

Haiku Alphabet

by Byron López Ellington

*This poem book is
Dedicated to my cat
Emma, my graceful*

Each haiku has a
Focus on one nonliving
Object, idea

At the back of this
There is a key with answers;
What the subjects are

Each haiku is not
A standalone, but a piece
Of a greater work

This has been my note
To you, the reader, from me,
The author. Now, read!

The Pieces of the Puzzle

1. Whips fast as lightning
Through the air; has pointed tip
And feathers at back

2. Thick stalks, forest grass
Grows cyclical and eaten
By grayscale beasts

3. Brown seed of tropics
Can be transformed into food
Or drink of sugar

4. Fluttering in light
Softly floating and coating
All near surfaces

5. Where river meets sea
And where the stream meets the tide
Transitional zone

6. Tight curls and tufts
Blossoming around one's head
Flower of crazy

7. Exterior lungs
On creatures with scaly skin
To live in water

8. Covers one's head, for
Manners, weather, or style
Or perhaps safety
9. Between and betwixt
Within and throughout the time
When there's no one else
10. A curious card
Below royalty, above
All the numbered troops
11. Heats or holds some tea,
Whistles to alert; a means
To satisfaction
12. That empty feeling
Something/one, missing from life
Absent and alone
13. When gold liquifies
When ice becomes drinkable
When solids turn soft
14. Home of little chicks
From which they eventually
Must leap, soar, escape

15. Twisting, twirled tree
Grey-brown bark and leaves of green
Gnarled and knotted
16. Traditional cake
The American morning
Brown and syrupy
17. Feather, pointed end
Dipped in deep black or blue ink
Writing in the past
18. Circle of metal
Or of sound, oft repeating
Ad infinitum
19. Used to wind a thread
(Of wool, silk, or otherwise)
From a stack of it
20. A means of learning
What others have learned about
In particular
21. Like a small guitar
Name from a Hawaiian word
Meaning “jumping flea”

22. If a suit lacked sleeves
Or, for that matter, a coat
But not a tank top
23. Gentle breeze of speech
Floating, carrying secrets
Or gossip, or more
24. Tube using surface
Pressure to transport water
Up a great tree's trunk
25. Day before today
A past time, now set in stone
Look back, then forward
26. A tickle of air
Gently wafting through your hair
As you settle; peace

Key

1. Arrow
2. Bamboo
3. Cacao
4. Dust
5. Estuary
6. Frizz
7. Gill
8. Hat
9. Interim
10. Jack
11. Kettle
12. Loss
13. Melting point
14. Nest
15. Oak
16. Pancake
17. Quill
18. Ring
19. Spindle
20. Test
21. Ukulele
22. Vest
23. Whisper
24. Xylem
25. Yesterday
26. Zephyr

The End