

Farmer as Gentleman Poet

far from your world an archer wills his arrow straight
to the target you think what zen might do for birdshot

water the tomato plants hang a dead crow in the cherry
branches and pick what is left of the cherries nothing

magical in this everything fits into the natural order
water plants birds on the earth pulled by occasionally

visible forces now that they're visible you compose in
your mind the wonderful mondo **does my wife love me the**

crow's cawing question and answer that's answer enough
satisfied you aim your 10-gauge shotgun high the crows

seem to know and accept what is coming they explode in
the cherry branches petals and feathers float to earth

reminding you of the north american tanka competitions
and the hard edges even the gentlest of farmwives give

to their poems soft at the core as if the very mention
of cherry blossoms were ornamentation and significance

enough yet no stiff crow ever hangs upside down in the
branches that project abruptly into the mist like your

wife now approaching with four cherry buckets you slip
another shell into its chamber now you are aiming high

—Derk Wynand