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Virgilio graduated from Camden High School and attended the College of South Jersey. He graduated from Temple University in 1952. Virgilio spent several years as a professional radio announcer before his second career of poet and lecturer. The public is invited to hear the Camden poet. Admission free. The Walt Whitman International Poetry Center is located in Johnson Park at 2nd and Cooper Streets, Camden, New Jersey. For further information, write to Frederick Missimer, Coordinator, Camden Bicentennial Advisory Board, Bureau of Intergovernmental Relations, 22 Haddon Avenue, Camden, New Jersey 08103. Telephone 757-7345 Area Code 609.
dapper
the first dragonfly
goes sailing down the river
with the town tailor.

the empty schoolyard:
a basketball hoop

his toy parachute
dangled
tangled on telephone wire

Marine major
with bad news comes to call:
summer nightfall.

empty farmhouse
beside the dried up well:
cicada shell.

the first cicada
has brought the dentist
to a grinding halt.

the first mosquito
cursed by the county clerk
blurs the birth record.

through the cemetery gate

the first firefly
fades on a blade of grass
little brother's grave

that dapper dragonfly
goes sailing down the river
with the town tailor.

In the cherry tree
before and after blossoms
the face of the moon.

motel mosquito
is helping the night clerk
smear the register.

a gust of cold wind
sweeping the old mantelpiece
snuffs out a candle
drawn under the bridge
at dawn, a dandelion
rides the rising tide.

all summer long
unseen covered with green...
cardinal song.

after the storm,
through the holey umbrella:
the starry night.

under the draw bridge
at dawn, a dandelion
rides the rising tide.
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the spring tornado
tearing up the young corn field
spares the old scarecrow.

on the scarecrow's arm
a pair of crows perches
the deserted farm.

the deserted farm
volcanic lake
quaking jungle temple
tumbles idol

Independence Day
taking up new resident:
the hut by the lake.

island volcano
trembling jungle temple
tumbles idol

down the dusty trail
from town dragging bamboo poles:
tale of the fishing-hole.

down the secret trail
shouldering bamboo poles
tale of the fishing hole.

Independence Day
taking up new resident:
the hut by the lake.

the deserted farm
volcanic lake
quaking jungle temple
tumbles idol

the first dragonfly
perches on my fishing pole:
distant church bell tolls.

distinct church bell tolls.

a nest of blue jays
has cost the lost child a snack
of wild blackberries.

a nest of blue jays
has cost the lost child a snack
of wild blackberries.

In the empty church
at midnight, a frightened child
searches for the light.

trailing a small string
from its beak failing to scale
a wall of spring wind.
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26 days to spring:
a distant cardinal
sings its heart out.

26 days to spring:
a single cardinal
sings his heart out.

The snowy backyard
showered with sunflower seeds:
cardinals & juncos feed

In the empty church
darkened by the autumn wind,
the lost child searches
searching for the light

The displaced farmer
has borrowed the scarecrow's arms
and sorrowful face.

Monastery fields
shorn by the autumn winds,
the fence becomes
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the flag's shadow stretching to the crater; footprints in sand.

CMa' A

the golden maple they didn't like; deep in the trunk a copper spike.

city heat wave; covered with sea gulls: a copper spike.

in my bedroom, reading haku by moonlight: short night. In the bedroom, mourning for little brother's grave.

the spring wind sweeping the cemetery. Tonight, no snow remains.

the autumn wind at the roadside mail box is sticking out its tongue. the autumn wind. the crescent moon--

attending the wake; pretending to remember. the wake; pretending to remember.

In my bedroom; with tears in his eyes. the city dies:

today, the rains-- the hot sun beats down-- tonight no snow remains.

the roadside mail box is sticking out its tongue. the autumn wind. the autumn wind.

attending the wake; pretending to remember. the wake; pretending to remember.

now the city dies: a cigar store Indian standing mute in the moonlight. the city heat wave; covered with sea gulls: a copper spike.

the autumn wind at the roadside mail box is sticking out its tongue. the autumn wind. the autumn wind.

attending the wake; pretending to remember. the wake; pretending to remember.

In my bedroom; with tears in his eyes. the city dies:

attending the wake; pretending to remember. the wake; pretending to remember.

now the city dies: a cigar store Indian standing mute in the moonlight. the city heat wave; covered with sea gulls: a copper spike.

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The long winding road
through the pines in the moonlight
a string of Burma Shave signs

Where Burma Shave signs
lined the long winding highway:
the haiku of spring.

Where Burma Shave signs
lined the highway through the pines:
the haiku of spring.

bitter cold I feel
for helping an old neighbor:
rusty nail in my heel.

While he's
while his wife gives birth,
a peon with a
while his wife gives birth,
a peon facing the sun
paces the parched earth.

the angry farmer
plewing under ripe strawberries:
miscarriage in the sun.

the autumn moon--
the old master poet
shadows Tairo's Tomb.

Washington's Birthday:
limbs
bare cherry reaching out
to the Monument.

pink morning glories
climb the chain link fence

pink morning glories
climbing the chain link fence:

pink morning-glories
adorning the chain link fence:
rain on the monuments.
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a cloud of blackbirds
climbing on the horizon
eclipses the sun.

A gust of March wind
arching the back of the cat
rustles clothesline ghosts.

a gust of March wind
rustling ghosts on the clothesline
the back of the cat.

that gust of March wind
rustling ghosts on the clothesline
arches the black cat.

built like a tub
enough to feed the whole world;
rubs worry beads

built like a tub,
enough to feed an army;
rubs worry beads.

built like a tub,
bald with a double chin,
rubs worry beads.

built like a tub,
bald and double-chinned

the first song sparrow
following a cardinal
the lingering snow.

song sparrow today,
a cardinal yesterday;
the lingering snow.

Walt Whitman Bridge,
and the yellow moon beyond
the ferryboat below.

the first cicada
following
the first cicada
following the first firefly;
little brother dies.
the first cicada

fades and another cries;
little brother dies.

atop the town church
a chromium cross surrounded
by air raid sirens.

the first cicada
fades and another rises
little brother dies.

the first cicada

dies and another rises;
baby brother cries.

the long winding road
through the pines in the moonlight

Burma Shave signs
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Now there are four
at the Thanksgiving table:
the Viet Nam War...

the village church elders
putting their heads together
billowing clouds.

a buzzing horsefly
exploring the mission porch;
friar
the snoring padres.

became a genius overnight
by growing a beard.

my parents h
my parents grow old,
and I have not married:
bitter cold.

an autumn fly
crawling on the windowpane

the noonday heat
the farmer’s carting

the noonday heat
cartings a jar of water
stops to cool her feet

Released for Christmas,
recovered from heart attack:
ransacked apartment.

the street market hums:
people through snow flurries
hurry to and from.

the street market hums:
hurrying through snow flurries,
people to and from.

the icy creek
of course, the stolen boots
have sprung a leak.

the thawing river
drifting on a sheet of ice
puppy
a shivering kitten

the thawing river:
a shivering puppy drifting

the thawing river:
a shivering puppy
drifts on a sheet of ice.

the thawing river:
a shivering puppy drifts
on a sheet of ice.

the icy creek:
stolen rubber boots
have sprung a leak.

Released for Christmas
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with smith brother beards
conforming to mediocrity;
the taste of their peers.

rising and falling
in a sunbeam, a cobweb
stretched across the stream.

the morning dew,
the morning dew,
then the afternoon rain;
holes in my shoes.

New Year's Eve and more
dropping another copper
in the top drawer.

the more I study
the moon in the rain puddle
the more it muddies.

alone ashore,
the frozen marsh and more
between us...

alone ashore,
the frozen marsh--
and more between us

Released for Christmas,
recovering from heart attack:
ransacked apartment.

the dry crooked creek
filled with cracked clay and silt
creates a crazy quilt

the dry crooked creek
filled with cracked

the dry crooked creek
filled with cracked clay, leaves
creates a crazy quilt

released for Christmas,
back home after heart attack:
ransacked apartment.

looking to the New Year
after a heart attack
after heart attack,
back home for the holidays:
ransacked apartment.

looking for little brother:
the sound of the brock.

putting down the book,

New Year's Eve and more
dropping another copper
in the top drawer.

the morning dew,
the morning dew,
then the afternoon rain;
holes in my shoes.

the dry crooked creek
filled with cracked clay
creates a crazy quilt

the dry crooked creek
filled with cracked

the dry crooked creek
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a tiny butterfly
wren's
ends the sparrow's melody
in a minor key.

a distant temple
is baring its golden breast
to the rising sun.

In the empty cellar
at twilight, a wine fly
dines on dry muscatel.

In the attic
tearing up old love-letters
bitter cold

something there is
that doesn't like kids at all
builds a spite wall.

the empty arena
where Christians were thrown to lions
the sign of the cross
the empty arena...
bits of fur from a lion:
the sign of the cross.

a cicada sings
as the air raid siren fades:
the scream clock rings.

a new few small clock rings.

My little brother
writes: the fireflies are brighter
in Viet Nam tonight.

the quaking graveyard
shaking a few dewdrops on
the wake of the hearse.

the town undertaker
shaking dewdrops on my shoes:
the wake of the hearse.

Easter at sea
elevating the Host:
the wafer moon.

Easter alone
in the radio studio
at the microphone

Easter alone
in the radio station
at the microphone.

Minnie High Coo and her boys
With Smith Brother beards,
these "poetry pioneers"
conform to their peers.

the undertaker passes
shaking dewy grass on my shoes:
the wake of the hearse.

bitter cold and gusty
by the fire-gutted house:
rusty nail in my sole.

windblown thistledown
is paying a lone nestling
a surprise visit.
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the autumn moon--
the master poet alone
visits Taro's Tomb.

this blind poet
has left the morning moon
and more behind in mist

this blind poet
has left behind the moon and more
in morning mist

this blind poet
has left the moon and more behind
in morning mist.

this blind poet
has left the moon and more
behind in mist.

Easter alone
attending sunrise services;
the wafer moon.

Easter alone
receiving the Holy Communion
the wafer moon.

this blind poet
has left the moon

this blind poet
has left behind the moon and more
and more in mist.

this blind poet
has left behind the autumn moon
and more in mist.

after the short night...
the flash flood -- and the long day
of random tornadoes.

a wedge of snow geese
at the edge of the lagoon
the boomerang moon.

the deserted beach
at dawn, a spawning turtle
emerges from the surf.

Easter alone
at sunrise services;
the wafer moon.

a butterfly
ends the sparrow's melody
in a minor key

lying in the grass,
seventeen-syllabled sun;
magnifying glass.

the scum-covered creek;
ripples from a crippled carp
ring the rising sun.

a wedge of snow geese
wwing over the
the boomerang moon
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the empty park bench
by the war memorial
carved with hearts and names

autumn evening alone
leaving her aged mother
at the nursing home.

the empty arena
sharp breeze at daybreak
shaking mulberry trees
feeds carp in the lake

the bare cherry limbs
are reaching out
to the Washington Monument

empty city lot
strewn with sticks and broken brick

empty city lot
strewn with sticks and broken bricks
and forget-me-nots.

In the crowds alone
searching in vain for father
cursing church and home.

the first firefly
inspiring

atop a rubbish heap
fuming in tropic heat;
a human fetus rots.

Texas tornado
forming on the horizon
hides the rising sun.

the autumn moon--
the old master poet
visits Tairo's Tomb.
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monastery gardens
a string of flagstones
stops at the tearoom

little brother calls

little brother calls
in the middle of the meadow
the dead oak fallā.

the bass in the lake
is mistaking a firefly
for the evening star

the statue of Columbus
points to the rising sun

the autumn moon—
a string of staggered flagstones
stops at the tearoom.

monastery moons:
a string of staggered flagstones
stops at the tearoom.

monastery ruins:
a string of flagstones
stops at the tearoom.

steam after the storm

shouting from the shore
little brother - the frozen marsh
and more between

my little brother
shouts from the shore

my little brother
shouting from the shore -- the frozen marsh
and more between us.

littel brother

shouting from the shore -- the frozen marsh
and more between us.

littel brother shouts
from the shore--the frozen marsh
and more between us.

my little brother
shouts from the shore--frozen marsh
and more between us.

down the mountain road
to town, a butterfly
flutters by a leaf

the tax collector
standing in the long line

cemetery gate
rattling in the autumn wind
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after the blizzard,
breaking through the frozen lake;
suffocating catfish.

neighborhood kids
opening the fire hydrant
city heat wave.

neighborhood kids
opening fire hydrants;
city heat.

the first arrowhead
the distant train trestle
the distant trestle
in the autumn rain and mist
a train whistle

following ashore--
the frozen marsh,
and more between us.

standing on the shore
the frozen marsh
and more between us.

alone on the shore:
the frozen marsh
and more between us.

left ashore:
the frozen marsh
and more between us.

calling from the shore:
the frozen marsh
and more between us.

shouting from the shore:
the frozen marsh
and more between us.

In the autumn woods,
learning to be ignorant;
returning to childhood.

island volcanos:
jungle temple trembling
tumbling idol.

leaving the old pond
entering the empty temple
centering the moon.

an autumn evening
receiving the robe and alms bowl;
leaving the temple.

little brother calls
in the middle of the meadow:
the old scarecrow falls.
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the empty park bench
carved with hearts and names:
the war monument.

war monument
carved with hearts and names:
cold morning rain.

a line of lindens
and a ribbon of sidewalk
follow the river

a buzzing horsefly

the empty mission
a buzzing horsefly
touring the empty mission
explores the poor box.

a buzzing horsefly
touring the empty temple
explores the poor box.

under the rainbow,
over the river bridge:
a wedge of wild geese.

tenement ruins

mountains of soapsuds
drifting out to sea

breaking through the ice
covering the lake

neighborhood kids
opening the fire hydrant
the city heat wave

the autumn breeze
is piecing together
a puzzle of leaves.

In the autumn woods
learning to be ignorant
returning to childhood

In the autumn fields
learning to be ignorant
a grown up child feels...
a grown up child alone

the empty cathedral
with its door slightly ajar

under the rainbow
over the river bridge
the crescent moon.

little brother's grave
covered with dewy cobwebs:
how he loved spiders!

the autumn wind
opening the cathedral door
closing the Bible

the empty hotel
reflecting city hall
echoing the wrecker's ball

beneath the deep snow
breaking through the frozen lake:
suffocating catfish.

beneath the frozen lake,
beneath the blanket of snow
suffocating catfish
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snow forecast tonight: checking the street
looking out of the window then looking out at the street light

so greedy and bold molding unveiling the bronze statue sold for the price of gold

a statue of Pan still stands hoofprints in snow
where Pan's statue stands abandoned by the portico hoofprints in snow.

by the portico where the statue of Pan stands: hoofprints in snow.

By By the portico where the statue of Pan stood

By the portico where the statue of Pan stood: hoofprints in snow.

empty city lot strewn with sticks and broken bricks

rising and falling all day long, waves of barley: MEADOWLARKS a skylark's song.

that doll on the bed that doll on the bed silent in satin and lace sits up with the dead.
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bitter cold I feel
for a neighbor whose home burned down

bitter cold I feel
in the fire-gutted ruins
rusty nail in my heel.

fire-gutted ruins
stepping on a rusty nail:
bitter cold.

fire-gutted home...
stepping on a rusty nail:
bitter cold.

built like a bathtub,
as if he feeds the whole world,
rubs worry beads

built like a tub,
as if he feeds the world:
rubs worry beads.

built like a tub,
as if he feeds the whole world:
rubs worry beads.

hiding down the well,
an urchin rides the bucket:
the town church bell chimes.

helping a neighbor
whose home burned down last winter:
rusty nail in my sole.

cleaning up rubble
from a neighbor's burned down home
rusty nail in my sole

helping a neighbor
whose home burned down in the cold

helping a neighbor
by his fire-gutted home
rusty nail in my sole

the fire-gutted home
helping in the bitter cold
rusty nail in my sole

the fire-gutted home
crumbling in the bitter cold
rusty nail in my sole

the fire-gutted home
trembling in the piercing cold:
rusty nail in my sole.

house
the fire-gutted home
howling in the piercing cold:
rusty nail in my sole.

gaslight by the gate:
of all the snowflakes flying past;
I await the last...

inchworm in moonlight
meandering on the veranda
measures the short night

the moonlight veranda:
a meandering inchworm
measures the short night.
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a distant church bell,
and the air raid siren beyond;
a cicada's song.

Now the yellow moon
fills the bedroom window
silhouettes pilby-talk.

funeral cortege
followed by a butterfly
followed by the child's eye.

lamplight at the gate:
all the snowflakes flying past
waiting for the last.

gaslight at the gate
of all the snowflakes flying past
I wait for the last.

gaslight at the gate:
of all the snowflakes flying past
I wait for the last.

early autumn heat:
a squirrel cooks its belly
on the shady street.

flurries of cherry blossoms
in the wake of snowflakes

the flag on the hill
rippling in the april wind
how still the grass on the grave

gaslight at the gate
of all the snowflakes flying past
I wait for the last.

gaslight at the gate:
of all the snowflakes flying past;
I wait for the last.

wearing a toupee,
being fitted for bifocals;
the first of the year

wearing a toupee
and new pair of bifocals;
first of the year.

distant church bell--
and air raid siren beyond
a cicada song

inchworm
measures the short night

inchworm on the porch
meandering in the moonlight
measures the short night.
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Stavros Stanislailis, Restauranteur

as if he feeds
the whole world in his diner,
rubs worry beads.

cathedral steps
covered with frozen snow:
casket shadow.

dozing on sofa,
burping her colicky son,
opens...closes eyes.

Jim Bull
85 North Hickory
Platteville, Wis 53818

cemetery hill
and the yellow moon beyond:
the smell of the pond.

bake feet on the beach
with each step on wet sand:
retreating fleas.

Now the yellow moon
filling the bedroom window
silhouettes pillow talk.

bitter cold I feel
in the ruins of our neighbor's home
rusty nail in my heel
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Autumn nightfall

veiling small coffins with white <pale> palls
recalls the Wailing Wall.

Shahairazod, belly-dancer
with a pixie grin
wiggles her nipples and navel
whistles Dixie.

McTavish Tytewad, miser
wearing an eye shade,
counting out his money:
first dime he ever made.

Shahairazod, belly-dancer
with a pixie grin
wiggling nipples and navel
whistling Dixie.

with a pixie smile)

while wiggling nipples and navel
whistles Dixie.

Ludlow Scofflaw, the Judge's cousin
Charged and convicted
of stopping up the public John
with parking tickets.

with pixie smile

while wiggling nipples and navel
whistles Dixie

emptying his cup,
counting up the day's receipts
in his Cadillac.

the scumcoated pond
a floating condom intercepts
the setting sun

Stavros Stanislaus, restaurateur
acts as if he feeds
the whole world in his diner
rubs worry beads.

The Old Year passes:
disposing of a pair
of rose-colored glasses.

at the eye doctor's
being fitted for bifocals—
the first of the year.

emptying his cup,
counting up the day's receipts
for being corrupt.
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I strongly urge the inclusion of another category of poems: demi-haiku in the next issue of Modern Haiku. There are many good poems "lost" to readers, many demi-haiku that are far better than most published haiku. This would help define what constitutes a haiku and link haiku to mainstream American and tradition poetry. This would also help remove the odium of cultishness from the American haiku.

Lavizia Lightfingers, shop-lifter

Now the tide has turned:

flocks of terns and sand pipers roosting on the rocks.

Ludlow Pickett Scofflaw

papering "rec" room walls
with parking tickets.

Midas Miser

Ludlow Scofflaw, charged and convicted of papering "rec" room walls
with parking tickets.

Almina Moonshine

roasting on skewers
dressed and sk
dresses and skewers
roasting over the campfire the last revenocer
dressed and skewered
roasted over the campfire the last revenocer.

Lily White, bigot

no trace of racism
she pretends for brotherhood:
"Some of my best friends..."

Lily Wyte, bigot
not a trace of racism,
she stood for brotherhood:
"Some of my best friends..."
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on the rain puddle
bumping into each other:
brother bubbles.

in the empty church
darkened by the autumn wind

where the scarecrow stood
attired in his birthday suit:
a pile of firewood.

scapegoat scarecrow
wearing a hair shirt
burns at the stake

scapegoat scarecrow
sharing his coat with a hobo
wears a hair shirt.

the empty feeder:
a flock of hungry sparrows
gather before the snow.

the empty schoolyard

the empty feeder:
pigeons, starlings and sparrows
gather before the snow.

the bright lantern dances:
autumn moonlight enhances
white chrysanthemums.

the dangling lantern dances:
autumn moonlight enhances
white chrysanthemums

where the scarecrow stood
forlorn in the windstorm
a pile of firewood.

sign language silence
exchanging stares and garbage cans
cover the back fence

the autumn wind
sweeping linden leaves from the lawn
uncovers the dawn
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the wind-swept prairie
a crumbling covered wagon
collects tumbleweed

A gust of March wind
rustling ghosts on the clothesline
arches the black cat.

the pallbearer's glove
fallen by the empty grave
the autumn wind.

the pallbearer's glove
fallen by the empty grave
forms the autumn wind.

That gust of March wind
arching the back of the black cat,
rustles clothesline ghosts.

a gust of March wind
arching the back of the black cat
rustles clothesline ghosts.

the far willows,
and village church beyond
barring clouds in the pond.

a distant lantern
swinging through the midnight snow

a distant lantern
swinging through the midnight snow

a pair of doves
perched on an icy wire
dripping silence

the sun silhouettes
a dove on an icy wire

atop the town church
with
a chromium cross.

sycamore cicada
serenading the sick room
rhymes the death rattle.
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Virgilio graduated from Camden High School and attended the College of South Jersey. He graduated from Temple University in 1952. Virgilio spent several years as a professional radio announcer before his second career of poet and lecturer. The public is invited to hear the Camden poet. Admission free. The Walt Whitman International Poetry Center is located in Johnson Park at 2nd and Cooper Streets, Camden, New Jersey. For further information, write to Frederick Missimer, Coordinator, Camden Bicentennial Advisory Board, Bureau of Intergovernmental Relations, 22 Haddon Avenue, Camden, New Jersey 08103. Telephone 757-7345 Area Code 609.
down the mountain road, she rolls over a boulder; the moon on her shoulder.

down the mountain road
shouldering the autumn moon
drifting on the beach
lifting on th

drifting on the beach
lifting the capet of surf
the fingers of the wind

How still the cracked bell suspended from the rafter
black children's laughter. how still the cracked bell
welded to the rafter

black children's laughter.

how w
how still the cracked bell—
now echoing from rafters,
black children's laughter.

the cellar corner:
a curled leaf in a cobweb contains the poet's world

an autumn evening...
reading her dead son's letters
over and over...

this twilight moment
a lone firefly has taken
for its very own.

Now the bell is cracked:
still echoing from rafters,
black children's laughter.

Christmas Eve...
leaving the crowded inn;
leaning in the cold wind.
PRESS RELEASE

The Walt Whitman International Poetry Center presents one of America's finest poets Nick Virgilio on February 4th at 12 noon in the Poetry Center at 2nd and Cooper Streets, Camden, New Jersey. The Camden-born poet will read from his prize-winning poetry published by Doubleday in the Haiku Anthology edited by Cor van den heuvel. The Anthology is one of the few collections of poems that is a best-seller.

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treetop cardinal
stropping its beak on a branch
sharpens the shard of dawn.

a gust of cold wind
closing the rusty gate
ghosts on the clothesline

down the schoolyard path
reading footprints and tire tracks
leading to the grave.

sick room cicada
singing on the window sill
rhymes the death rattle.

autumn twilight
announcing poverty vows:
taking the veil.

sycamore cicada
singing before the sick room
rhymes the death rattle.

autumn twilight
making poverty vows:
taking the veil.

sycamore cicada
serenading the sick room
rhymes the death rattle.

man with a paper nose
locks like a tapered hose

man with a paper nose
that's like a tapered hose
like a long tapered hose
nostrils from the

morning twilight:
cottontails of dandelion
line the winding trail.

morning twilight:
dandelion cottontails
trail

morning twilight:
dandelion cottontails
line the winding trail.

treetop cardinal
stropping its beak on bark
sharpens the shard of dawn.

treetop cardinal stops
stropping its beak on bark
sharpens the shard of dawn.
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We had to fight our way to school
Through a maze of alleyways
With survival the only rule:
Bloody nose and black eye drew praise.
The drawing of blood drew praise.

We had to fight our way to church
Bloodying white suits mom had sewn
For Easter, two brothers in search
Of God with sins to atone.

She lies shaking all day
With Parkinson's Disease,
Since the Vietnamese
War took her son away.

She lies praying all night
For God to take her home
Under the darkened dome
Of Death, to him holding light.

treetop cardinal
stropping its beak on a branch
sharpens the dark dawn.