Jack Kerouac
Collected Haikus*

*Haiku is both singular and plural. Kerouac’s usage of “s” is unusual.

"He's the only one in the United States who knows how to write haikus... Kerouac thinks in haikus, every time he writes anything—talks that way and thinks that way. So it's just natural for him... He's the only master of the haiku."

"The American Haiku is not exactly the Japanese Haiku. The Japanese Haiku is strictly disciplined to seventeen syllables but since the language structure is different I don't think American Haikus (short three-line poems intended to be completely packed with Void of Whole) should worry about syllables because American speech is something again... bursting to pop. Above all, a Haiku must be very simple and free of all poetic trickery and make a little picture and yet be as airy and graceful as a Vivaldi Pastorella."
Jack Kerouac

Then I'll invent
The American Haiku type
The simple rhyming triolet:--
Seventeen syllables?
No, as I say, American Pops:--
Simple 3-line poems
Jack Kerouac - Reading Notes, 1965

Renowned for his groundbreaking Beat Generation novel On the Road, Jack Kerouac was also a master of the haiku. He incorporated his nearly 1,000 American haiku pops in novels and in his correspondence, notebooks, journals, sketchbooks, and recordings. A selection is listed in alphabetical order below.

Jack Kerouac spent 63 days during the summer of 1956 as a fire lookout on Desolation Peak. He wrote about his experiences in the books Lonesome Traveler, The Dharma Bums and Desolation Angels. The 'Desolation Pops' manuscript is a collection of seventy-two haiku experiments, numbered by the author, represent Kerouac’s effort in relating his mountain loneliness to nature and mystical experience.

2 traveling salesmen
passing each other
On a Western road

50 miles from N.Y.
all alone in Nature,
The squirrel eating
A balloon caught
        in the tree - dusk
In Central Park zoo

Abbid abbayd ingrat
        - Lighthouse
On the Azores

A black bull
        and a white bird
Standing together on the shore

A big fat flake
        of snow
Falling all alone

A bird hanging
        on the wire
At dawn

A bird on
        the branch out there
- I waved

A bird pecking kernels
        on a grassy hillside
Just mowed

A bottle of wine,
        a bishop -
Everything is God

A bubble, a shadow -
        woop -
The lightning flash

A car is coming but
        the cat knows
It's not a snake

A current pimple
        In the mind’s
Old man

After a year and a half
        finally saw the rat
Big and fat

After supper
        on crossed paws,
The cat meditates

After the earthquake,
        A child crying
In the silence

After the shower,
        among the drenched roses,
the bird thrashing in the bath
After the shower
    my cat meowing
on the porch

After the shower
    the red roses
In the green, green

A full November moon
    and mild,
Mary Carney

Ah, Genghiz Khan
    weeping - where
did Autumn go?

Ah Jerusalem - how many
    Autumn saints slaughtered
Thee with Christ?

Ah the birds
    at dawn,
my mother and father

Ah, the crickets
    are screaming
at the moon

Ah who cares?
    I’ll do what I want -
Roll another joint

All day long wearing
    a hat that wasn't
On my head

All I see is what
    I see -
Red fire sunset

All that ocean of blue
    soon as those clouds
Pass away

All the insects ceased
    in honor
Of the moon
(Desolation Pops, 28)

All these sages
    Sleep
with their mouths open

All the wash
    on the line
Advanced one foot

Alone at home reading
    Yoka Daishi,
Drinking tea
Alone, in old
    clothes, sipping wine
Beneath the moon

A long island
    in the sky
The Milky Way

A long way from
    The Beat Generation
In the rain forest

Alpine fir with
    snowcap’t backround -
It doesn’t matter

America: fishing licenses
    the license
To meditate

Am I a flower
    bee, that you
Stare at me?

A million acres
    of Bo-trees
And not one Buddha
(Desolation Pops, 51)

Among the nervous birds
    the morning dove
Nibbles quietly

A mother & son
    just took a shortcut
Thru my yard

Ancient ancient world
    - tight skirts
By the new car

And as for Kennedy -
    in Autumn he slept
By swishing peaceful trees

And the quiet cat
    sitting by the post
Perceives the moon

Answered a letter
    and took a hot bath
- Spring rain

Apasionata Sonata
    - hiballs, gray
Afternoon in October

April mist -
    under the pine
At midnight
A pussywillow grew there
   At the foot
Of the breathless tree

A quiet Autumn night
   and these fools
Are starting to argue

A quiet moment -
   low lamp, low logs -
Just cooking the stew

A raindrop from
   the roof
Fell in my beer

Arms folded
   to the moon,
Among the cows

A spring mosquito
   dont even know
How to bite!

As the cool evenings
   make themselves felt,
Smoke from suburban chimneys

Asking Albert Saijo
   for a haiku,
He said nothing

A stump with sawdust
   - a place
To meditate
(Desolation Pops, 7)

At a Coney Island
   hamburger
In Vancouver Washington
(Desolation Pops, 3)

At night
   The girl I denied
Walking away

A turtle sailing along
   on a log,
Head up

Aurora borealis
   over Mount Hozomeen -
The world is eternal
(Desolation Pops, 70)

Aurora Borealis
   over the Hozomeen -
The void is stiller
(Desolation Pops, 33)
Autumnal cowflops -
a man
Makes a living.

Autumnal Cowflops -
but a man must
make a living.

Autumn eve - my
mother playing old
Love songs on the piano

Autumn night in New Haven
- the Whippenpoofers
Singing on the train

Autumn night
low moon -
Fire in Smithtown

Autumn night
Salvation Army sign
On a cold brick building

Autumn night stove
- I’ve never been
on a farm before.

Autumn nite
- Lucien leans to Jack
on the couch.

Autumn nite -
Lucien’s wife
Playing the guitar

Autumn nite -
my mother cuts her throat

Autumn nite -
my mother remembers
my birth

Autumn nite -
the boys
playing haiku.

August in Salinas -
Autumn leaves in
Clothing store displays

August moon - oh
I got a boil
On my thigh

August Moon Universe
- neither new
Nor old

A whole pussywillow
over there,
Unblown

A yellow witch chewing
a cigarette,
Those Autumn leaves

Bach through an open
dawn window -
the birds are silent

Barefoot by the sea,
   stopping to scratch one ankle
With one toe

Barley soup in Scotland
   in November -
Misery everywhere

Bee, why are you
   staring at me?
I'm not a flower!

Beautiful young girls running
   up the library steps
With shorts on

Beautiful summer night
   gorgeous as the robes
Of Jesus

Big books packaged
   from Japan -
Ritz crackers

Big drinking & piano
   parties - Christmas
Come and gone -

Big wall of clouds
   from the North
Coming in - brrrr!
(Desolation Pops, 69)

Bird bath trashing,
   by itself -
Autumn wind

Birds chirp
   fog
Bugs the gate

Birds flew
   Over the shack
Rejoicing

Birds flying north -
   Where are the squirrels?
There goes a plane to Boston

Birds singing
in the dark
In the rainy dawn

Bird suddenly quiet
   on his branch - his
Wife glancing at him

Bird was gone
   and distance grew
Immensely white
(Desolation Pops, 64)

Black bird - no!
   bluebird - pear
Branch still jumping

Blizzard in the suburbs
   - the mailman
And the poet walking

Blizzard in the suburbs
   - old man driving slowly
To the store 3 blocks

Blizzard’s just started
   all that bread scattered,
And just one bird

Blowing in an afternoon wind,
   on a white fence,
A cobweb

Blueberry dubbery
   the chipmunk’s
In the grass
(Desolation Pops, 68)

Bluejay drinking at my
   saucer of milk,
Throwing his head back

Breakfast done
   the tomcat curls up
On the down couch

Bred to rejoice,
   the giggling
sunshine leaves
(Desolation Pops, 14)

Brighter than the night,
   my barn roof
Of snow

Brokenback goodshit
Heap bigshot
among the Birchtrees.

Buddha laughing
   on Mt. Lanka!
Like Jimmy Durante!
Buddhas in moonlight
- Mosquito bite
  thru hole in my shirt

Buds in the snow
- the deadly fight
  between two birds

Butterfat soil
  of the valley -
Big black slugs

But the Lost Creek trail
  they dont believe
Is in existence any more
(Desolation Pops, 67)

Came down from my
  ivory tower
And found no world

Cat eating fish heads
- All those eyes
In the starlight

Catfish fighting for his life,
  and winning,
Splashing us all

Cat gone 24 hours
  - A piece of his hair
Waving on the door

Change Su Chi’s art
  studio, a silent
Shade in the window

Chief Crazy Horse
  looks tearfully north
The first snow flurries

Chipmunk went in
  - butterfly
Came out
(Desolation Pops, 71)

Chou en Lai, his briefcase
  should be fulla leaves,
For all I know

Christ on the Cross crying
  - his mother missed
Her October porridge

Churchbells ringing in town
  - The caterpillar
In the grass

Close your eyes -
  Landlord knocking
On the back door

Closing the book,
   rubbing my eyes -
The sleepy August dawn

Cloudy autumn nite
   - cold water drips
in the sink.

Coffee beans!
   - Methinks I smell
The Canaries!

Cold crisp October morning
   - the cats fighting
In the weeds

Cold gray tufts
   of winter grass
Under the stars

Coming from the West,
   covering the moon,
Clouds - not a sound

Concatenation! - the bicycle
   pulls the wagon
Because the rope is tied

Content, the top trees
   shrouded
In gray fog
(Desolation Pops, 13)

Cool breeze - maybe
   just a shillyshallying snow
That'll ruin everything

Cool breezy morning
   - the cat is rolling
On his back

Cool sunny autumn day,
   I’ll mow the lawn
one last time

Cradled and warm,
   the upper snow,
The trackless
(Desolation Pops, 15)

Crisp wind
   My tired limbs
Relaxed before the coals

Crossing the football field,
   coming home from work,
The lonely businessman

Dawn, a falling star
A dewdrop lands
On my head!

Dawn - crows cawing,
   ducks quack quacking,
Kitchen windows lighting

Dawn - the first
   robins singing
to the new moon

Dawn - the tomcat
   hurrying home
With his tail down

Dawn - the writer who
   hasn’t shaved,
Poring over notebooks

Dawn wind
   in the spruces
- The late moon

Debris on the lake
   - my soul
Is upset
(Desolation Pops, 22)

Desk cluttered
   with mail -
My mind is quiet

Desolation, Desolation,
   so hard
To come down off of

Desolation, Desolation,
   wherefore have you
Earned you name?

Disturbing my mind essence,
   all that food
I have to cook

Do you know why my name is Jack?
   Why?
That’s why.

Drinking wine
   - the Queen of Greece
on a postage stamp

Drizzle -
   Midnight pine,
I sit dry

Drunk as a hoot owl
   writing letters
By thunderstorm
Drunken deterioration -  
    ho-hum,  
Shooting star  
Dusk - boy  
    smashing dandelions  
With a stick  
Dusk in the holy  
    woods -  
Dust on my window  
Dusk now -  
    what’s left of  
An ancient pier  
Dusk - the bird  
    on the fence  
A contemporary of mine  
Dusk - The blizzard  
    hides everything,  
Even the night  
Early morning gentle rain,  
    two big bumblebees  
Humming at their work  
Early morning with the  
    happy dogs -  
I forgot the Path  
Early morning yellow flowers  
    - Thinking about  
The drunkards of Mexico  
Elephants munching  
    on grass - loving  
Head side by side  
Eleven quick skulks  
    to Fall  
And still cool  
Emptiness  
    of the Ananda glass bead,  
Is the bowing weeds  
Empty baseball field  
    - A robin,  
Hops along the bench  
Evening coming -  
    The office girl  
unloosing her scarf  
Everlastingly loose  
    and responsive,  
The cloud business  
(Desolation Pops, 16)
Every cat in Kyoto
can see through the fog

Everyone of my knocks
disturbs my daughter
Sleeping in her December grave

Everywhere beyond
the Truth,
Empty space blue
(Desolation Pops, 17)

February dawn - frost
on the path
Where I paced all winter

February gales - racing
westward through
The clouds, the moon

Fiddlydee! -
Another day,
Another something-or-other!

Fighting over a peach
stone, bluejays
In the bushes

First December cold
wave - not even
One cricket

First frost dropped
all leaves
Last night - leafsmoke

Flowers
aim crookedly
At the straight death

For a moment
the moon
Wore goggles

Following each other,
my cats stop
When it thunders

Forever and forever
everything’s alright -
night woods

Four bluejays quiet
in the afternoon tree,
Occasionally scratching

Four in morning -
creak my mother
In her bed
Free as a pine
  goofing
For the wind

Frogs don’t care
    just sit there
Brooding on the moon

Front hooves spread,
    the mule scratches his
Neck along a log

Frozen
  in the birdbath,
A leaf

Full moon in the trees
    - across the street,
the jail

Full moon of October
    - The tiny mew
of the Kitty

Full moon -
    Pine tree -
Old house

Full moon, white snow, -
    my bottle
Of purple jello
(Desolation Pops, 30)

Gary (Snyder) gone from the shack
    like smoke
- My lonely shoes

Gary Snyder
    is a haiku
far away

Gee last night -
    dreamed
Of Harry Truman
(Desolation Pops, 23)

Geronimo, in Autumn
    says no to peaceful
Cochise - Smoke rises

Get to go -
    fork a hoss
And head for Mexico
(Desolation Pops, 39)

Ghengis Khan looks fiercely
    east, with red eyes,
Hungering for Autumn vengeance

Girls' footprints
    in the sand
- Old mossy pile

Girl trapped beneath the
    steering wheel, beautiful
As the Dalai Lama’s dream

Girl with wagon -
    what do
I know?

Giving an apple
    to the mule, the big lips
Taking hold

Glow worms
    brightly sleeping
On my flowers

Glow worm sleeping
    on this flower,
Your light's on!

God’s dream,
    It’s only
A dream

Grain Elevators are tall trucks
    that let the road
approach them

Grain Elevators on
    Saturday waiting for
The farmers to come home

Grain elevators, waiting
    for the road
To approach them

Grass waves,
    hens chuckle,
Nothing’s happening

Gray day -
    the blue spruce
Is green

Gray orb of the moon
    behind silver clouds -
The Spanish moss

Gray spring rain
    - I never clipped
My hedges

Greyhound bus,
    flowing all night,
Virginia

Gull sailing
    in the saffron sky -
The Holy Ghost wanted it
Haiku! Haiku!
Still wears a bandage
Over his injured eye!

Haiku my eyes!
my mother is calling!

Haiku, shmaiku, I cant
understand the intention
of reality

Halloween colors
orange and black
On a summer butterfly

Hand in hand in a red valley
with the universal schoolteacher -
the first morning

Haunted Autumn visiting
familiar August,
Those last 2 days

Haydn’s creation or
Coleman Hawkins, I can
Fix em just right

Here comes
My dragon -
goodbye!

Here comes the nightly
moth, to his nightly
Death, at my lamp

Her yellow dolls bowing
on the shelf -
My dead step grandmother

Highest perfect fool -
the wisdom
Of the two-legged rat

High in the Sky
the Fathers Send Messages
From on High

High noon
in Northport
- Alien shore

Hitch hiked a thousand
miles and brought
You wine

Hmf - Ole Starvation Ridge
is
Milkied o’er
(Desolation Pops, 27)
Holding up my purring cat to the moon,
I sighed

Holy sleep
    - Hanshan
Was right
(Desolation Pops, 72)

Horse waving his tail
    in a field of clover
At sundown

Hot coffee
    and a cigarette -
why zazen?
(Desolation Pops, 32)

Hot tea, in the cold moonlit snow -
a burp

How cold! - late
    September baseball -
The crickets

How’d those guys get in here,
those two flies?

How many cats they need around here
For any orgy?

How flowers love the sun,
Blinking there!

How that butterfly’ll wake up
    When someone
Bongs that bell!
Cf. Yosa Buson (1716-1784): The butterfly / Resting upon the temple bell, / Asleep.

Huge knot in the Redwood tree
Looking like Zeus’ face

Hummingbird hums hello - bugs
Race and swoop

Hurrying things along,
    Autumn rain
On my awning

I called - Dipankara
    instructed me
By saying nothing
(Desolation Pops, 60)

I called Hanshan
in the fog -
Silence, it said
(Desolation Pops, 59)

I called Hanshan
in the mountains
- there was no answer
(Desolation Pops, 57)

I close my eyes -
I hear & see
Mandala
(Desolation Pops, 10)

I don’t care -
the low yellow
Moon loves me
I don’t care
what
thusness is

I drink my tea
and say
Hm hm

If I go out now,
my paws
will get wet

I found my
cat - one
Silent star

Ignoring my bread,
the bird peeking
In the grass

I gotta make it in terms /that anyone can understand/
Did I tell ya about my nightmare?

I hate the ecstasy
Of that rose,
That hairy rose

I'll climb up a tree
and scratch Katapatafataya

I made raspberry fruit jello
The color of rubies
In the setting sun

I’m back here in the middle
of nowhere -
At least I think so
(Desolation Pops, 35)

I’m so mad
I could bite
The montaintops
(Desolation Pops, 31)
In a Mojave dust storm
   Albert said: "Senzeie,
Was a Mongolian waif"

In Autumn Geronimo
   weeps - no pony
With a blanket

In back of the Supermarket,
   in the parking lot weeds,
Purple flowers

In enormous blizzard
   burying everything
My cat’s out mating

In enormous blizzard
   burying everything -
My cat turned back

In Hakkaido a cat
   has no luck

In London-town cats
   can sleep
In the butcher's doorway.

In my medicine cabinet
   the winter fly
Has died of old age

In the chair
   I decided to call Haiku
By the name of Pop

In the desert sun
   in Arizona,
A yellow railroad caboose

In the late afternoon
   peaks, I see
The hope
(Desolation Pops, 25)

In the lovely sun
   reading lovely
Haikus - Spring

In the middle of
   the corn, a new
Car slithering

In the morning frost
   the cats
Stepped slowly

In the quiet house,
   my mother's
Moaning yawns
In the sun
   the butterfly wings
Like a church window

Iowa clouds
   following each other
Into Eternity

I rubbed my bearded
   cheek and looked in
The mirror – Ki!
(Desolation Pops, 61)

I said a joke
   under the stars
- No laughter

I should have scratched
   that spot before
I started to sleep

I’ve turned up
   the lamp again
- The sleeping moth

I went in the woods
   to meditate –
It was too cold

I woke up
   - two flies were boffing
On my forehead

Jack reads his book
aloud at nite
- the stars come out.

Juzu [=juzu] beads on the
   Zen manual –
My knees are cold

June – the snow
   of blossoms
On the ground

Just woke up
   - afternoon pines
Playing the wind

Kicked the cupboard
   and hurt my toe
- Rage
(Desolation Pops, 43)

Kneedeep in the
   blizzard, the ancient
Misery of the cat

Kneedeep, teeth
   to the blizzard,
My cat gazing at me
Late afternoon –
   it’s not the void
That changed
(Desolation Pops, 44)

Late afternoon –
   my bare back’s
Cold
(Desolation Pops, 41)

Late afternoon –
   the lake sparkle
Blinds me

Late afternoon –
   the mop is drying
On the rock
(Desolation Pops, 40)

Late April
   dusk bluster –
Lions & lambs

Late autumn nite
the last faint cricket.

Late moon rising
   - Frost
On the grass

Lay the pencil
   away – no more
thoughts, no lead

Leaf dropping straight
   In the windless midnight:
The dream of change

Leaves falling everywhere
   in the November
Midnight moonshine

Leaves skittering on
   the tin roof
- August fog in Big Sur

Lilacs at dusk
   - one petal
fell

Listen to the birds sing!
   All the little birds
Will die!

Listening to birds using
   different voices, losing
My perspective of History
Little frogs screaming  
in the ditch  
At nightfall

Little pieces of ice  
in the moonlight  
Snow, thousands of em

Lonely brickwalls in Detroit  
    Sunday afternoon  
piss call

Lonesome blubbers  
    grinding out the decades  
with wet lips

Looking around to think  
    I saw the thick white cloud  
Above the house

Looking for my cat  
in the weeds,  
I found a butterfly

Looking up at the stars,  
    feeling sad,  
Going "tsk tsk tsk"

Looking up to see  
    the airplane  
I only saw the TV aerial

Lost cat Timmy -  
    he wont be back  
In a blue moon

Loves his own belly  
    The way I love my life,  
The white cat

Made hot cocoa  
    at night,  
Sang by woodfire  
(Desolation Pops, 56)

Man dying -  
    Harbor lights  
On still water

Man - nothing but  
a  
Rain barrel  
(Desolation Pops, 21)

Mao Tse Tung has taken  
    too many Siberian sacred  
Mushrooms in Autumn

May grass -  
    Nothing much  
To do
Mayonnaise -
   mayonnaise comes in cans
Down the river

Memère says: "Planets are
   far apart so people
Can't bother each other."

Me, my pipe,
   my folded legs -
Far from Buddha
(Desolation Pops, 9)

Men and women
   Yakking beneath
the eternal Void

Mexico - After the dim
   markets, bright
San Juan Letran

Me, you - you, me
   Everybody -
He-he

Middle of my Mandala
   - Full moon
In the water

Mild spring night -
   a teenage girl said
"Good evening" in the dark

Missing a kick
   at the icebox door
It closed anyway

Mist before the peak
   - the dream
Goes on

Mist boiling from the
   ridge - the mountains
Are clean

Mist falling
   - Purple flowers
Growing

Mists blew by, I
   Closed my eyes, -
Stove did the talking
(Desolation Pops, 62)

Misurgirafical & plomlied
   - ding dang
The Buddha’s gang
(Desolation Pops, 65)
Moon behind
   Black clouds -
Silver seas

Moon in the
   bird bath -
One star too

Morning meadow -
   Catching my eye,
On weed
(Desolation Pops, 1)

Morning sun -
   The purple petals,
Four have fallen

Moth sleeping
   on the newly plastered wall
- the spring rain

M’ugly spine - the loss
   of the kingdom
Of Heaven
(Desolation Pops, 46)

Mule on the seashore
   One thousand foot
Bridge above

My blue spruce
   in the pale
Haze dusk

My butterfly came
   to sit in my flower,
Sir Me

My cat eating
   at his saucer
- Spring moon

My cat’s asleep
   - poor little angel,
the burden of flesh!

My Christ blinds
   are down -
I’m reading about Virgin

My corncub pipe
   hot from
the sun

My critics jiggle
   constantly like
Poison ivy in the rain

My flashlight,
   where I put it this afternoon
Twisted away in sleep
My friend standing
    in my bedroom -
The spring rain

My hand,
    A thing with hairs,
rising and falling with my belly

My hands on my lap
    June night,
Full moon

My Japanese blinds
    are down -
I’m reading about Ethiopia

My rumpled couch
    - The lady's voice
Next door

My rose arbor knows more
    about June
Than it'll know about winter

My pipe unlit
    beside the Diamond
Sutra - What to think?

Napoleon in bronze
    the burning Blakean
mountains

Nat Wills, a tramp
    - America
In 1905
(Desolation Pops, 34)

Neons, Chinese restaurants
    coming on -
Girls come by shades

New aluminum
    grammar school
In old lamplight

New neighbors
    - light
In the old house

Nibbling his ankle,
    the mule’s teeth
Like kettle drum

Nightfall,
    boy smashing dandelions
with a stick

Nightfall - too dark
    to read the page,
Too cold
Night fall - too dark
   to read the page,
Too dark

Night rain - neighbors
   Arguing loud voices
In next house

Night - six petals
   have fallen from
Bodhidharma’s bouquet

Nirvana, as when the rain
   puts out a little fire

No imaginary judgments
   of form,
The clouds

No telegram today
   - Only more
Leaves fell

Nodding against the wall,
   the flowers
Sneeze

Nose hairs in the moon
   - My ass
Is cold

November - how nasal
   the drunken
Conductor's call

November’s New Haven
   baggagemaster stiffly
Disregards my glance

November the seventh
   The last
Faint cricket

Nored the Atlantican Astrologer
   weeps because the King
Laid his Autumn girl!

October night, lights
   of Connecticut towns
Across the sound

O for
   Vermont again -
The barn on an Autumn night

Oh another weekend’s
   started - people squeaking
On U-turning tires
Oh I could drink up
    The whole Yellow River
In my love for Li Po!

Oh moon,
    such dismay?
- Earths betray
(Desolation Pops, 52)

Old man dying in a room -
    Groan
At five o’clock

Old man of Aix
    white hair, beret -
Gone up the Cezanne street

On Desolation
    I was the alonest man
in the world

One drop from
    the blue spruce -
two more drops

One flower
    on the cliffside
Nodding at the canyon

One foot on the bar
    of soap,
The Bluejay peeking

On Starvation Ridge
    little sticks
Are trying to grow

On the sidewalk
    A dead baby bird
For the ants

OO a continent
    in a birdbath -
April full moon

Ooh! they kicked up
    a cloud of dust!
The birds in my yard

Or, walking the same or different
paths
The moon follows each

O Sebastian, where art thou?
    Pa, watch over us!
Saints, thank you!

Peeking at the moon
    in January, Bodhisattva
Takes a secret piss
Perfect circle round
the moon
In the center of the sky

Perfectly silent
  in the starry night,
the little tree

Perfect moonlit night
  marred
By family squabbles

Phantom Rose
  Lust
Is a Leopard

Pink petals on
  gnarly Japanese twigs
In rain

Playing basketball
  - the lady next door
Watching again

Poor gentle flesh -
  there is
No answer
(Desolation Pops, 36)

Poor tortured teeth
under
The blue sky
(Desolation Pops, 2)

Protected by the clouds,
  the moon
Sleeps sailing

Prayerbeads
  on the Holy Book
- My knees are cold

Praying all the time-
  talking
To myself

Propped up on my shoe
  the Diamond Sutra -
Propped up on a pine root

Puddles at dusk
  - one drop
fell

Quietly pouring coffee
  in the afternoon,
How pleasant!

Quiet moonlit night -
  Neighbor boy studying
By telescope; - "Ooo!"
Racing westward through
    the clouds in the howling
wind, the moon

Rain in North Caroline
    - the saints
Are still meditating

Rain-in-the-Face
    looks from the hill:
Custer down there

Rain’s over, hammer on wood
    - this cobweb
Rides the sun shine

Rainy night,
    the top leaves wave
In the grey sky

Rainy night
    - I put on
My pajamas

Reading my notes -
    The fly stepping from
The page to the finger

Reading the sutra
    I decided
To go straight

Red roses, white
    clouds, blue sky,
In my birdbath

Red trees -
the dog tears at
an old itch.

Reflected upsidedown
    in the sunset lake, pines,
Pointing to infinity

Resting watchfully, the cat
    and the squirrel
Share the afternoon

Rig rig rig -
    that’s the rat
On the roof
(Desolation Pops, 55)

River wonderland -
    The emptiness
Of the golden eternity

Rock rosed - behind the Casbah
    - the sun has disappearing act
Roses! Roses!  
    robin wants his  
Evening bath!  

Run after that  
    body - run after  
A raging fire  
(Desolation Pops, 4)  

Run over my lawnmower,  
    waiting for me to leave,  
The frog  
Samsara in the morning  
    - puppy yipping,  
Hot motor steaming  
Satisfied, the pine  
    bough washing  
In the waters  
(Desolation Pops, 12)  

Second thundershower  
    over - the sun  
Is still high  
September raindrops  
    from my roof -  
Soon icicles  
Seven birds in a tree,  
    looking  
In every direction  

Sex - shaking to bread  
    as  
Providence permits  
(Desolation Pops, 45)  

Shall I break God's commandment?  
    Little fly  
Rubbing its back legs  

Shall I heed God’s commandment?  
    - wave breaking  
On the rocks -  

Shall I say no?  
    - fly rubbing  
its back legs  

She loves Lysander  
    not Demetrius -  
Who? - Hermia  

Ship paint  
on  
An old T-shirt  
(Desolation Pops, 19)
Shooting star! - no, lightning bug! - ah, well, June night

Sitting Bull adjust his girdle: the smell
Of smoking fish

Silent pipe - peace and quiet
In my heart

Sitting in the sun, no bugs yet - Yellow clover

Sixty sunsets have I seen revolve on this perpendicular hill

Skhandas my ass! - it’s not
Even that (Desolation Pops, 53)

Sleeping on my desk head on the sutras, my cat

Smell of burning leaves, The quiet pool at evening
In August

Snap your finger stop the world! - Rain falls harder

Snow in my shoe Abandoned Sparrow’s nest

Snow melting, streams rushing - Lookout leave the valley (Desolation Pops, 20)

Snow on the grape arbor - the little dead raisins

So humid you can’t light matches, like Living in a tank!

Somebody rang my bell I said who? O it doesn’t worldly care

Sometimes they sleep with their lights on, the June bugs
Some trees still
  have naked winter look
- Spring day

Spring day -
  in my mind
Nothing

Spring dusk
  on Fifth Avenue,
A bird

Spring evening -
hobo with hard on
Like bamboo

Spring evening -
  the two
Eighteen year old sisters

Spring is coming
  Yep, all that equipment
for sighs

Spring moon
  on 2nd Avenue
- girl in white coat

Spring night -
a leaf falling
From my chimney

Spring night - the gleam
  of the fish head eye
In the grass

Spring night
  the silence
Of the stars

Spring night - the sound
  of the cat
Chewing fish heads

Spring night -
  the neighbor hammering
In the new old house

Spring rain,
  Kicking stones
An arrowhead

Standing on the end
  on top of the tree,
The Big Dipper

Stare intently
  at my candle
- Pool of wax
Staring at each other,
    Squirrel in the branch,
Cat in the grass

Stop slipping me
    Your old Diamond Sutra
You illimitable tight-ass!

Straining at the padlock,
    the garage doors
At noon

Suddenly the official
    goes cross eyed
And floats away

Summer afternoon -
    impatiently chewing
The jasmine leaf

Summer night -
    I put out
The empty milk bottle

Summer night -
    the kitten playing
With the Zen calendar

Sunday in a bar
    in Woodland Calif.
- One noon beer

Sunday -
    the sky is blue,
The flowers are red

Sunny day - bird tracks
    & cat tracks
In the snow

Sun on the rocks -
    a fighting snag
Holds on
(Desolation Pops, 6)

Sun shining on
    A distant mountain
- the low moon

Surprising cat fight
    in the parlor on a
Blustery September night

Sweet birds, chordless
    except in another
Clime

Swinging on delicate hinges
    the Autumn Leaf
Almost off the stem
Taghagata [=Tathagata] neither loathes
    nor loves
His body’s milk or shit

Take up a cup of water
    from the ocean
And there I am

Temple trees
    across the creek
- Fog blowing

Terraces of fern
    in the dripping
Redwood shade

Thanks to Coolidge,
    Hoover - Hoover - but Autumn,
Roosevelt done America in

That's an unencouraging sign,
    the fish store
is closed

The Angel’s hair
    trailed on my chin
Like a cobweb

The ant struggles escaping
    from the web -
The spider’s non-comment

The backyard I tried to draw
    - It still looks
The same

The barking dog -
    Kill him
With a bicycle wheel

The barn, swimming
    in a sea
Of windblown leaves

The beautiful red
dogwood tree
Waiting for the cross

The bird came on the branch
    - danced three times -
And burred away

The birds start singing
    but he is in the cat meadows

The bird’s still on top
    of that tree,
High above the fog

The birds
    surprise me
On all sides

The book
stands all by itself
on the shelf

The bottoms of my shoes
are clean
From walking in the rain

The carpenter of spring
the Zen
of hammer and nail

The castle of the Gandharvas
is full of aging
Young couples

The cat: a little
body being used
By a little person

The cat musing
along the ground -
cold gray day

The clouds are
following each other
Into Eternity

The clouds assume
as I assume,
Faces of hermits
(Desolation Pops, 11)

The cows of Autumn -
laughing along the fence,
Roosters at Dawn

The cow, taking a big
dreamy crap, turning
To look at me

The creamer gives,
the groaner quakes -
the angel smiles
(Desolation Pops, 50)

The cricket in my cellar window, this quiet
Sunday afternoon

The crickets - crying
for rain -
Again?

The days go -
They can't stay -
I don't realize
(Desolation Pops, 49)

The dog yawned
and almost swallowed
My Dharma

The dregs of my coffee
Glisten
In the morning light

The droopy constellation
on the grassy hill -
Emily Dickinson’s Tomb

The earth keeps turning
like a dreary
Immortal

The earth winked
at me - right
In the john

The falling snow -
   The hissing radiators -
The bride out there

The flies on the porch
   and the fog on the peaks
Are so sad

The flowers don’t seem
to mind
the stupid May sunshine

The fly, just as
   lonesome as I am
In this empty house

The full moon -
   the cat gone -
My sleeping mother

The gently moving
   leaves
Of the August afternoon

The Golden Gate
   creaks
With sunset rust

The hermit’s broom,
   the fire, the kettle
- August night

The housecats, amazed
   at something new,
Looking in the same direction

The jazz trombone,
   The moving curtain,
- Spring rain
The leaves, fighting
    the empty sky -
No clouds helping

THE LIGHT BULB
    SUDDENLY WENT OUT -
STOPPED READING

The little sparrow
    on my eave drainpipe
Is looking around

The little sparrow on the eave drainpipe
My heart flutters

The little white cat
    Walks in the grass
With his tail up in the air

The little worm
    lowers itself from the roof
By a self shat thread

The low yellow
    moon above
The quiet lamplit house

The mansion of
    the moon
Has hidden faces

The microscopic red bugs
    in the sea-side sand
Do they meet and greet?

The mind of the flower
    regards my mind
Externally

The mist in front
    of the morning mountains
- late Autumn

The moon had
    a cat's mustache,
For a second

The moon
    is a
Blind lemon
(Desolation Pops, 54)

The moon is moving,
    thru the clouds
Like a slow balloon

The moon is white -
    the lamps are
Yellow

The moon,
the falling star
- Look elsewhere

The mountains
    are mighty patient,
Buddha-man
(Desolation Pops, 18)

The mule, turning
    slowly, rubbing his
Behind on a log

The national scene
    - late afternoon sun
In those trees

The new moon
    is the toe nail
Of God

The night
    is red
with stars

"The old pond, yes!
    - the water jumped into
By a frog"

The other man, just as
    lonesome as I am
In this empty universe

The pine woods
    move
In the mist

The poppies! -
    I could die
In delicacy now

The postman is late
    - The toilet window
Is shining

The purple wee flower
    should be reflected
In that low water

The racket of the starlings
    in the trees -
My cat’s back

The raindrops have plenty
    of personality -
Each one

The rain has filled
    the birdbath
Again, almost

The red paper
waves for the breeze
- the breeze

The red roof of the barn
is ravelled
Like familiar meat

There is no deep
turning-about
In the Void

There’s no Buddha
because
There’s no me

There’s nothing there
because
I don’t care
(Desolation Pops, 24)

The robin on
the television antenna,
Something on his beak

The rose moves
like a Reichian disciple
On its stem

These little gray sparrows on the roof
I’ll shot my editor

The sky is still empty,
the rose is still
On the typewriter keys

The sleeping moth -
he doesn’t know
The lamps turned up again

The smiling fish -
where are they,
Scouting bird?
(Desolation Pops, 8)

The smoke of old
naval battles
Is gone

The son packs
quietly as the
Mother sleeps

The son who wants solitude,
Enveloped
In his room

The sound of silence
is all the instruction
You’ll get

The Spring moon -
How many miles away
Those orange blossoms!

The stars are racing
  real fast
Through the clouds

The storm,
  like Dostoevsky
Builds up as it lists
(Desolation Pops, 37)

The strumming of the trees
reminded me
Of immortal afternoon

The summer chair
  rocking by itself
In the blizzard

The sun keeps getting
dimmer - foghorns
began to blow in the bay

The Sunny Breeze
  will come to me
Presently

The taste
  of rain -
Why kneel?
(Desolation Pops, 29)

The top of Jack
  Mountain - done in
By golden clouds
(Desolation Pops, 26)

The train speeding
  thru emptiness
- I was a trainman

The tree looks
  like a dog
Barking at Heaven

The tree moving
  in the moonlight
Wise to me

The trees, already
  bent in the windless
Oklahoma plain

The trees are putting on
  Noh plays -
Booming, roaring

The vigorous bell-ringing priest
  the catch in the harbor
The white cat
   Is green in the tree shade,
Like Gauguin’s horse

The white chair is
   holding its arms out
to Heaven - dandelions

The whiteness of the houses
   in the moon
Snow everywhere

The windmills of
   Oklahoma look
In every direction

"The wind agrees with me
   not the sun" -
Washlines

The wind sent
   a leaf on
the robin’s back

The word HANDICAPPED
   sliding over snow
On a newspaper

The yellow dolls bow -
   Poor lady
Is dead

This July evening,
   A large frog
On my doorsill

This October evening,
   the velvet eyes
Of Manju[sh]ri

Those birds sitting
   out there on the fence -
They're all going to die.

Three little sparrows
   on the roof
Talking quietly, sadly

Three pencils arranged,
   Three minutes,
Sambagakaya [=Sambhogakaya], Nirvanakaya [=Nirmanakaya], Dharmakaya

Thunder and snow -
   how
We shall go!
(Desolation Pops, 48)

Thunder in the mountains -
   the iron
Of my mother's love
(Desolation Pops, 47)
Thunderstorm over
   - there! The light
is on again

Time keeps running out
   - sweat
On my brow, from playing

To the South,
   in the moonlight,
A sash of cloud

Tonight I'll lower
   my tail -
I've seen them around town

(Tonight) that star
   is waving & flaming
Something awful

Too hot to write
   haiku - crickets
and mosquitoes

Train on the horizon -
   my window
rattles

Train tunnel, too dark
   for me to write: that
"Men are ignorant"

Trees cant reach
   for a glass
Of water

Trying to study sutras,
   the kitten on my page
Demanding affection

Tuesday - one more
   drop of rain
From my roof

Twilight - the bird
   in the bush
In the rain

Two ants hurry
   to catch up
With lonely Joe

Two cars passing
   on the freeway
- Husband and wife

Two clouds kissing
   backed up to look
At each other
Two Japanese boys
   singing
Inky Dinky Parly Voo
Useless! useless!
   - heavy rain driving
Into the sea
Velvet horses
   in the valley auction -
Woman sings
Voices of critics
   in the theater lobby -
A moth on the carpet
Walking along the night beach,
   - Military music
On the boulevard.
Walking down road with Allen -
   Walking down the road in Autumn.
Walking down the road
   with Allen
   - An old dream
       the same dream.
Walking down the road/a crushed snake.
autumn
Red trees -
Walking down the road with dog
   - a crushed leaf
Walking down the road
with dog -
a crushed snake.
Walking down the road with Jack -
a crushed snake
Walking with the dog on the road
   - a crooked leaf.
Walking on the water wasn’t
   Built in a day
Walking over the water
   my shadow,
Heavier than lead
WARM WIND
   makes the pines
Talk Deep
Wednesday blah
   blah blah -
My mind hurts
(Desolation Pops, 42)
Who cares about the pop-off trees
of Provence?
A road’s a road

Why’d I open my eyes?
because
I wanted to

Winking over his pipe
 the Buddha lumberman
Nowhere

Work of the quiet
 mountain, this
Torrent of purity
(Desolation Pops, 5)

Worm is looking
 at the moon,
Waiting for me

Wash hung out
 by moonlight
 - Friday night

Washing my face
 with snow
Beneath the Little Dipper

Waiting for the leaves
 to fall; -
There goes one!

Waiting for the Zipper
 4 PM -
Sun in West clouds, gold

Water in the birdbath
 - a film of ice
On the moon

Waiting with me for
 the end of this ephemeral
Existence - the moon

Water in a hole
 - behold
The soddden skies

Waving goodbye,
 the little girl,
Backing up

Well here I am,
 2 PM -
What day is it?

Wet fog
 shining
In lamplit leaves
Whatever it is, I quit
- now I'll let my
breath out -

What could be newer? this
new little bird
Not yet summer fat!

When the moon sinks
down to the power line,
I'll go in

What is a rainbow,
   Lord? - a hoop
For the lowly
(Desolation Pops, 38)

What is Buddhism?
   - A crazy little
Bird blub

What passes through
   is amusing
Himself being dew
(Desolation Pops, 58)

While meditating
   I am Buddha -
Who else?

White clouds of this steamy planet
   obstruct
My vision of the blue void

White rose with red
   splashes - Oh
Vanilla ice cream cherry!

Who wd have guessed
   that a January moon
could be so orange!

Why explain?
   bear burdens
In silence

Wild to sit on a haypile,
   Writing Haikus,
Drinkin wine

Wind too strong
   - empty nest
At midnight

Windows rattling
   in the wind
I’m a lousy lover

Wine at dawn
   - The long
Rainy sleep
Winter – that
    sparrow’s nest
Still empty

Wish I were a rooster
    and leave my sperm
On the sidewalk, shining!

"Woo!" – bird of perfect
    balance on the fir
Just moved his tail
(Desolation Pops, 63)

Wooden house
    raw gray –
Pink light in the window

Woke up groaning
    with a dream of a priest
Eating chicken necks

Yard tonight an eerie
    moon leafshroud
A midsummernight’s dream

Yellow halfmoon cradled
    among the horizontal boards
Of my fence

"You and me"
    I sang
Looking at the cemetery

You’d be surprised
    how little I knew
Even up to yesterday

You paid yr homage
    to the moon,
And she sank

Your belly’s too big
    for your
Little teeth
(Desolation Pops, 66)