

distant car horn—
in the empty studio
the faceless portrait

busy Italian restaurant—
happy birthday
sung to the wrong table

faint scent of plum—
the judge unfolds
the jury's verdict

hospital waiting room—
the drinking fountain
stops humming

singles bar
everyone coupled
but me

These poems have previously appeared in the following books and journals: *Carpe Diem: Canadian Anthology of Haiku* (Ottawa, Ontario: Les Éditions David; and Nepean, Ontario: Borealis Press, 2008), *Fig Newtons: Senryu to Go* (Foster City, California: Press Here, 1993), *Frogpond*, *Geese Landing* (Napanee, Ontario: Haiku Canada, 2008), *Geppo*, *Haiku Canada Newsletter* (Canada), *Hekinan Exposition Haiku 2007* (Japan), *Inside the Mirror: 2005 Red Moon Anthology* (Winchester, Virginia: Red Moon Press, 2006), *Mariposa*, *Mayfly*, *Modern Haiku*, *Poems from the 11th Annual Mainichi Haiku Contest* (Tokyo: Mainichi, 2008), *Shiki Haikusphere* (Matsuyama, Japan: Shiki Team, 2007), *The Haiku Anthology* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1999), and *When Butterflies Come* (1993 Haiku Society of America Members' Anthology). In addition, "busy Italian restaurant" won second prize in the Haiku Society of America's 2008 Brady Senryu Contest; "chambers pulsing" won an honourable mention in the 2002 Haiku International Contest (Japan), and won second prize in the 11th Mainichi Haiku Contest (Japan); "sleeping toddler" won the English Haiku Prize in the 2007 Genkissu Spirits Up World Wide Hekinan Haiku Contest (Japan). Also, "hospital waiting room" appeared on Carlos W. Colón's Electronic Poetry Network at the Shreveport Memorial Library, Louisiana. Other poems have appeared on selected Web sites online. Here's to haiku that are curiously strong!

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WelchM@aol.com

22230 NE 28th Place
Sammamish, WA 98074-6408

Dinner Mints

Michael Dylan Welch

after-dinner mints

passed around the table

. . . slow-falling snow

chambers pulsing
in the washed-up jellyfish—
waning moon

dark calm—
the common drift
of firework smoke

the crack of driftwood
burning in the bonfire—
you retune again

for you going
for me going
two urinals

disinfectant jar—
there must be 14 or 15
barber's combs

a bitter loss—
college football players
without any necks

the street-corner preacher
points the way
with his Bible

sleeping toddler—
a bit of the ocean
left in his plastic pail

express checkout
the fat woman counts
the thin man's items

short day—
the manhole cover's
misaligned stripe

lime-green moss
blowing from the pine
on the logging truck