

Article: [COMPUTERS BEHAVING BADLY](#)

Topic: Alternate Error Messages

Author: Mark Ahearn

An email came across my desk years ago that had alternate Windows error messages in the Haiku style.

Haiku is a Japanese form of poetry. It has strict rules - each poem has only 17 syllables; 5 syllables in the first line, 7 in the second, 5 in the third. They are used to communicate a timeless message, often achieving a wistful, powerful insight through conciseness.

Instead of "Your computer has performed an illegal operation and will be shutdown.", wouldn't the following offer that much needed stress relief in such moments.

Your file was so big  
It might be very useful  
But now it is gone

Chaos reigns within  
Reflect, repent, and reboot  
Order shall return

Program aborting  
Close all that you have worked on  
You ask far too much

Windows has crashed  
I am the Blue Screen of Death  
No one hears your screams

Yesterday it worked  
Today it is not working  
Windows is like that

First snow then silence  
This thousand-dollar screen dies  
So beautifully

A crash reduces  
Your expensive computer  
To a simple stone

Three things are certain  
Death, taxes and lost data  
Guess which has occurred

Having been erased  
The document you're seeking  
Must now be retyped

There is a chasm  
of carbon and silicon  
the software can't bridge

No keyboard present  
Hit F1 to continue  
Zen engineering?

Everything is gone  
Your life's work has been destroyed  
Squeeze trigger (yes/no)?

The code was willing  
It considered your request  
But the chips were weak

Printer not ready  
Could be a fatal error  
Have a pen handy

Errors have occurred  
We won't tell you where or why  
Lazy programmers

[mark@computersbehavingbadly.com](mailto:mark@computersbehavingbadly.com)