

# Ameraiku

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## William Eaton

*October 2013, augmented May 2017*

*It is quite some time now that the haiku has made its way across the Pacific, and many an American, adult and school child, has tried their hand at imitating the form and sensibility of these Japanese poems. Meanwhile, you might say, I have, intermittently, been exploring what an American armed with English might do to the haiku. A few enchantillons, let's call them:*

### **She Had It All**

She had it all—the  
    phone, the tattoo, the Diet  
Coke, the cigarette

### **Traits disunions**

Balmy winter — ros-  
    y cheeks, shorts, smiling — species  
eliminated

### **On Human Agency**

The taxi driver  
    without a fare drives slowly  
and with a fare fast

*William Eaton is an essayist, aphorist, poet and the Editor of the intellectual journal [Zeteo](#). A collection of his essays, [Surviving the Twenty-First Century](#), was published in 2015 by Serving House Books, and a second volume—Art, Sex, Politics—is due out in 2017. Readers of these haikus might also be interested in [Translating Dickinson](#), [Poetry as Conversation](#) or [This is my poem for Terminal B](#).*

**You could fry an egg on the sidewalk**

A woman says half  
the women in New York — no  
panties. Sticky hot.

**Partial arts**

Partial arts—learning  
to fight without hurting and  
hurt without fighting

**Toilet Training**

We admire his turds,  
my son and I. I would show  
him mine, but refrain.

**Buildings in London**

something taken from  
the world and turned into stone  
buildings in London

**Christmas haiku composed after walking across Midtown Manhattan from my dentist's office to the United Nations**

December, New York  
To inspire such honking  
What did Jesus do?

**Haiku written a day after long considering a tiny bit of a plant that clung to my finger while I was taking a shower**

non-cancerous spots  
the bike lane blocked by cars—ghosts

play with our beliefs

### **Time Waits for No Haiku**

First frost. School girls with  
knit reindeer ears. And my son  
has given up straws.

### **The Great Laurel**

The Great Laurel  
bends to its scattered petals.  
The rain will not stop.

**Afterword:** Shortly after I wrote the post-shower haiku a colleague sent me a news story about “chimeras”—organisms that are composed of two genetically distinct types of cells. *Science Times* writer Carl Zimmer told of a woman who discovered that her eggs did not all carry the same genes, and thus one of her three children was not genetically related to the other two (or perhaps only on the father’s side). More than half of all mothers of boys may have neurons—and thus reactions?—that, genetically, belong to their sons.

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