

# Hail Rain Well Met

## *No Poem about No Good Sense*

by Alan Harris

TODAY WHILE I WAS WALKING toward the restaurant about a mile from home, I heard faint rumblings in the indefinite northwest, but decided to take a chance that I could finish my lunch mission without disaster. I reached the restaurant and had a fine meal of three eggs, hash browns, and toast. As I walked back outdoors, I observed that there was still no rain, so I congratulated myself on my meteorological prowess.

By the time I had walked only a block toward home, however, drops were in the air. The rain began tentatively in an "I don't know whether I'm going to just dribble on you or really break loose and let you have it" mode. I had no umbrella, and only a cardigan sweater for a wrap. There was no one to telephone, nothing to do but keep walking.

Gradually the May rain intensified as I played the dignified fool who didn't know enough to come in out of it--a fool who was also wearing new shoes that allowed rainwater to be cozy with his toes. Before long I saw beads of hail bouncing all around me--quite small, about the size of little pills. Lightning was zitting close by, thunder was showing off its surround-sound, and I was by this time a thoroughly soaked stoic.

Halfway home, I considered milking this experience for a new poem, using at the beginning the soft tap of gentle raindrops tickling the tree leaves, then the crescendo of pattering on the leaves as the rain intensified, then the enthusiastic applause heard in an utter downpour, and finally the dice-like scamperings of tiny hailstones across the sidewalk. All of these might be in the poem, I mused, not wishing to waste an embarrassment.

But when I arrived home, I just took off all my clothes and threw them into the dryer. No poem came, but I did recall the wisdom related to me by Sister Davina, an Irish nun in her eighties who, sixteen years ago, was walking beside me through a light rain. Unconcerned, she said, "You get wet, you get dry."