Linda, Aaron and Julia

•

I, their only child,
so confident of their love—
my spring never ends

•

love freely given
all these years my wife and I—
an endless summer

•

bringing us such joy
our son and our daughter—
just the way they are

SEASONS

peeling the apple
in an unbroken spiral—
year's end

New Year's Day—
the sun is up
too early

firecracker—
the hiss before it goes off
year of the serpent

New Year's Day—
the millennium
one day closer

peeling the apple
in an unbroken spiral
at years end

still celebrating
with a lion dance—
year of the tiger

spring daybreak—
a robin ascends
to a higher perch

its whiteness blinding
even as it melts away—
April snow

colors everywhere—
many more than in summer—
spring flowers

the round purple vase—
a kind called Depression glass
filled with spring flowers

spring flowers—
I do not know all their names—
but then, why name them?

the same spot each year
yet they come as a surprise—
cherry blossoms

none here yesterday—
these odd mushrooms on the lawn—
spring rain

my wife's gentle touch—
her long fingers so narrow—
spring rain

her eyes the color
of the sidewalk after rain—
spring morning

the millennium—
each day a little sooner—
spring once more

just an hour ago
I left it in the city—
country moon

streets nearly empty,
shoppers gathered in doorways—
summer storm

her hair turning gray
I still see her as she was
that summer we met

“Rose is a rose . . .”
no—the rose at each moment
a different rose

list of season words—
under the summer entries
atom bomb

the summergarden—
while musicians play, petals
fall to the water

from the Hudson
to the Harlem—quite far—
a child's summer walk

lightning—
then thunder and rain—then
lightening

although a suburb,
as if deep in the country,
the crickets' sounds

wondering what town
these tourists are from out of—
summer in New York

looking quite as if
the earth revolves around it—
the sun

solitary walk—
sorting things out in my mind—
autumn dusk

September morning—
children going back to school—
colors everywhere

stepping in puddles—
the smell of rubber raincoats
and boots—back to school

the stained glass windows
of the temple coloring
October sunlight

emerging from clouds
the moon pauses for a while—
wind subsiding

windy night—
the moon from cloud to cloud
hurrying

in a strange town—
only the moon
from back home

Hallowe'en—ghosts,
witches, goblins, in costume—
the black cat real

And her dark brown eyes—
the way she puckers her chin—
autumn leaves

Paris sky
in New York—
grey November

seeing her once more,
knowing it's for the last time—
winter dusk

a wintry morning—
baked apples in the oven—
my wife up early

my grandmother
made praline candy with it—
fresh snow

dressing for winter—
wearing a mohair sweater—
so soft to the touch

sounds in the attic—
eye to eye with a raccoon—
winter night

each moment different—
the Hudson from my window—
even in winter

turning up the heat—
already behind schedule—
this late winter dawn

waking up on time—
going back to sleep again—
winter morning

bare branches and sky
the color of loneliness—
winter morning

already asleep,
my wife breathing beside me—
softly—winter night

pretending to sleep,
my wife and I both lying
awake—winter night

peeling the apple
in an unbroken spiral—
winter afternoon

CRESTWOOD LAKE

just an inlet
where the Bronx River widens
we call Crestwood Lake

from the jogging path,
if you look closely, a hare
perfectly still

Crestwood Station
between Tuckahoe and Scarsdale—
almost a secret

Crestwood Station—
some commuters even stop
to view Crestwood Lake

after waterfalls
just the Bronx River again—
Crestwood Lake no more

where my wife grew up,
where our children grew up too—
the Crestwood house

remembering when
our name for him was pumpkin—
his head then so round

her grandmother's ring—
her name the same too—
Julia

Crestwood Lake—such calm
I must be back in Japan—
summer mist

he folds her a crane—
my son receives in return
an elegant kite

swans on Crestwood Lake—
the season never matters
so serene always

swans on Crestwood Lake—
spring, summer, fall—in winter
imaginary

her pale complexion—
as a child she had
such rosy cheeks

Crestwood Lake—
it must remind them of home—
my Japanese neighbors

Aaron and Julia
both at Harvard now—but now
empty nest

Crestwood Station
as in Norman Rockwell's painting—
still the way it was

Aaron and Julia
grown up now—other children
feeding the ducks

STAYING ALIVE

made from barks of trees—
these medicines I take
to live—another year

another spring—one
I was not expected to
ever see—still here

suddenly stricken—
my dreams come more and swiftly—
winter almost here

after thirty years
still seeking perfect dreams for
meeting each season

bright stars—
but they give no warmth—
frosty night

reading poetry,
not sure I have ever seen
plum blossoms

the silence between
the lightning and the thunder—
everything waits

UNCOLLECTED HAIKU

last week a snowstorm,
now people out in short sleeves—
summer before spring

early spring
an old man complains
of the cold

after those warm days,
the forsythia bent by
April frost

overcrowding in
the hospital's labor rooms—
full moon

summer solstice
and full moon—my wife
gives birth to our son

the moon half full—
half empty—
autumn night

my mother-in-law
tells of the rainstorm the day
my wife was born

as I near the house,
within an upstairs window,
my children's faces

my son and daughter
in separate bedrooms
close to each other

unhinged by the wind
the door to the screened-in porch
no longer banging

Japanese pilgrims
bow to their clogs—my toddler
says, these shoes walk good

the wrong spot each year
where my child once planted them—
black-eyed susans

away at college—
in his room the teddy bear
my son still keeps

my wife and I
walk to Crestwood Lake
just to see the swans

the children grown up,
waiting for their children
to come feed the ducks

ENDNOTES

“everything waits” from *The Tree As It Is*

“the sidewalk after rain” and “seeing her once more”
from “From Another Season”, renku by Bernard
Lionel Einbond, L. A. Davidson & Elizabeth Searle
Lamb, *M and A* XIV:3, 1983

“the moon half full” from “Circles in the Sand”, renku
by Bernard Lionel Einbond and L. A. Davidson

Note: Bernard Lionel Einbond’s wife and children have
added the sections “Staying Alive” and “Uncollected
Haiku” from misplaced drafts and notes.

COLOPHON

Crestwood Lake is set in I3/I6 Centaur

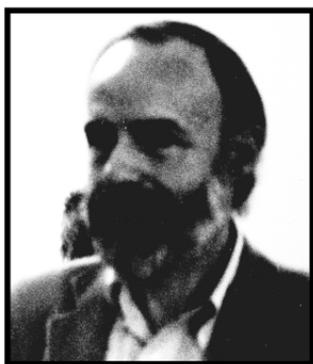
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BERNARD LIONEL EINBOND (1937-98) is an internationally recognized haiku poet and translator of haiku, as well as a poetry scholar and expert on song lyrics. Former chair of the Department of English of Lehman College of the City University of New York, Professor Einbond received his Ph.D. from Columbia in English and Comparative Lit-



erature in 1966, where he later taught Literature, Humanities and poetry courses. His dissertation, "Samuel Johnson's Allegory," was published as a book by Mouton and Company. His versatility is shown by his having been both the textual editor for Lionel Trilling's *The Experience of Literature* and a disc jockey at WCED in DuBois, Pennsylvania. In 1975 he won the Keats Poetry Prize from the UK. He collected his poetry in *The Coming Indoors and Other Poems*, published by Charles Tuttle and Company in 1979, which won a Haiku Society of America Merit Book Award, and *The Tree As It Is*, issued by Red Moon Press in 2001. In 1975 he served as President of the Haiku Society of America. He was contributing editor for song lyrics of Columbia University Press's *World of Quotations*. The benchmark of his career came in 1988 when his haiku *frog pond* was chosen as the Grand Prize winner of the Japan Air Lines Haiku competition.

