

Hundred-Stanza Renga

by Gail Sher and Andrew Schelling

[Published in *Simply Haiku*, Autumn 2010]

(1) summer

A whole year's passed—
he fetches down the elk skull,
aspen leaves shaking

(2) summer

night:
except for the occasional squawk of a korhaan . . .

(3) autumn moon

and a Moon of Yellow Willows
breaks across
bits of these tattered lives

(4) autumn

little knife-edges of snow
luminous against the clear blue sky

(5) autumn

mid-September—
and Wang Wei's poem hides a haiku?
pre-dawn buck's cry says yes

(6) misc.

pass me the hoe!
how many times do I have to ask?

(7) winter

Sand Hill Cranes
rise from the stubble field's first snow—
ice wrinkling the Platte

(8) winter

now I am thinking that
immolation is wrong

(9) travel

pawprints, criss-cross trails,
green tracks in the mud—
I, too, take the Great Journey

(10) travel

the truth of its clothes
in the cold hall, think of clothes

(11) lamentations

she thinks that had she become a nun
something about coats
light as soft as yellow foxes fur

(12) love

now her cloister's
a careless bedsheet across her thighs

(13) love

like a tree's shadow in darkness, she says
seated in her flesh
watching young night creep behind the massif

(14) love

dark ridge bristles with pine
dark thighs fragrant of jasmine

(15) spring flowers

fondling the flower—
light plump peas
float in the loosening pod

(16) spring

her eyes are blank
I feel no connection with her

(17) spring

rash blue petals
a dukula cloth covers Radha's
deep lotus

(18) autumn moon

chestnut-moon: I smear the land
a fierce bright lilac

(19) autumn

he eyes the mist-filled ravine
longing for "home's
familiar moon" (stars)

(20) autumn

bubbles splurge, though they are slow bubbles
sometimes empty white holes

(21) autumn

cold constellations
twist over Kullu
even the plum wine's sour

(22) winter

beware of mud piled and caked
in little squares of mud maps

(23) lamentations

my ornaments bones
of emptiness –
I study them for clues to lost love

(24) lamentations

yet, practically speaking, what is her fan
compared to the carp's life

(25) misc.

he studies the formal
stiff board, the fibers of silk
and longs for wind-torn high granite

(26) misc.

today you are a brook, feeling brook energy,
a monk thinks in his forest cell near Hua Hin

(27) spring flowers

a Full Wolf Moon
the brittle snow
but who recalls the dogtooth violet?

(28) spring

which dawn did the fresh wind blow
toward a knoll of fawns

(29) spring love

where in the dark grove,
eyes, eyes, where the ivory instep,
the petal-soft foot

(30) love

sun shines on my spine
as I greet him through the window

(31) love

the river merchant's wife—
by the gate the thick mosses
the unused hinges

(32) love

I read it as a book against war
a hundred years what did we learn

(33) misc.

light falls on raw wood
and softly falls on her
as she passes into sky

(34) travel

she bows, mimicking the dancer
because her ancestors are there too

(35) autumn travel

rises, tightens a scarf against the year's

first snow, the angled trees
strange skyline, smoldering clouds

(36) autumn moon

the noise of its blue
resolves into stars

(37) autumn

twice gone moon song glint
the poetry shelf's
one phase of the hunt

(38) love

her braid seeks shadows
snowdrops, honeysuckle, or in summer, violets

(39) love

he'd give her sapphire,
avalanche can't crush it,
but dwarf dogwood's soft on her cheek

(40) lamentations

I'm thinking of wings
rubbed with sky

(41) lamentations

sometimes it hurts
to hear that no snowflake falls
in the wrong place

(42) miscellaneous

where does a person with three kinds of defects

breathe out the master asks

(43) miscellaneous

or the sand lily –
if you say change to a sea-bird
where would it root

(44) miscellaneous

how a beaver floats under sky-words –
before what in a bud sprouting on a sprig of grass

(45) miscellaneous

this was near Chama,
a clump of blue juniper
where the clicking bones sang don't fear

(46) miscellaneous

that wild red impassible gully
rushed with such violence

(47) travel

I thought of sea-beds
thought of tilting red sandstone plates
the drift of continents

(48) travel

a relaxed tousled gamine emerges
from last year's prim and simple one

(49) love

easy to be near her,
but now I can't shake the Taoist

emblem inked on her nape-line

(50) love

I shiver through a shallow sleep
on this night of extreme cold

(51) love

her glowing bare shoulders burn me
indecipherably—
moon, crater, remorse

(52) religion

as if you are light and as you approach
you are dimmer light

(53) religion

and in that dim aura
coils of smoke, gray, twisted—
to you I offer a handful of water

(54) autumn moon

an old owl coos stirring the girl
whose face looks out

(55) autumn

steep rib of canyon, view of Denver
ne bear fattens on what—
crabapples?

(56) autumn

the combination of sere, barren wood laden
with richly colored fruits being starkly beautiful

(57) travel

being, in the Chinese cycle
metal, when the blues enter our heart,
...on a northbound train

(58) love

was it his tooth in her lighted body
beckoning him

(59) love

one brittle shard
in his sheets
a bone fragment left by the dream

(60) spring flower

the crocus breaks as parts of the sky
that are hers

(61) spring

all those abstract
skirts of rain
sweeping the mesa at Hopi

(62) spring

dogs chew light
they lay it at her feet

(63) travel

she has seen marvels
none scared her more than the
gods of the Punjab Hills

(64) lamentations

movement being like a shell or castanet
like the days and lives of her horses

(65) autumn moon

only the crickets chirr'd
when the word brindled sank
through Eldorado Gap

(66)autumn

the crocus breaks as parts of the sky
that are hers

(67) autumn

he studies the clouds
the first hard snow pellets sting
what has he lost

(68) lamentations

a flower is soft
and the pain of soft presses against the hill

(69) lamentations

just as I'd befriended
the Holocene,
angry constellations burnt the night sky

(70) miscellaneous

when you appear the interior land shifts
making sounds like stones

(71) spring flower

Tim Hogan showed me
the billion year jump, stone to stone,
kinnikinnik bells

(72) spring

he regrets that he's disturbed their nap
under the peony blossoms

(73) spring

useless, useless,
a late frost throws them to the winds
all the words of Hamlet

(74) travel

an instinct for home in a carrier-pigeon
has no presence in what will happen then

(75) travel

or the myna stole the peacock's feet—
that's what I
heard in the Kangra

(76) travel

the nipple of the bird
its sound in the dark grass

(77) love

tabla ektar tambur
bent the way we make love
one string one insect

(78) love

and the fire-pink, its ontogeny,
how it came to be, as you say, erupted

(79) love

caribou horns cast their moss
the moon's lost its link,
dream dream cries the blackbird

(80) miscellaneous

the impression I get is of
an image being destinies

(81) autumn moon

now redshaft flickers
left wings needle towards
leaf-fall-moon

(82) autumn travel

a distant reddish-brown mountain
looks like a flying dragon

(83) autumn

days I shuffle the Taoist
bird script symbols,
at night dream of baseball

(84) travel and love

he hears cars as air containing pleasure
towards which he has a certain relationship

(85) love

each time they thought
their thirst sated (redwoods, bay laurel)
old desire again

(86) winter

so my image of sky flips
white alternately occluded and revealed

(87) winter

while by night
crackly glitter over shagged lodgepoles
we glimpse the Hunter's Belt

(88) (miscellaneous)

a tulip on the sill
for a minute I forget

(89) miscellaneous

lost in the raga's
ascending notes
the mood the blue grove sets

(90) miscellaneous

its non-benevolence equitable to some
hidden karmic debt

(91) autumn

there's sinew
there's a dark gust tossing the letter
thunder yellow willows guilt

(92) autumn moon

to exfoliate the water
the skin of night growing clear

(93) autumn

water plants words
omens of animals in céénkoo'
I keep antler dreams in the pouch

(94) miscellaneous

but I get tired
like the naga, Elapatra

(95) spring flower

when I doze
pasque flowers, prairie smoke
then from Swift Turtle a star falls

(96) spring

bluebells light a field
the scent of ones grown thin and tall

(97) spring religion

others cluster by the bridge
where I burn juniper
spring runoff take these words

(98) spring religion

Negro sound is pale wheeling
down into the skies

(99) miscellaneous

curved night dome
a rock-cut Mary surveys the valley
high up the Great Bear

(100) miscellaneous

having blossoming of light, crop of morning light,
forks of light cross the horizon of seeing then
