Matsuo Basho stands today as Japan’s most renowned writer, and one of the most revered. Yet despite his stature, Basho’s complete haiku have never been collected under one cover. Until now.

To render the writer’s full body of work in English, Jane Reichhold, an American haiku poet and translator, dedicated over ten years to the present compilation. In *Basho: The Complete Haiku* she accomplishes the feat with distinction. Dividing the poet’s creative output into seven periods of development, Reichhold frames each period with a decisive biographical sketch of the poet’s travels, creative influences, and personal triumphs and defeats.

Supplementary material includes two hundred pages of scrupulously researched notes, which also contain a literal translation of the poem, the original Japanese, and a Romanized reading. A glossary, chronology, index of first lines, and explanation of Basho’s haiku techniques provide additional background information. Finally, in the spirit of Basho, elegant sumi-e ink drawings by well-known Japanese artist Shiro Tsujimura front each chapter.

Reichhold notes that “Basho was a genius with words.” The poet obsessively sought the perfect word for each phrase or coupling, always stretching for the very essence of experience and expression. With equal dedication, Reichhold has sought the ideal translations.

As a result, *Basho: The Complete Haiku* is likely to become the essential work on this brilliant poet and stand as the most authoritative book on his poetry for many years to come.
NOTE: This book uses macrons to indicate an extra syllable in a word or name. In the Japanese language, for example, Bashō is a more exact representation of the author’s name. However, in some Western cataloging and database processes lesser-known diacritical marks can create problems, so the poet’s name appears without a macron on the jacket and the opening pages of this volume. Further, such Japanese words as “Tokyo” and “Shinto” that have found their way into common English usage have no macrons.

*Historical Japanese names appear in the traditional Japanese manner, family name followed by given name.

Jacket photograph by Shuhei Fujita
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INTRODUCTION

Bashō is the most famous Japanese writer of all time. At the time of his death, in 1694, he had more than seventy disciples and about two thousand associates who had accepted and aligned themselves with his teachings. On the one-hundredth anniversary of his death, the Shinto religious headquarters honored him by canonizing him as a deity. Thirteen years later the imperial court gave him similar status. He alone is known as a haisei, the saint of haiku. Today he is a recognized genius.

In his time, the latter half of the seventeenth century, Bashō was already a well-known poet, and people across Japan tried to entice him to their area in order to bask in his popularity and to learn from him. Wherever he stayed, a group of poets formed to study with him, to write with him, and to become his followers. His casual writings were saved and preserved along with over 165 of his letters. Disciples carefully recorded his teachings. Followers established an informal postal system to share his teachings and their works. Even today, in places he visited four hundred years ago, stories are retold to tourists and bits of paper or stone monuments bear the poem he wrote on that spot.

Though Bashō only wrote and bound one book himself, The Shell Game (Kaisō), in his lifetime, his disciples produced a stream of anthologies, books of single poems and collaborative poems that contained his poetry and teaching. After his death this stream widened into a river, fed by people claiming to have known Bashō and his secrets for writing. Thanks to the volume of works produced with his assistance or in his name, there is a fairly large treasure of information in Japanese available.

In almost any anthology of translated haiku of the Old Masters, the majority of poems will be by Bashō. And yet, in the more than one hundred years or so of people translating his poems around the world, this is the first time that
all of Bashō’s accredited poems have been translated into English by a non-Japanese. Now the casual reader, as well as poets, can access the wide scope of Bashō’s single poems for a more complete impression of his range and depth.

It is an accepted truth that reading great writers draws forth one’s own greatness. This is even truer for haiku because part of the writing is done by the reader. Haiku are so short, succinct, and ambiguous that the reader must supply his own images and make leaps and connections out of acquired experiences to realize the complete poem.

By reading the poems of Bashō, an astute reader can become familiar with the poet’s various techniques. As one becomes acquainted with these methods of association and leaping, one can begin to evaluate the degrees of success in Bashō’s work. For the poet, this same knowledge can eventually be used to evaluate his or her own work. It can also be used to better appreciate contemporary haiku. Many of the techniques are valuable for writing in other genres, as well.

Becoming familiar with Bashō’s single poems, reproduced here in the approximate chronological order in which he wrote them, gives the reader a marvelous overview of the process through which Bashō changed as a poet and how he changed the poetry of Japan—and of the rest of the world. The accompanying notes provide a true sense of the times and culture in which the poems were written. While Bashō’s work is definitely a product of time and place, his ability to capture and convey universal aspects of humanity and our world makes his poems timeless.

The Wisdom of Bashō

There is much to be learned from Bashō. He was a master of renga, the collaborative poem form usually written by two or more writers, and he took the poetic diary form, haibun, to a level that no one else has reached. Perhaps most importantly, he almost single-handedly reformed the single poem form he called hokku, which we call haiku.

Even before Bashō, poets had recognized the importance and difficulty of finding the best possible poem to set the tone and stage for renga and had been practicing writing just this part of the collaborative poem in private. It was Bashō who saw the potential in hokku, a form composed of a 5–7–5 string of sound units. By giving this slim form his attention, he was able to elevate a few
phrases into the sacred realm of poetry. It is right that we honor him as the father and saint of haiku.

At the time Bashō emerged as a professional poet, there were two famous schools of hokku writing. Almost no one remembers the Danrin or Teitoku schools, though some of their poems have been translated and quoted to demonstrate the fashions and goals of the hokku during Bashō’s time. Many of these poems are very good, but they lack the greatness of Bashō’s work. They lack the ability to capture both the momentary and the eternal in a small poem. They sacrifice simplicity for verbal display and the need for a laugh.

Bashō brought several unique qualities to his life and work. At a time when hokku writing was more often seen by the newly rich merchant class as an amusing pastime for displaying wit and humor, Bashō took his writing seriously. Though he worked various jobs when he needed money, he quickly understood his need to be a full-time poet. There were several times he tried to quit writing, but even on his deathbed, when he felt he should be aware of the experience of his soul’s journey and praying, he was still thinking of poems and revisions.

In addition, due perhaps to his samurai military heritage or his years of being educated with the son of a clan leader, Bashō had a quality of nobility about him. Although the earliest examples of his poems imitate the frivolity and clichés of the then current schools, he soon pulled away from these influences to follow his own inner guidance. Along with his nobility, it was his high spiritual development that continues to set his poetry apart.

Because of this, haiku and Zen are often closely linked. Bashō never actually became a monk, though he studied Zen for many years and when he traveled he shaved his head and wore the robes of the order. At one point he seriously considered taking vows, but this would have meant giving up poetry, which was something he simply could not do. Still, because he had assimilated the precepts and teachings of Buddhism, his poetry is infused with Buddhist ideas and ideals to a degree not found in the works of most other writers.

Buddhist teachings and the poetry of Bashō train us to search for the essence, the very being, of even the smallest, most common things. One of the goals of poetry is to penetrate this essence, to grab hold of it in words and pass it on to the reader, so purely that the writer as author disappears. Only by stepping aside, by relinquishing the importance of being the author, can one capture and transmit the essence—the very is-ness—of a thing. To do this
takes both modesty and enormous confidence. Some contemporary poets attempt to accomplish this by using the lower-case “i” for the personal pronoun. Others attempt to avoid the use of all personal pronouns. Some claim that a haiku cannot be about or even contain references to people. Bashō shows the way through all of this.

Bashō’s Impact on Poetry

Poetry has usually been considered a high-end literary work. While Bashō was raising the hokku to this level he also changed poetry. In Japan, as in many cultures where only the nobility or independently rich had the luxury to pursue poetry, specific words and images were used to aspire to higher thoughts and ideals. In Bashō’s time, certain animals and plants were already clichés from the poets of waka (tanka). One might assume that Bashō latched on to these images to raise the level of hokku. Surprisingly, he did not. He found the images for his poetry in objects common to everyday life. Instead of writing about the “songs” of frogs, he wrote of the plop sound a frog makes when it jumps into water. Rather than always using plum and cherry blossoms as subjects, he brings images of barley grains and weeds. By seeing, and then showing, the importance of these neglected subjects, he imbues every form of life with importance in the eternal scheme of being.

Bashō took another significant step forward when he dispensed with pretentious poetical language. Instead of sprinkling his poetry with foreign Chinese words, as his predecessors had done, Bashō experimented with common words and words considered too vulgar for poetry. In most cases modern translators have hesitated, or even refused, to use the words “piss,” “shit,” or “slop” as Bashō did in his poems. Bashō could be direct without coarseness because he was using poetry to expound the deepest feelings and the highest artistic expression. His use of colloquial words and common expressions both grounds his work in reality and allows it to soar. This ability to be up-to-date and ageless distinguishes him from the poets of his day and many in our times.

Bashō was a major influence on the democratization of poetry in his day and now. In his time, as poetry moved from the court’s inner circle to the military and merchant classes, Bashō’s choice of students and friends crossed a similar bridge. Among his close disciples were members of the imperial court and doctors, as well as several men who had been in prison. Still today, the accessibility
of haiku allows it to move from the ivory towers of academia and mainstream poetry, into the heart and mind of anyone.

Bashō was a genius with words. He understood the importance of using the most perfect word in every phrase of his poems. This explains why he revised his work so obsessively and why, in spite of his thirty years of writing, we only have slightly more than one thousand of his poems. As a translator I became keenly aware of his word choices. Very often the word he used was the one with the most meanings or variations. Japanese, like English, has many homonyms. Again and again I would be surprised to find that the word Bashō had picked was the one with columns of explanation in the dictionary. He did this consciously in order to give the tiny poem additional levels of understanding, and it is possible to make several very different translations from nearly every one of his short, seventeen-unit poems. By understanding wordplay and hidden meanings, euphemisms, and culturally nuanced words, the reader can gain a surprising and marvelously new understanding of a familiar poem.

Bashō comprehended the necessity of learning and practicing the craft of writing. All too often people are under the impression that a moment of insight or profound realization is all it takes to write a haiku. Yes, the writer needs that moment of inspiration and clarity between the worlds of reality and eternity, but in order to transmit the image, idea, feeling, and vision, one must use words in the best possible way. This means practice, and it demands not being pleased with a first effort. It takes courage and determination to continue to work for days—in some cases years—to find the right words for an eight- to ten-word poem.

The Zen idea of “first word, best word” actually works in some cases, but the writer must be skilled enough to recognize when this is true and when it is not. Often, as a haiku writer’s understanding and experience with the form grows and changes, he will return to previously written poems and revise them—as did Bashō. It is vital to remember that a poet writes a poem with all the knowledge and skills available to him at that moment. With more study, wider reading, and deeper understanding, the poem would evolve, but we can still value the inspiration and capabilities under which it was written.

Growing up in Japan, Bashō was also nurtured in the Shinto religion. He had a genuine reverence for life, as shown in the incident with Kikaku, his student who was thrilled with his own poem about tearing wings off a dragonfly to make it look like a red pepper. Bashō quietly reversed the images in the
poem to add wings to the pepper to make a dragonfly. Due to Bashō’s nobility and spirituality, his poems could be simple without being banal. He could be humble because he had high principles.

**Poetry as a Way of Life**

Bashō clearly lived the life of a poet where his poems were the result of his way of living. He constantly strove to remain in an emotional and intellectual position where the poems would come to him. This meant immersing himself in the study of other writers. In a few instances we have a record of the books he carried or was reading, and references in his poems reflect that he studied the work of various Chinese poets. Bashō reportedly said that any day he did not read the old masters of the waka form, thistles formed in his mouth. Many of his poems refer to his own poetic master and mentor who had lived five hundred years previously, the famous waka poet Saigyō.

Bashō believed he must live simply. Several verses celebrate a life pared down to its basic existence, with simple food and the bare necessities. Bashō liked traveling because it required simplicity. He called his home, built and given to him by disciples, a cottage or even a hut. Twice he found that the property was too much for his precepts of the simple life. In one case he sold the house, and the second time, he gave it away. Poet master-teachers of the time were supported by their students’ donations of food and clothing. Bashō wrote poems as a thank-you for these gifts, and one can read between the lines to find a certain discomfort with so many gifts. Later in his life he actually complained about the overly rich food served to him when he stayed with others and the fact that he was given more clothes for his journey than he could carry. He envied clouds because they could travel long distances with everything they needed.

Bashō made his famous journeys to see places that had inspired other poets. From his studies he knew which poems had been written in certain places, and it was important to him to stand on that same plot of ground, to absorb the vibrations and impressions for himself. At times he was able to write a poem as a response, or in “correspondence” with, the older poem. In situations where he came upon spectacular scenery not yet recorded in a poem or literary history, he was either too overwhelmed for words or not moved enough to write.

Bashō met many people on his travels. The travels also introduced Bashō,
the man and poet, to many people. This helped spread his popularity in the same way book tours work for today’s authors. Because Bashō was first and foremost a renga master, renga parties were organized everywhere he went. According to legend, one woman sold her hair to buy the necessary food and drink for such a party. But a renga party is much more than a social event. It’s also a place for people to sit down together to work on one poem written collaboratively.

The host would ask the guest of honor, Bashō, to write the opening stanza or hokku. This crucial verse had to express the season, the reason for the gathering, and a compliment for the host. Sometimes Bashō was able to come up with an excellent verse. Other times he borrowed a poem from his stash of recent work. Sometimes the hokku he wrote was not very good. Often he had spent the day trudging by foot, carrying a pack, through the summer heat and bug infestations of the area. Through most of his adult life he was plagued by various stomach and digestive disorders, which ultimately resulted in his death.

No matter how poorly he was feeling during a renga session, he would kneel down on the floor for as many hours as it took for his group to write the eighteen or thirty-six stanzas. After Bashō delivered his hokku and a scribe recorded it, the host would offer his reply. Then the other members of the party would attempt to make an apt response spoken with either fourteen or seventeen sound units. The six-hundred-year tradition of renga writing was now encrusted with rules, a schema of topics to be followed, words to use and avoid. As a renga master, Bashō would have to decide instantly if the verse was of the proper season or voice. Secondly, he had to confirm it was connected properly to the previous verse. Thirdly, he had to evaluate if the stanza was moving the poem along at the proper rate for this part of the poem. He had to consider all of this along with the personal issues he encountered when he worked with men of great wealth and influence, because these were people whose support he depended on for his next book. To make matters even more complicated, all of this was done with enormous quantities of saké.

This exhausting process not only allowed the poets to leave the evening with a poem that could be published, but working together endeared Bashō to the poets as nothing else could do. Often the experience was so important to some of the individuals that they later published a book of the finished poem (after Bashō did some major revisions) along with their own poems. This too
widened Bashō’s fame and gave him a popularity that bordered on love. In his wake he left poets dedicated to the renga form who went on to teach others in the manner Bashō had taught them.

**Early Travel Writing**

The material and inspiration that Bashō collected on his journeys contributed to another significant change in Japanese literature. Since early times travelers kept diaries of their journeys and the poems they had written on their way. In those days the poetry in vogue was waka, now called tanka, a verse with thirty-one sound units divided into five, seven, five. Later two more phrases each containing seven sound units were added.

When Bashō traveled, his diary entries were accompanied with verses called hokku or haikai. These short poems had the same attributes as the beginning verse of a renga or of the seventeen sound unit stanzas within the *haikai no renga*, verses within the renga. Today we call these haiku and they are what are translated in this book.

In addition to changing the poem form, Bashō made major changes in the prose part of these travel journal entries, now called haibun. Previously, the travel sagas were composed of random entries with widely different subjects and styles, written in a haste that often made for boring reading.

Because of Bashō’s experience with the renga form, he was able to transmit the renga’s rules for pacing, offering breathing spaces between intense passages, in a technique that refreshed readers instead of boring them. It has been suggested that Bashō’s desire to use a renga scheme in his travel journal, *Narrow Road to the Deep North (Oku no Hosomichi)*, was so strong that he added the incidents with the prostitutes just to have some “love verses” in the story. Bashō made the trip accompanied by a man named Sora, who also kept a journal. Sora’s extremely factual, precise account was only rediscovered in 1943. Scholars have occupied themselves since with pointing out where the diaries of the two men differ and speculating why Bashō chose to move events around to make his story the adventure it now is.

Because *Narrow Road to the Deep North* is considered Bashō’s longest and best example of the form, it has often been translated into English. Because the translators were often scholars and not poets, no one version can be a perfect example of haibun.
Writing the prose parts of haibun is very different from simply setting down a bit of a story or sudden fiction. The haibun are to be poetic prose, the idea being that the principles that govern poetry are followed in the text portion. At the moment there is great interest in this genre in English-language writing circles because it is so challenging. Though many of the five journals Bashō left are brief, they are still eagerly read and studied for this style of writing.

It was almost as if the Japanese publishing world was preparing itself for Bashō. During the Edo period (1600–1868), a number of factors combined to bring about tremendous growth in the field of book publishing. With the unification of the country under the Tokugawa military government came years of peace and prosperity, conditions that encouraged the growth of towns and fostered literacy. With a larger workforce available, the price of paper fell, though the production methods remained as labor intensive as always. Booksellers began to appear by about 1650, and by 1886 there were over eight hundred in the Tokyo area alone. Reading was so important at this time that a system of libraries was developed. Though it required a fee to rent books, it was possible to rent ones that were prohibited by the government. Peace and prosperity encouraged education, and the literacy rate soared as books appeared on every conceivable subject, from scholarly historical works and studies of geography, mathematics, and moral conduct to picture books and popular novels. Travel journals and diaries as well as sightseeing books became very popular. Conditions were perfect for Bashō.

The Bashō Legacy

There is a multitude of reasons to study the works of Bashō. In the one hundred and thirty years since translations have been available in English, they have had enormous influence on the literature of many cultures. Rarely has credit been given for the lessons learned and the examples followed from work in the Japanese. Often it is not recognized by the reader, and maybe not even by the author, but once a person has studied Japanese literature’s methods and techniques, it is easy to see the lineage.

One of the aspects that made Western poetry so dreary at the turn of the twentieth century was the reliance on abstract thinking and words. Poets thought they had to write about love, truth, thoughts, and ideals in order to be a great writer. From the Japanese they learned that by using images of
actual things—a grass stalk, a bird’s eye, the movement of a fly rubbing its legs together—abstract ideas could be conveyed with greater meaning and poignancy. Ezra Pound and the Imagists verbalized this idea, but more poets around the world latched onto the idea and used it.

Long before Gertrude Stein was espousing the importance of using the exact word in poetry or any writing, the Japanese had based their writing on creating images of actual things. Instead of telling the reader what to think or feel, words describing images were used as signposts. The placement of these signs caused the reader to form certain pictures almost like memory. As the signs moved from one image to another, with one word and then another, the reader created the journey to the unspoken conclusion of the poem. This process of making the reader see or imagine parts of the poem has, on one hand, made it harder for people to learn to read haiku. Still, this miracle of involving the reader in the creation of the poem has expanded our own definition and concept of poetry. No longer is poetry what someone tells us. It is the mental and emotional journey the author gives the reader.

This technique of juxtaposing images so the reader’s mind must find a way from one image to another has greatly influenced how we perceive simile and metaphor. Metaphors were and are one of the cornerstones of poetry, and yet for years scholars told us that Japanese poets did not use them. They did. They simply made their metaphors in a different way. Instead of saying “autumn dusk settles around us like a crow landing on a bare branch,” Bashō would write:

120. on a bare branch
    a crow settled down
    autumn evening

The simplicity and economy of the words demand that the reader goes into his mind and experiences to explore the darkness of bird and night, autumn and bareness, and even how a branch could move as the dark weight of a crow presses it down. The reader is writing the rest of the verse and making it poetry.

In learning or following new techniques from the Japanese, it is important to study as many poets as possible. In the literary history of haiku it is possible to find writers who discovered and propagated a certain technique or philosophy of writing. Onitsu-ura had his concept of makoto, truth, sincerity, and honesty.
Shiki had his *shasei*, a simple sketch of nature. All are worthy elements in poetry, but because each author felt his was the only element or technique he needed, a longer reading of their work soon feels repetitious and boring.

Bashō instinctively understood that he needed many techniques and methods not only of linking the images within one poem, but of forming the leaps between stanzas in renga. Practice in one genre sharpened the skills for the other, one reason why modern poets who write haiku also write renga, haibun, and free verse.

One of the reasons for the success of Bashō’s work was his ability to write, and write well, in all of these fields. In the past, writers in Japan were forced to choose one genre. Today they are discovering the joy of writing in the form the subject demands instead of squeezing all ideas into one chosen form. For the first time tanka poets and haiku writers are crossing boundaries and publishing poems in both genres.

Many contemporary haiku educators are uncomfortable with the idea that something as workman-like as technique can be mentioned in the same breath with the holiness and sublime atmosphere of a haiku. But Bashō understood many techniques and created a few new ones himself, so it behooves us to examine them and understand how he used them. In the present volume the techniques as Bashō exercised them in his poems can be found in Appendix 1.

Whether you opened this book to learn more about haiku or just to enjoy the work of one of the great literary giants of the world, I hope your time spent with Basho’s poetry will be bright and fill you with as much inspiration as it has given me.
CHAPTER ONE

EARLY POEMS
1662–74
The legendary Japanese poet known as Matsuo Bashō was born in the small village of Ueno in Iga Province (presently Mie Prefecture), which is about thirty miles (forty-eight kilometers) southeast of Kyoto, and two hundred miles (three hundred and twenty kilometers) west of Tokyo. Located in a river basin surrounded by the Suzuka and Murō Mountains, the town is home to the Iga-Ueno Castle, which has the highest walls of any castle in Japan. Today, Iga-Ueno, as it is called to designate it from other towns named Ueno, has another tourist attraction aside from Bashō. It is the home of the iga-ryu ninja sect, established in the twelfth century. In the town's center is the oft-visited Ninja Yashiki Museum, where the secrets of the ninja are revealed, and children and adults can try out the training equipment to become the superhuman ninja spy. In this same central park is also a huge memorial to Bashō.

The house where it is said that Bashō was born in 1644 still stands in Iga-Ueno. As with many births, his has become a matter of legend, giving him the birth date of the autumn full moon, or September 15. About all we know of his mother is that her parents came from Iyo Province (Ehime Prefecture) in Shikoku, the large island below Honshū. His father, Matsuo Yazaemon, was a low-ranking samurai. In times of peace, when he was not active defending the local feudal lord, he taught calligraphy. Bashō's father had been given a plot of land where he could farm to support his family of two boys and four girls. As a baby, Bashō was given the name Kinsaku.

Bashō was named Munefusa when, as a young lad, he entered the retinue of Tōdō Yoshitada, a relative of the feudal lord who ruled the province. Since there is no official record of his service, it has been suggested that his position was a very low one. We do not know what his official job was, but it is certain
that Bashō became a close friend of the man’s son, Yoshitada, who was only two years older. One of their passions was for verse writing. They were serious enough that Yoshitada took on the nom de plume of Sengin, and Bashō called himself Sōbō, the sinified rendition of Munefusa.

By 1664, when he was twenty, Bashō’s skills had advanced to the point that he had two poems included in an anthology and Yoshitada had only one.

On December 19, 1665, Bashō, Yoshitada, and three others organized a renga party to write a hyakuin, one-hundred-link renga. Yoshitada’s haikai teacher, Kitamura Kigin (1624–1705), from Kyoto, sent a verse as his participation. Eighteen of the verses in the finished poem were Bashō’s. At this point he saw writing more as entertainment for samurai, the profession for which he was training. His writing was heavily influenced by Kigin, who belonged to the prestigious Teimon school of haikai. Thus he wrote in a style that aimed at elegant, humorous allusions to classical court literature, wordplay, and wit.

On May 28, 1666, Yoshitada, now head of the clan, suddenly became ill and died. The shock and grief were so extreme for Bashō that he left, first his position and then his hometown. Various reasons have been put forth to explain his actions. One idea was that Yoshitada was succeeded by his younger brother, who had his own retinue, from which Bashō was excluded. This younger brother also became the husband of the widow. Part of the gossip still swirling about this event suggests that perhaps the reason Bashō decided to leave this service was because he himself was one of the widow’s lovers. In an effort to explain why Bashō suddenly left Ueno, theories are also put forth that he was having an affair with his own older brother’s wife, one of the ladies-in-waiting, or another secret mistress. Much later in his life, a woman named Jutei shows up with several children and moves in next door, and later into his home.

Bashō was so discouraged after the death of his friend and his resulting situation that he gave up his samurai status. It was even rumored that he wanted to commit suicide, in order to follow his friend and lord into the next world, but abandoned the idea because taking his own life was against religious law. He moved to Kyoto, then the capital of Japan, where he immersed himself in studies of philosophy, poetry, and calligraphy. According to legend he lived at the Kinpuku Temple, where he studied Japanese classics under Kigin, Chinese classics under Itō Tanan, and calligraphy under Kitamuki Unchiku.

At this point he did not consider himself a poet, and he even later wrote that “at one time I coveted an official post with tenure of land.” In another
instance he wrote, "There was a time when I was fascinated with the ways of homosexual love." It is suggested that this, too, was one of his reasons for moving to Kyoto.

Still, Bashō continued to write and his poems were published in anthologies compiled by reputable haikai masters and duplicated either by handwriting or woodblock print. Since he still signed himself as Sōbō of Ueno in Iga Province, it has been assumed that perhaps he remained closer to his family than previously thought.

One verse was saved because it was submitted by Bashō to a contest called the Shell Game, which he himself judged. In this project sixty verses by thirty-six poets were divided into two groups and each verse was compared to a randomly picked verse from the opposing group. More valuable than finding a winner was the education on how to write a poem as given in the judge's comments. Interestingly enough, Bashō's comments in the book about his own verse were: "The hokku is poorly tailored, and its words are badly dyed, too. All this is due to a lack of craftsmanship on the poet's part." His own verse lost this match.

The Shell Game (Kai Ōi), published in 1672, was the only book of which copies exist that Bashō wrote and bound himself. On February 23 he dedicated the book to the Shinto shrine in Ueno. He used this publication, when he left the capital at Kyoto for Edo, now Tokyo, as his introduction into poetic circles. Compared to Kyoto, where Kigin and many other haikai masters were firmly established, Edo offered more opportunities for a new poet to find his own niche. One of Bashō's new friends was Sugiyama Sanpū (1647–1732), a rich fish merchant, who probably helped him settle in and perhaps even found him a job as scribe for the former Kyoto haikai master, Takano Yūzan. This most likely prepared him for the important job of copying a book on the art of haikai written by Kigin, the same teacher he and Yoshitada had studied with in Ueno.
1.
Today we have the first day of spring in spite of the date.

has spring come
or the year gone away?
second last day

2.
the moon a sign
this way, sir, to enter
a traveler’s inn

3.
the old woman
a cherry tree blooming in old age
is something to remember

4.
from Kyoto’s many houses
a crowd of ninety-nine thousand blossom viewing

5.
people growing old
the youth of Ebisu
makes them even older

6.
a falling sound
that sours my ears
plum rain
7.
rabbit-car iris
how much it looks like
its image in water

8.
a flower
visible to the eyes of the poor
the plumed thistle ogre

9.
in summer rain
would you be happy with
the moon’s face

10.
by moonflowers
a fascinating body
floats absent-mindedly

11.
rock azaleas
dyed red by the tears
of the cuckoo

12.
how long
to wait for the cuckoo
about a thousand years
13.
autumn wind’s
mouth at the sliding door
a piercing voice

14.
for the Star Festival
even when hearts cannot meet
rainy-rapture

15.
just to be clear
I live in the capital
for today’s moon
or
only clear
I live in the capital
for Kyoto’s moon

16.
the rainy image
of the bottom shining princess
the moon’s face

17.
the voice of reeds
sounds like the autumn wind
from another mouth

18.
asleep
the good-looking bush clover
has a flowery face
moon's mirror
seen on a balmy autumn night
New Year for the eyes

frost withered
field flowers still in bloom
seem depressed

a winter shower
the pine tree is unhappy and
waiting for snow

At the home of the person whose child has died
drooping downward
the upside-down world
of snow on bamboo

hailstones mixed
with large flakes of snow
finely patterned cloth
or
hailstones mixed
on an unlined robe
with a fine pattern

the face of a flower
is it feeling shy
the hazy moon
25.
in full bloom
may the plum not be touched
by the wind's hand

26.
here and there
a mask by itself combs
willow hair
or
a spring wind
combs on a mask
willow hair

27.
flower buds
it's my regret I can't open
my bag of poems
or
flower buds
sadly spring winds cannot open
a poem bag

28.
snowflakes like cookies
changing into white strings
the willow

29.
spring winds
hoping the flowers burst
out in laughter

30.
summer's near
cover the mouth of the wind sack
to save the blossoms
31.

making merry
the people at Hatsuse
wild cherry trees

32.

drooping cherry trees
as I leave to go home
tangled feet

33.

as the wind blows
the dog cherry tapers off
like a tail

34.

crest of a wave
flowers as snow turn to water
to return early

35.

that handsome man
clearly is no longer living
a rain-hidden moon

36.

inside the temple
visitors cannot know
cherries are blooming
37. 
arrival of spring 
even a boy knows to decorate 
with a rice straw rope

38. 
put it on to try 
in-vest yourself 
in a flowered robe

39. 
early summer rain 
measuring the shallows 
of the Oft-seen River

40. 
summer grove 
a sword worn by the mountain 
a hip tassel

41. 
beautiful 
the core of the princess melon 
is already a queen

42. 
a pair of deer 
hair on hair in agreement 
with hair so hard
hating flowers
the mouths of talkative people
and the wind bag

when planting one
handle it like a baby
wild cherry tree

what a sprout
a dewdrop seeps down the nodes
of generations of bamboo

stars in my eyes
wishing to see blossoms
on weeping cherries

ah such a life
sweet potatoes again the source
of the harvest moon

written letters, yes
not colored leaves raked up
burned after reading
in everyone's mouth
the tongue of autumn's
red leaves

watching them
it almost makes me surrender
to the prostitute flowers

today
this night has no time to sleep
moon viewing

see its slim shape
it is still not developed
the new moon this night

separated by clouds
the wild goose lives apart for a while
from his friend
CHAPTER TWO

BASHŌ

THE PROFESSIONAL POET

1675–79
After Bashō moved from Kyoto to Edo (Tokyo) no one knows exactly what he did for several years. It has been suggested that he was a physician’s assistant, a town clerk, or worked for the local waterworks department in addition to being a poet’s scribe or secretary. His indecision concerning what to do with his life was reflected in this statement: “At one time I was wearying of verse writing and wanted to give it up, at another time I was determined to be a poet until I could establish a proud name over others.” Clearly he was an ambitious man.

In 1675, Bashō was invited to write a one-hundred-link renga with a distinguished poet, Nishiyama Sōin (1605–82). Sōin was the founder of the Danrin school of haikai writing, which was formed in opposition to the more old-fashioned courtly Teimon style. The Danrin style strove to be more plebeian by using mundane subject matter and a zanier wit. Sōin was an established poet in Kyoto, but his school and style were much more suited to the rising merchant class that now made Tokyo so fashionable. It is not surprising that Bashō was greatly attracted to the teachings of the Danrin school, and at this time he began writing under the name Tôsei (“Green Peach”). It was with this name that eight links of Bashō’s were accepted in this renga. The achievement greatly encouraged him to be a poet.

During the winter, Bashō judged two contests that were published as Hokku Poetry Contests in Eighteen Rounds (Jûhachiban Hokku Awase). The fact that he wrote the commentary on each match shows his confidence and his mature assessment of poetry. Through his work with Yûzan, Bashō was introduced to Naitô Yoshimune, pen name Fûko, a wealthy government official noted for his interest in poetry and support of poets. At his mansion Bashō was able to meet other poets and benefit from all these associations.
Bashō was joined by Sodō and Itō Shintoku (1633–98), another poet from Kyoto, to write a renga of one hundred links. Encouraged by the success of this work, Bashō decided to become a professional poet. After a brief visit to his hometown from July 30 to August 11, Bashō began to spend more and more time writing poetry. During this period he began to enlarge the scope of his haiku by cultivating different poetic techniques gleaned from his studies of Japanese and Chinese classics. As he became comfortable with them, his poems reflected his own experiences rather than an imitation of the works of others.

In 1677 Bashō joined about sixty other poets in a colossal poetry contest sponsored by Fūko known as the Hokku Contest in Six Hundred Rounds (Roppyakuban Haikai Hokku Awase). Well-known haikai masters served as judges. Bashō won nine of the matches, lost five, and tied six. This placed him among established masters like Yūzan, with whom he studied.

As New Year’s gifts, Bashō distributed a small book of his verses, New Year’s Verses (Saitanchō) among his acquaintances. This was a great honor for him because this practice was usually reserved for recognized haikai masters.

That spring Bashō made another attempt to announce his new status as a writer by inviting many poets to write a ten-thousand-link renga with him. Unfortunately both this poem and New Year’s Verses have not survived.

However, as a result of the many contributions other poets made to Bashō’s ten-thousand-link renga, he increased his association with poets of both schools. He was very active in writing verses with them, sending verses for their anthologies and judging poetry contests. With his increased contact with other poets, Bashō began to move away from his old employer and haikai mentor, Yūzan. Some have intimated that there may have been some animosity between the two, but it was this break that established Bashō on his own.

70 it’s a beginning poem
the name of the renga master
at home on New Year’s

Judging from verses that Bashō wrote after this and contributed to a collective renga, he had shaved his head and become a lay monk. He was still living in the downtown part of Edo and earning money by grading and correcting the poems of beginners.
the village quack  
sent for with a horse  
from a grand mansion

on the grassy plain  
it's about one inch tall  
the deer's voice

acupuncturist  
hammering into the shoulder  
without clothes

under the spilled cup  
flows the chrysanthemum  
on the flowered tray

it had to be  
it had to be until  
the end of the year

seeing plum blossoms  
the spring song of an ox  
bellows yes
60.

as to a god
I looked into the sky at his treasure
plum blossoms

61.

the cloud's base
Mount Fuji shaped as a cedar
grows thicker

62.

Mount Fuji
a flea on the cover
of the tea grinder

63.

At Sayo no Nakayama
still alive
under the slightness of my hat
enjoying the coolness

64.

a summer moon
leaving from Goyu
arrives in Akasaka

65.

a Fuji wind
placed here on a fan
a souvenir of Tokyo
coming two hundred miles
the distance under the clouds
to enjoy the coolness

viewing a mountain moon
rarely is it seen so clear
in dirty old Tokyo

on the scales
Kyoto and Tokyo balance
one thousand springs

pine decorations
when I think of New Year's
thirty years overnight

it's a beginning poem
the name of the renga master
at home on New Year’s
top of Mount Hiei
the letter shi has been drawn
by someone with mist
72.
Cat in Love

a cat's wife
visited so frequently
the oven crumbles

73.

The Doll Festival is on March 3 when the tide is at its lowest.

the dragon's palace
with today's low tide is airing
everything in the sun

74.

without waiting
for the cuckoo has he come
selling vegetables

75.
tomorrow the rice dumpling
will be just dead reed leaves
with a dream

76.

rainy season
sea glow lights held up
by the night watchman

77.

the Ōmi mosquito net
perspiration ripples come
in the bed of night
78.
from a treetop
emptiness dropped down
in a cicada shell

79.
making a mistake
finding corn instead of
reeds under the eaves

80.
autumn has come
visiting my ear on
a pillow of wind

81.	onight’s moon
polish it so one can see it
showing out of the clouds

82.
logged tree
see the larger cut end is
a harvest moon

83.
fragile twigs
breaking off the scarlet papers
autumn winds
94.

a stain
falling on tofu
a bit of autumn leaf

95.

knowing it first
on the famous musician's flute
a snowstorm of flowers

96.

scudding clouds
as a dog pisses while running
scattered winter showers

97.

winter shower
a falling of pebbles
into Small Stone River

98.

coming with frost
the wind lies down to sleep with
a deserted child

99.

Mount Fuji snow-covered
Rosci's dream has already
been built
90.
white charcoal
in the Urashima tale
made him old

91.
grass of forgetting
picked for a rice soup
the end of the year

92.
homemade
who takes the book from the box
this spring morning

93.
well nothing happened
yesterday has passed away
with globefish soup

94.
even the captain
bows down before
the lord of spring

95.
royal family dolls
the figurine of the emperor
"long may he reign!"
96.

first blossoms
seeing them extends my life
seventy-five more years

97.

iris growing
under the eaves from a sardine’s
weathered skull

98.

Mourning over the Death of Fuboku’s Mother

offering water
may the deceased be consoled
with dried boiled rice

99.

a shipbuilder
will have to lend us a boat
the river of heaven

100.

autumn has come
loving a wife with stars
on buckskin

101.

surely star-lovers
using as a rug
a deerskin
a rainy day
the autumn world
of a border town

truly the moon
is as high as land prices
this shopping area

pickled in salt
now it will send a message
the imperial gull

rocks wither
even water is dried up
freezing winter
or
stones are exposed
by water drying up
extreme winter

pining for flowers
or a tune from Gichiku
Mount Yoshino

the captain and
the flowers have come
on a saddled horse
sandal backs
coming home in folds
of mountain cherries

the blue sea
in waves smelling of saké
tonight’s full moon

a wine cup
of “mountain-path mums”
drink it up

overlooking it
when I see the view of Sarna
life’s autumn

a morning of snow
only the onions in the garden
blaze the trail

Seeing off Tsuchiya Shiyū, who was
going to Kamakura
stepping on frost
it cripples me
to see him off
CHAPTER THREE

A RETREAT TO NATURE—A RELIGIOUS LIFE
1680–83
With the appearance in the summer of 1680 of the book Best Poems of Tōsei’s Twenty Disciples (Tōsei Montei Dokugin Nijikkasen), it is clear that Bashō had already gathered a group of renga students from the brightest poets in Tokyo. In the winter Bashō’s disciple Sanpū built a small, rustic house for him in the rural area of Fukagawa on the eastern shores of the Sumida River. Fukagawa was known as "the sea-level lowland" because it was on reclaimed land on the river’s delta. It was exposed to the constant attack of sea wind from the Tokyo Bay as well as the danger of tidal waves from the ocean. At one point, during a typhoon, the government decreed that certain residents should be evacuated. Because the area had no safe water supply, water was delivered by boat. It was a rough and wild place for a poet to live.

This is one of several poems written during this time in which Bashō emphasizes the simplicity of his new life. Here it sounds as if he is so poor that he is reduced to making tea from the leaves blown down in a storm.

In spring a student named Rika presented Bashō with a bashō ("banana tree") to plant beside the new house. In later years Bashō wrote: "The leaves of the banana tree are large enough to cover a harp. When they are wind-broken, they remind me of the injured tail of a phoenix. When they are torn, they remind me of a green fan ripped by the wind. The tree does bear flowers, but unlike other flowers, these have nothing gay about them. The big trunk of the tree is untouched by the axe, for it is utterly useless as building wood. I love
the tree, however, for its very uselessness... I sit underneath it and enjoy the wind and rain that blow against it.”

Bashō was so attracted to the new tree, a rarity in Japan, that he changed his writing name from Tōsei (“Green Peach”) to Bashō and called his cottage Bashō-an. He first used his new pseudonym in *Eastern Trends* (*Musashi Buri*), a book intended for Kyoto readers to inform them of the poetry scene in Tokyo. Not only did the book open with one of Bashō’s poems, but it featured his disciples so prominently that it looked as if Bashō’s school dominated the city. The publication also declared Bashō one of the six haikai masters of Tokyo.

In September of 1681 the book *Sequel Verses* (*Jiin*) was published. It contained renga verses and single poems written at meetings in Bashō’s home. This also added to his reputation.

Bashō’s fame had spread so much that he began giving lessons by correspondence. A letter to Takayama Biji (1649—1718), dated June 20, 1682, is the oldest evidence of Bashō’s teachings. In it he wrote: “Even if you have three or four extra syllables—or as many as five or seven—you need not worry as long as the verse sounds right. If even one sound unit stagnates in your mouth, give it a careful scrutiny.”

Bashō followed his own advice. Several of his poems show a willingness to experiment with longer or shorter lines. The practice of adding or subtracting a sound unit or two from the established 5—7—5 set, now thought of as “lines,” was known as *jiamari*. Bashō freed himself from the strict rule-followers by adding two sound units to the middle line of “*kareeda ni / karasu no tomar keri / aki no kure*,” which became one of his most famous poems:

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120. on a bare branch
    a crow settled down
    autumn evening
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That second line, *ka-ra-su no to-ma-ri ke-ri*, has nine units. One can see that Bashō could have achieved the proper seven unit count by leaving off the *keri* or cutting a word, but he must have considered it important enough to use *jiamari*. In an earlier version, the second line read “*ka-ra-su no to-ma-ri-ta-ru ya*,” which had ten sound units and several crows in the prescribed present tense. The revision changed the poem to one crow in the past tense, which broke another rule. The fact that this poem has become prized as being quintessen-
A RETREAT TO NATURE

ultimately Bashô adds marvelous irony and importance to his contribution to haikai literature.

Acquiring a house and the growing circle of renga students only increased Bashô’s unhappiness with himself and his writing. At this time his poems became darker, expressing loneliness. In the head note to one of his poems, he wrote: “I feel lonely as I gaze at the moon. I feel lonely as I think about myself, and I feel lonely as I ponder upon this wretched life of mine. I want to cry out that I am lonely, but no one asks me how I feel.”

The Zen priest Butchô (1642–1715) was living nearby in Tokyo to settle a judicial dispute at a temple. Because of him, Bashô began practicing Zen meditation. He became so enthusiastic that he considered entering a monastery. Yet nothing he did seemed to relieve his feelings of disillusion and ennui. Instead his suffering only increased.

On December 28, 1682, a huge conflagration swept through his neighborhood and most of the houses were burned. According to one account, Bashô had to save his life by jumping into the river and huddling under a reed mat. After this Bashô was homeless and felt even more fragile. A few months later he found out his mother had died. Since his father had died earlier, on March 13, 1656, Bashô was now homeless and without parents. Because Bashô had an older brother, it was he who inherited the family land and was the head of a household. The brother had the farm, a wife, and children; Bashô had nothing.

In spite of Bashô’s unhappiness, or perhaps due to it, his students made astounding progress. One young man, Kikaku, had come to Bashô soon after he moved to Tokyo. Born in 1661, he was a brilliant writer and became Bashô’s oldest friend. He was urbane, debonair, and witty. His quick sense of humor and generosity added levity to Bashô’s more serious, plodding nature.

In 1683 the two published an anthology of the works of Bashô’s students, Shriveled Chestnuts (Minashiguri). Kikaku’s wit comes through in the title. Chestnuts were the traditional food for monks, but here the nuts are shriveled and the implication is that they are worthless. In some ways it was typical for self-published work to be self-deprecating, but the idea of shriveled nuts definitely contains Kikaku’s joke that worthlessness may extend beyond the poems to the authors. The book contains 424 single verses by 110 poets. Included were forty-four poems by Kikaku, nineteen by Ransetsu, fifteen by Sanpû, and fourteen by Bashô. In the postscript Bashô listed his ideals for poetry based on the lyric beauty of Chinese poets, the spirit of Zen teachings, mabi sensibility,
the poetic life as lived by Saigyō, and the romantic love in Po Chu’s work. Though the poems fail to achieve these high standards, the book immediately set the work outside of conventional crudity and vulgar themes by being precise, knowledgeable, and influenced by diction. Increasingly the poetry circles of Tokyo became aware that this group was working with something new and different.

In the beginning of his book *Knapsack Notebook* (*O i no Kohni*), Bashō wrote: “In this poor body, composed of one hundred bones and nine openings, is something called spirit—a flimsy curtain swept this way and that by the slightest breeze. It is spirit, such as it is, which led me to poetry, at first little more than a pastime, then the full business of my life. There have been times when my spirit, so dejected, almost gave up the quest, other times when it was proud, triumphant. So it has been from the very start, never finding peace with itself, always doubting the worth of what it makes.”

While he had no home, Bashō traveled to Kai Province to visit a student, Biji, in Yamura, about forty-three miles (seventy kilometers) west of Tokyo. Bashō returned when his disciple Sodō had collected funds and furnishing for his new house. But he was still very unhappy. Success, students, and a new house didn’t offer consolation. He still felt old and worthless. It was a typical midlife crisis.
ah spring spring
how great is spring!
and so on

under blossoms overnight
I should name myself
a purified gourd

early summer rain
the green of a rock cypress
lasting how long

is it a spider
with a voice crying
the autumn wind

in a humble cottage
tea leaves raked up
after the storm

has the charcoal changed
into the sound of split wood?
the back of Ono's ax
on a bare branch
a crow settled down
autumn evening

it seems to stupid me
that hell is like this
late autumn

Feelings on a Cold Night in Fukagawa

the sound of an oar hitting waves
freezes my bowels
night tears

charcoal of Ono
people learn how to write
scratching in the ashes

does he grieve
the poet when he sees parsley
grow dark with cooking

rice-cake flower
stuck as a hair ornament
on Lord Rat
On the morning of New Year’s Day, I had a certain idea in mind.

dreaming rice cakes
fastened to folded ferns
a grass pillow

a hangover
is nothing as long as
there are cherry blossoms

Rika gave me a banana tree.

storm-torn banana tree
all night I listen to rain
in a basin

flowers in full bloom
in high spirits the priest
and the fickle wife
The summer onion withers before a scouring rush, and the leaf of a yam is defeated by that of the lotus...

dew on roses
the rapeseed flowers' faces
become envious

Spring Pleasures at Ueno

drunk on flowers
the woman armed with a sword
wears a man's jacket

is the cuckoo
invited by the barley
or pampas plumes

when is it a lifesaver?
on a leaf an insect
sleeps on a journey

in summer rain
the leg of the crane
becomes shorter

folly in darkness
grasping a thorn
instead of a firefly
a weird dark night
a fox crawls on the ground
for a beautiful melon

hibiscus flower
naked I wear one
in my hair

def they picked tea
don't they know the withering
winds of autumn

a night secret
a worm under the moon
bores in a chestnut

made of papier-mâché
the cat seems to know
an autumn morning

where was the shower
with umbrella in hand
the monk returns
144.

Wealthy people eat tasty meat and strong, ambitious men eat roots. I am just poor.

snowy morning
all alone I chew
dried salmon

145.
such a pine
it pulls out of the mist
with a "yo ho heave ho"

146.
gathering in waterweed
if catching an ice fish
it would disappear

147.
ending the ending
only the echo of rice cakes
in lonely sleep

148.
the gay boy
a plum and the willow
a woman

149.
March 3
dirting their sleeves
fishing for mud snails
no time for leisure
160.

a white evening face flower
taking to the privy at night
a candle

161.

the sexy servant boy
chants for flower viewing
hit tunes

162.

old pond
a frog jumps into
the sound of water

163.

a globefish in snow
the left team wins with
a carp in June

164.

In response to the poem about a water pepper
and a firefly by Kikaku.

by morning glories
I gobble up rice slop
like a man

165.

a crescent moon
at evening must be a closed
morning glory
166.

an austere life
a lonely moon gazer’s
Nara tea songs

167.

Remembering Tu Fu

beard blown by wind
lamenting late in autumn
who is this child

168.

to live in this world
as Sōgi says is as long as
taking shelter from rain

159.

a poor temple
frost on the iron kettle
has a cold voice

160.

such heavy quilts
snow in the far country
is surely visible

167.

New Year’s Day
looking back I am lonely
as an autumn evening
bush warbler
is it putting to sleep the spirit
of the lovely willow?

flowers in this world
my wine is white
my rice dark

wake up wake up
I want to be your friend
little sleeping butterfly

butterfly butterfly
let me ask you about Chinese poetry

cuckoo
plum flowers of the sixth month
have already bloomed

to hear the cuckoo
I've smudged my ears
with incense
mulberry fruit
without flowers a butterfly
is a hermit’s wine

A priest in a hat. Where does he come from and
what is he traveling toward? The owner of the
picture says that this depicts a scene on my journey.
Therefore, the poor wandering horse rider should be
careful not to fall off.

a horse plodding along
seeing a picture of myself
in a summer field

on the inn’s doorway
a name card to announce yourself
cuckoo

green grain crackers
the wheat ears come out of
veggie cookies

the cuckoo
has stained the fish
I suppose
waving a white scarf  
the doe comes closer to the stag  
the isle of Oga  
or  
waving their fins  
skipjack fish come closer  
to the isle of Oga

Talking in Sleep by a Morning Glory

ought one laugh or cry  
when my morning glory  
withers up

The noon face flower is strong and brave.  
even in snow  
the noon face flower does not wither  
in the sun

by the noon face flower  
the rice huller cools himself  
how tasteful

Lamenting the Death of Sanpū's Father

offering  
a yam on a lotus  
because “they are alike”

a white poppy  
from a wintry shower  
has blossomed
179.

cuckoo
now as for haiku masters
none are in this world

180.

shaggy white chrysanthemums
your long hair a disgrace
such long hair

181.

almost full moon
tonight at thirty-nine years
a child

182.

Cat Mountain

has the mountain cat
licked away all the snow
but in crevices

183.

Black Forest

black forest
whatever you may say
a morning of snow
Ishikawa Hokuson's young brother, Santenshi, has come here to break up the boredom with rice and parsley that was surely grown on the banks of the Qung ni Fang. Now I recognize the value of the elegance of this simple taste.

is it for me
the crane leaves rice with parsley
for me to eat

Living again at banana tree cottage which has been rebuilt...

hearing hailstones
as if this body was
an old oak

bitter ice
the rat's throat
barely moistened
CHAPTER FOUR

BASHÔ’S JOURNEYS IN THE WAY OF THE POET

1684–88
Perhaps it was the happiness Bashō had felt on his trip to Biji’s in Kai Province, or the relief he had found in moving from Kyoto to Tokyo. Whatever the cause, he felt he had to get out and travel around the country. He sensed that fresh inspiration from new vistas could enable him to write at the level he desired.

He was not the first Japanese poet with this idea. The earliest writings contain accounts of trips taken and poems written. Some of these trips had business or family purposes, but for many travelers, the only goal of a trip was to see new and beautiful places. For nature-based poetry, it made sense that going to impressive sites would cure writer’s block. By Bashō’s time there were places known for the poems that had been written there. A popular outing was to follow the literal and literary footsteps of a favorite poet.

Saigyō was a Buddhist monk-poet who lived from 1118 to 1190 and was the most prominent waka poet of the imperial anthology, Shinkokinwakashū. In many ways Bashō modeled his life and poetry on Saigyō’s. Bashō’s poems often contain references either to a poem Saigyō wrote on one of his journeys or to Saigyō’s memorial home, which Bashō visited several times. In Knapsack Notebook (Ot no Kobumi) Bashō wrote: “Heels torn, I am the same as Saigyō, and I think of him at the Tenryū ferry. Renting a horse, I conjure up in my mind the sage who became furious. In the beautiful spectacles of the mountain, field, ocean, and coast, I see the achievements of the creation. Or I follow the trails left by those who, completely unattached, pursued the Way, or I try to fathom the truth expressed by those with poetic sensibility.”

The astute reader can glean from Bashō’s poems and poem headings from this time that fear of death was deeper than his depression and dissatisfaction. He wanted to make a big trip—he needed to do it—and yet he was fairly
CHAPTER FOUR

convinced that he would not survive it. Even before setting out on the journey, he gave it the title of “the journey of a weather-beaten skeleton.” Evidently he had visions of dying in the wilderness, lying alone along the side of a road where he would become an unknown pile of bones. Bashō wrote the poem that opens his journal on a cold night as he was leaving his home.

191. weather beaten
wind pierces my body
to my heart

Knowing what we do now of the several journeys Bashō made, his fears seem a bit exaggerated. But he was not in the best of health at the time. He suffered from several chronic ailments. Judging from his sparse comments, it is possible that he suffered from colitis and rheumatism.

Travel in seventeenth-century Japan was not easy. There were bandits and rogues who preyed on wealthy travelers, who would travel with a retinue of guards for protection. Bashō had only his friend, Namura Chiri (1648–1716). Bashō dressed in monk’s clothing so robbers would think he was poorer than he was. By all accounts, Bashō was only robbed once and that occurred in his own home ten years later.

He would have to walk most of the way and only occasionally be able to rent a horse to ride. He would have to rely on the hospitality of his students for lodging and food, a major issue for someone with colitis.

He had planned a long journey—from Tokyo to Kyoto—that took him through many provinces and over several mountain ranges. Going south and west from Tokyo, Bashō followed the Pacific coastline and passed Mount Fuji. Turning southward, he made a pilgrimage to the Grand Shrines in Ise.

Then Bashō and Chiri turned north toward Ueno, Bashō’s hometown. Here he stayed only a few days for the one-year memorial for his mother’s death. Continuing west they crossed the Kii Sanchi Mountains over the Takami Pass at 2,970 feet (904 meters) and visited many temples. As Bashō traveled he found many people who had heard of his renga and were curious about the form. His arrival in an area would be announced, someone would offer the use of rooms, and a renga party would be organized.

Often there were only four or five people but they would make it a proper party. Food and drink would be served, a scribe appointed, and Bashō, the
guest of honor, would be asked to write the first stanza. This verse was called a hokku and was what later became known as haiku. This poem was supposed to reference the current season, give a subtle compliment or thanks to the host, and be worthy of heading a long poem. At this time renga contained one hundred verses. This number could only be reached if the party lasted for several days, which it rarely did. Bashō discovered that an experienced group could accomplish about one-third of a hundred-link renga in an evening. There was a tradition of picking thirty-six of the best poets, or masters or sages, in other fields, so the number thirty-six seemed a good choice. This length was then called a kasen ("sages") renga and is an innovation followed still today.

Five of these shorter, more lyrical renga were written during this trip. They became the groundwork for all of Bashō’s later work. He recognized how valuable the pleasure he got from meeting people and the work they had done together had been. A book of the completed renga, The Winter Sun (Fuyu no Hi), was published, and Bashō began to collect his notes and poems from the trip into a work, The Records of a Weather-Exposed Skeleton (Nozarashi Kikō).

By the end of this book, the reader has the impression that Bashō has lived through his fear and can look at traveling without heroism or sentimentality. He seems to understand his urge to travel and how necessary it was for him to take his teaching and his poetry to the people. From this new perspective he gained self-esteem and purpose in his life.

Bashō was now very clear about why traveling appealed to him. He wrote: “As I have no home, I have no need of pots and pans. As I have nothing to steal, I have nothing to fear on the roads. I need no palanquin but amble along in my own time, and my coarse evening meal tastes better than meat. There is no particular road I have to follow and no particular time I have to set off in the morning. Each day, there are just two things I have to bother about—whether I’ll find a pleasant lodging that evening, and whether I’ll be able to get straw sandals that fit my feet—that is all. Time after time new sights stir my spirit, day after day my feelings are kindled.”

In this frame of mind he returned to his home on the Fukagawa river at the end of May and spent the next two years enjoying his existence. His students provided him with clothes, food, and companionship. He was an established poet with spreading fame and he enjoyed calling himself "an idle old man.” This was not completely true, as each newly published work continually drew
more students. Larger groups would gather at his place to enjoy the moon or flowers. They would share their poetry and learn from the master.

Part of Bashō’s teaching was this admonishment: “Go to the pine if you want to learn about the pine, or to the bamboo if you want learn about the bamboo. And in doing so, you must leave your subjective preoccupation with yourself. Otherwise you impose yourself on the object and do not learn. Your poetry issues of its own accord when you and the object have become one, when you have plunged deep enough into the object to see something like a hidden glimmer there. However well phrased your poetry may be, if your feeling is not natural—if the object and yourself are separate—then your poetry is not true poetry but merely your subjective counterfeit.”

One of the renga parties was held at the New Year, in honor of Bashō’s student Kikaku, who had just been declared an independent haikai master. They completed a one-hundred-link poem to which Bashō contributed six links. He was then asked to make a verse-by-verse commentary. Halfway through this job his health worsened, preventing him from finishing it. This unfinished work, finally published in 1763 as Critical Notes on the New Year Renga (Hatsukaishi hyōchū), was valuable for Bashō’s theory of atarashimi (“novelty”). Here he meant, not novelty for novelty’s sake, but beauty or subject matter overlooked by other poets.

At another meeting held at Bashō’s home, the members of the group wrote poems on the subject of frogs. Bashō enjoyed the exercise so much he continued to write frog poems long after. One became his most famous poem. This poem was placed in the beginning of the book The Frog Contest (Kawazu Amase) to set the pace and standard for excellence.

It was at this time a man named Sora (“sky”) became his follower and friend. Sora (1649–1710) took up a temporary residence near Bashō’s home. He was four years younger than Bashō but seemed to have a special understanding of how to get along with him. They fell into a pattern of sharing meals and special events like a first snowfall, and were the best of friends.

Still, Bashō needed to make trips, so he planned for one in 1687 to Kashima, about fifty miles (eighty kilometers) east of Tokyo, where there was a Shinto shrine famed for its view of the full moon in the middle of September. Sora and Sōha, a Zen monk, accompanied Bashō with great plans for describing the scene with poems. Unfortunately it rained most of the night and only briefly near dawn did they get a glimpse of the moon. While they were there, Bashō had
the chance to visit and exchange poems with his old Zen master, the Priest Butchô, who had retired to Kashima.

Back home Bashô wrote about the journey in a journal with essays and poems titled *A Visit to the Kashima Shrine (Kashima Kikô)*, which he completed by October 1. Bashô also compiled thirty-four of his single verses from the previous three years into *Collected Verses (Atsume Ku)*. He also wrote comments on twelve pair of poems for the contest *The Extending Plain (Tsuzuki no Harâ)*.

Encouraged by the success of the poetry from his trip, Bashô set off two months later on another westward journey that roughly followed his trip of 1684. He planned to be in his hometown of Ueno by New Year’s and then to go on to Kyoto.

This trip was very different. He was now a famous poet with a large circle of friends and disciples. They gave him a huge farewell dinner and presented him with many presents. Many poems were written in his honor and others were sent from those unable to attend. The poems were later collected into *Farewell Verses (Ku Senbetsu)*. The disciples had arranged for Bashô to be well-cared for at each of his stops. When he arrived in Ueno he was greeted as the famous poet from Tokyo by the new young head of his former master’s family. How different this was to the shame and rejection he felt on his departure just twenty years earlier after the death of his friend and employer, the noble Yoshitada.

Bashô saw the famous cherry trees in bloom on Yoshino Mountain, visited Waka Beach for spring scenes of the coastline, and arrived in Nara at the time of new green leaves. Deeply steeped in his studies of Murasaki Shikibu’s famous *The Tale of Genji*, Bashô went to Osaka to visit the places associated with Genji’s exile at Suma and Akashi on the coast of the Inland Sea.

From there he turned east, passed through Kyoto, and arrived in Nagoya in the middle of summer. The weather was very hot, so after a short rest he headed for the mountains of central Honshû. He wanted to see the harvest moon in the rugged area of Sarashima. The trip was difficult, but Bashô survived and got to see the moon. He returned to Tokyo in late autumn after one year of traveling.

This had been a very productive journey. He returned with enough material for two travel journals. *Knapsack Notebook (Oi no Kobumi)* covers his travels from Tokyo to Akashi, and *A Visit to Sarashina Village (Sarashina Kikô)* describes his trip to view the moon there. In addition he wrote many single verses and renga.
His students had swelled not only in number, but in stature. Many of the newly rich merchants and warlords were eager to obtain culture by learning to write renga. Bashō lodged in the best houses in the neighborhood and he had been richly blessed with many new poems.
187.

spring arises
ten quarts of old rice
in the new year

188.

At the House of Chiri in Asakusa

seaweed soup
shows such skills
in a decorated bowl

189.

Bunrin sent me a picture of Buddha leaving the
mountain and I have placed it on my altar.

glory to Buddha
on a pedestal of grass
such coolness

190.

don't forget
to enjoy the cool air at
Sayo of Nakayama

191.

In the year of Jōkyō, with the eighth moon, I left
my humble hut by the river. The sound of the wind
was strangely cold.

weather beaten
wind pierces my body
to my heart

192.

ten autumns
Tokyo has become
my hometown
It rained the day I passed through the barrier, and all the mountains were hidden in the clouds.

misty showers
the day one cannot see Mount Fuji
it is more attractive

This is our scribbling at the sacred oratory of Tado Gogen Shrine in Ise. The aged Bashō, owner of the Bashō Cottage on Fukagawa River, and Tani Bokuin, the master of Kansuiken of Nōshū, Ōgaki, poet vendors on a visiting journey of Ise and Owari, would like to offer to you these various poems of the four seasons.

life of a priest
my name is swept away
in the River of Fallen Leaves

near the roadside
my horse grazing
on hibiscus

I left the inn in the deep of night, and just as the dawn was breaking, I recalled Tu Mu's "horse-whip drooping" poem.

dozing on horseback
half-dreaming the faraway moon
was smoke for morning tea
Matsubaya was in Ise, so we went in search of news of him, and stayed here for ten days. After dark, I visited the Outer Shrine of Ise. The first gate was faintly visible against the light sky. Sacred lanterns were everywhere. The pine wind from the mountain pierced me, and my heart was deeply moved.

end of the month
no moon hugging an ancient cedar
in the storm

A stream flows through the bottom of Saigyō Valley, where I wrote a poem about women who were washing yams.

women washing yams
if Saigyō was here
he'd compose a poem
or
women washing yams
if Saigyō was here
they'd compose a poem

Visiting a man retired from worldly affairs at his thatched cottage

ivy planted
with four or five bamboo
an autumn storm
203.

At the beginning of September I came back to my birthplace. Nothing of my mother remained. The grass in front of mother’s room had withered in the frost. Everything had changed. The hair of my brother and sisters was white and they had wrinkles between their eyebrows. We could only say, “We are fortunate to be still alive.” Nothing more. My elder brother opened an amulet case and said reverently to me, “Look at mother’s white hair. You have come back after such a long time. So this is like the jewel box of Urasshima Tarō. Your eyebrows have become white.” We wept for a while and then I composed this verse.

if taken in my hand
it would vanish in hot tears
autumn frost

204.

Traveling to Tamata, we have come to Tike no Uchi in Katsuge County, which is the native village of Chiri, so we have stayed here for a rest.

cotton-beating bow
as soothing as a lute
behind the bamboo

205.

Visiting Futakamiyama Taima Temple,
I saw a pine tree about a thousand years old spreading its branches over a garden. It was so large it could have covered up the cattle as Chuang Tzu said in his story. It was very fortunate and precious that the pine, under the protection of Buddha, had escaped the penalty of being cut down with an axe.

priest and morning glory
how many times reincarnated
under pine tree law

206.

The remains of Saigyō’s thatched hut are off to the right side of the Inner Temple, reached by continuing a few hundred paces on a woodcutter’s path. The hut faces a steep valley with a stunning view. The “clear trickling water” is unchanged from old times, and still, even now, the drops drip down.

dew drips drips
wanting to rinse away
this dust of this world
not knowing winter
the house where rice is hulled
the sound of hail

strike the pounding block
so I can hear it
temple wife

I went up mountains and down slopes, with the late autumn sun already in decline. Of all the famous places here, I went first to worship at the mausoleum of the former Emperor Go-Daigo.

what do you recall enduring
fern of remembrance

We passed from Tamato to Tamashiro, traveling the Ōmi Road to Mino. Passing Imasu, then Tamanaka, I saw the old grave of Tokiwa. I was wondering what Arakida Moritake of Isa meant by the phrase in his poem, "the autumn wind resembles Lord Yoshitomo." I have also composed like this.

Yoshitomo’s heart
was perhaps similar to
the autumn wind
autumn winds
in the thickets and fields
Fuwa’s fence
or
autumn winds
like thickets and fields
the indestructible barrier

Late autumn, wishing to see the colored cherry leaves, I entered the mountains of Toshino, but I had sore feet from my straw sandals, so I stopped for a rest and put aside my walking stick.

leaves scatter
light from the cherry tree
on a cypress-slat hat

At Kuwana Hontō Temple

a winter peony
the plovers must be
a cuckoo in snow

not yet dead
but sleeping at journey’s end
autumn evening

how harsh
the sound of hailstones
on a cypress-slat hat

After having a good time at Kuwana, I have come over to Atsuta.

coming for pleasure
and to angle for globefish
going as far as seven miles
On Seeing a Traveler

even a horse
is something to see
on a snowy morning

The owner of the inn, Tōyō, is such an enthusiastic poet I have decided to stay with him for a while.

into this sea
throwing my sandals
rain on my hat

I visited the Atsuta Shrine. The buildings were in ruins, the earthen walls had crumbled and were hidden in a field of weeds. Sacred straw ropes had been put up to mark the site of the lesser shrine and rocks piled up to show the shrine itself. Ferns and mosses, growing as they will, only made the place more sacred and captured one’s heart.

buying a cookie
even the ferns are withered
at a rest stop

Having had enough of sleeping by the road, I got up while it was still dark to go to the beach.

at dawn
the white of an ice fish
just one inch long
224.

Mediating the two unfriendly persons at Tokoku’s place...

snow on snow
this night in December
a full moon

226.

comical poetry
in a winter wind I resemble
a poor poet-doctor

225.

The three venerable old men were gifted with the talent of poetical elegance, expressing their hearts in the poems of eternal value. Those who enjoy their poems naturally honor linked poetry with great respect.

moons and flowers
these are the true ones
the masters

227.

New Year’s festival
I’d like to celebrate it in the capital
with a friend

228.

Spending the New Year holiday at my hometown
in the mountains...

who is the bridegroom
carrying rice cakes on ferns
in the year of the ox

229.

Caught in a winter rainstorm on the road...

without a hat
a winter rain falls on me
so what
280.  
Taking off my sandals in one place, setting down my staff in another, I was still on the road at the end of the year.

the year ends
while still wearing my cypress hat
putting on straw sandals

281.  
grass pillow
a dog also in the cold rain
on a night of voices

282.  
Sun Going Down

the sea darkens
and the duck's voice
is faintly white

283.  
This was composed when seeing a screen of plum blossoms and a crow at the house of Sakuei.

A renga party was held with this as the starting poem.

a wandering crow
its old nest has become
a plum tree

284.  
the plan
for Kiso in April
blossom viewing

285.  
On the Road to Nara

surely it is spring
in the nameless mountains
a thin haze
236. In the second month I secluded myself at the Nigatsudō Hall.

drawing water
by monks from the icy sound of clogs
or
drawing water
the sound of the clogs of the freezing monks

237. There lived a man at Take no Uchi in Kazuraki County. He took good care of his family, employing many workers who plowed paddy fields in spring and harvested rice in autumn. His house was filled with the scent of plum blossoms, which encouraged and consoled the sorrowful poets.

earliest spring
selling plum flower wine
the fragrance

238. House of One Branch in Take no Uchi

a world of fragrance
in one branch of plum blossoms
a wren

239. I went to Kyoto to visit the mountain villa of Mitsui Shūsū at Narutaki Plum Grove.

white blossoms
the crane was stolen
just yesterday

240. the oak tree
pays no attention to flowers
a pose

241. Meeting the Priest Ninkō at the Saiganji Temple, Fushimi

my silk robe
peaches of Fushimi
drip here
242.
Crossing Over the Mountains on the Road to Ōtsu

on a mountain path
where something might charm you
a wild violet

243.
A View of the Lake

Karasaki’s
pine has a haze
softer than the blossoms

244.
arranged azaleas
in the shadow a woman
splits a dead cod

245.
Poem on a Journey

at a kale farm
the face viewing the flowers
is a sparrow

246.
At Minakuchi I just happened to meet a friend
not seen for twenty years.

two lives
between them have lived
cherry blossoms

247.
A Peaceful View of the Country in Spring

a butterfly flies
only in the field
of sunshine
rabbit-ear iris
it gives me an idea
for a poem

A View of Narumi-gata Inlet
On a fine and balmy spring day, a boat seen way out in the offing seems to be moving very slowly, sometimes almost stopped. The bright pink peach blossoms are in the foreground on the beach.

boat landing
stopping for a rest on a beach
of peach blossoms

A Buddhist priest of Izu Province, Inbe Rotsū, who has been traveling alone since last year, on hearing about me has come to Owari to travel with me.

now that we’re together
let’s graze on ears of barley
for our journey

The Priest Daiten of Engeki Temple passed away at the beginning of this year. I could hardly believe that, but I wrote a letter to Kikaku with the following verse of grief while I was on my journey.

missing the plum
I bow to the bush clover blossoms
in tears

Given to Tokoku
a white poppy
a butterfly tears off a wing
for a keepsake
Having stayed with Toyo again, I am now leaving for the Eastern Provinces.

from deep in the peony's stamens
a bee crawls out
a reluctant parting

Stopping at a House in the Mountains of Kai Province

the steed passes
comforting himself with barley overnight

summer robe
I've not yet finished
removing the lice

a bird catcher also
probably threw away his hat
cuckoo

On the portrait of a priest viewed from the back is a poem which reads, "Having lived with my back against the secular world all the way, now I live in a small mountain hamlet wearing a priest's black robe." This picture and poem were done by a vegetarian priest, Bansai. I miss him and the way he lived in poetical elegance.

with a round fan
I want to cool him
back to front

Three people living in Reiganjima came to my place late last night. Their names happened to be all the same. This reminded me of Li Po's poem of "Drinking Alone under the Moon," and so I playfully composed this verse.

the wine bowl moon
filled full with three names
to drink this evening
260.
occasional clouds
people can rest themselves
moon viewing

261.
Eating what was given, and what I begged for,
surviving without starving till the end of the year
perhaps I’ll be one
of those happy people
old at the year’s end

262.
in many frosts
the rapid beating of a heart
pine decoration

263.
fallow field
men going out to pick
shepherd’s purse greens

264.
if I look closely
shepherd’s purse blooms
by the fence

265.
horsetail rush
as if a legendary person is wearing
a pleated skirt
since I’m sick  
not eating a rice bar  
peach flowers

Goddess of Mercy  
the temple roof overlooks  
a cloud of blossoms

Composed impromptu on March 20...  
cherry flowers bloom  
for a week seeing a crane  
in the foothills

On the occasion of the departure of Priest Sōha,  
living next door, as he leaves on his journey  
just an old nest  
how lonely will be  
the house next door

falling to the ground  
a flower closer to the root  
bidding farewell

east or west  
the same elegance  
in autumn winds
272.

full moon
walking around the pond
all night

273.

"is he blind"
that's how others see me
moon viewing

274.

On a journey to a certain place I stayed
overnight in a boat. I saw a beautiful waning
moon at dawn rising over my head above the
rush mat cover.

at dawn
the moon of the twenty-seventh
night
seems new

275.

the one thing
that lights my world
a rice gourd

276.

A Desolate Garden

all the flowers withered
such sadness in the dropping
of a weed's seeds

277.

The Priest Genki kindly presented me with
some wine, so I composed this for him in return.

cold water
unable to fall asleep
a sea gull
278.

I wanted to see the first snowfall of the year at my cottage, and returned many times in vain whenever it was getting cloudy. I was so glad to see the snow finally on January 31, 1686.

first snowfall
luckily I am here
at my cottage

279.

first snowfall
enough to bend down
narcissus leaves

280.

Someone named Jane has set up a temporary lodging nearby and evening and night we visit each other. When I cook something he feeds the fire. When I make tea he breaks the ice up for water. Because he likes solitude and our friendship is congenial to both of us. One evening after a snowfall he stopped by for a visit.

if you start a fire
I'll show you something good
a huge snowball

281.

moon and snow
seem to be ignoring each other
end of the year

282.

a jar cracks
awakened from sleep
in a night of frost

283.

the white moon
in December a legend
awakened from sleep
284.

_A Snowy Night in Fukagawa_

drinking wine
more and more sleepless
snowy night

285.

year-end fair
I want to go out to buy
incense sticks

286.

Ranetsu presented me a fine new robe for the New Year.

whose is it
I look like quite a character
on New Year’s Day

287.

village kids
don’t break all the plum branches
for cattle whips

288.

_A Mountain Cottage_

a stork’s nest
can be seen among flowers
through the leaves

289.

_Tamaga: A Cottage in the Mountains_

in a stork’s nest
untouched by a storm
of cherry blossoms
Hearing someone talking about the history of the temple...

Hat Temple
the non-leaking cave
in a spring rain

When I visited a friend at his cottage, he was not there. The old caretaker said that he had gone to a certain temple. Plum blossoms were in full bloom by the fence. So I said, "They look like the master of the house. I will enjoy meeting them instead." Then the caretaker said, "They belong to the person next door."

coming in his absence
even the plum blossoms are
in someone else's hedge

dealing the scent
of plum blossoms to a granary
under the eaves

it is oysters
not dried seaweed one should sell
when one is old

do not forget
that in the thicket are
plum blossoms

playing on flowers
do not eat the horsefly
friend sparrow
296.
My Reed-thatched House
clouds of blossoms
is the temple bell from Ueno
or Asakusa

297.
how curious
on grass without fragrance
lands a butterfly

298.
tiny river crab
creeping up my leg
clear water

299.
cuckoo
calls repeatedly as it flies
restless

300.
fishmonger
what kind of person wants
to make someone drunk

301.
lying down drunk
wild pinks bloom
on the stones
On the Thirty-fifth Day Memorial Service

tofu pulp
without a mother in the house
so dreary

Given to Rika

a flash of lightning
your hand takes in darkness
a paper candle

even a long day
is not enough for the singing
of a skylark

in the middle of a field
with nothing to cling to
a skylark sings

summer rain
the grebe’s floating nest
tempts me to see it

My disciple Sanpū sent me a sheer robe
as a summer gift.

now I am good
wearing the cloth
of a cicada robe
308.
I visited the overgrown hut of an old man who had gone into seclusion.
growing melons
“I wish you were here”
in the evening coolness

309.
melon flower
what kind of water drop
was forgotten

310.
The Rainy Season
summer rain
the bucket hoop splits
a night voice

311.
Depicting the Poor Master
hair grown long
a pale bluish face
in rainy season rain

312.
Ransetsu painted a morning glory and asked me to write a poem alongside it.
a morning glory
even drawn badly
is charming

313.
mid-harvest
a crane on the rice paddy
in a village in autumn
814. a peasant’s child stops hulling rice 
gazes at the moon

816. sleeping at a temple 
with my true face 
moon viewing

818. a field of bush clover 
one night’s lodging 
for a wild dog

815. taro leaves 
waiting for the moon in a village 
where they burn fields

817. the moon passes quickly 
treetops are still holding 
the rain

819. sleep on a journey 
then you will understand my poem 
autumn winds
98  CHAPTER  FOUR

320.

Before the Shrine

this pine
sprouted in the age of the gods
now in autumn

321.

Hermitage Rain

rising up
chrysanthemums are faint
in a trace of water

322.

growing thin
the pitiful mum bush
bears a bud

323.

clarifying the sound
the Big Dipper echoes
the pounding block

324.

In Mourning for Dokukai

everything
that beckons dies in the end
pampas grass

325.

moths in a straw raincoat
come listen to their voices
in a thatched hut
I was given some rice... 
inside the world of rice harvest time
a straw hut

a traveler now call me by that name
first shower of winter

like a ridge
a cloud shower
snow on Mount Fuji

halfway to Kyoto
in the middle of the sky
clouds of snow

"look into the darkness of Star Cape"
is this the plovers' cry?

burning dried pine needles
to dry my hand towel
such coldness
Composed at Amatsu Nawate in Toyohashi
where the cold winds blew in from the sea

winter sun
frozen on horseback
the priest’s shadow

though it’s cold
two sleeping together tonight
feels comfortable

On the way to Irago, Etsujin gets drunk
and tries to ride a horse.
on snow and sand
you can fall off a horse
drunk on wine

Cape Irago
nothing resembles it
like the hawk’s voice

more reassuring
than in a dream
the real hawk

a single hawk
finds me happy at
the Cape of Irago
just as I feared
extremely desolate
frost on the house

with barley growing
what a fine shelter you have
in Farm Fields

taking medicine
it is as bad as having
frost on the pillow

plums and camellias
praising the early blossoms
in a prized village

Given to a man hidden for a time
first celebrate
the flowers in your heart
confined in winter

crossing Hakone
it seems there are people
on a snowy morning
344.
At the house of Dewa no Kami Ujikumo
in Narumi
how interesting
it seems the snow becomes
winter rain

345.
For the completion of the reconstruction and
repairing of Atsuta Jingū Shrine
polished again
the mirror is as clear as
flower-like snowflakes

346.
Attending the party of a certain person...
smoothing out the wrinkles
to attend the snow-viewing party
a paper robe

347.
now farewell
for snow viewing we’ll fall down
until we get there

348.
well, let’s go
we will fall down snow viewing
until we get there

349.
frozen dew
a dry brush draws
clear water
Rented a horse at the village of Hinaga, mentioned in the poem "From Kwvana I came with nothing to eat..." so I could ride up Walking Stick Hill, but my saddle slipped and I was thrown from the horse.

if on foot
I'd use one on Walking Stick Hill
falling off a horse

On December 9, attending a renga party at Issei's place
sleeping on a journey
an inn at the end of the year
an evening moon

I have seen the world's annual housecleaning

On the last day of the year, reluctant to leave, I drank deep into the night and slept through New Year's morning.

again on the second day
I will not fail
the flowers of spring

my hometown
weeping over my navel cord
at the year's end

Seventh Day of the New Year
in all directions
the chopped herbs are confused
CHAPTER FOUR

Early Spring

spring begins
still on the ninth day
in mountains and fields

like Akokuso's heart
I can't ever know
plum blossoms

There is something called "peat" in the castle
town of Iga. It smells very bad.
to smell the odor
peat dug from the hill
of plum blossoms

At a Mountain Cottage

blowing his snotty nose
such a sound with the plum
in bloom

I didn't see a single plum tree in the shrine
area, so I asked a man why that was. He said,
"There is no reason for it except since olden
times the only plum tree has been one behind
the shrine virgin's house."

shrine virgin
only one lovely enough
for plum blossoms

red plum
creating unobtainable love
blinds of a noble lady
what kind of tree
with the unknown flower
such a fragrance

tell of the sorrows
of this mountain temple
old yam digger

On February 15, at the residential quarters
of the monks at the Outer Shrine of the
Grand Shrine of Ise

wine cup
don’t drop in any dirt
village swallows

At Rosō’s House

wearing a paper robe
even if it gets wet
picking flowers in the rain

Ichiyū’s Wife
doorsway curtain
deep in the interior a wife
plum blossoms
Meeting Ajiro Minbu Sersudô

on one plum tree blossoms—mistletoe
on another

Ryu no Shôsha was his pen name, but his real name was Tatsuno Denemon Hirochika. He was a priest at the Outer Shrine at Ise, a scholar of Shinto religion, and also a poet.

first of all
may I ask the name of the reed
with young leaves

Staying at Hyôchiku-an, which was so comfortable
staying among flowers
from beginning to end
about twenty days

At a poetry party held at a certain retreat
taro planted
at the corner young leaves
of bedstraw

go naked
one needs to wear more clothes
in February's storm

On the Day I Leave
for these past days
giving thanks to the flowers
farewell
Two travelers with no abode in heaven or earth

at Yoshino
I'll show the cherry blossoms
my cypress hat

The Honorable Tangan held a flower-viewing party
at his villa. Things were just as in the old days.

many various
things come to mind
cherry blossoms

At Hoso Toge, which is on the way from Tusu
no Mine to Ryūmon

higher than the lark
resting in the sky
on the mountain pass

drinking friends
to talk I'll hang over like this
waterfall of flowers
Dragon's Gate

waterfall blossoms will be a souvenir for my drinking friends

with a fan drinking wine in the shadow of scattered blossoms

if I had a good voice I would chant until cherry blossoms scatter

Traveling in Tamato Province, I stayed overnight in a farmer's house. The master of the house was very kind and hospitable. shaded by blossoms it is like song in a play resting on a journey

cherry blossom viewing something admirable every day in ten to twelve miles

Koke Shimizu

spring rain trickling down a tree clear water spring
melting away
the brush draws up the water
of a spring

Yoshino
blossoms at their peak
the mountain the same as always
at daybreak

Mount Kazunoki
still I want to see
a flower in first light
a god’s face

Composed at Nijikō
patter patter
petals of tiny flowers drop
a waterfall of sound

“Tomorrow I’ll be a cypress,” the old tree in the valley said. “Yesterday is gone, tomorrow is not here yet. While alive, doing nothing but enjoying drinks and repeating the excuse, ‘Tomorrow! Tomorrow!’ until in the end we are blamed by the wise.”

Mount Kōya
father and mother
are missed so much
the pheasant’s voice
departing spring
at the Bay of Poetry
I catch up with it

taking one robe off
tossing it over my shoulder
clothes-changing day

Buddha’s birthday
on this very day is born
a fawn

Parting from my old friends in Nara
deer antler
now branching at the joint
farewell

with young leaves
I would like to wipe away
the tears in your eyes

both weary
taking lodging at the same time
wisteria flowers
fading temple bell
the fragrance of flowers strikes
at evening

The lotus is the prince of flowers. The tree peony
is said to be the wealthy noble of flowers. A rice
seedling comes out of muddy water, but it is
purer than the lotus. In autumn, it bears fragrant
rice, so that this one plant has the merits of
both: it is pure and wealth making.

villagers
composing songs to rice
as in the capital

In Osaka, at the home of a certain person
rabbit-ear iris
talking about a trip
is one of its delights

At the residence of Tamazaki Sōkan a verse
that had been jokingly composed by Konoe-dono
came to mind.

honorable figure
I will bow down to
rabbit-ear iris

Invited by a townsman on May 4, I saw a perfor-
mance by Toshioka Matome. He died on the fifth.
Therefore, this a memorial verse for him.

iris flower
has withered overnight
play’s leading actor

withered grass
a little shimmer of heat
one or two inches
404.

fifteen feet high
the heat shimmer high
above the stone

405.

the cuckoo
disappears in the direction
of one island

406.

an octopus jar
the short-lived dreams
of the summer moon

407.

not hiding
at the lodge green vegetable soup
with red peppers

408.

in blowing wind
a fish jumps up
purification rite

409.

scooped by hands
yet it shocks my teeth
spring water
410.

a delight
cooling oneself in a rice paddy
the sound of water

411.

there’s a moon
yet it’s as if something is missing
Suma in summer

412.

seeing the moon
is not enough
summer in Suma

413.

The fishermen catch a small white-meat fish with fishing nets. When they dry the fish in the sun the crows fly down to steal them away. The fishermen hate the birds and scare them off by shooting arrows. It is not what fishermen are supposed to do. I wonder if this solution is a remnant of the old warriors’ practice because there are old sites of civil wars near here. It seems to me that they are guilty.

Suma’s fishermen’s arrowheads ahead of the cry cuckoo

414.

The dawn is growing whiter from the side of the sea where a cuckoo might come out to sing. The ears of barley on a higher plain are turning brownish and the poppy flowers are seen blooming here and there near the fishermen’s houses.

faces of fishermen
first of all it’s possible to see
poppy flowers
416.
the Suma temple
hearing the unplayed flute
in the shade of green leaves

416.
The distance between Suma and Akashi is so close that we can reach it by crawling. Now I understand it.

land snail
wave your horns between
Suma and Akashi

417.
washing my feet
I fall asleep for the short night
with my clothes on

417.
these fireflies
let me compare them with the moon
in rice paddies

418.
Planning a journey along the Kiso route, I stayed in Otsu and went to Seta to see the fireflies.

Fireflies
still before my eyes
cherry blossoms of Yoshino
fireflies of Seta

419.
Fireflies
still before my eyes
cherry blossoms of Yoshino
fireflies of Seta

420.
leaves of grass
as soon as it drops it flies
a firefly
421.
summer rains
wondering if it'll disappear
the Seta Bridge

422.
At Otsu
the summer world
floating in the lake
on the waves

423.
At the end of May, I have climbed up to a pavilion
with a lake view owned by a certain person.
clear at the lake
yet it rains on Mount Hiei
departing of May

424.
Enjoying the Coolness
gourd flowers
in autumn various varieties
of gourds

426.
At the meeting on June 6, 1688
bindweed
because of short nights
taking a nap

426.
in bindweed flowers
something takes a nap
on a mountain bed
427.
I want to stay here
until the day the goose-foot
is a walking stick

428.
Accepting an invitation from a certain Rakugo,
I intended to recuperate from the fatigue of the
journey in the cool shade of the pine trees of
Mount Inaba.

mountain shade
body to rest awhile
as a melon field

429.
Consoling the host, Rakugo, on the death of
his child.

the frail one
compared to a flower
in a summer field

430.
A certain Kisaburo invited me often to his villa
at the foot of Mount Inaba for enjoying the
cool breezes.

castle ruins
an old well with spring water
I will visit first

431.

432.
I was invited to see the famous cormorant
fishing when it became dark. People were
seated under the trees at the foot of Mount
Inaba raising their wine cups.

nothing compares
to Nagara's river of
pickled sweet smelt
483.

exciting
but sad when it is over
cormorant boats

484.

cormorant boats
this neighborhood
everything that comes to the eye
is seen as cool

485.

coming in summer
the tongue is noon only has
one leaf

486.

Third Day of the Seventh Month
like nothing
it has been compared to
the crescent moon

487.

At Hōōji Temple in the rice paddies...

already harvested
the earliest rice on one side
sandpiper’s voice

488.

that cloud
waiting for lightning or a sign
of the wife-god of rice
489.  
Celebrating a Newly Built House

what a good house
the sparrow is delighted with
millet at the back door

490.  
At the renga party held at Chikuyō and hosted by Chōkō on July 20, 1688

millet among millet
nothing is scanty here
in a thatched hut

491.  
lotus pond
leave the leaves for
the ancestor’s festival

492.  
On hearing that Chine had died, I sent a message to Kyorai from Mino.

one who died
now her robe with small sleeves
hung out to air

493.  
The View at Narumi

early autumn
the sea and rice fields
one green

494.  
various grasses
each flower
an achievement
People came to the edge of the town to see me off and we had farewell drinks at a teahouse.

morning glories
ignoring the revelers
in full bloom

trembling feeble
yet even more so with dew
lady flowers

First Day of Autumn

travel-wear
how many days of this?
autumn wind

seeing someone off
his back looks lonely
in the autumn wind

being seen off
and in the end be parted
autumn at Kiso

being seen off
and finally seeing off
autumn in Kiso
451.  
Mount Obasute

the image shows
an old woman weeping alone
my friend the moon

452.  
They have a very hot radish in Kiso though it is small in size.

hot radish
piercing the body
autumn wind

453.  
Kiso’s horse chestnuts
for people weary of the world
a souvenir

454.  
blowing away
the stones of the volcano
a typhoon

456.  
passing through autumn
a butterfly seems to lick
chrysanthemum dew

456.  
As Sōdō’s house. Celebrating the chrysanthemums on the tents. The elderly host of the lotus pond loves chrysanthemums. Yesterday he held a party for the Chrysanthemum Festival just like that of Long Shan and today he offers the sake left over from our renga party. I wonder who will stay in good health for next year’s party?

which is better today
the lingering moon or
leftover mums
Staying at Sakaki of Shinano Province

sixteenth night moon
 lingering still in Sarashina County

lantern plant
 fruit and leaves and shells
 are autumn colors

with that moon
 I wish to paint glitter
 on the inn

swinging bridge
 lives are intertwined
 in ivy vines

swinging bridge
 first one thinks of
 meeting horses

moonlight
 four gates and four sects
 just one
463.
ivy leaves
giving the feeling of antiquity
autumn foliage

464.
what do poor folks eat
the small house of autumn
in willow shadow

465.
the thinness of Kiso
though not yet recovered
the late moon

466.
departing autumn
pulling closer to the body
a single quilt

467.
I want to borrow
the scarecrow’s sleeves
midnight frost

468.
this mallet
was it originally from a camellia
or a plum tree?
469.

A Motto: "Do not mention the faults of others. Do not mention one's own merits."

when saying something
my lips are cold
autumn wind

470.

Musashi no Kami Tasutoki. He gave priority to benevolence, throwing away first his personal desire in governing the country.

the full moon
shines like the 51-article law
of the feudal lord

471.

The Emperor Niouku. We still remember his grateful poem.

owing to the emperor's kindness
people are thriving as well
as their fires

472.

chrysanthemums and cockscombs
all cut off for the memorial service of Saint Nichiren

473.

winter confinement
again I'll lean on
this post

474.

five or six
sitting with tea and cakes
a fireplace
hackberries falling
sound of a gray starling's wings
on a stormy morning

a withering wind
hiding in the bamboo
has calmed down

day and night
who waits on Pine Island
with a one-sided heart

The man Jūzō of the Province of Owari is also known as Etsujin—the name of his hometown. Now he hides in the city, but only to supply himself with food and fuel. If he works for two days, he plays for two days. If he works three days, he plays three days. He loves his wine, and he sings from the Tales of the Heike when he is drunk. A true friend indeed.

snow we two
watched last year
is it falling again

The Priest Dōn, whose name I knew well, promised we would meet someday, but unfortunately he could not wait and died, dropping away like an early winter's frost falling at night. Today is, I understand, the first anniversary of his death, so...

his figure
wishing to see in a dead tree
the length of his staff
In mourning for the death of Rika’s wife...

lying down
with quilts over the head
such a cold night

In mourning for the death of a certain person
dying charcoal fire
extinguished by tears
a boiling sound

I have got the two words “buying rice”
while looking for a good theme on a snowy night.

off to buy rice
in the snow the empty sack
a cloth hood

everyone bows to
the sacred rope around the wedded rocks
end of the year

Looking at a picture of Futami respectfully

no doubt
flowers of the sea waters
springtime on the bay
a famous artist
what is the source of sadness
at the year’s end

bottom of discretion
has been reached
end of the year

New Year’s Day
longing to see the sun in Tagoto’s
rice paddies

for what
in this year’s-end market
goes a crow

staying indoors
the only friend of bedstraw
a vendor of greens

even bedstraw
has tender new leaves
a dilapidated house
CHAPTER FIVE

BASHÔ’S JOURNEY TO THE INTERIOR

1689
Excited by his successes during his travels, Bashō began planning his next journey. Since the last one had covered territory he had previously visited, he was eager to see new places. This time he decided to set out for the wild interior of the northern part of the island of Honshū. The trip would cover over fifteen hundred miles (twenty-four hundred kilometers) and be the biggest one of his life.

Bashō had traversed relatively easy routes, so he wanted this trip to be more rigorous. He wanted to go where he was not well known. He wanted to travel simply—more like a wandering monk who only took his begging bowl. He wanted to live among the people in small inns and not be housed by the rich and famous who expected poems in praise of their fancy homes and gardens. Even his farewell parties were more subdued.

He sold his house on the river to a family. His friend Sora went with him. Both men kept journals. Sora’s was called Sora’s Journey Diary (Sora Tabi Nikki). Along with his poetry, Sora kept a record of where the two men stayed, how far they traveled, the weather, and the names of the people they met. Curiously, Sora’s diary was only made public in 1943, under the title, Narrow Road to the Deep North, Accompanying Diary (Oku no Hosomichi Zuikō Nikki), published by Ogawa Shobō, with Yamamoto Yasusaburō as editor.

Bashō’s account, titled Narrow Road to the Deep North, or Journey to the Interior, would be much more literary. He would spend almost five years revising and polishing his book. It became one of the highest achievements in the history of poetic diaries. Reading both accounts, it is hard to believe the two men made the same journey.

Sora and Bashō had planned to leave Tokyo during the first week of March, right after the Doll Festival, but they were not able to get away until May 16.
They proceeded north with stops at the Tōshō Shrine in Nikkō, the mineral hot springs of Nasu, and the castle at Iizuka. The pair arrived on the Pacific coast near Sendai and greatly admired the fantastic pine-topped islands of Matsushima. They visited the old battlegrounds at Hiraizumi where legends and history came together.

They headed west and crossed over desolate mountains to reach the Sea of Japan at Sakata. After a short trip north to Kisagata, they followed the coastal road south, passing Sado Island. Due to the heat, the rains, and the conditions of the roads and accommodations, Bashō and Sora arrived in Kanazawa and decided to rest at a hot spring resort. It was here Bashō became infatuated with the son of the innkeeper.

At this point Sora became ill and decided to give up the journey. He left his master to go to stay with a relative in Ise. Bashō missed him very much, but continued on alone to Fukui. There he met his old friend Tōsai, who accompanied Bashō as far as Tsuruga, where they met Rotsū. Bashō and Rotsū, who had originally planned to make the whole trip, traveled south to the town of Ōgaki. Sora came from Ise and Etsujin joined them at Joko’s house. Bashō considered the adventurous part of the trip over because he was again surrounded by old friends, students, and familiar terrain.

After resting only a few days, Bashō was off again, on the road to Ise with Sora and Rotsū, to offer prayers at the rebuilding of the Great Shrine. Much of the trip was made by boat to conserve Bashō’s strength.

In November of 1689 Bashō, exhausted and weakened by failing health, returned to his hometown of Ueno. After only a couple of months Bashō left again, this time with Rotsū. They departed for the famous Shinto festival at the Kasuga Shrine in Nara in early January. By February Bashō was in Kyoto with his friend Kyorai and together they traveled to the village of Zeze on Lake Biwa, where a throng of students welcomed Bashō for a New Year’s Day celebration on February 9.
how enticing
in the spring of this year
again on a journey

heat shimmer
rising from the shoulders
my paper robe

a skylark sings
the pheasant's voice
the instrumental music

Looking at a picture of a man drinking alone
drinking saké
without flowers or moon
one is alone

a door of grass
the resident changes for a time
a house of dolls

baby sweet fish
seeing off the ice fish
farewell
497.

spring departing
birds cry and in the fishes’
eyes are tears

498.

Tashima Shrine of Muro
heat threads
tie together to hold
the smoke

499.

the setting sun
a thread of heat haze
as remnant

500.

Feeling lonely on a spring evening in a hamlet
a bell at sunset
also was not heard
a spring evening

501.

no bell ringing
what does the village do
on a spring evening

502.

how glorious
young green leaves
flash in the sun
503.
for a while
secluded behind the waterfall
summer retreat begins

504.
cuckoo
seen from behind the waterfall
both sides

505.
Trying to find Tōja at Toze in Nasu Province
carrying hay
a man is the marker
in a summer field

506.
Facing the beautiful garden of the host, Shūa
letting the mountain
move into the garden
a summer room

507.
in a barley field
especially in summer
the cuckoo

508.
a summer mountain
I pray to the wooden clogs
at departure
609.
Looking at a painting of a banana tree with a crane

a crane calls
its voice couldn’t tear
a banana leaf

610.
less than
five foot square
grass shelter
not needed
unless there is rain

I understand that the Priest Butchô composed this poem about his home here. Seeing this place is so much more impressive than hearing about it, and I feel my heart is purified.

even woodpeckers
do not damage this hut
a summer grove

611.
across the field
the horse pulls toward
the cuckoo

612.
The two priests traveling together to Michinoku visited the bamboo-covered fields of Nasu and hurried to see the Killing Rock.

is it falling down?
the inn at Takaku
a cuckoo

613.
The Killing Stone
the stone’s stench
even reddish summer grass
has hot dew
The gods of Iwashimizu Hachimangu are also enshrined here with the gods of Tusen Daimyojin, so when we pray here, we pray to the gods of both shrines at the same time.

scooping hot water
the vow is the same as one
rock spring water

from west or east
first of the young rice in
the sound of the wind

We were told that about five miles (eight kilometers) to the east of Sukagawa Station there are falls named Ishikawa, so we planned to go to see them, but because of the heavy rains of the past few days, the river was so swollen we were unable to cross it and therefore canceled the trip.

early summer rains
falling so heavily they cover up
the waterfall

The willow tree with “clear water flowing” was in the village of Ashino, by a paddy path. Ashino Suketoshi, the local lord, had written to me from time to time to say, “I’d like to show you the willow,” so I had wondered in what kind of a place it would be. Today I was able to stop in the shade of this willow.

one patch of a rice field
when it was planted I left
the willow tree

I missed your poetry in Shirakawa, and I felt so sorry that I wrote a letter to you from Sukagawa.

border guard
I regret I was not a bird
to knock at your door
519.

Crossing the Barrier of Shirakawa

roots of elegance
on this trip to the far north
rice-planting song

520.

The Chinese character for "chestnut" consists of the radicals for "west" and "tree." They say that the Bodhisattva Gyōgi used the wood of this tree for his walking sticks and for the pillars of his house. Therefore it has, I understand, a connection with the Pure Land of the West.

men of this world
fail to find the flowers
chestnuts under the eaves

521.

hide-a-way
unseen flowers on the chestnut
near the eaves

522.

picking up rice seedlings
hands move as in days of old
ferns of remembrance

523.

backpack and sword
decorated in May
with paper fish banners

524.

Rainhat Island
where is it in May
a muddy road
Because someone named Kyohaku had given me a farewell gift poem: Takekuma no / matsu mose / oso-zakura (Takekuma's pine shows him / late cherries).

since the cherry blossoms I’ve waited three months to see the twin-trunk pine

Matsushima is known as the most beautiful place in Japan. Since olden times, it has been depicted in poetry and pictures by many poets and artists. It has an expanse of about seven and a half miles (twelve kilometers) of sea coast, where there are many off-shore islands carved into various shapes by the wind and waves. Many of the islands, or sea stacks, have enough soil to support a few wind-bent pines, making them seem to be stages for a play about the gods.

many islands broken into pieces summer's sea

The houses are decorated with iris leaves for the annual festival, but I have no fixed abode. So, at least I can tie them to my sandal cords to drive away evil spirits.

iris leaves I tie them to my feet as sandal cords

summer grass the only remains of soldiers' dreams

early summer rains their falling leaves untouched golden hall of light
630.
firefly’s glow
disappears at daylight
behind the pillar

631.
fleas and lice
now a horse pisses
by my pillow

632.
making the coolness
my own dwelling place
here I sit

633.
crawling out
from under the shed
toad’s voice

634.
Seeing Safflowers Blooming at Mogami
an eyebrow brush
is the image drawn by
safflower blossoms

635.
such stillness
piercing the rock
a cicada’s voice
mountain temple
deeply staining the rock
cicada's voice

loneliness
seeping into the rock
cicada's voice

summer rain
quickly gathered
Mogami River

At Fūryū’s house
the water’s source
in an ice cavern if I ask
the willow

At Seishin’s house
the scent of wind
from the south not far from
the Mogami River

admirable
snow gives its scent to
the south valley
642.

admirable
making the snow fragrant
sound of the wind

643.

admirable
making the snow go around
the wind’s sound

644.

coolness
a crescent moon faintly seen
over Black Feather Mountain

645.

this jewel his soul
will return to Black Feather Mountain
the moon of sacred law

646.

asking the four sleepers
about moon and flower poetry
snoring

647.

cloud peaks
how many have crumbled
on the mountain of the moon
not permitted to tell
how sleeves are wetted
in the bathroom

June 10, 1689. After visiting Mount Haguro
for seven days.

how rare
on leaving the Dewa mountains
the first eggplant

a hot day's sun
taken into the sea
by the Mogami River

Kisagata silk tree
is a Chinese beauty in the rain
a sleeping flower

Kisagata rain
with the Chinese beauty asleep
a silk tree in bloom

Toward evening, a certain local person showed
us around Kisagata by boat.

a clear night
cooling myself under cherry trees
waves of flowers
low tide crossing
the crane's shank is wetted
with the sea's coolness

Mount Atsumi
over to Blowing Beach
to enjoy a cool breeze

herb garden
which of the flowers are for
a grass pillow?

are the relatives
of a notorious bandit holding
a memorial service

July
ordinarily the sixth night
is not like this

Looking over toward Sado Island from Echigo Province
a rough sea
stretching over to Sado
heaven's river
the shape of branches
changing every day
a hibiscus

the voice of a dove
pierces my body
cave entrance

the first melon
shall it be cut crosswise
or into round slices?

small fish skewered
by the willow twigs' coolness
the fisherman's wife

in one house
prostitutes lie down to sleep
bush clover and the moon

the scent of early rice
coming in from the right
the Ariso Sea
866.

Ishio was well known in the poetical world, but unfortunately died last winter, and his elder brother performed a memorial service for him.

the tomb also shakes
my weeping voice is
the autumn wind

867.

Invited to a Certain Grass Hut

autumn coolness
each peeling with our hands
melons and eggplant

868.

red more red
in spite of the indifferent sun
an autumn breeze

869.

At a Place Called Little Pines

a lovely name
at Little Pines blows
bush clover and thatch reeds

870.

to get wet passing by
a man is interesting
bush clover in rain

871.

how pitiful
under the armored helmet
a cricket
672.

alas how cruel
under the armored helmet
a cricket

673.

Stone Mountain
whiter than its stones
autumn wind

674.

at Yamanaka
it's not necessary to pluck
chrysanthemums
hot spring fragrance

676.

a peach tree
do not scatter its leaves
winds of autumn

677.

fishing flares
the fish in the ripples
choked with tears

tonight my skin
will miss the hot spring
it seems colder
missing the hot springs
how often looking back
at their mist

from this day on
dew will erase the writing
on my hat

sweeping the garden
I want to leave in the temple
scattered willow leaves

writing something
vigorously tearing up the fan
at the parting

writing something
pulling apart the torn fan
missing someone

Asking Tōtai, a man of Fukui, to go with me
let’s visit the places
best for seeing the moon
sleeping on a journey
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584.
When we crossed the bridge of Asamutsu, which is now pronounced Asozu, I recalled a passage in The Pillow Book of Sei Shōnagon where she named, in a list, the most interesting bridges, and one was at Asamutsu. This is the same bridge.

Shallow Water
a journey of moon viewing
at dawn parting
or
at shallow water
a journey for moon viewing
departs at dawn

585.
Mount Hina
tomorrow’s moon
I can forecast rain by the sun
on Mount Hina

586.
Tu-no-o
the moon’s name
it is difficult to cover up
the yam of a god

587.
Koshi no Nakayama
at Nakayama
the moon on the sea coast road
is alive again

588.
The Sea of Kehi
in many places
of eight famous scenes
the moon of Kehi
589.
go moon viewing
before the reeds of Tamae
are cut off

590.
the moon clear
on sand carried over here
by a saint

591.
At Hyūchi Castle
the famous general
awakening on this mountain
saw a sad moon

592.
As the innkeeper predicted yesterday, it rains today.
harvest moon
weather in the northern areas
is unsettled

593.
On the same night the innkeeper told me a
story of the temple bell that sank to the bottom
of the sea. The governor sent divers down for it
but the dragon-headed hook on its top was
buried in the sand so they were unable to get
a hold of it.

where is the moon
the temple bell has sunk
to the bottom of the sea

594.
not only the moon
but the wrestling match also
canceled by rain
495.

an ancient name
missing the deer horn
moon of autumn

496.

putting on a robe
to pick up small shellfish
moon of colors

497.

small flower scraps
small red-beauty shells
small wine cups

498.

loneliness
Suma is outdone by
Hama’s autumn
or
loneliness
clarity is only outdone
by an autumn beach

499.

between the waves
small shells mingle with
bits of bush clover

500.

a clam
torn from its shell
departing autumn
601.
just as it is
without depending on the moon
Ibuki Mountain

602.
hurry up and bloom
the festival approaches
chrysanthemum flowers

603.
An impromptu verse written at the villa of Josui
staying inside
trees’ fruit and grasses’ seeds
are what I want to gather

604.
A certain Sogyū of Seki visited me when I stayed in Ogaki. I composed this for him in the lingering scent of the flowers that Sogi had called the flowers of white wisteria.
wisteria beans
let’s make a poem as
the result of flowers

606.
what a retreat!
with the moon and mums
in an acre of rice paddies

606:
Saigyō’s straw sandals
hanging from the pine tree
dew
607.

When I stayed at the home of Tügen in Ise Province, his wife, in cooperation with her husband, worked very hard to take care of me so I could relax and recover from the fatigue of my journey.

look sad moon
while I tell the story
of a warrior's wife

608.

Staying two nights at the Daichin Temple of Nagashima in the Province of Ise

I am weary
so now make me lonely
as a temple in autumn

609.

At Nakamura of Ise Province

autumn wind
in the graveyard of Ise
more dreadful

610.

in holiness
people pushed by others
for shrine renewal

611.

entering a gate
sago palms with the fragrance
of orchids

612.

“inkstone”
picking up a hollow stone
with dew
first winter rain
even the monkey seems to want
a little straw raincoat

not yet a butterfly
even as autumn passes
the caterpillar

das.

these people
showering down on this house
in spite of the cold

winter garden
the moon and insects’ song
a thin thread

a folding screen
with a painting of a mountain
winter confinement

gathering mushrooms
the dangerous thing is
an evening shower
First day of the eleventh month for a linked verse
at Roydbon’s house...

now children
come run among jewels
hailstones

Playing with Children in the Mountains

the first snowfall
using a rabbit skin
to make a beard

first snowfall
when will they erect the columns
for the Buddha image

have the monks
gone first to the poet’s grave
bowl bell ringers

departing for White Mountain
by a borrowed palanquin
a cold shower

Visiting Chigetsu, an elderly nun, I was told
about Ono-ga-nejin-shōshō, who had lived in
seclusion near here.

the story
of the famous poet nun
a village in snow
625.

this is it
not stained by worldly soot
a covered wooden bowl

626.

People from Zeze have visited me at my cottage.
if it hails
ice fish from the trap
I’ll serve cooked

627.

Welcoming the New Year near Kyoto
wrapped in a straw mat
who can this great one be
flowers of spring

628.

To the one who is going to Zeze...
go see it
the Festival of the Otters
downstream the river
CHAPTER SIX

AT THE PEAK AND STILL TRAVELING

1690–91
Basho’s journey to the Far North was the apex of his literary career. He composed some of his finest works while traveling. This was due in part to his deepening maturity. He had overcome his fears, had accomplished the complete trip, and was still able to write poetry. He had discovered a mode of life that inspired his work, and this gave him peace of mind. In the wilderness he had been able to immerse himself in a state of oneness with nature. His worries fell away before the magnificence of a powerful universe. He realized how necessary it was to be in this state in order to write poetry the way he wanted.

Back home in Ueno, he spent the next two years assimilating what he had learned and experienced. He spent many hours revising his journal and meditating on the places he had been. The resulting travel record, Narrow Road to the Deep North (Oku no Hosomichi), became denser, less accurate but more illuminating. He perfected the form called haibun, a combination of prose and poetry that brings out the best in both genres. His prose became poetry and his haiku soared. From this book Basho was able to glimpse a new standard of worthiness for the small three-part poem. In his search for meaning in life, he had found a way to express his deepest feelings in simple observations.

These new ideas about poetry resulted in two books that record Basho’s serious, philosophical understanding of words and ideas. Thanks to his disciples who wrote and published Records of the Seven Days (Kikigaki Nanukagusa) and Conversation at Tamanaka (Tamanaka Mondō), his teaching continued.

After his long trip, Basho continued to visit friends, family, and disciples in the vicinity of Ueno, Kyoto, and towns along the southern shore of Lake Biwa. He often made side trips during these journeys to special shrines or scenic sites. People were so eager to have this famous poet stay in their area that they built
or found homes for him. One of his favorites, “The Abode of Illusion,” or Ginjū ("The Unreal Hut"), was located halfway up a hill with a panoramic view overlooking Lake Biwa and the Seta River. He described these four months of his life as idle, but the many hours of solitude and meditation fed his writing. Bashō loved the place and the views, but he was greatly bothered by snakes and poisonous centipedes. Three poems—numbers 648, 649, and 650—reflect his attitudes toward these pests.

In August his disciples rented a cottage on the lake shore between Zeze and Ōtsu. It was in a quiet, hidden place behind the Gichū Temple on the southernmost tip of the lake where Bashō could write and work in seclusion. When his health again deteriorated, the isolation became cumbersome, so he moved back to Ueno, where, in his weakened condition, he instructed his students from his bed.

As he recovered he began to make small trips to neighboring provinces and went as far as Kyoto. There, in the month of January, local poets gathered around Bashō to write “The Kite’s Feathers” (Tobi no Ha), which is considered the finest renga ever written.

His move to Ōtsu over the New Year’s holidays meant that for the first time Bashō failed to write poems to celebrate the season. His stay was brief and he soon returned to Ueno and the care of his family.

In the spring Bashō traveled to Kyoto and one of his disciples bought and repaired a house for him in the suburb of Saga. The place was called the “Hut of Fallen Persimmons,” which Bashō described as “in the suburbs of Kyoto among the bamboo thickets of Shimo Saga, not far from either Mount Arashi or the Ōi River. It is an ideal place for meditation, for it is hushed in silence. Such is the laziness of my friend, Kyorai, that his windows are covered with tall grass growing rank in the garden, and his roofs are buried under the branches of overgrown persimmon trees. The house has developed a number of leaks, and the long rain of May has made the straw mats and paper screens terribly moldy, so that it is difficult to find a place to lie down. Ironically, the sun reaching into the house is the gift with which the master of the house welcomes his guest.”

When Bashō stayed here for seventeen days in 1691 the result was The Saga Diary (Saga Nikki), the last of his longer prose works.

Bashō’s two disciples Kyorai and Nozawa Bonchō were working with him to compile an anthology of renga verses that resulted in the book, The Monkey’s
Straw Raincoat (Sarunino). During their work together, Bashō had moved into Boncho's house. He stayed there until July 16. One week before the book's publication, Bashō was enticed to move back to the Gichū Temple, where a new house, Mumyō (“Nameless”), had been built for him.

When The Monkey's Straw Raincoat was finally published in the summer of 1691, the importance of Bashō's concept that being immersed in nature can bring perfect spiritual serenity became clear. For the first time others could see that renga writing and even the resulting single verses could be a serious art form capable of embodying mature comments on man and his environment.

In the preceding three hundred years renga had gained popularity greater than that of the waka. Then it had degenerated back into silliness and a party game for drunks.

The spiritual maturity and force of Bashō's personality allowed him to steer the form back to prominence. Bashō was recognized as one who could infuse poetry with its old power and magnificence. He tried to teach his students his new understanding of poetry by stressing the concepts of sabi (“loneliness”), shiori (“tenderness”), and hosomi (“slenderness”). Kyorai wrote his understanding of the lesson: "Sabi is in the color of a poem. It does not necessarily refer to the poem that describes a lonely scene. If a man goes to war wearing stout armor or to a party dressed up in gay clothes, and if the man happens to be an old man, there is something lonely about him. Sabi is something like that. It is in the poem regardless of the scene it describes, whether it is lonely or gay."

The term sabi continues to be redefined. Nobuyuki Yuasa describes sabi as "The merging of the temporal into the eternal, of the vast and infinite, out of which emerges a primeval lonely feeling shared by all things in this world."
In my natal place I planted three kinds of seeds
in my elder brother’s garden.

spring rain
leaves on the sprouts
of eggplant seeds

this seed
is not to be underrated
red pepper

The year of the horse in the mountains of
Iga—a tasteful scene in spring

yarn seed vendor
when cherries are in bloom
a business trip

At the Mansion of Kyo-boku
pines on the bank
blossoms in the thick woods
make a mansion

well-matched
rice balls covered with roasted soy flour
cherry blossom gathering

On March 11, at the shrine of Shirahige in
Araki village
plowing a field
the sound of a violent storm
for hemp blossoms
635.
On the Departure of Rotsu for Michinoku

a grass pillow
is the best to use when coming
to view cherry blossoms

636.
under the trees
soup and pickles
cherry blossoms

637.

butterfly wings
how many times have they flown
over the wall's roof

638.
are you the butterfly
and I Chuang Tzu’s
dreaming heart

639.

these villagers
all are descendants
of flower guards

640.
from all directions
blossoms blow into
waves of Lute Lake
heat shimmer
the medicinal herb’s sprout is
slightly hazy

mountain cherries
first of all the two
tiled roofs

bush warbler
has dropped his hat
camellia

Viewing the lake, I miss the departing spring.
departing spring
with the people of Ōmi
we missed it

Staying overnight at Seta, I visited
Stone Mountain Temple at dawn to
see the "Room of Genji."
daybreak
not yet lavender
the cuckoo

a nun living alone
cold-hearted in a thatched house
a white azalea
AT THE PEAK AND STILL TRAVELING

647.

missing a wife
putting on bamboo grass
[unfinished]

648.

summer grass
adorned with a wealth
of snake skins

649.

summer grass
I will go ahead to hunt
for the snakes

650.

dreadful to hear
that they eat snakes
a pheasant’s voice

651.

above all else
a dependable chinquapin tree stands
in a summer grove

652.

neither evening
nor morning belongs to
the melon flower
658.

path of the sun
the hollyhock leans into
early summer rain

659.

oranges
when do they come to the fields
cuckoo birds

664.

Firefly Viewing at Seta

firefly viewing
when the boatman is drunk
unsteady

665.

each with its own light
fireflies in the trees
lodge in flowers

666.

From the beginning to the middle of June, a special platform is set up right on the river bank at Shijō in Kyoto, and people enjoy drinking and eating all night. Women tie their sashes properly, and men wear their formal long coats. I see even the apprentices of a cooper and the blacksmith. They seem to have too much leisure time, singing and making noise. This is probably a scene that can only be seen in the capital.

a river breeze
one wearing a light persimmon robe
enjoys the coolness
688.

even in Kyoto
longing for Kyoto
the cuckoo

689.
don't be like me
even though we're like the melon
split in two

690.
a dragonfly
unable to settle
on the grass

691.
a wild boar
it is also blown about
by the typhoon

692.
at my house
the smallness of the mosquitoes
is my treat

693.
The Vicissitudes of Life Are Swift, and Life Is Ephemeral

soon to die
yet showing no sign
the cicada's voice
On Tanabata

664.
a silk tree
even through the leaves weary
of starlight

665.
festival of the dead
even today there is smoke
from the crematorium

666.
full moon
acolytes form a line
on the temple veranda

667.
full moon
the ocean welcomes
seven Komachi

668.
Enjoying Moon Viewing at an Old Temple

moon viewing
no party without
a pretty face

669.
moonrise
their hands in their laps
about evening
670.

moonrise
their hands on their knees
inside at evening

671.

At Masahide's house for the first renga party
moonrise
holding their hands on their knees
evening at a house

672.

to hear the wild goose
is my reason to go
to the capital in autumn

673.

a cricket
the forgotten faint voice
of a foot warmer

674.

pulling out white hairs
underneath the pillow
a cricket

675.

fisherman's house
small shrimps mixed in
with camel crickets
While staying in Awazu, a man who liked the tea ceremony very much invited me to a ceremony and served vinegar boiled chrysanthemum flowers picked from a nearby beach.

a butterfly also comes
to sip the vinegar on the chrysanthemum salad

Recalling Olden Times
after a frost
some wild carnations still bloom on the brazier

drinking morning tea
the monk is quiet
as is the mum flower

by the paulownia tree
the quail seem to be calling behind a wall

Showing me a portrait, probably his own, with the face looking the other way, the Priest Unchiku, from Kyoto, a famous calligrapher of the Daishi school, asked me to write a poem on it. I said to him, "You are sixty years old and I am almost fifty. Life was like a dream just as Chuang Tzu said. The portrait looks like a dream and now I am adding sleep talk to it.

turn this way
I am also lonely
this autumn evening
At Katada

a sick goose
falling into the night’s coldness
sleep on a journey

an early winter shower
a rice paddy with new stubble
darkens just a bit

A high priest says, “A superficial knowledge of Zen causes great harm.” I appreciate his comment.

with lightning
one is not enlightened
how valuable

Traveling

first snowfall
the traveling monk’s
faded backpack

Coming on the Shinano Route

snow falling
pampas reeds for the shrine hut
still not cut
unable to settle down
the traveling heart remains
a portable heater

dried salmon
and the lay-monk’s thinness
the cold within

wait awhile
cut the soybeans to the sound
of monks beating bowls

This is still the morning of December 1 but already...
carolers
the elegance when they come
in early December

year-end housecleaning
blowing through the cedars
a violent storm

In Ōtsu
three feet high
a storm in the mountain
of a tree’s leaves
Stone Mountain’s stones shower down hail

building a bridge between snow-covered mountains white egrets

usually hateful however a crow on a snowy morning

Renga Party at the End of the Year for half a day my friend turns into a god end-of-the-year party

At Otokum’s New House having someone else buy a house makes me forget a year of troubles

Closed my mouth for the first three days and on the fourth day of the New Year I have gotten this: souvenir paintings what kind of a brush first drew the image of Buddha
700.

disappeared
end of the year in the lake
a little grebe

701.

Early Spring in the Mountains of Iga-Ueno

mountain village
holiday carolers are as late as
plum blossoms

702.

plovers fly away
the evening grows later with
cold mountain winds

703.

Answering to the request of the Priest jōkō.
Oh they are precious, precious indeed. The hat is
precious, the straw cape is also precious. Who told
us about her? Who depicted her like this, reproduc-
ing the image of a figure of so long ago? When her
figure is here, her soul must be here, also! The
straw cape is precious, and the hat is also precious.

how precious
a day without rain or snow
straw cape and hat

704.

A parting present for Otokuni, who is leaving
for Tokyo

plums and young greens
at the post town of Mariko
grated yam soup

705.

high-spirited Kiso
under the snow it grows
spring grass
the scent of plum
a series of storybooks
for children

waiting for the moon
plum blossoms lean toward
a child mountain ascetic

At a Farmhouse
barley soup
grown thin from love
the cat’s wife

year after year
the cherry tree nourished by
fallen blossoms

drink up
we’ll make a flower vase
out of the cask
712.
lemon flowers
recalling olden times
in the serving room

718.
laziness
helped out of bed
by spring rain

714.
laziness
jerked awake
by spring rain

716.
Having decided to leave the Hut of
Fallen Persimmons tomorrow, I miss it so
much I wanted to see every room closely,
and composed this poem.

summer rain
where the poem card peeled off
a mark on the wall

717.
wrapping dumplings
with one hand brushing back
her bangs
a bamboo shoot
when I was a child it was
fun to sketch

for a while
flowers are above
the night's moon

a cuckoo
in a bamboo thicket
leaking moonlight

day after day
barley ripens
a singing skylark

Seeing the Portrait of Jōzan Respectfully

a cool breeze
the collar of his jacket
is crooked

yellow roses
at Uji the fragrance
of roasting tea leaves
724.

rice paddy sparrows
shelter in the tea plants
when chased away

726.

the month of June
like someone with a cold
the heat

726.

already sad
now make me lonely too
mountain cuckoo

727.

summer's night
the tree spirit follows in
the sound of wooden shoes

728.

clapping my hands
the echo as it dawns
of a summer moon

729.

good for nothing
I am so drowsy
reed warbler too loud
the fates of people become
as a bamboo shoot

begonia flowers
blooming in the colors
of a watermelon

darkness of night
lost from its nest
cry of the plover

cattle shed
dark sound of mosquitoes
in summer heat

Early Autumn

early autumn
the folded mosquito net
as a blanket

an autumn wind
blowing yet how green
chestnut burrs
In autumn of 1691, while enjoying Kyoto, I passed by the Rashōmon Gate on the ninth street.

reed plumes
I fear they might seize my head
at Rashōmon

loneliness
hung on a nail
a cricket

giving rice
my friend this evening
guest of the moon

appearing easily
it now seems to hesitate
a cloudy moon

At Katada on the Sixteenth Night
wanting to knock
on the Floating Temple’s gate	onight’s moon
unlock the door
let the moon come into
the Floating Temple

harvest moon
even coming twice in a year
the moon of Seta

a late moon
enough to cook shrimp
evening darkness

gazing at buckwheat
a field of bush clover
becomes envious

sometimes
vinegar on mum flowers becomes
an appetizer

On a Cold Night
noodles
building a fire underneath
a night’s cold
In the tenth month of the fourth year of Genroku's reign, I am staying over at the honorable Riyū’s place at Menshōji Temple. It has been a hundred years since this temple was moved here from the village. As recorded in the records of contributions to the temple: “Bamboo and trees grow densely, and the earth and rocks are aged moss.” Here is a truly venerable grove, deeply moving in its appearance of great age.

an indication

of the garden’s hundred years

fallen leaves

Storm Mountain

in a thicket’s dense growth

a line of wind

the hawk’s eye also

already it has darkened

the quail call

Toei takes good care of the garden of his father’s country house, where there are several fruit trees.

grandfather and parents

the prosperity of grandchildren

in persimmons and oranges

a grass hut

the setting sun gives me

chrysanthemum wine
by the bridge girder
ferns recalling the past
of a nearly full moon

nine times
waking with the moon
still four a.m.

pine mushroom
a leaf from an unknown tree
sticks to it

the paulownia leaf
moves on the autumn wind
frost in the ivy

deep-rooted leeks
when finished washing
the coldness

narcissus and
whiteness of a paper screen
reflect each other
In Praise of a Garden

tastefully designed
the garden is enlivened
by winter showers

rice threshing
an old woman celebrated
with mum flowers

Having a good time at Sensen’s home
once in a while
I see my own breath
winter confinement

Leaving the capital at the end of September, I have arrived in Numazu near the end of October. The innkeeper asked for a poem and I could not ignore his elegant plea.

leaving Kyoto
traveling with the gods
numbering the days
tired of Kyoto
this withering wind
and winter life

At Kögetsu’s House
waiting for snow
the faces of those who like to drink
a flash of lightning

I visited Hōrai Temple in Mikawa Province. On
the way, I suffered from my chronic illness and
stayed overnight at a hut at the base of the
mountain.

one healer
gotten by praying
on a journey

rented lodge
introducing my name
as cold winter rain
pack horse driver
he does not know the cold rain
of Ōi River

during the absence
of the gods it goes to ruin
fallen leaves

With no settled place in this world I have spent my nights on journeys the last six or seven years while suffering many illnesses. Unable to forget my dear friends and disciples of many years, I finally made my way back to the Musashi Plain. Day after day they have come to visit my poor cottage. I composed this verse for them.

anyway
nothing happened—snow
on withered pampas grass

kudzu leaves
showing on the front side
frost this morning

wild geese honking
is this the coldest rain
in Toba’s paddy fields

fish or bird
one can never know the hearts
at a year-end party
CHAPTER SEVEN

Pope finds the secret of greatness in poetry and life

1692–94
Bashō returned to Tokyo in the winter of 1691 when his disciples offered to build him a new house for the third time. Here, however, he did not find the peace and quiet he needed. Because the house was still under construction, he had to finish out the year in a rented place at Nihonbashin.

In the meantime he tried to balance the full life of a famous poet with increasing responsibilities at home. Though he yearned to transcend worldly cares, now that he was a famous poet he was completely confined by them. Bashō became rather nihilistic and his poems were touched with a new bitterness.

He wrote to a friend in Zeze in the spring of 1692: “Everywhere in this city I see people writing poetry to try to win prizes or notoriety. You can imagine what they write. Anything I might say to them would no doubt end in harsh words, so I pretend not to hear or see them.” Even his beloved students Kikaku and Ransetsu joined this popular trend by becoming contest judges. Bashō refused to attend any cherry blossom parties, saying that “places famous for cherry blossoms are filled with fame-seekers who know nothing better than screaming and making noise.”

Bashō was again so discouraged and depressed that he considered giving up being a poet, but the life of poetry was so deeply ingrained in his being that he was unable to do so. As he wrote, “I tried to give up the way of ふうが (‘poetry’) and stop writing verses. But each time I did so, a poetic sentiment would tug at my heart and something would flicker in my mind. Such is the magic spell of the life of poetry.”

In June or July he was able to move into his new three-room cottage. Friends had dug up some of the banana trees from his old place and transplanted them to his new house. His cousin (or nephew—it is unclear) Tōin, whose care Bashō
had assumed seventeen years previously, was now ill with tuberculosis. Bashō loved him like a son and even borrowed money from students for his care. Jutei, a woman with whom Bashō had had some sort of a relationship earlier, moved in next door with her several young children, none of whom were deemed Bashō’s. One of her children, a young boy named Jirōbei, moved in with Bashō to help care for Toin.

When Bashō was again settled, even more invitations poured in for his attendance at renga parties. He began to entertain poets from distant provinces who stayed in his home. His calendar filled with names and obligations.

At first he tried infusing his work with a new philosophy he called karumi (“lightness”). The aim was to write with detachment and ease, and to take a step back from the folly of this life. He felt the author should only be a bystander, and an invisible one at that. To be without feelings or emotions was his goal. In this way he thought he could cope with the depressing fragility of life.

At one of his last gatherings with the Tokyo group, Bashō tried once more to explain his technique of lightness. “The style I have in mind these days is a light one in form and in the method of linking verses, one that gives the impression of looking at a shallow river with a sandy bed.”

It is no wonder that several of his disciples were so at odds with this idea that they broke away from Bashō and started new groups. They tried to retain the direction of his previous works, which reflected a belief that all things are mutually communicable and that a person can become one with other creations of nature.

As his new concept failed, Bashō found himself so impatient with the battles between egos of poets that he chose to stop seeing people altogether. He closed his gate and, as he wrote in a poem, “fastened it with a morning glory.” As he explained, “If someone comes to see me, I have to waste my words in vain. If I leave my house to visit others, I waste their time in vain. Following the examples of Sonkei and Togorō, I have decided to live in complete isolation with a firmly closed door. My solitude shall be my company, and my poverty my wealth. Already a man of fifty, I should be able to maintain this self-imposed discipline.”

This experiment in artificial solitude lasted a little more than a month.

Bashō still considered his idea of lightness to be the ideal way to write. He decided to take his thinking to the poets beyond the Tokyo group. This plan
fit perfectly with his earlier method of outmaneuvering unhappiness—to go on a journey. His nephew had died in April and he was freed from his role as caregiver. He gave his house to Jutei and her two daughters, Masa and Ôfu. Bashô took her one son, Jirôbei, with him and the two set off on the familiar coastal road to the west on June 3. At the last moment Sora went along too. Because he was so concerned about Bashô’s frail health, he stayed with him as far as Hakone.

Family business was now more important than ever. Bashô felt his end was near and he wanted to go home. Thus, the pair traveled first to Iga-Ueno. Bashô received invitations to many parties but declined them because he was too tired and ill. Bashô and Jirôbei went on to Kyoto and stayed with several students. He had such fond memories of his time on the southern shores of Lake Biwa that he wanted to go back. However, Jutei died around this time and Jirôbei left Bashô to return to Tokyo to take care of his mother’s affairs. Bashô found that he needed his family, so he traveled back to Ueno. Here his disciples built him a small house at the back of his brother’s land. The view over the valley was grand and Bashô was able to host a moon-viewing party on October 3.

Still Bashô’s deteriorating condition seemed to overshadow any comfort of having his family around him. In these last months of depression and illness he wrote some of his best, most mature poems.

The death of Jutei and several of his younger disciples depressed Bashô to the point that his already delicate health began to fail. He became quite fragile, had to walk with a cane, and lost several teeth. As his depression deepened there was only one cure for him. He wanted to ensure that all his students understood his new idea of lightness. Bashô wrote a letter to Kyorai saying that “recently there have been a number of haikai parties, but poets here have not yet been able to accept the lightness style, and their halfhearted efforts have resulted in nothing but mediocre verses. I am worried.”

Bashô and his entourage of Shikô, Izen or Sogyû, Jirôbei, and Mataemon, the son of Bashô’s older brother, set off for Osaka on October 26. It was as if Bashô wanted to outrun death, but his body failed him. Upon arrival in Osaka a chill and a migraine sent him to bed for ten days. He recovered on November 7 and held a series of renga parties on succeeding nights.

On November 15 he had a relapse of chills, fever, and severe diarrhea and was confined to bed at the home of a physician and poetry student. Later Bashô was moved to the home of Hanaya Niemon. On November 25 he dictated his
poem "ill on a journey" at around 2:00 A.M. Bashō knew he was dying and that he should have prayers on his mind rather than poetry. Instead he continued to mentally review his work. He got an idea for how to revise the poem "clear cascade" and dictated instructions to Kyorai.

The next day his condition became worse and by evening it was serious. He dictated three wills to his disciple Shikō and wrote a final letter to his elder brother.

Because Bashō’s condition was so dire, his disciple, Kyorai, asked him if he wished to compose a death poem. Bashō told him, "Yesterday’s poem is today’s death verse. If anyone asks about my death verse, tell him that the poems composed recently are all my death verses. The verse ‘ill on a journey / dreams in a withered field / wander around’ is a poem composed in my illness, but it is not my death verse; but it cannot be said that it is not my death verse."

The next day Kikaku, Bashō’s oldest student and close friend, arrived not yet having been told of how ill Bashō was.

Bashō slept peacefully until almost noon. Several flies were zooming around the sickroom and the students tried, with various degrees of skill, to catch them on lime sticks. Bashō awoke and, amused at their antics, laughed out loud, and said, "Those flies are delighted to have a sick man around unexpectedly."

Around four in the afternoon of November 28 Bashō died at the age of fifty-one. That evening, Kyorai, Kikaku, Otokuni, Shikō, Jōsō, Izen, Masahide, Bokusetsu, Donshū, and Jirōbei accompanied his body to the Abode of Illusion on the Gichū Temple grounds near Zeze on Lake Biwa. Bashō was buried according to his will on November 29. Eighty disciples and over three hundred people came to the temple to burn incense.

There were four accounts of Bashō’s last days and burial: Shikō’s Knapsack Diary (Oi Nikki), Tsuizen Nikki, Rotsū’s Bashō Ō Gyōjōki, and Kikaku’s essay “Bashō Ō Shūenki” in Kare Obana.

Bashō died thinking he had failed to transmit his poetic concept of lightness or detachment. For almost a century, as the popularity of haikai poetry waned and waxed, the slender moon of Bashō’s poetic vision was nearly lost. Then came the great master, Buson (1718–83), with his painterly poems, and Issa (1763–1827) with over twenty thousand single poems of compassion and oneness.
By the time of Shiki (1867–1902), the fourth of the Old Masters, Bashō’s idea of lightness had been abandoned. However, Shiki carried on the lineage by redefining lightness to shasei (“sketch”). Shiki also tried to obtain detachment by using simple, straightforward words without emotion, judgment, puns, or wordplay.

When translators and scholars first introduced the ideas and poems of these masters to other cultures and languages, their simplicity was often lost in the effort to make the poems more like Western poetry. Only with the increased availability of translations have readers and writers been able to comprehend these subtle techniques. Coupled with an appreciation for, and adoption of, Zen Buddhist teachings, the long-sought goal of allowing the author’s life, ideas, and personality to recede behind the poem is now easier to accomplish.

The growing popularity of haiku has brought a renewed appreciation for Bashō and his poetry. Even more vital has been the transmission of Bashō’s theories and practice through examples of modern poetry that illuminate and transmit his concepts.

Bashō’s work lives on in translation and in our own literary endeavors. By better knowing and understanding his contributions, our poems will be changed for the better.
was it a bush warbler
poop on the rice cake
on the veranda’s edge

people do not see
spring in a mirror
plum blossoms on the back

their color
whiter than peaches
a narcissus

cats in love
in the bedroom when they stop
is a hazy moon

how enviable
living north of the secular world
mountain cherry

in both hands
peach and cherry blossoms
veggie rice crackers
As a parting gift for one traveling east...

know my heart
the flower on these
five lidded bowls

the cuckoo
singing about five feet
of iris leaves

A Leisurely Walk
counting as I go
villa by villa
plum and willows

under a crescent moon
the ground is hazy
with buckwheat flowers

a banana leaf
let’s hang it on a post
of the moon’s cottage

Why doesn’t the bird sleep with the cherry blossoms?
I don’t understand the heart of spring and the bird
not staying with the blossoms.

not sleeping in flowers
it’s just like the rat
leaving its nest
On the first anniversary of Fuboku’s death, Kinpu holds a renga party.

cuckoo
whose old singing voice
in the inkstone case

probably it was alive
when it left Kamakura
the first tuna

in June
having salted whale is better than
sea bream

on the gable
the sunlight dims
evening coolness

on the Chinese gable
light of the setting sun thins
to evening coolness

To celebrate Tanabata and the seventy-seven years of Sodo’s mother, we seven poets chose each of the seven autumn plants as a theme for the single verses, wishing ourselves also to live as old as the seven old Chinese poets.

seven plants
of bush clover become a thousand autumn stars
Writing on the painting of a wild chrysanthemum...

pinks
their heat is forgotten with wild chrysanthemums

misty rain
the skies of the hibiscus weather

Onagi River
along with autumn
I would like to go to Little Pine River

A little farther than Fukagawa river, we stopped our boat at Five Pines.

upstream and
downstream these are friends for moon viewing

departure
but also a hopeful future
a green orange
800.

departing autumn
all the more hopeful
a green orange

801.

though green
and yet it is changed
red pepper

802.

At the Memorial for Senka’s Father

they seem stained
a dreary rat-gray
the sleeves’ color

803.

first frost
when mums start to feel chilly
I get a cotton waist warmer

804.

today is the day
people grow older
first wintry shower

805.

opening the fireplace
the plasterer is getting old
frost on his sideburns
Opening the Month at the House of Shiryō

806.
opening a tea jar
I long for the garden
of Sakai

807.
salted sea bream
its gums are also cold
in a fish shop

808.
memorial service
five gallons of sake
like oil

809.
memo rial ser vice
five gallons of sake
like oil

810.
sweeping the garden
the snow forgotten
by the broom

811.
banked fire
on the wall a shadow
of the guest
Ampromptu Party on December 20 at Mizuno Saru

come closer
to look at the vase
of plum and camellia

how very tasteful
amusing the heart
at the year’s end

carolers
the sparrow’s smile
at their appearance

cams survived
and became valuable
year’s end

The New Year’s Day

year after year
the monkey wearing
a monkey mask

slowly spring
is making an appearance
moon and plum
Glass noodles
the winning vendor today
has young greens

820.

on his grave:
wild violets make me sadder
than angelica

821.

Writing on a Picture of the Priest Kensu

ice fish
their dark eyes are open
in the net of the law

822.

A Verse to Send Off the Priest Sengin

crane feathers
in a black robe
clouds of flowers
Giving this to one named Okada at his farewell party before he followed the lord of the castle to visit Tōshō Shrine in Nikkō on behalf of the military ruler.

dew on bamboo grass
has moistened a man’s skirt
a bush

cuckoo
its voice lies over
the water

also be like
the heart of the chinquapin’s flower
on a trip to Kiso

As Kyoriku Leaves for Hikone by the Kiso Route
a traveler’s heart
it also should look like
chinquapin flowers
380.
learn to travel
as one above trifles
flies of Kiso

381.
this temple
the garden is full
of banana trees

382.
evening faces flowers
putting a drunken face
out the window

383.
children
bindweed is blooming
let’s peel a melon

384.
hey children
if bindweed is blooming
let’s peel a melon

385.
I envy Tao Yuan-Ming.
by a window
a nap on the bed
of a bamboo mat
fishy smell
on top of the waterweed
fish guts

On the night of Tanabata there was such a rain
that it would wash away the bridge of magpies.
flood waters
stars too will have to sleep
on top of a rock

mushrooms
not yet that many days
of autumn dew

pine mushroom
with its ragged top it's
like a pine tree

still summer
the harvest moon too hot
to enjoy the coolness

moon past full
the beginning of a little more
darkness
842.
Lamenting the Death of Matsukura Ranran

autumn wind
sadly breaking off
the mulberry staff

843.

Visiting his grave on September 3
did you see
on the seventh-day ceremony over your grave
the crescent moon

844.

the moon disappears
afterward the desk has
four corners

845.

Talking about the superb performance by the late Koshōgen
that moon
reminds me of the day he performed
without a mask

846.

Remarks on Closing the Gate
"...if anyone comes, I have to make
unnecessary talk. If I go out to visit anyone,
I feel bad for disturbing him. I should be content
without any friends. I should feel wealthy in spite
of my poverty. A fifty-year-old man writes this
for himself as precept for his edification."

morning glories
in the daytime a lock lowered
on the gate

847.

While the gate was shut at the Fukagawa cottage...
a morning glory
this also is not
my friend
At the house of Hōshō Sadayū at a three-poet party

growing old
one does not even know it
after forty
or
growing old
one who doesn’t even know it
is the chickadee

At the House of Taisui

sunrise party
the mum’s scent skewered
by the tofu kabob

chrysanthemum flowers
bloom at the stonemason’s
between stones

Passing the street of the great gate...

harp case
at an antique shop’s
back door mums
A Farewell to Tōzan

Tōzan stayed in Tokyo on business for three months. One morning, I surprised him with an early morning visit, catching him still asleep. Later, he visited me late one night, long after I had retired. We knew each other well. We were such good friends it was almost as if we were living under one roof. Today, he leaves for his home. I wanted to see him off and went tottering out with a staff to find a departing autumn and, sadly, a departing friend.

vast grassy plain
may nothing touch you
but your hat

every morning
practicing to improve
a cricket

after the mums
there is nothing more
except the radish

departing autumn
the urge to hide oneself
in a poppy

winter mums
covered with rice flour
edge of the grinder
in the saddle
the small boy rides
an uprooted radish

monkey's master
the monkey and his life quiver
under the autumn moon

during the night
the bamboo freezes
a morning of frost

everyone comes out
to appreciate the bridge
a frosty road

When the new Great Bridge at Fukagawa was
almost finished
first snowfall
almost finished
on the bridge
Presented to Shado.

A mud snail that crawls out on the beach of the lake should fear the claws of crabs living among the reeds. Don’t be stamped on by oxen or horses either.

at Naniwa
the lid of the mud snail
winter confinement

with rice gruel
listening to a lute under the eaves
hailstones

the beach at Suma

New Year's preparations are a bundle of brushwood

As a four-poet renga party with a certain Taba

on the gold screen
the pine’s great age
winter solitude

Enjoying a party in Sodo’s chrysanthemum garden

chrysanthemum scent
in the garden a worn out sandal’s sole

winter chrysanthemum
it makes a sweet drink in front of the window
871.

Following the title of the waka "The Heart of the Eldest Son of Fan Li"

even human dew
doesn’t fall out of the mum
as ice

872.

first wintry shower
the first written word in my
wintry shower

873.

opposing leaves
the flowers of the camellia
are indifferent

874.

a feather-down robe
wrapping warmth around
a wild duck’s feet

875.

a peddler’s
wild ducks are pitiful
good fortune festival

876.

A poem on the painting of Hotei
wanting the things
inside the bag
moons and flowers
877.

god of good fortune
made the pickle vendor
dress in formal wear

878.

In praise of old Teitoku as I see his portrait...

childhood name
an old man I don’t know
with a circular cap

879.

“tired of children”
for those who say that
there are no flowers

880.

Eating roots; talking all day with
a warrior

warriors
the bitterness of pickles
in the talk

881.

parsley baked duck
first ice around the irrigation pond
at the mountain’s foot

882.

still alive
yet frozen into a block
sea cucumbers
The Winter of That Year

dawn moon
close to the end of the year
pounding rice

being urged
to hold a year-end party
a good mood

annual housecleaning
the carpenter hanging
his own shelf

New Year's decoration
I would like to hear from Ise
the first news

in the night
meeting a thief who also stole
the end of the year

once a year
it is gathered with respect
shepherd's purse
89. out of melted snow
a thin light purple of
the herb sprout

890. Hokaku asked for my writing on a
folding fan.
the boy’s bangs
still have the smell
of young grass

891. baby sparrows
exchange voices with
rats in the nest

892. on the sore
a willow’s touch
bends

893. on the sore
the willow’s bending
to touch it

894. oiled paper umbrella
trying to push through
willows
plum blossom scent since ancient times the word has been sorrowful

plum blossoms’ scent the person I’ve never seen nor had the honor of meeting

plum scent suddenly the sun comes out on a mountain road

plum blossom scent has chased away the return of the cold

Visiting the private room of the retired Priest Etsudō...

the lingering scent of orchid curtains a private room

Buddha’s death day wrinkled hands join the prayer beads’ sound
901.
Buddha’s birthday
wrinkled hands join
the prayer beads’ sound

902.
the bat also
emerging into this world
of birds in flowers

903.
the world in bloom
even to flowers a “Hail Buddha”
was chanted

904.
Day of the Dolls’ Festival
green willow
drooping into the mud
low tide

905.
eight or nine feet up
in the sky rain falls from
a willow

906.
spring rain
trickling into the wasp’s nest
a leaky roof
bush warbler
behind the willow
before the thicket

for cherry blossom viewing
the boat is slowly punted
by willows

spring rain
a straw rain cape blows back
as river willows

an old river
making big eyes
at the willow

spring night
at dawn with the cherry blossoms
it ends

blooming wildly
among the peach trees
first cherry blossoms
butterflies and birds
restlessly they rise up
a cloud of flowers

how serious
the cat in love tramples on
the dog

cherry blossom viewing
without a set of nested bowls
in my heart

Nara seven-fold
seven buildings in the temple
eight-petaled cherries

At the residence of Lord Rosen
Saigyo’s cottage
must be here somewhere
a garden of flowers

spring rain
mugwort grows taller
in a grassy lane
Presented to Torin to celebrate the completion of his new house, written on my own painting.

it is not cold dew but the honey of a flower on the tree peony

hiding himself can the tea pickers hear the cuckoo

tofu pulp the willow’s darkness bends over

occasional rain there is no need to worry about rice seedlings

hydrangea a bush is the little garden of a detached room

A Portrait of Kusunoki Masashige. His fidelity is as strong as iron and stone.

on Sweet William a camphor tree is dropping tears of dew
listen to an old story
the feudal lord's warrior
was once a wrestler

ears of barley
dependning on their grasp
at the farewell

ears of barley
grasping for support
at the farewell

at the time of parting
carrying my hat in my hand
and a summer vest

coming to the eye
especially at this time
May's Mount Fuji

While resting idly on the roadside grass...
dimly seen
the chinaberry in rain
hazy weather
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981.

a bush warbler
a bamboo shoot in the grove
grieves of old age

982.

early summer rain
a silkworm sickens
on a mulberry farm

983.

already bent
the bamboo waits for snow
what a sight

984.

In Nagoya of Owari
life’s journey
plowing the patch of rice field
back and forth

985.

coolness
appears in the plan
of this house

986.

Tasui was planning to build a house for himself
after his retirement.
for coolness
this Hida carpenter has
the house plans
Having Entered Suruga Province

road to Suruga
orange blossoms also
smell of tea

summer rains
the sky blows down
the Hello River

Owing to the heavy rain of May, the Oi River
was swollen so that I had to wait at Shimada
staying with Jochiku and Ichiku.

the lettuce
leaves are just as green
eggplant soup

squid vendor
his voice confused
with the cuckoo

flowers and fruit
at the same time melons
at their peak

Stopping over at the house of the hermit
Tamada

“the water rail calls”
people say that is why
we stay at Saya
CHAPTER SEVEN

943.
this house
does not know the water rail
at its door

945.
even if it doesn’t rain
on a day to plant bamboo
a straw rain cape and hat

947.
The poem “cottage of brushwood / when I hear that it / sounds miserable / but I soon found out / how tasteful it is” by Priest Saigyō on his visit to a certain priest living at Higashiyama had me wondering how attractive the owner of the hermitage was. I also visited a tasteful hermitage at Higashiyama, where I met a similar priest and gave this to him.

the brushwood door
the moon the same as it was
for the Priest Amida

944.
coolness
exactly as a pine in the fields
the shape of a branch

946.
loaded with brushwood
the horse returns to the rice paddy
transplanting casks of wine
how touching
to exist after the storm
chrysanthemum

At Tamei's House
coolness
reflected in a picture
of Saga's bamboo

fallen blossoms
birds also are astonished
at dust on the harp

a clear cascade
was the water drawn up
for jelly noodles

clear cascade
a summer moon on the waves
but no dust

Oi River
no dust on the waves
just a summer's moon
the sixth month  
clouds rest on the peak  
of Storm Mountain

For a freestyle renga party at Rakushisha  
on May 22 . . .

a wicker trunk  
the coolness on one side  
the first melon

morning dew  
the muddy melon stained  
with coolness

pine wind  
needles falling on the water’s  
cool sound

At Kyokusui’s House

summer night  
broken up at dawn  
chilled food

While at Kyokusui’s house we chose poetic topics  
from “farm life.”

boiled rice slop  
his old lady fans the treat  
with evening coolness
plates and bowls
dimly in the darkness
evening coolness

evening faces
trying to peel a dried gourd
for sour rice

People got together and were talking about
where the best melons are produced.

melon rind
the place it is peeled
a graveyard

At the Temple of Ogura

pine and cedar
to admire the wind
smell the sound

These two verses were composed as I enjoyed
the cool breeze at the house of a No actor,
Tōbo, at Zeze.

rippling waves
the fragrance of wind
in their rhythm

a lake
the heat misses the clouds
on the peak
CHAPTER SEVEN

Having a good time at the house of Honma Shume

flutteringly
the fan is raised
to the peak of a cloud

At Honma Shume’s house, hanging on the back wall of a stage is a picture of skeletons playing flute and drum. Is human life any different from the play of skeletons? Zhuangzi used a skull for his pillow and didn’t distinguish dream from reality. Truly this evokes the character of our lives.

lightning flash
where the face was
pampas plume

scent of lotus blossom
goes to the eye through the mask’s nose

legendary warrior
at the cherry blossom viewing the actor

lightning flash
flying toward the darkness
heron’s voice

the narrow lane
of wrestler’s grass
dew on flowers
hydrangea
in the season of unlined robes
a light yellow

Star Festival
autumn has set in
first of the nights

as autumn draws near
our hearts feel closer
to this small tearoom

While I was staying in Ōtsu, in the summer of 1694, my brother wrote asking me to come home for the Festival of the Ancestors.

the whole household
walking staffs and gray hair
visiting graves
On hearing that the nun Jutei had died
do not think
that “you didn’t count”
festival of souls

departing autumn
to open one’s hands
as a chestnut burr

my dwelling
the moon’s square of light
at the window

old village
not a house without
a persimmon tree

under a clear moon
the foothills’ mist
is the field’s cloud

flowers
of the harvest moon appear
in cotton fields
984.  
the color of wind  
planted artlessly in a garden  
bush clover

986.  
the color of wind  
planted artlessly  
in an autumn garden

986.  
the color of wind  
planted artlessly  
in a garden of reeds

987.  
white gourds  
how we've all changed  
the looks of a face

989.  
*August 15*  
who this evening  
sees the full moon of Yoshino  
sixteen miles away

989.  
cockscomb  
when the geese come  
still redder
the beginning verse
should not resemble our faces
budding cherry blossoms

Visited by Toji of Ise at my mountain hermitage
buckwheat
still served with flowers
on a mountain road

crying "beeeeee"
how sad the bellowing
of deer at night

the sun covered
by clouds for a while
migrating birds

On the Kuragari Pass
in the scent of mums
climbing up the dark pass
for a flower festival

smell of mums
in the ancient capital
are many Buddhas
scent of chrysanthemums in Nara a long time ago
a handsome man

leaving the mums from Nara to Naniwa
a crescent moon night

a cricket
does it get into the bed of
a wild boar

The host likes to enjoy himself till late at night,
and gets up late in the morning. Going to bed early
in the evening is to be stingy with lamp oil and
rising up early in the morning looks too busy.

how pleasurable
sleeping late in autumn
as if master of the house

On September 13, visiting the market
of Sumiyoshi Shrine...

buying a measuring box
I change my mind
about moon viewing
already autumn
even sprinkles of rain
in the moon's shape

new rice straw
it begins to appear already
wintry shower

autumn night
dashed to bits
in conversation

human voices
returning on this road
autumn's departure

Thought...
this road
that no one goes on
autumn's departure

this autumn
why getting older is like
a bird into clouds
1008.
white chrysanthemums
looked at closely
no dust at all

1009.
An impromptu poetry contest at the house of Keishi with the topic of a man accompanying a catamite under the moon.
a clear moon
the red fox frightens
the boy-lover’s friend

1010.
autumn deepens
so what does he do
the man next door

1011.
Composed While Sick in Bed
ill on a journey
dreams in a withered field
wander around

1012.
clear cascade
scattered on the waves
green pine needles
NOTES
NOTE: The mark <> signifies a cutting word. The designation ONH followed by a number indicates a poem from Basho's *The Narrow Road to the Deep North* (Oku no Hosomichi).
1. **haru ya koshi / toshi ya yukiten / kotsugomori**
   
   spring <> came / year <> went / second last day
   
   1663—spring. This is the oldest dated verse by Bashō that we presently have. In his lifetime, the Japanese calendar was based on the phases of the moon so that the month began with the new moon, continued with the full moon on the fifteenth and ended in the dark of the moon. Because the year was based on solar rotation, adjustments had to be made to keep the monthly moon calendar in sync with the skies. Thus, in 1663, instead of the first day of spring arriving on New Year’s Day, as was normal, it was marked as beginning two days earlier. This phenomenon had been commented on by poets for centuries, as is shown by the link between Bashō’s verse and the one written by Ariwara Motokata (888–953) that opens the imperial anthology, **Kokuwakashi**: “before the year ends / spring has already come / left-over days / how shall we name them? / the old or the New Year?”

2. **tsuki zo shirube / konata e irase / tabi no yado**
   
   moon <> guide [or sign] / come here to enter / journey’s lodging
   
   1663—autumn. This verse is considered to be a parody of a tanka in the Nō play *Kurama Tengu*, which has the phrase “the blossoms will guide you.” Bashō’s wordplay works with the idea that the moon is considered a traveler across the skies, as we are travelers over the earth. There is the concept that the moon acts as a guide, a person, as well as a guiding light. The second line could be a direct quote of the moon’s invitation, or that of the innkeeper, but the poem is ambiguous enough to avoid actual personification of the moon.

3. **uba-zakura / saku ya rogo no / omoiide**
   
   old lady cherry tree / bloom <> old age’s / memories
   
   1664—spring. The cherry tree is thought be personified, but the verse could be simply a play of words on another name of *uba-zakura*, or the *higan-zakura* (a type of cherry tree that blooms with no leaves). There is also the idea that a very old cherry tree covered with the youthful look of new blossoms seems like an old woman wearing an overabundance of powder and rouge.

4. **Kyō wa kuman / kusen kunju no / hanami kana**
   
   Kyoto as-for / ninety-nine thousand crowd of / blossom viewing <>
   
   1666—New Year. At the time there was a saying that Kyoto had 98,000 houses. Another phrase is *kisen kunju* (“a crowd of rich and poor”). Bashō changed the *kisen* to *kusen*,
adding even more people to the number. This technique of adding meaning by changing one vowel is called katsuri. Notice that the second line is short by two sound units.

6. toshi wa hito ni / tora se te itsuno / waka Ebisu
years as-for people in / making someone always get it / young Ebisu
1666—spring. On New Year’s Day people bought pictures of various gods to place in their home shrines for their wishes in the New Year. Ebisu was one of the seven gods of good fortune, or long life, whose specialty was fishing, safe navigation, and business.

7. furu oto ya / mimi mo sū-naru / ume no ame
falling sound <> ear also sour / plum rain
1666—spring. What the Japanese call *ume* is most often translated as “plum” because of the Latin name *Prunus mume*, but the fruit more closely resembles the apricot. Because these fruits ripen during mid-June to mid-July, the rains of this time are called *ume no ame* (“plum rains”). Even ripe, the fruit is inedible until it has been preserved in a salty, sour liquid similar to olives.

8. kakitsubata / nitari ya nitari / mizu no kage
rabbit-ear iris / looks like <> looks like / water’s reflection
1666—summer. What is not said in this verse, but is suggested, is that the leaf of the iris also resembles a rabbit’s ear. The repeat of “looks like” emphasizes the thought.

9. hana wa shizu no / me ni mo miekeri / oni azami
flower as-for poor people’s / eye to also appear / ogre thistle
1666—summer. It has been suggested that this verse has a connection to a phrase in the introduction to the imperial anthology of *waka*, *Kokinwakashū*, by Ki no Tsurayuki: “Only those acts which save people are called by the poor to have been done by an invisible ogre.” The play of words comes with the two meanings for *oni* (“plumed” or “ogre”), with *azami* (“thistle,” *Cirsium japonicum*).

10. samidare ni / on mono dō ya / tsuki no kao
early summer rain in / gratitude thing would-you-like <> / moon of face
1666—summer. It was common in other Japanese literature to speak of the moon as having a face. One cannot know if Bashō is asking if someone wants to see the moon’s face or his.

11. yūgao ni / mitoruru ya mi mo / ukari hyon
moonflower / fascinating <> body / floats absent-mindedly
1666—summer. The *yūgao* (“evening face,” *Lagenaria siceraria*) is also called “moonflower” because the large, white blooms open in the cool of the evening on vines of dark, green leaves. The connection here is the ambiguity of whether the author or
some unknown lover is floating by the flowers. An additional clue comes with *ukari* ("to float" or "to be high spirits").

11. *iwa tsutsuji / somuru namida ya / hototogishu*
rock azalea / colored by tears <> / red cuckoo
1666—summer. Again one sees the kasuri loan technique where *hototogishu* is changed to *hototogishu so shu* ("red" or "vermilion") refers to the idea that when one cried for a very long time the tears became blood. The bird known as a *hototogisu*, from its call *hoto-to*, is not found in English-speaking lands, and thus is usually translated as "cuckoo" because of a resemblance in size, song, and habits.

12. *shibashi ma no / matsu ya hotogi– / su sen nen*
for a short while also / pine <> cuckoo / some thousand years
1666—summer. One of the traditional occupations of poets was to wait for the first song of this bird in order to write a verse on the arrival of the season. The proverb *matsu ma sen-nen* ("a pine lives for a thousand years”) adds to the classical wordplay of "pine tree / to pine or long for" which is one of the very few that works in English.

13. *aki kaze no / yarido no kuchi ya / togari-goe*
autumn wind's / sliding door of mouth <> / sharp piercing voice
1666—autumn. The wordplays come with *yari* (a “spear” or “lance”) and *yarido* (a “sliding door”) and with *kuchi* (a “mouth” or “opening”). Some view this verse as one using metaphor, the door as a mouth with the voice of autumn wind.

14. *Tanabata no / awanu kokoro ya / uchūten*
Star Festival's / meet cannot hearts <> / rainy rapture
1666—autumn. On the seventh day of the seventh month, now celebrated on July 7, is Tanabata ("Star Festival"). This is the night once a year when the cow herder, the star Altair, crosses the Milky Way on a bridge of magpie wings to meet the weaver-girl, Vega, for a night of celestial love making. On a summer night, considered by the Japanese as the beginning of autumn, in this hemisphere, these are the two brightest stars seen directly overhead. If it rains the lovers cannot meet. Traditionally, on this evening people gather for outdoor picnics. Children of all ages make wishes by writing them on strips of paper to be tied on bamboo bushes. The word *uchūten* is a compound word made by Bashō incorporating “rain in the middle of heaven” and “ecstasy.” There is a sexual connotation.

15. *tanda sume / sume ba miyako zo / Kyō no tsuki*
just clear / live I capital <> / Kyoto [or today's moon]
1666—autumn. *Sume* means “clear” and “to live.” Bashō uses the word twice to make his point. *Kyō* also has two meanings, either “today” or “Kyōto” the city. In addition, *kyō no tsuki* means the “harvest moon of autumn.”
16. **kage wa ame no / shita teru hime ka / tsuki no kao**
image as for rain of / bottom shining princess <> / moon’s face
1666—autumn. *Shita Teru Hime* ("Shining Under Princess") was the daughter of the legendary ruler, Ōkuninushi, of Izumo Province, in a Shinto myth. She was considered the Mother of Waka poetry. *Shita*, as “bottom,” probably meant “lower” or “last,” in reference to her rank as a princess.

17. **ogi no koe / koya akikaze no / kuchi utsushi**
reed’s voice / sounds like autumn wind / mimics [or transferred from another’s mouth]
1666—autumn. The wordplay occurs with *kuchi utsushi*, which can refer to either “mimicry” or “food or water transferred from the mouth of one person to another.” In the days before jars of baby food, mothers chewed the food for their toothless children.

18. **ne taru hagi ya / yōgan burei / hana no kao**
asleep (finished condition) bush clover <> / face good-looking / flower’s face
1666—autumn. This kasuri works with *burei* ("gawking") and *burei* ("good-looking"). The *hagi* is a low-growing bush with pea-like blooms in purple or white that open in the fall.

19. **tsuki no kagami / koharu ni miru ya / me shōgatsu**
moon’s mirror / balmy autumn in see <> / eye New Year [or to enjoy watching something beautiful]
1666—autumn. The combination of the autumn moon and the New Year exemplifies the humor of haiku because the seasons are deliberately mixed. There is a combination wordplay with *me* “eye” and *shōgatsu* (“New Year”), and *me shōgatsu* (“to enjoy watching something beautiful or good”).

20. **shimo gare ni / saku wa shinki no / hana no kana**
frost wither in / bloom (object) melancholy / flower field<>
1666—autumn. Eizō wrote in *Bashō Ku-shū* (*Collected Verses of Bashō*) that Bashō had taken the phrase *shinki no hana* ("the flowers seem depressed") from a song, "*Ryūtatsu-bushi*,” which was popular at that time.

21. **shigure o ya / modokashi gari te / matsu no yuki**
winter shower (object) <> / displeased with or unhappy and / pine tree [or waits for snow]
1666—winter. This poem is a good example of personification. In Japanese, as well as in English, the word for “pine” (*matsu*) can mean a “pine tree” or “to pine for, or long for” as in to wait for someone. The verse works with the idea that the beginning of winter changes the leaves of the other trees, but the pine must wait to be covered with
snow to be transformed. The drooping slope of pine trees’ branches, especially when bowed with the weight of rain, can give a feeling of sadness or depression.

22. **shiore fusu ya / yo wa sakasama no / yuki no take**

wither bow down <> / world as-for upside down of / snow of bamboo 1666—winter. There was a story called “Snow on the Bamboo” that has a touching scene of a mother lamenting the death of her child who has died under a snow-covered bamboo. The world seems inverted or out of order when a child dies and the parent lives. There is also a play of words on yo, which can be either the “world” or the “joints,” or “nodes,” on the bamboo plant. The cold, frozen stillness of snow is compared to death and the sadness it brings.

23. **arare masiru / katabira yuki wa / komon kana**

hailstones mixed with / unlined heavy silk robe [or large, thin, flat snowflakes] as-for / a finely spotted pattern on fabric <> 1666—winter. The hail and snow against the dark sky looked like the very small prints on kimono cloth. The humor comes from the idea of an unlined summer robe in wintertime. There is also the suggestion that the coolness of the robe comes from the pattern of hailstones and snow on the fabric.

24. **hana no kao ni / hante shite ya / oboro-zuki**

flower’s face at / to feel shy doing<> / hazy moon 1667—spring. The personification can be attached to either the face of the flower or the face of the moon. The ambiguity allows for the hazy moon seeming to be shy before the flowers or the flower being shy in the moonlight.

25. **sakari naru / ume ni sude hiku / kaze mogana**

bloom affirmative / fruit-plum untouched by hands / wind (denoting the wish of the speaker) 1667—spring. Because the Japanese have such a love for the delicate blossoms of flowering trees, a lot of poetical energy is spent wishing that the wind that blows down the petals will stay away. The wind is clearly personified by the wordplay on sude (“to leave something untouched by a hand”) or su-de (“an empty hand”). In addition there is the su of sui, meaning “sour” or the “foods preserved in vinegar.”

26. **achi kochi ya / men men sabaki / yanagi gami**

here there <> / mask combing by itself / willow hair 1667—spring. Several combinations of possible phrases give the feeling that the spring winds in the willow’s long branches resemble a woman’s hair that has been loosened for combing. The metaphor also goes the other way to say the woman’s hair let down for combing is like the long, sweeping branches of the willow. Another wordplay comes
with *achi kochi* ("here and there") and *kochi* (an "easterly wind" or "spring wind"). *Sabaki* has various shades of meaning, including "to comb," "to loosen (hair)," "to sell," "to dispose of," "to deal with," or "to judge."

27. **hana ni akaru / nageki ya kochi no / utabukuro**
blossom at not open / sorrow <> my [or spring winds] / poem bag

1667—spring. Because Bashō has used *kochi* instead of the conventional *ware* for "my," the verse has two distinct versions. The associative technique is the idea that the flowers are not yet opened and neither is Bashō’s bag of poems. The unopened purse of poems is like the flower bud in its potential for beauty.

28. **mochi yuki o / shira ito to nasu / yanagi kana**
cookie snowflakes (object) / white string into form / willow <>

1667—winter. *Mochi* are small white rectangular cakes made with rice flour. When the same dough is formed into twisted hanks it is called *shira ito* ("white strings"), which look like the strings of snow-covered willow branches. Traditionally associated words are "rice cookies" and "snow," because of their whiteness; "strings" and "long thin cookies," and "strings" and "willow branches," because of their shape.

29. **haru kaze ni / fukidashi warau / hana mogana**
spring wind in / start to blow [or burst out laughing] / flowers [the speaker’s wish] 春風に吹き出し笑は花もがな

1668—spring. The phrase *warau hana* can mean "flowers blooming all at once" or "to burst out laughing."

30. **natsu chikashi / sono kuchi tabae / hana no kaze**
summer near / its mouth to cover or save / flower of wind 夏近しその口たばへ花の風

1668—spring. There was a legend that the God of Winds had a sack in which he carried the storm winds. This poem is another way of asking the wind to save itself for summer when a cool breeze is needed and not to come now when it would blow the petals from the trees and shorten people’s enjoyment of the flowers.

31. **ukare keri / hito ya Hatsuse no / yama-zakura**
making merry / people <> at Hatsuse / wild cherry trees うかれるけもや若瀬の山桜

1668—spring. Hatsuse is the old name for the Hase Temple in Nara. The Hase Temple, dedicated to Kannon, the Goddess of Mercy, is noted for its display of wild cherry blossoms.

32. **ito-zakura / koya kaeru sa no / ashi motsure**
string cherry tree / cabin go back as-when of / feet tangle 銭小や帰るさの足もつれ

1668—spring. The name of *ito* ("string") is the name for a species of the cherry tree that resembles what we call the weeping willow. The use of the word "string" suggests
that revelers would get tangled up in the branches so that when they tried to leave to go home, they would stumble.

38. kaze fuke ba / obosō naru ya / inu-zakura  
wind blow when / taper like an animal's tail [or be lonely] <> / dog cherry  
1668—spring. This poem has a play of words and images on the name of the species of the tree, the dog cherry, which has small, white blossoms. There is also a wordplay with obosō (“to dwindle,” “to taper off,” “to lose vigor,” or “to become lonely”) and also contains a (“an animal’s tail”). In English the verse provides a strong image of a cherry tree dwindling in its glory. As the blossoms blow away, the slender branches look more like the tail of a dog.

39. nami no kusa to / yuki mo ya mizu no / kaeribana  
wave of blossoms as / snow also <> / water’s / returning [or early flower]  
1668— mixed seasons. The crest of a wave is called “the flower” because of the similarity of the white water and blooming cherry trees. Large fluffy snowflakes are called “snow flowers.” Bashō combines these images with several turns of meaning so that the snow “flowers” that have melted form a wave of flowers, as water, which comes back as flowers that bloom too early in the season.

40. katsura otoko / suma zu nari keri / ame no tsuki  
handsome man / live not to become <> / rain of moon  
1669— autumn. The word suma can be “to live” or “to become clear.” According to Chinese legends the figure seen on the moon was katsura (“Judas tree,” Cercidiphyllum japonicum). In this way the image came to be seen as a handsome man as well as a leaping rabbit, the traditional Japanese image. The literary connection is in The Tales of Ise in chapter 73, “Katsura Tree in the Moon.” Chapter 23 contains the line otoko / suma zu nari keri (The man did not come to live with her/him), which gives Bashō’s verse another twist.

41. Uchiyama ya / tozama shira zu no / hana zakari  
Uchiyama <> / visitors cannot know of / flowering cherry trees  
1670—spring. The temple, Uchiyama Kongōjōin Eikyūji in Nara, belongs to the esoteric Buddhist Shingon sect, which was not well known by outsiders. This fact adds to the wordplay of uchi—inside—and yama—mountain or temple grounds. Bashō’s verse can be taken as a critique of organized religion by saying that outside the temple is the greater religious experience in the beauty of cherry blossoms.

42. haru tatsu to / warawa no shiru ya / kazari nawa  
spring arrive when / boy also knows <> / decorate straw rope  
1671— spring. At New Year’s, then the first day of spring, a rope made of braided
rice straw was decorated with paper folded into the shape of lightning. This Shinto symbol for enclosing sacred space was hung above the door of homes. The ornament is not merely decorative but thought to repel evil spirits. The wordplay involves warana ("boy") and wara nara ("rice straw rope").

38. kite mo miyo / jinbe ga haori / hana goromo
put on also to try / padded vest / flowered robe
1671—spring. The jinbe ga haori is a padded vest. The hana goromo is a flowered robe worn for viewing blossoms. Haori sounds similar to geori, which means "to surrender to the beauty of the flowers," and kite can mean both "come" or "wear."

39. samidare mo / sebini tazune nu / Minare-gawa
early summer rain also / measuring shallows / often-seen river
1670—summer. The name of the river, Minare, can be translated as "seen so often as to be familiar with it." It is a branch of the Yoshimo River, which flows through Gojō City in Nara. Some authorities see the verse as personifying the rain, but others consider it simple wordplay.

40. natsu kodachi / haku ya miyama no / koshi fusage
summer grove or sword / wear<> deep in the mountains / hip tassel
1672—summer. The word kodachi means a "grove of trees" or a "short sword." This verse can be seen as an example of personification in which the mountain is a warrior wearing a sword of trees.

41. utskukishi / sono hime ura ya / kisaki zane
beautiful / its princess melon <> / empress core
1671—summer. The puns rest on hime ura ("the princess melon," Cucumis melo) and zane ("core" or "kernel"), which sounds like span ("clitoris").

42. meoto jika ya / ke ni ke ga soroute / ke matsukashi
pair deer <> / hair on hair in agreement / hair hard
1671—autumn. What is interesting in this verse is Bashō's use of the word ke ("hair") three times. In his later years Bashō admitted that when he was young he loved men. This verse, written when he was twenty-eight, could be seen as coming from these experiences. The word meoto usually means "married couple."

43. hana ni iya yo / seken guchi yori / kaze no kuchi
flowers in do not like / talkative people's mouths / mouth of wind
Year unknown—spring. The phrase iya yo ("I don't like") was one currently used in popular songs. The phrase hitori ni wa iya yo ("I don't like sleeping alone") was very close to hana ni iya yo.
44. ūru koto / ko no gotoku seyo / chigo-zakura
to plant something / baby as-if to do / baby or wild cherry tree.
Year unknown—spring. This verse is based on the instructions in a Chinese book
on gardening. Bashō’s poem was included in an anthology compiled in 1676 by Kigin
that contained 6,600 poems by nine hundred poets. These numbers give an idea of the
popularity of haikai at that time.

45. takanna ya / shizuku mo yoyo no / sasa no tsuyu
bamboo sprout <> / drop also slides down [or nodes or generations of] / bamboo grass of dew
Year unknown—summer. The wordplay comes with yoyo, which can be “nodes” of the
bamboo or “generation after generation.” Toyo no is an adverb that describes how drops
of liquid seep or drip down.

46. me no kochi ya / hana o negai no / ito-zakura
eye of star <> / flower (object) wish for of / string cherry
Year unknown—autumn. The name ito-zakura (“string cherry”) was another term for the
shidare-zakura (“weeping cherry”). A connection is also seen with Tanabata (“Star
Festival”), when people hung strips of paper by strings on bamboo trees. These special
five-colored threads are called negai no ito (“wish on a string”). Stars in the eyes sug-
gest that the spots seen when straining to see the flowers or the stars could be light
reflected on tears.

47. inochi koso / imo dane yo mata / kyō no tsuki
life (emphasis) / sweet potato seed <> again / harvest of moon
1672—autumn. Imo (“sweet potatoes”) and dane (“seed”) form a pun with the meaning of “source.” At the festival of the full autumn moon, then around August 15, the sweet
potatoes, or yams, were brought to market. Not only were they bringing in money for the
farmers but they were also a special treat for the harvest festivities.

48. fumi nara ni / iroha mo kaki te / kachū kana
letter (affirmative—negative) / colored autumn leaves [or the first three letters of Japanese sound units] rake
[or scratch] / burn <>
Year unknown—autumn. The play of words comes with iroha, the first three units of the
Japanese sound units or a-b-c (which also means “colored autumn leaves”). Added
to this is kaki (“to write” and “to rake” or “scratch”). Kachū dome means “burn after
reading,” a note sometimes added to letters.

49. hito goto no / kuchi ni aru-nari / shita momiji
person every of / mouth in be is / tongue autumn foliage
Year unknown—autumn. The wordplays arise from the idea of saying “in everyone’s
mouth” when everyone is talking about the same thing. The comparison of red leaves
and a red tongue completes the image.

50. miru ni ga no / oreru bakari zo / ominaeshi
watch results surrenders also / to break almost (emphasis) / maiden (or prostitute) flower

Year unknown—autumn. The ominaeshi (“maiden flower,” Patrinia scabiosifolia) bears
long stalks of tiny yellow flowers in autumn. When the name is written in Chinese
characters it means “prostitute flower,” so the maiden can be either chaste or a harlot.

51. kyō no koyoi / neru toki mo naki / tsuki mi kana
today’s tonight / to sleep time also no / moon viewing

Year unknown—autumn. This is regarded as a parody or outright rewriting of the
twenty-eighth tanka in The Tales of Genji. August 15 of the lunar calendar was the most
important moon-viewing festival of the year.

52. miru kage ya / mada katanari mo / yoi zukiyo
see shape <> / still immature / new moon evening [or good]

Year unknown—autumn. This is a honki-dori (“a literary reference”) to a waka in The
Tale of Genji in which the phrase mada katanari is used to refer to the girl-child as being
“pure” because she is not yet grown up enough to mate with men. Yoi zukiyo is the
“young new moon that appears only early in the evening and then disappears.” This
correlates with a young girl being sent to bed early.

53. kumo to hedatsu / tomo ka ya kari no / ikiwakare
cloud as separate / friend <> wild goose [or temporary of] / live apart

1672—autumn. It is assumed by some authorities that Bashō is referring to his
friend Magodayū, who was living in Iga. The word kari means both “wild goose” or
“temporary.”

54. machi ishi ya / yashiki gata yori / koma mukae
village doctor <> / mansion (honorable suffix) from / horse going for

1675—mixed seasons. This is often seen as a social critique of class segregation. At this
time Bashō was living in Edo (Tokyo), where he observed the lifestyles of the newly
rich merchant class.

55. Musashino ya / isun hodo na / shika no koe
grass plain <> / one inch about / deer’s voice

1675—spring. The Edo (Tokyo) region was previously a huge grassy plain known as
Musashino, today known as the Kantō Plain. This great prairie has been mentioned in
poetry since recorded history. Bashō is mixing the senses by using both sound and size.
The measurement is given as is (“one”) and sun (“the length of the joint of the thumb” or “about one inch”).

56. hari tate ya / kata ni tsuchi utsu / kara koromo
acupuncturist <> / shoulder into small hammer hits / empty robe
1675—autumn. This poem refers to acupuncture, the process in which needles are driven into the skin with a tiny flat hammer as a method of treating various afflictions. During Bashō’s time, it was customary to give fabric a shiny appearance by putting it on a wooden surface and beating it with mallets, an early kind of dry cleaning. Bashō removes the cloth from the fulling block to make the sound as sharp as the pain of the needle being pounded into his bare shoulder.

57. sakazuki ya / shita yuku kiku ya / kutsuki bon
wine cup of / under flows chrysanthemum <> / lacquered tray
1675—autumn. This is a visual joke. The saké from the shallow cup has spilled onto the tray, which is lacquered in black and has a large chrysanthemum painted on it.

58. nari ni keri / nari ni keri made / toshi no kure
had to be <> / had to be until / end of the year
1676—New Year. Bashō and Yamaguchi Sōdō (1642–1716) wrote two one-hundred-link renga, later published as Two Poets in Edo (Edo Ryōgushū), that clearly show the influence of the Danrin school. The opening verses of both works honor Sōin by referencing his name and by displaying the typical Danrin techniques and methods. With this work, Bashō established himself as a strong proponent of the school and hopeful standard-bearer.

59. kono ume ni / ushi mo hatsune to / naki tsu beshi
these plum blossoms at / ox also first song of the new year / bellow yes also
1676—spring. The ox is considered a divine messenger of Tenjin, Sugawara no Michizane (845–902), the deity who helps students with their grades and passing exams. This verse is considered new and unusual because Bashō replaced the elegant literary image of the first spring song of the nightingale with that of the bellowing of a cow.

60. ware mo kami no / hisō ya aogu / ume no hana
I also god’s / pathetic beauty <> / look up / plum blossoms
1676—spring. This is a parody of a poem that Sugawara no Michizane wrote while he was in exile, where he was so poor that he eventually died of starvation. The poet was elevated to sainthood when he was found innocent of the charges against him and miracles were accredited to the invocation of his name.

61. kumo o ne ni / Fuji wa suginari no / shigeri kana
cloud (object) root in / Mount Fuji as-for cedar of / grows thick <>
1676—mixed seasons. Bashō compares the shape of Mount Fuji to a cedar tree. Often low clouds surround the base of the mountain and leave only the cone-shaped top exposed.

62. Fuji no yama / nomi ga cha usu no / ooi kana
Fuji's mountain / flea tea grinder / cover <>

1676—mixed seasons. Dried tea leaves are ground in a mortar or a tea mill to release their aroma more quickly. This device was protected from dust by an oiled paper cone that looked a bit like the snow-covered mountain. There is a Japanese nursery rhyme that goes, “A flea crawled up the tea grinder and jumped over Mount Fuji.”

63. inochi nari / wazuka no kasa no / shita suzumi
life yes / slight of hat of / under enjoy coolness

1676—summer. The famous poet Saigyō wrote a similar poem at Sayo no Nakayama published in the Shinkokinwakashū. In his poem Saigyō finds all of life wonderful with the line inochi nari keri (“still alive”), but Bashō finds the wonderful life in the little space of coolness under his hat.

64. natsu no tsuki / Goyu yori idete / Akasaka ya
summer's moon / Goyu from leaving / Akasaka <>

1676—summer. Of the fifty-three stage-inns of the Tokaidō Highway, the closest two towns were Goyu and Akasaka, which were only 1 mile (1.7 km) apart. The idea in the poem is that because of the shortness of the summer night, not the shortness of the distance between the two towns, the moon would rise above both at almost the same time.

65. Fuji no kaze ya / ōgi ni nosete / Edo miyage
wind from Mount Fuji <> / fan on placed / Tokyo souvenir

1676—summer. It was considered especially elegant, and traditional, to offer a gift on a fan rather than letting it touch one’s hand. Having little to give, Bashō is offering only the coolness the fan itself can bring to the host.

66. hyaku ri kitari / hodo wa kumoi no / shita suzumi
hundred unit of distance to come / degree of distance as-for clouds of / under enjoy coolness

1676—summer. The distance measurement was the ri, which is about 2.5 miles (4 km). The ambiguity of the poem leaves open whether it was Bashō or the cool air that traveled the distance; whether he came from the clouds, down into the valley where Iga-Ueno was, or if the cool air came from the higher elevation of the clouds.

67. nagamuru ya / Edo ni wa marena / yama no tsuki
to view <> / Tokyo in as-for rare / mountain moon

1676—autumn. This was the beginning verse at a renga party sponsored by Kuwana at
the residence of Watanabe. It is typical of the greeting verse given to hosts and used to begin a renga. The word Edo could mean the old name of Tokyo or “unclean,” or “dirty,” in the Buddhist terminology of people living without the benefit of religion.

68. tenbin ya / Kyō Edo kakete / chiyō no haru
scales <> / Kyoto Tokyo balance / one thousand springs

1676—New Year. Bashō was comparing Kyoto, where he had lived, to Tokyo, where he was now living. Spring comes one thousand times or eternally.

69. kadomatsu ya / omo ba ichiya / sanjū-nen
pine decoration <> / when I think overnight / thirty years

1677—New Year. In Japan, many people still place bamboo and pine boughs outside of their doors at the New Year. Bashō was now thirty-four. According to Chinese belief, a man became an adult at thirty-one.

70. hokku mori / Matsuo Tosei / yado no haru
beginning poem (sensitive) / (Bashō’s family name) (Bashō’s pen name) / at home in spring

1677—New Year. In 1677 Bashō had become sōshō (“professional haikai-no-renga master”). The middle line consists of Bashō’s family name, Matsuo, and the current nom de plume that he was using at this time, Tosei (“Green Peach”).

71. Ō-Hiei ya / shi no ji o hiit te / hito kasumi
top of Mount Hiei <> / letter shi drawn / person mist

1677—spring. Mount Hiei is 2,800 feet (848 m) high. The character shi looks like a fishhook with a long, straight shank. The supposed basis for the verse is that once the monks of the temple at Hiei asked the Zen priest Ikkyū (1394—1481) to write something very large. He ordered a strip of paper that stretched from the temple to the foot of the mountain. The priest ran down the strip of paper dragging a brush. The resulting long line was also the symbol for “one.” This illustrates the oneness of everything, the largest thing there is. Bashō’s verse adds a hook to the story.

72. neko no tsuma / hetsui no kazure yori / koyoi keri
cat’s wife / cook stove crumble / visit frequently <>

1677—spring. The Tales of Ise contains a story of a man who secretly visited a woman by squeezing through a crack in the earthen wall of her garden. Bashō’s cat receives her visitors at a crack where the stove has crumbled. This poem also implies that the cat is visited as often as the oven.

73. Ryūgū mo / kyō no shioji ya / doyō—boshi
Dragon Palace / today’s low tide <> / hottest time to dry

1677—spring. The Tales of Ise contains a story of a man who secretly visited a woman by squeezing through a crack in the earthen wall of her garden. Bashō’s cat receives her visitors at a crack where the stove has crumbled. This poem also implies that the cat is visited as often as the oven.
1677—spring. The Dragon Palace was an underwater place in the fairy tale *Urashima Taro*. *Doyō* are the hottest days of summer, much like our “dog days” of August. It was customary to use this weather to dry out clothes and books by putting them in the sun to air. The low tide exposed parts of the sea that probably looked as if they needed drying in the sun.

74. **mata nu noni / na ura ni kita ka / hototogisu**
to wait for [negative] / edible greens in order to sell <> / cuckoo

1677—summer. Japan’s literary history contains many poems on the subject of waiting for the cuckoo in vain. While waiting for the first call of the cuckoo, Bashō instead hears the call of the greengrocer peddling his wares. The *hototogisu* is a bird found only in Japan, but it is similar in size and cry to our cuckoo.

75. **asu wa chimaki / Naniwa no kareha / yume nare ya**
tomorrow as-for rice dumpling / Naniwa’s withered leaves / dream yes <>

1677—summer. *Chimaki* (“rice dumplings”) were wrapped in reed leaves and steamed. The leaves were peeled off and discarded. The dumplings are the customary dish served on Boys’ Day, the fifth day of the fifth month. The pointed leaves of the reed plant are like tiny swords. The bay of Naniwa (“rapid waves”) was famous for its vast marshes of reeds.

76. **samidare ya / ryūtō aguri / Bantarō**
rainy season <> / sea phosphorescence held up / night watchman

1677—summer. The phosphorescence of the summer sea was considered to be the light offered to Buddha by the god of the dragons. *Bantarō* (“night watchmen”) were hired to watch for fires or thieves during the night. According to notes on this verse, it had rained so much that the night lanterns of the watchmen looked like sea phosphorescence or candle offerings to the dragon god.

77. **Ōmi-gaya / ase ya saza nami / yoru no toko**
mosquito net made in Ōmi / perspiration <> / ripples / tonight’s bed

1677—summer. Ōmi was a province by Lake Biwa well known for the manufacture of mosquito nets. It seems that on this hot night Bashō is perspiring so much he feels as if he is lying in a lake that has ripples like the place where the net was made. It is hotter to lie under mosquito netting, but the little bit of coolness won by not using it is lost in the resulting bug bites.

78. **kozue yori / adani ochi keri / semi no kara**
treetop from / emptiness dropped down <> / cicada shell

1677—summer. Haiku writers are often warned to write their haiku in the present tense, but here is one of Bashō’s in the past tense. The poem is interesting because he is observing not the fall of the shell but the emptiness within it.
29. tōkibī ya / nokiba no ogi no / tori chigae
corn <> / eaves under reeds / make a mistake

1677—summer. This is a humorous reference to a situation in The Tale of Genji in which a woman outsmarts Genji while he is trying to rape her by rolling away from him in the darkness. Sleeping beside her, however, was her stepdaughter, Reed under the Eaves. Only after falling on the stepdaughter and having his way with her does Genji realize that he has been deceived by the woman he adores and has assaulted the wrong woman. Corn plants look like huge imitations of reeds.

30. aki ki ni keri / mimi o tazune te / makura no kaze
autumn has come <> / ear to ask for [or visit] / pillow of wind

1677—autumn. This poem is very lyrical for a haiku. It could be that Bashō was studying old waka, which he admitted he often did, and thus was led to write more in the manner of tanka than haiku.

31. koyoi no tsuki / togi dase hitomi / Izumo no Kami
tonight’s moon / eaves to show a seeing man / a god to show up out of the clouds

1677—autumn. There were two famous makers of mirrors in Kyoto, and both of their names started with hitomi (“man who sees”). One was Hitomi Sado no Kami and the other was Hitomi Iwami no Kami. Bashō adds a change in one of the last names to make Izumo no Kami (“god of the province” or “to show up out of the clouds”). The wordplay works with the idea that, just as a cloudy mirror needs cleaning, so does a cloud-covered moon also need polishing.

32. ki o kirite / motokuchi miru ya / kyō no tsuki
tree (object) cut / larger cut-end see <> / today’s moon [or a full autumn moon]

1677—autumn. The end of a recently cut log, still shining with sap, looks very much like a full harvest moon.

33. eda moroshi / hi tōshi yaburu / aki no kaze
twig fragile / scarlet paper to break / autumn’s wind

1677—autumn. The term tōshi refers to a very fragile paper made in China. The idea of the poem could be that even a fragile twig could tear the paper or that the twigs are too fragile to hold autumn leaves.

34. irozuku ya / tōfu ni ochite / usu moniji
staining <> / tofu falls / slight or faint autumn leaf

1677—autumn. There are several possible inspirations for this poem. A bit of a leaf could have blown onto a block of tofu and stained it red. The tofu could have been
molded in a form with the shape of a leaf on it. Or it could have been sprinkled with dried red pepper using an actual leaf as a stencil.

85. *mazu shiwa ya / Gichiku ga take ni / hana no yuki*
first knowing <= / Gichiku's bamboo on / flowers of snow まづ知るや宣竹が竹に花の雪
1677—winter. Gichiku was a famous musician who specialized in the *shakuhachi* ("bamboo flute"). The phrase *hana no yuki* can be translated as "flowers with petals like large, fluffy flakes of snow" or "a snow of flowers as when petals are blown from the trees in a blizzard of petals."

86. *yuku kumo ya / inu no kake bari / mura shigure*
scudding clouds <= / dog pisses while running / a passing winter shower 行く雲や犬の駄け扉村時雨
1677—winter. The word for urinating has both polite and vulgar variations. Bashō uses the vulgar one. This poem uses the comparative technique to suggest that the way the rain comes and goes is like a dog running while urinating.

87. *hito shigure / tsubute ya futte / Koishikawa*
one winter shower / pebble <= to fall / Small Stone River 一時雨霧を降って小石川
1677—winter. Koishikawa ("Small Stone River") was the name of a river and a village that are now in the Bunkyō district of Tokyo. One could construe the winter shower to be hailstones that fall like small pebbles into Small Stone River.

88. *shimo o kite / kaze o shikine no / sutego kana*
frost (object) to come / wind (object) lies down to sleep of / abandoned child <= 霜を立て風を敷き眠る子供の栁<br>1677—winter. Bashō’s poem shows his ability to visualize the frosty wind as the child’s only cover for the night.

89. *Fuji no yuki / Rosei ga yume o / tsukase tari*
Mount Fuji’s snow / Rosei of dream (object) / was built 矢村の雪生が夢を築かせたり
1677—winter. The Tale of Rosei, Han Dan of China, contains the story of a prime minister who was so rich he lost his appreciation of life. A religious man gave him a special pillow that made him dream of a mountain of silver. Upon waking he realized how useless money could be and that only life had true value.

90. *shiro zumi ya / kano Urashima ga / oi no hako*
white charcoal <= / that Urashima self / getting old of box 白炭やかの捕魚が老の箱
1677—winter. White charcoal truly is white. It is made from the wood of camellias or azaleas. After the wood has been burned once, it is burned again and covered with ash to extinguish the fire. It then becomes white. The story of *Urashima’s Box* is that Taro was given the box as a gift from the Dragon Palace. When he opened it, smoke came out and turned his hair and eyebrows white and made him look like an old man instantly.
91. wasure-gusa / nameshi ni tsuna n / toshi no kure
forgetting grass / boiled rice with chopped greens picked / year’s end
1678—New Year. The name of the double tawny day lily combines wasure (“to forget”) with gusa (“grass” or “herb”). At year’s end people try to forget their worries. They pay off debts or are forgiven their loans and put away the disappointments of the past.

92. Teikin no orai / ta ga bunko yori / kesa no haru
home schooling textbook / who small stationary box out of / spring’s morning
1678—spring. Teikin Orai was a book written in the fourteenth century by an unknown author on a wide range of subjects. The words teikin (“teaching at home” or “home schooling”) and orai (“correspondence,” “traffic,” or a “street”) give more meaning to the title of the book. Kesa no haru (“a morning of spring”) was also a word used in haiku to signify the new year.

93. aru nanetomo na ya / kinō wa sugite / fukuto-jiru
well nothing happened <> / yesterday as-for passed away / globefish soup
1678—spring. The globefish, or puffer fish, is a popular delicacy. If a globefish isn’t prepared properly it can be deadly. It remains an expensive dish because chefs have to be specially trained and licensed. The expense and idea of tempting death add to the thrill of eating this food.

94. kapitan no / tsukubawase keri / kimī ga haru
captain also / bows down <> / lord of spring
1678—spring. “Captain” refers to the chief of the Dutch Trade Office on Dejima Island at Nagasaki, where Dutch foreigners were confined. On New Year’s Day, the captain was required to make a formal visit to the emperor. For this visit he had to dismount from his horse and bow down before the kimī (“lord” or “shogun”). Kimī ga haru is a season word also meaning “the new year” or “beginning of spring.”

95. dairi bina / ningyō tennō no / gyo u to ka ya
royal family dolls / doll emperor / reign (quotation) (exclamatory) <>
1678—spring. On March 3, Girls’ Day, a display is set up in many homes, especially those with female children. Family heirloom-dolls are displayed on stair-like platform. The dolls on the highest step are representations of the emperor and empress and are treated with the respect one would pay the actual people.

96. hatsu hana ni / inochi shichī ji / go nen hodo
first blossoms at / life span seventy- / five years that much
1678—spring. This is a parody of the Japanese expression, “If we eat the first produce
of the year we shall live seventy-five days longer.” Bashō changed the meaning from “eat” to “see” and “days” to “years.”

97. ayame i keri / noki no iwashi no / sarekōhe
iris growing <> / leaves of a sardine's / weathered skull
1678—spring. To celebrate Setsubun (“last day of the old year”), usually in February, people display a sprig of sharp-edged hirragi (a plant very similar to holly) speared to the head of a sardine to drive away bad spirits. For Boys’ Day, the caves of the roof are decorated with the sword-like leaves of the iris. In this case, the sardine head has not been removed and both symbols are seen at once. There was also a legend that a reed grew out of the eye socket of the skull of Ono no Komachi, one of Japan’s immortal poets. Here Bashō changes the image from “reed” to “iris” and the famous beauty and poet to a sardine.

98. mizu muke te / ato toi tamae / dōmyōji
offer water by / virtue deceased ask / dried cooked rice
1678—summer. Fuboku, Ichiryūken Okamoto, was a haikai poet in Tokyo. One of the items offered on graves for the consolation of the dead was dried cooked rice, a treat enjoyed in summer, when it is soaked in very cold water. The name for this dish, dōmyōji, comes from the name of the Buddhist temple where this was a specialty.

99. Suigaku mo / norimono kasa n / Ama-no-gawa
shipbuilder also / boat lend (conjecture) / River of Heaven
1678—summer. The Milky Way, known in Japan as Ama-no-gawa, translates to “River of Heaven.” Suigaku was a well-known shipbuilder of the times. This night was a party occasion with saké and poems with jokes about the star-crossed lovers [see note 14]. On this night it had rained so much it seemed the “River of Heaven” was overflowing onto the Earth.

100. aki ki nu to / tsuna kon hoshi ya / shika no kawa
autumn has come (quotation) / wife to love star<> / deer’s skin
1678—summer. This is another poem from the Tanabata festival. A person makes love to his “wife” under the stars of the heavens on the star-spots of a deerskin. The fallow deer of Japan retain their spots, which we are used to seeing only on fawns, throughout their lives. Though this festival is celebrated on July 7, in Bashō’s time this was considered the beginning of autumn.

101. sazo na hoshi / hijikimono ni wa / shika no kawa
surely star / rug on as-for / deer’s skin
1678—summer. This is an associative technique that connects the white spots on the rug and the star lovers Altair and Vega. In other cultures, white spots on wild animals are viewed as marks made by stars or patterns of actual stars.
102. *ame no hi ya / seken no aki o / sakai-chō*

a rainy day <> / world of autumn (object) / border town

1678—autumn. The play of words comes with *sakai* ("boundary," or "border") and Sakai-chō, the name of the theater district of old Tokyo. Because of its questionable reputation the district was placed at the edge of town.

103. *geni ya tsuki / maguchi sen kin no / tōri chō*

truly<> moon / the frontage much money of / a prosperous shopping area

1678—autumn. The host of the renga party, Jiyōshi, lived in Odawara-chō, a city now located about an hour by train from Tokyo, and near Tōri-chō, which was a prosperous shopping area. Bashō was complimenting Jiyōshi on the prosperity of his town even though living expenses were much cheaper than in Tokyo. Land prices were as high as the moon or as high as land would cost on the moon.

104. *shio ni shi te mo / iza kotozute n / miyako-dori*

salt (result of a change) to do also / now to send a message (the speaker’s will) / imperial bird (name)

1678—winter. The joke is in *miyako-dori* ("bird of the imperial city," "black-headed gull," or "oystercatcher"). The term was first used by Ariwara no Narihira (825–80) in *Tales of Ihe* where he implied that a bird would bring news from the capital. At that time, Kyoto was the capital of Japan, but the bird was often seen on the Sumida River in Tokyo.

105. *ishi kare te / mizu shibome ru ya / fuyu mo nashi*

stone withered is / water dried <> / winter also more

1678—winter. This poem can be read literally or figuratively. The sense is based on the phrase "water is dried up and stone is exposed" in a poem by the Chinese poet Su Tung Po (1036–1101). Here, Bashō is saying that the cold is so great that rocks shrivel up the way vegetation does when it freezes.

106. *matsu hana ya / Tōzaburō ga / Yoshino yama*

to wait for flowers <> / name of a popular flute player of the day / Mount Yoshino

1678—winter. Gichiku, known as Tōzaburō, had a hit song named after Yoshino, the mountain famous for its cherry trees and deep snows. When the flowers bloomed there would be parties and flute music. The joke is in *matsu hana*, which can mean "pine flowers" or "longing for flowers."

107. *Oranda mo / hana ni ki ni keri / uma ni kura*

Hollander also / flowers have come <> / horse on saddled

1679—spring. The annual visit of the captain of the Dutch Trade Office had been changed from annually on New Year’s to once every five years on March 5. Thus the
captain came as the cherry trees were blooming. (See poem 94.) This poem uses the comparative technique in a pseudo-science way. Bashō is saying that the foreigner's visit and the blossoms have both come by horseback. The flowers bloom for the arrival of the foreigner and the foreigner comes because of the flowers, so they are tied together in a way one would not normally consider. This is a major goal of haiku writing.

108. zōri no shiri / ori te kaera n / yama-zakura
sandal backs [or bottoms] / fold return home (speaker's will) / mountain cherry blossoms

1679—spring. The play of words works with ori, "to fold up the backs of sandals"—zōri, so they did not flip mud on the long robe, or "to break off a spray of flowers." Often part of cherry viewing was to break off branches of the flowers to bring them back home. As one walked long distances the edges, or hems, of the robe would slip out of the belt and drag on the ground. They would be folded up to keep them out of the mud.

109. sōkai no / nami saké kusashi / kyō no tsuki
blue sea of / a wave saké smells / today's moon

1679—autumn. The full moon was compared to a saké cup, a small, shallow bowl with flaring sides. The scene could be of a sailing party for viewing the moon where the waves were permeated with alcohol, or the "blue sea" could have been a bowl of water nearby for washing the saké cups.

110. sakazuki ya / yamaji no kiku to / kore o hosu
saké cup <> / mountain path's chrysanthemum (quotation) / this (object) drink up

1679—autumn. The yamaji no kiku ("mountain road chrysanthemum") was a legendary drink from China taken for longevity. In Japan this practice was celebrated with a festival for chrysanthemums on September 9.

111. miwatase ba / nagamure ba mire ba / Suma no aki
look over / to view to see (conditional clause) / Suma's autumn

1679—autumn. Suma is the place name of a lonely coastline near Kobe as well as the verb "to live," so the verse can mean "seeing Suma" or the "autumn of life." The poem is saying that the autumn view in Suma is so great that Bashō can overlook the fact that he is getting older.

112. kesa no yuki / nebuka o sono no / shiōri kana
morning's snow / onion (object) garden's / broken branch signpost <>

1679—winter. In earlier times, one way to mark a trail was to bend over grasses or weeds. The snow was so thick only the bent green tops of onion plants were showing.
118. *shimo o fun de / chinba hiku made / okuri keri*

frost (object) step / walk with a limp (to a degree) / send (or see off) <> 眠を騒んでちんば引きまで送りけり

1679—winter. Tsuchiya Shiyū was a warrior of the Matsue clan and one of Bashō’s haikai friends. The ambiguity rests on whether the pain of farewells has made his knees weak or walking on slippery ice has forced him to walk cautiously. There is a hidden compliment in the idea that Bashō’s poetry writing will be crippled by losing his friend and the inspiration from his writing.

114. *ah haru haru / ōinaru kana haru / to un nun*

ah spring spring / great <> spring / thus and thus 於春々大哉春と云々

1680—spring. The beginning of the poem is a parody of a line from a poem in admiration of Confucius by the Chinese poet Mi Fu (1051–1107): “Confucius, Confucius, great Confucius!” Notice that “ah” is the same in both Japanese and English.

116. *hana ni yudori / Hyōtansai to / mizukara ieri*

blossoms under stay /ollowed out gourd purified / myself to be named 花にやどり髪車齋と自らいうへり

1680—spring. *hana* (”blossom”) implies cherry blossoms. When *sai* is attached to a noun it indicates a pseudonym, but it literally means “to keep a body clean and purified.” Bashō combines the word with “gourd,” implying that a night under cherry blossoms has purified his inner being so he is like a sanctified vessel.

116. *satsuki no ame / iwahiba no midori / itsumade zo*

early summer’s rain / rock cypress of green / lasting how long 五月の雨岩松葉の緑いつまでぞ

1680—summer. *Iwahiba* (*Selaginella tamariscina*) is the “rock cypress” or “tamarisk tree.” The question is ambiguous and open to multiple interpretations. How long will the rain continue to fall? How long will the cypress stay green? How long can the tree endure in its rocky place?

117. *kumo nani to / ne o nani to naku / aki no kaze*

spider what thus / voice (object) what thus cry / autumn’s wind 如何と音をなにと鳴く秋の風

1680—autumn. This poem uses the riddle technique to convey the paradox that spiders make no cry or sound but the wind, which is invisible, does.

118. *shiba no to ni / cha o konoha kaku / arashi kana*

humble cottage brushwood gate in / tea (object) leaves raked up / storm <> 柴の戸に茶を木の葉摘く風哉

1680—autumn. The wise man was Po Chü (772–846) and Ch’ang-an was the capital of China during the T’ang Dynasty. This verse uses humility and the poverty of the poet to express acceptance. It is fairly improbable that Bashō raked up leaves and made tea from them, but it could have been that the wind blew the leaves into piles along the fence that reminded him of his supply of tea leaves. Or the verse could be saying that he used dried leaves as fuel to boil the water for his tea.
179. *keshi-zumi ni / maki waru oto ka / Ono no oku*

soft charcoal [or making a change] in / firewood split sound / ax's back

1680—autumn. There are several wordplays in this poem. One pivots on the word *Ono*, which is the word for “ax” as well as the name of a place in northwest Kyoto famous for making high-quality charcoal. When this combined with the word *oku* (“the interior,” “back of,” or “inner part”), the reader’s mind is flipped between the back side of an ax, the back of the area called Ono, or the interior of the wood.

180. *kareeda ni / karasu no tomari keri / aki no kure*

bare branch on / crow (subject) to perch, [sand, or sit] <> / autumn’s evening

1680—autumn. This verse uses the comparative technique. The landing of a crow on a bare branch is similar to the way autumn evenings arrive. The problem for the translator is to find a verb that applies to both the crow and the arrival of an autumn evening. The last line can also be translated as “late autumn” and still the comparison remains. In an earlier version of this poem, written on a painting of seven crows with twenty more birds in the sky, Bashō had an extra sound unit, *ya*, in the second line. That version also contained the verb *tomari-taru*, in the perfect tense. This revision left one crow to represent all the crows and put the verb into the past tense. So often teachers of haiku believe that the poem must be in the present tense. However, in this revision Bashō rebelliously puts the poem in the past tense. This verse and Bashō’s “frog” poem are his most well known. In his later years Bashō said: “Poetry of other schools is like a colored painting. Poetry of my school should be written as if it were a black-ink painting.” Both Bashō and Kyoriku, his disciple, made paintings to accompany this verse and included only one crow.

181. *gu anzuru ni / meido mo kaku ya / aki no kure*

it seems to stupid me / hell also this <> / late autumn or autumn evening

1680—autumn. Bragging or pride were often expressed through opposite language. It was customary to introduce one’s “dumb” son or “ugly” daughter or to refer to oneself in derogatory manner. The phrase *gu anzuru ni* was commonly used in annotated books. The humble form underscores the fact that Bashō didn’t consider his observation profound, but more on the level of a passing remark.

182. *ro no koe nami o utte / harawata kōru / yo ya namida*

oar’s sound a wave hit / bowels freeze / night <> tears

1680—winter. This Japanese verse contains a sound unit count of 10–7–5. This technique is called *hachō* (“broken-meter style”). Some have suggested that the poem reflects the same sentiments of a Chinese poem that was popular at the time. This could be, as Bashō makes a reference to Tu Fu (712–70), a legendary Chinese poet, in the essay accompanying the verse.
123. Ono-zumi ya / tenaran hito no / hai zeseri
charcoal Ono <> / learn to write person / scratching in ashes

1680—winter. Ono no Tofu, or Michikaze (894-966), was a famous calligrapher, known as one of Japan’s three best. The word ono could refer to the place (Ono, in the Kyoto area) or to the man. Dragging tongs through white ashes to expose the black metal of an iron stove would create an effect similar to black characters written on white paper.

124. kanashima n ya / Bokushi seri yaki o / mi te mo nao
to grieve (conjecture) <> / (name of a Chinese poet) parsley cook / to see also likewise

1680—winter. Sern (“water dropwort” or “Japanese parsley,” Oenanthe javanica) darkens when cooked with vinegar and soy. Bokushi is the Japanese name for Mo Tzu (470-390 B.C.), the Chinese philosopher who grieved when threads had to be bleached before being dyed a color. In Japan mourning robes were dyed dark colors.

125. mochi-bana ya / kazashi ni sase ru / yome ga kimi
rice cake flower <> / hair ornament stuck / on Lord Rat

1681—New Year. Because of the custom that it was taboo to use the word nesumi (“rat”) during the first three days of the new year, yome ga kimi (“Lord Rat”) was substituted. Yome also means “bride,” which adds another connotation to the verse. As a decoration, bits of rice-cake dough were attached to willow branches in the form of blossoms and placed in the household shrine.

126. mochi o yume ni / ori musubu shida no / kusa makura
rice cake dream in / bend to tie fern / grass pillow

1681—New Year. Shida (Gleichenia glauca) means “fern.” For a New Year’s decoration, two large rice cakes, shaped like dumplings, are stacked and placed on crossed fern leaves. The phrase “a grass pillow” always implied a journey where one would have to tie grass together for a pillow. Several wordplays come with musubu, which can mean “to have a dream” or “to tie together.” It was customary for people to put a drawing of a takara-bune (“treasure ship”) under their pillows to enhance their first dream of the new year. Basho lays his head, like a rice cake, on ferns instead. The poem could also suggest that the rice cakes are dreaming with their heads lying on the fern pillow.

127. Musashino no / tsuki no waka bae ya / Matsushima-dane
(name) grassy plain of / moon of young sprout <> / Pine Island seed

Year unknown—spring. Musashino was the name of the grassy plain that covered the area now occupied by Tokyo. Its expansiveness was used in poetry since the beginning of Japan’s recorded history as the image of wide open spaces, much as Americans think of the Great Plains. Matsushima (“Pine Island”) was considered one of Japan’s three
most scenic spots for its bay containing tiny islets covered in wind-shaped pine trees. In effect Bashō is saying that the moon (himself) on the grassy plain is the offshoot of the seeds (of poetry) in Matsushima. In reality, if one watched the moon rise over the flat, grassy plain, the moon looked like a huge white sprout.

128. 満月ei / monokawa hana no / aru aida
hangover / no thing flowers / time (interval) 二日酔ひものが花のあるあひだ
1681—spring.

129. basho uete / mazu nikumu ogi no / futaba kana
banana to plant / first to hate reed of / sprout ばさを植えてまず憎む菰の二葉故
1681—spring. Rika was one of Bashō’s favorite disciples, and this poem seems to be another thank-you to him for the gift of the banana tree. The sprout of a reed and that of a banana tree are similar in shape, but the banana tree sprout is much larger. Reeds were a classical topic for court poetry. Bashō now lived in a marshy area where two rivers joined, so it was possible that many reeds grew around his house. Reeds have thick, deep, and connected root systems, much like the classical poetry. Not only was Bashō working to establish a new mode of poetry, he was planting a banana tree.

130. Basho nowaki shite / tarai ni ame o / kiku yo kana
banana tree strong wind that divides / basin in rain (object) / listen night 芭蕉野分して雷に雨をさく夜かな
1681—mixed seasons. In the strong winds the banana leaves would be torn just like the roof of Bashō’s house. If he lived inside a banana tree it would be leaking rain just as his roof lets in the water he catches in basins.

131. sakari ja hana ni / sozoro ukiboshi / numeri zuma
blooming flowers / aimlessly merry-making priest / fickle wife 盛りじや花に座浮法師ぬめり妻
1681—spring. The sound unit count is 7–8–5, giving this poem hachō (“broken meter”). The word “numeri” can mean “fickle” or “slippery” in the amorous sense, and combined with “wife” it becomes thick with meanings. The phrase sozoro ukiboshi (“aimless merry-making priest”) was a word compound created by Bashō.

132. yamabuki no tsuyu / na no hana no / kakochi gao naru ya
gerse’s dew / rapeseed flowers / envious face become <> 霧の臥雲の花のかこち顔なるや
Year unknown—spring. The sound unit count for this poem is 7–5–8. The yamabuki (Kerria japonica) is in the rose family. The single flower variety looks much like the mallow blossom, but the multi-flora variety is a thornless thicket bush with tiny yellow flowers similar to spirea. Rape, a common field flower, was grown not for its beauty but for its nutritious seeds, which were fed to livestock.
188. *hana ni ee ri / haori ki te katana / sasu onna*
blossom in get drunk (perfect tense) / jacket to wear sword / armed with a sword woman

花に醉へり羽織着て刀ぎす女

Year unknown—spring. A woman wearing two items of male attire, a kimono jacket and a sword, was drunk on sake while flower viewing. Softening the image, Bashô implies that she was intoxicated by the beauty of the flowers.

189. *hotogisu / maneku ka mugi no / mura obana*
cuckoo / invite <> barley of / a group of miscanthus plumes

1681—summer. “Miscanthus plumes beckon a cuckoo” is a well-known expression in waka poetry. Bashô makes the phrase a haikai by changing the invitation to come from the smaller, less noble, barley plumes.

190. *yorube o itsu / hito ha ni mushi no / tabi ne shite*
something to depend on for help when? / one leaf on insect of / journey sleep to do

よるべをいつ—葉に虫の旅転して

1681—summer. This is associated with the story of Huo Di, the Chinese man who got the idea for boats by watching a spider drift to shore on a leaf.

191. *samidare ni / tsuru no ashi / mijikaku nareri*
summer rain in / crane’s leg / short become

五月雨に鶴の足短くなれり

1681—summer. As the water rises, the crane’s legs look shorter, but in reality they are not. The poem’s sound unit pattern is 5–5–7, which seems to emphasize the line about the crane’s legs being shorter.

192. *gu ni kuraku / ibara o tsukamu / hotaru kana*
folly in darkness / thorn (object) grasp / firefly <>

愚にくらく刺をつかむ蛻哉

1681—summer. There is a proverb that states: “pursuing one thing, not paying attention to other things.” The word “darkness” can apply to the time when one sees fireflies, and to the state of not being a very bright person. The poem uses the twist technique. The first two lines lead the reader’s mind toward certain images and the third line twists away from that theme to something else.

193. *yami no yo to sugoku / kitsune shita ban / tama makuwa*
a weird dark night / fox down crawl / beautiful melon

闇夜きつね下道ふ玉真桑

1681—summer. *Tamiyo* (“a dark night”) is the correct word, but Bashô added a note to the verse that he wanted *yami no yo to sugoku* (“a weird dark night”) to emphasize the strangeness of the night. Bashô uses the associative technique to show the fox creeping over the ground the way melons grow. In Bashô’s time, the *makusa* was a type of popular melon. Some authorities see metaphors in the poem where the lover, a fox, sneaks into a house, the melon field, to steal the beautiful princess, the melon.
Tama can mean “beautiful” or “bead,” so both words conjure up the image of the melon.

189. hana mukuge / hadaka warawa no / kazashi kana
flower hibiscus / naked I of / hair decoration
1681—summer. This verse uses the paradox “naked I wear” and then solves the riddle by revealing that it is a flower that is worn in the hair. The mukuge is the *Hibiscus syriacus*, of the family Malvaceae.

190. tsuni ken ya / cha o kogarasli / aki to mo shira de
picked (conjecture of the past) <> / tea (object) withering winds of / autumn (quotation) also know not
1681—autumn. The sound unit count for this poem is 7—5—7. “Withering winds” is usually a season word for winter, but here Bashô puts the cold winds in autumn. Tea is normally picked in the early and late spring.

191. yoru hisokani / mushi wa gekka no / kuri o ugatsu
night secret / worm as-for under the moon / chestnut (object) dig
1681—autumn. The white meat of a chestnut and the full round moon indicate the use of the associative technique. One text contains the head note, “The later harvest moon.” Because the full moon of the ninth month, our harvest moon, was so spectacular, it was customary to hold moon-viewing parties even after the moon was past its prime. Flattened slightly on one side, it looked more like a chestnut and because these nuts were harvested at this time of year, it was traditional to offer chestnuts to the moon and to serve them as party food.

192. harinuki no / neko mo shiru nari / kesa no aki
papier-mâché of / cat also knows (affirmative) / morning of autumn
Year unknown—autumn. Most shops displayed a small statue of a cat with a raised paw as a good luck charm.

193. izuku shigure / kasa o te ni sagete / kaeru sô
where winter rain / umbrella [or hat] (object) hand in carry / return monk
1681—winter.

194. yuki no ashita / hitori kara zake o / kami e tari
snow’s morning / alone dried salmon (object) / chew able
1681—winter. The preface to this poem is based on a Chinese proverb, “If a man is able to chew roots, he can do anything.” By this time Bashô was completely dependent upon his students for income.
145. *matsu nare ya / kiri ci sara ei to / hiku hodo ni*
pine tree (affirmative) <> / fog a shout-when-something-is-pulled-out / pull (to a degree)

Year unknown—winter. In winter it was a tradition for the court and emperor to make
an excursion to the hills to pull up young pine trees and to replant them in containers.
As the fog drifts away, Bashō suggests that the tree is pulling itself out of the mist in
the same way seedlings pull themselves up from the ground.

146. *mo ni sudaku / shirano ya tora ba / kie nu beki*
gathering in waterweed / ice fish catch if / disappear (conjecture)

1681—winter. The *shirano* ("white fish" or "ice fish") is a tiny, transparent, minnow-
like fish. The word *sudaku* can be either "gather in" or "swarm," which in English creates
the ambiguity of whether the author is gathering the waterweed or the fish are
gathering themselves in the waterweed.

147. *kure kure te / mochi o kodama no / wabi ne kana*
end end / cake (object) to echo of / lonely sleep <>

1682—New Year. Mochi is a cookie or thick cake made of rice flour. The rice has to be
pounded to a powder in mortars, and the sound has come to symbolize the new year. Not only
was Bashō too poor to afford a rice cake, there was no one there to pound his rice.

148. *ume yanagi / sazo wakashu kana / onna kana*
plum willow / homosexual boy <> / woman <>

1682—spring. This verse is an example of the comparison technique.

149. *sode yogosu ran / tanishi no ana no / hima o na mi*
sleeves stain (conjecture) / mud snail of fishermen's / leisure (object) as-they-have-no-time

1682—spring. March 3 was supposedly the best day for gathering mud snails, but it is also Girls' Day.

150. *yūgao no shiroku / yoru no kōka ni / shisoku torite*
evening face flower white / night's privy in / candle hold

1682—spring. One kind of candle was made of a finger-thick stick of pine wood covered
in wax. It had a cone of paper around the bottom to keep the wax from dripping.
In the dark the glowing paper shape would look as if someone was carrying an illuminated
flower. The contrast between this elegant image and the commonness of the privy gives the poem its haikai quality. The word *kōka* is a euphemism for the privy in a Zen temple, which adds another element to the joke. Temples were traditionally used as places for lovers' trysts.
151. en naru yakko / imayō hana ni / rōsai su
sexy servant boy / present fashion flower viewing / hit songs chanting
1682—spring. Rōsai were the pop songs of the times. Bashō makes a wordplay between rōsai and rōei-su ("to chant"). It could have been that Bashō observed this scene while viewing cherry blossoms.

152. furu ike ya / kawazu tobikomu / mizu no oto
old-pond <> / frog jump into / water's sound
1681–82—spring. This verse, now so famous, was first published in a selection of single verses in Haru no Hi (Spring Day). What made this verse interesting was the fact that poetry up until this time had mentioned frogs for their croaking but never for their leaping. According to the commentary by Shikō, at first Bashō thought of the 7–5 sound units, "a frog jumps into / the sound of water (kawazu tobikomu / mizu no oto)." Then he tried to think of a good five sound units for the first line. Kikaku proposed "Tamabuki ya (Japanese yellow rose) <>.” Bashō said that yamabuki would be elegant but too showy. He said "furu ike ya" should be used because it is simple and truthful.

153. yuki no fuku / hidari kachi / minazuki no koi
snow of globefish / the left (side) wins / June's carp
Year unknown—summer. Poetry contests were always done in teams, with the left side against the right. Here the decision is made into a verse.

154. asagao ni / ware wa mashi kū / otoko kana
morning glory by / I as-for gobble rice stop / man <>
1682—summer. Kikaku's poem was kusa no to ni / ware wa tade kū / hataru kana (at a grass door / I as a firefly nibble / on smart weed), and Bashō was advising Kikaku to not show off by writing this verse. Bashō uses vulgar terms for eating and avoids the polite word for cooked rice, gohan. Again, admiring flowers was seen as an elegant occupation, but Bashō combines the activity with the most low-class way of describing eating.

155. mikazuki ya / asagao no yūbe / tsubomu ran
crescent moon <> / morning glory in evening / closed (conjecture)
1682—summer. This poem uses the comparison technique. The crescent moon is compared to the morning glory, which curled up and closed as it withered.

156. wabi te sume / tsuki wabisai ga / Nara cha uta
aesthetic life / lonely moon gazer / Nara tea song
1682—autumn. Tsuki Wabisai ("The Lonely Moon Gazer") was the pseudonym that Bashō was using. Wabi has now become fairly well known as an aesthetic condition of loneliness and poverty necessary for artistic and spiritual sensitivity. Nara was the capital of Japan from 710 to 784, before it was moved to Kyoto. The drinking song
was about a simple dish of beans and chestnuts cooked in tea.

167. *hige kaze o suite / boshū tanzuru wa / ta ga ko zo*
beard wind (object) blown / late in autumn lamenting as-for / whose child

1682—autumn. The preface refers to a poem: “who is the man with the goosefoot cane, lamenting the world?” The phrase *hige kaze o suite* literally means “a beard blows wind,” while the line should read *kaze hige o suite*, or “the beard blown by wind.” Both Bashō and Tu Fu used the inverted form.

168. *yo ni furu mo / sara ni Sōgi no / yadori kana*
world in grow old also / saying further Sōgi of / dwell

1682—summer. *Furu* can mean either “getting old” or “rain.” Bashō greatly admired the renga poet Sōgi (1421–1502). Bashō’s admiration for Sōgi was so great that his verse is exactly like Sōgi’s—*yo ni furu mo / sara ni shigure no / yadori kana*—except for one word. Bashō substituted Sōgi’s name for *shigure* (“wintry showers”).

169. *hinzan no / kama shimo ni naku / koe samushi*
poor temple of / iron kettle frost in cry / voice cold

1682—winter. This verse is considered to personify the iron pot, but if one thinks of “voice” the meaning changes. The ringing of an iron bell on the temple grounds could sound as if the pot is being struck.

170. *yogi wa omoshi / go ten ni yuki o / miru ara n*
quilt as-for heavy / far country snow / see to be (conjecture)

Year unknown—winter. Obviously Bashō was studying the Chinese poets during his winter solitude. Here he seems influenced by Ke Shi’s “my hat is heavy with snow / under the skies of Wu.” He changes the hat to his coverlet. Japanese then slept in padded robes with sleeves instead of under blankets or quilts. The *go ten* refers to the skies of the country named Wu, now Jiang Su Sheng, which simply means “in a faraway country over the mountains.” The pile of bedding heaped over a person looks like snow on the far mountains.

167. *ganjitsu ya / omoeba sabishi / aki no kure*
New Year’s Day <> / I look back lonesome / autumn evening

1683—New Year.

169. *uguisu o / tama ni nemuru ka / tao yanagi*
bush warbler (object) / soul making it sleep <> / lovely willow

1683—spring. *Uguisu* is the Japanese “bush warbler.” It is a perching bird with a very distinctive song that is heard more often than the bird is seen. It can be heard throughout
much of Japan in early spring, which is why it is often associated with the blooming apricot or plum. The idea behind this verse is rather fanciful, more like tanka material, but somehow it is delightful that Bashō had the thought and kept it in a poem.

163. hana ni ukiyo / waga saké shiroku / meshi kuroshi
flower in this world / my wine white / boiled-rice dark

1683—spring. The word *ukiyo* has many meanings, including “to make merry,” “to indulge in frolic,” “to be in high spirits,” “drunk,” and “buoyant,” as well as the idea of the “transitory world,” or this “weary,” “troublesome,” “difficult,” “dull,” “melancholy” world. The saké is unfiltered and the rice is unpolished. The idea is that the flowers are so lovely it doesn’t matter if the picnic contains the cheapest items. Another interpretation is that even the poor-quality foods are Bashō’s flowers.

164. okiyo okiyo / waga tomo ni se n / nuru ko chō
wake up wake up / my friend to do (speaker’s will) / sleeping little butterfly

Year unknown—spring.

165. chō yo chō yo / morokoshi no / haikai towa n
butterfly <> butterfly <> / Chinese of / poetry ask (speaker’s will)

Year unknown—spring. Bashō was always studying other forms of poetry and other cultures. Here he is asking the butterfly, which supposedly could fly to China, to get the latest news on poetry there and bring it back. This was handwritten on one of Bashō’s paintings of a butterfly.

166. hototogisu / matsuki wa une no / hana sake ri
cuckoo / sixth month as-for plum of / flowers bloomed

1683—summer.

167. kiyoku kika n / mimi ni kō taite / hototogisu
clean to hear (speaker’s will) / ear with incense burning / cuckoo

1683—summer. An old Chinese poem said that if the heart was purified one could better appreciate the delicate scent of incense. Here is the idea that if one’s ears were ritually cleansed one would be sensitive enough to hear the cuckoo’s call. In Japanese, *kō o kika* (“to hear incense”) is used rather than *kō o kagu* (“to smell incense”).

168. kuwa no mi ya / hana naki chō no / yosute-zake
mulberry’s fruit <> / flowerless butterfly of / a hermit’s wine

1683—summer. *Tosute-bito* is a euphemism for “priest.” The idea is that whoever lives behind a mulberry gate or fence is cut off from the rest of the world. Bashō changes *bito* (“man, person”) to *zake*, or saké, and keeps the connection to mulberries. There is
a wine made from mulberries called sōchimshu, but Bashō is so poor that he can only get drunk by watching the flight of a butterfly. The butterfly has no flowers to visit because the tree bears only fruit, and thus Bashō has no wine.

169. aozashi ya / kusa mochi no ho ni / ide tsu ran
green wheat crackers <> / parsley cookies ear of wheat changes / appear (supposition)
青ざしや草餅の他に出でつらん
1683—summer. Aozashi is a cracker made with ground unripe green wheat and formed into the shape of strings. Kusa mochi were rice snacks spiced with Japanese parsley that were prepared for Girls’ Day. The suggestion is that the green flecks in the Girls’ Day crackers have grown “ears of wheat” in summer.

170. uma bokuboku / ware o e ni miru / natsu no kana
horse clip clop / myself a picture in seeing / field of summer <> 馬ばくばくわれを絵に見る夏野枚
1683—summer. Supposedly Bashō was looking at a painting, probably in the home of his host, of a priest on horseback.

171. hotogisu / katsuo o some ni / keri kerashi
cuckoo / skipjack fish (result of a change) / <> (conjecture)
時鳥鶴を深めにけりけらし
1683—summer. The hotogisu, like our nightingale, was reputed to have blood gush from its throat when it sang too much. The katsuo (“skipjack fish,” Euthynnus pelamis) was one of the symbols of summer. Bashō was living in the home of a very rich man, the chief retainer of the Akimoto Clan, so some of the delicacies offered to him may have seemed strange after the simple foods he was accustomed to.

172. to no kuchi ni / yado fuda nanore / hototogisu
doors of mouth in / inn card introduce oneself / cuckoo
戸の口に宿札名乗れはとぎす
1683—summer. When a feudal lord or court noble stayed in an official stage inn, it was customary to attach his name on a tablet by the entrance. The wordplay involves to no kuchi, which was also the name of a pier where boats docked on Lake Inawashiro. The idea of the poem was that a bird’s call was the calling card that was posted outside the inn to announce his royal presence. There is also the implication that the “mouth of the door” spoke with the bird’s voice.

173. hire furi te / mejika mo yoru ya / Oga no shima
scarf (or fin) wave / a deer (or young tuna or skipjack fish) also come closer <> / island of Oga
ひれ振りてめじかも寄るや男鹿島
1683—summer. This verse has two distinct meanings due to hire (“a scarf-like cloth worn around the neck of women” in the Nara and Heian periods, or a “fin”). Mejika can mean “female deer,” “young tuna,” or “young skipjack fish.” Deer indicate their readiness to mate by waving the white undersides of their tails. Oga is not really an
island but a peninsula in Akita Prefecture. It was famed for skipjack fish, not tuna.

174. warau beshi naku beshi / waga asagao no / shibomu toki

laugh [or cry] [imperative] / my morning glory’s / time to wither

笑ふべし泣くべしわが朝顔の時

1683—summer. For this poem the sound unit count is 9–7–5. The addition of waga ("my") has prompted some scholars to consider that Bashō was jokingly referring to a certain part of his body.

176. yuki no naka wa / hirugao kare nu / hikage kana

snow of as-for / noon face wither not / in sun

雪の中は日陰枯れぬ目影成

1683—summer. The hirugao ("noon face") is the bindweed, which has a flower very similar to the morning glory.

176. hirugao ni / kome tsuki suzumu / aware nari

noon face flower by / rice huller to get cool / tasteful

毬顔に米搗き凉むあわれなり

1683—summer. Originally the poem had a title, "Lowness of the Bottle Gourd," and was handwritten on a small piece of paper. In that version the poem was: yūgao ni / kome tsuki yasumu / aware kana (evening face with / rice huller rests / touching). In the revision Bashō changes the flower from "evening face" to "noon face" and switches "rests" to "cools himself."

177. tamuke keri / imo wa hachisu ni / ni taru tote

to offer / yam as-for lotus on / resemble (quotation)

手向けり芋は蓮に似たるにて

1683—summer. Some scholars think Bashō was referring to the leaves of these two plants. Lotus leaves were used as plates for offerings of food laid on graves for the dead. It is thought that Bashō referred to the yam as food for the body as well as the lotus leaf, a symbol of the Pure Land, for the departed one’s soul. It can also mean that Bashō put his offering on the leaf of a sweet potato instead of a lotus leaf. The phrase "they are alike" likely referred to his offering as well as to Sanpū and his father.

178. shira-geshi ya / shigure no hana no / saki tsu ran

white poppy / / early winter shower’s flower of / bloom has (cause)

白芥子や時雨の花の咲きつらん

1683—summer. The poem suggests that the poppies can bloom because there were showers last winter. Included is the feeling that the cold whiteness of a winter shower is still manifest in the white poppy even when it blooms in summer.

179. hototogisu / ima wa haikaishi / naki yo kana

cuckoo / now as-for renga master / not word

ほととぎす今は俳諧師なき世哉

1683—summer. The word haikaishi indicates a "renga master." There are two interpretations of this poem. One is that the cuckoo’s voice is so beautiful that no poet can rival it. Another possibility is that no poet could compose a poem about the cuckoo’s
voice because it is not a pleasant sound. In addition, one could interpret that compared to the cuckoo, no one can claim to be a master of poetry.

180. shira-giku yo shira-giku yo / hiji naga kami yo / naga kami yo
white chrysanthemum <> white chrysanthemum <> / disgrace long hair <> / long hair <>

1683—autumn. The sound unit count for this poem is 10–7–5. It is assumed that Bashō is referring to one of the varieties of chrysanthemum with long, slender petals that can be seen as being hair-like. The Japanese proverb “The longer you live, the more shame you suffer” has a connection to the medicinal use of chrysanthemums, and in folklore, to the extension of one’s lifetime.

181. tsuki jī yokka / koyoi san jū ku no / warabe
almost-full-moon fourteenth day / this evening thirty-nine years old / child

1683—autumn. The fourteenth night was the last night before the full moon. Analects of Confucius contains the statement: “At the age of forty, I have enough discretion not to lose my way.” Bashō was one year younger, and therefore, still like a child. There is a connection between the moon not being full and Bashō not yet reaching his fortieth year.

182. yama wa neko / neburi te iku ya / yuki no hima
mountain as-for cat / to lick to go <> / snow crevice

1683—winter. Cat Mountain is considered a western peak of Mount Bandai.

183. kuromori o / nani to in tomo / kesa no yuki
black forest (object) / whatever you may say / morning of snow

1683—winter. Japan has several places called Black Forest, but the most widely known one is near Sakata, Yamagata Prefecture.

184. waga tame ka / tsuru hami nokosu / seri no meshi
for me <> / crane to eat to leave / parsley cooked with rice

1683—winter. Bashō seems to be comparing the brother of his friend to a crane. Qing ni Fang was a river in China mentioned in a poem by the Chinese poet Tu Fu.

185. arare kiku ya / kono mi wa moto no / furu gashiwa
hail hear <> / this body as-for former of / old oak

1683—winter. Bashō’s house was destroyed in a larger neighborhood fire on December 28, 1682. Bashō lived with various students until he moved into his new home in September 1683. The leaves of the oak tree turn dry and brown in autumn but do not fall until late spring, when new leaves push them off. Hail hitting the leaves has the raspy sound of old dry skin.
186. kōri nigaku / enso ga nodo o / urunoseri
ice bitter / rat’s throat (object) / moisten

1683—winter. Because there was no potable water yet in the rebuilt neighborhood, Bashō had to buy it. This poem could have been based on a fable by Chuang Tzu with the line: “A rat drinks water at a river, but not any more than enough.” Perhaps Bashō was apologizing for the amount of water he had to buy or thinking of the paradox of living on a river and having to buy water.

187. haru tatsu ya / shin nen furiki / kome go shō
spring arises <> / New Year old / rice ten quarts

1684—New Year. The shō measured about one-half gallon and here are five shō of rice. It was the obligation of Bashō’s disciples to keep his rice gourd filled as payment for his services. Bashō was feeling well cared-for because his students had given him more than he had used. This verse uses the contrast technique between new year and old rice. In the original haiku the first line was mare tome-ri (“how wealthy I am”). The revision adds an additional season word and removes the emotional comment.

188. nori jiru no / tegiwa mise keri / asagi wan
seaweed soup of / skill show <> / decorated bowl

1684—spring. Asakusa was noted for its nori (“seaweed,” or “laver”), which is widely consumed in Japan and used today for sushi rolls. The asagi wan was a bowl decorated with a design of birds and flowers in red and white on a light blue background.

189. namo hotoke / kusa no utena mo / suzushi kare
glory to Buddha / grass of pedestal also / to feel cool <>

1684—summer. Bunrin was one of Bashō’s students. Most pictures show Buddha on lotus flowers, but Bashō could use only grass for a pedestal. The poem can also mean that instead of a wooden altar, this one was made of grass tied or woven together.

190. wasure zu ha / Sayo no Nakayama / nite suzume
forget not / place name of Sayo of Middle Mountain / at enjoy cool air

1684—summer. This verse was given to Fūbaku, an employee of the Ise Shrine, as he was ready to make the journey back to his work. Sayo no Nakayama (“Middle of the Mountains”) was one of the places on the Tōkaidō Highway that became famous because Saigyō, as well as poets before him, referred to the place in a poem.

191. nozarashi o / kokoro ni kaze no / shimu ni kana
weather beaten (object) / heart into wind of / pierce body <>

1684—autumn. This is the famous opening verse to Bashō’s travel account, Weather-Beaten Diary.
192. aki totose / kaette Edo o / sasu kokyo
Ten autumns / rather Tokyo (object) / indicates one’s hometown
1684—autumn. Actually Bashô had lived in Tokyo for thirteen years.

193. kiri shigure / Fuji o minu hi zo / omoshiroki
Mist shower / Fuji (object) see not day <> / more attractive
1684—autumn. One of the poetry games was to have the subject be something elusive, such as in the laments of lovers, or something intangible, as Mount Fuji was on this cloudy day.

194. kumo kiri no / zanji hyakkei o / tsukushi keri
Cloud fog of / a short time hundred scenes (object) / do the best <>
1684—autumn. The scenery changed very slowly when walking, but with the fog drifting in and out, views constantly changed.

195. miyamori yo / waga no chirase / konoha-gawa
Priest life / my name (object) swept away / fallen leaves river
1684—autumn.

196. saru o kiku hito / sutego ni aki no / kaze ikani
Monkey (object) listen to man / abandoned baby in autumn’s / wind how
1684—autumn. This poem is a response to the many Chinese poets who found poetic sadness in the cries of monkeys. Bashô is saying that the cry of an abandoned child is even more pitiful.

197. michi no be no / mukuge wa uma ni / kuware keri
Road of nearby of / hibiscus as-for horse by / grazed <>
1684—summer. While humans enjoy flowers by gazing at them, horses enjoy flowers by grazing on them.

198. uma ni ne te / zanmu tsuki tōshi / cha no kemuri
Horse on sleep and / not-quite-awake-from-dream moon faraway / tea’s smoke
1684—autumn. The reference is to the poem “Early Departure” by the late-T’ang Dynasty poet Tu Mu (803–52): “Holding a whip down, I let my horse go as it wants / For several miles a cock’s voice is not heard / Going under the trees of a grove, still half-dreaming / Falling leaves surprise me when they fly down upon me.”

199. misoka tsuki nashi / chitose no sugi o / daku arashi
End of the month moon no / thousand year old cedar (object) / embrace storm
1684—autumn. Matsuba Shichirô, pen name Fûbaku, was a member of a family of officials and teachers in the town of Daiseko in Ise-Yamada. There is a theory that Bashô
visited and hugged the famous cedar near the nun’s worshipping place at the Outer Shrine of Ise. Or maybe “no moon” means he did not.

200. *imo arau onna / Saigyō nara ha / uta yoman*

yam washing woman / Saigyō if be / poem write (conjecture)

1684—autumn. Saigyō (1118–90) was born a high-ranking warrior but left the secular world at twenty-three to become a monk. The poem is based on the story that when Saigyō was caught in a rain shower he offered a poem to a prostitute in exchange for shelter. He ended up exchanging several poems with her. Bashō makes the connection between the valley’s name and the poet’s to enrich his poem.

201. *ran no ka ya / chō no tsubasa ni / takimono su*

orchid’s fragrance <> / butterfly’s wing from / incense to do

1684—spring. This uses a fanciful pseudo-science technique by saying that the butterfly’s wings have a fragrance like orchids. *Sedirea japonica* is a classic Japanese orchid that has a heavy scent of lilies and citrus. The fanning movement of butterfly wings is similar to the way one fans incense over clothing to give it a fragrance.

202. *tsuta ne te / take shi go hon no / arashi kana*

ivy to plant with / bamboo four or five of / storm <>

1684—autumn. This was an *aisatsu ku* (“greeting poem”), given to compliment the host on his simple and plain way of life.

203. *te ni toraba kie n / namida zo atsuki / aki no shimo*

hand in take vanish (conjecture) / tear <> hot / autumn’s frost

1684—autumn. The story of Urashima Tarō is that once he rescued a turtle from some wild children on a beach. The turtle later took him to the Dragon’s Palace under the sea, where he had a good time. When he came back to his village he did not know anyone because he had been gone so long. All he had was a souvenir box from the Dragon’s Palace, which he was told never to open. Alone and curious, he opened the box. Out came smoke, which turned his hair and eyebrows white. Bashō’s mother died on June 20, 1683, almost a year before this poem. Bashō had returned for a memorial service.

204. *watayumi ya / biwa ni nagusamu / take no oku*

cotton bow <> / lute in soothing / bamboo of behind

1684—summer. Bashō took one of his students, Chiri from Asakusa (see poem 188), to Chiri’s hometown. The *watayumi* was a bow-like tool made of cow tendon and whale bone used to beat cotton fibers to remove seeds and impurities before spinning them into thread.

205. *sō asagao / iku shini kaern / nori no matsu*

Buddhist priest morning glory / how many times die return / law of pine tree

Alongside, he dies to return the pine
1684—mixed seasons. The tree in Chuang Tzu’s story was a Japanese oak tree. It was so large it could cover thousands of cows. The tree was able to survive so long because it was considered good for no other purpose. The pine tree in Basho’s poem was a reminder of how priests and morning glories, under the laws of Dharma, would reincarnate again and again, while the pine tree, in its old age under the protection of the Buddha, no longer had to go through the death-rebirth cycles.

206. tsuyu toku toku / kokoromi ni ukiyo / susugabaya
dew drip-drip / attempt (purpose) world of dust / rinse (wish) すとうととと浴に浮世すすかばや
Year unknown—autumn. Basho’s reference to “clear trickling water” comes from Saigyo’s poem: “trickling down / pure spring water falls / over mossy rocks / not enough to draw up / for this hermit life.” The Inner Temple was the Kinbū Shrine, a Shinto structure located to the rear of the temple where Basho stayed the night.

207. fuyu shira nu / yado ya momi suru / oto arare
winter to know not / house <> hulling rice / sound hail 冬知らぬ宿や枯れる音霰
1684—summer. This was a verse given to a man in Nagao village, with a preface that his family was prosperous, and he had a heart of poetical elegance and was a good son to his mother. Because they had a lot of rice to hull, their winter would be as warm as a summer. The only sound of hail would be the beating of rice to remove the husks.

208. kinau uchite / ware ni kikaseyo / bō ga tsuma
pounding block strike / me hear make / temple’s wife 坐ちて我に聞かせよ坊が婆
1684—autumn. The fulling block was made of wood. Newly woven silk was laid on it and struck with a stick or mallet to release the protein sericin, which gives silk its glossy appearance. Poetically it was supposed to be a romantic and erotic sound to hear a woman pounding away at this job late at night in autumn.

209. go byō toshi he te / shinobu wa nani o / shinobu-gusa
tomb honorable getting old / recall-endure as-for what (object) / remembrance fern 御廟年老て忍は何を忍草
1684—autumn. The Emperor Go-Daigo (1288–1339) had succeeded in reestablishing the Imperial Government at Kenmu from the Kamakura government. Two years later Ashikaga Takauji took back power by establishing the Muromachi Shogunate. The emperor died in the mountains of Yoshino and was buried in this mausoleum. Shinobu means both a fern called “hare’s foot” and “to recall” or “to endure.” Basho thinks the plants around the tomb must have memories of people who visited this sacred place. He would like to access these memories.

210. Yoshitomo no / kokoro ni nitari / aki no kaze
Yoshitomo’s / heart in resemble / autumn’s wind 義朝の心に似たり秋の風
1684—autumn. Moritake (1473–1549) was a priest and poet who Basho admired. In
his poem Moritake writes about the autumn wind’s resemblance to the warrior Yoshitomo. Yoshitomo (1096–1156) was a cruel and bloodthirsty legendary ruler who killed anyone who got in the way of obtaining power.

211. koke uzumu / tsuta no utsutsu no / nebutsu kana
moss buried / ivy of absent-minded / Buddhist prayer
1684—autumn. Minamoto no Tomonaga was one of the sons of Lord Yoshitomo. The boy was wounded in the kneecap while fighting at Kyoto. He came to this place to recover from the ensuing serious illness. Here Bashō is giving a human attribute to the ivy, making it absent-minded. The interesting idea is that though he sees the ivy as absent-minded, the juxtaposition of the lines can give the idea that the ivy is an unforgotten prayer. There is also the idea that the grave is buried by three things—the moss, the ivy, and prayers.

212. aki kaze ya / yahu no hatake mo / Fuwa no seki
autumn’s wind <> / thicket also farm-fields also / barrier of Fuwa
1684—autumn. Fuwa means “indestructible.” The barrier had been the border control checkpoint of Fuwa district where travelers had to be identified and/or searched before continuing their journeys.

213. shini mo senu / tabine no hate yo / aki no kure
die also to-do not / journey sleep of end <> / autumn’s evening
1684—autumn. When Bashō set out on his journey he thought he would die. Now, at the end of autumn, he is not dead but only sleeping on his journey.

214. ko no ha chinu / sakura wa karoshi / hinoki-gasa
tree’s leaves scatter-fall / cherry tree as-for light / cypress hat
1685—autumn. Travelers wore flat, basket-like hats woven of thin slats of cypress. The English word “light” allows even more interpretations of the poem. The trees are less dense without their leaves. Without leaves, more light falls on Bashō’s sun hat. Another idea is that Bashō finds the leaves falling on his hat so charming that he does not feel their weight. In addition, leaves are the repositories of all the summer’s light and when they fall, so does the light of summer.

215. ikameshiki / oto ya arare no / hinoki-gasa
harsh / sound <> / hailstone of / cypress-slat hat
1684—winter. Because the thin cypress slats were stronger than straw, these hats were preferred by travelers.

216. fuyu botan / chidori yo yuki no / hotogisu
winter peony / plover exist snow of / cuckoo
冬牡丹千鳥雪のほととぎす
1684—winter. Basho was staying at a branch temple of the Nishi-Honganji in Kyoto, which was headed at this time by Basho’s host, the Kigin school poet Koeki (1642–1709). This verse was a greeting poem for Koeki, in an effort to praise the winter peony.

217.  **asobi kinu / soku tsuri kane te / shichi ri made**
have-a-good-time come to / globefish to fish hold and / seven miles as-far-as 遊び来ぬ鯨釣りかねて七里まで
1684—The distance of seven ri equals about 2.5 miles (4 km), but the poem needs the word “seven” because it is a parody of a poem in the *Man’yōshū*, #1740. Both poems revolve around the legend of Urashima Taro, who went fishing and enjoyed it so much he did not go home for seven days. The trip from Kuwana to Atsuta was made by ferryboat.

218.  **uma o sac / nagamuru yuki no / ashita kana**
horse (object) even / to look at snow of / morning <> 馬をさへ継むる雪の朝哉
1684—winter.

219.  **kono umi ni / waranji sute n / kasa shigure**
this sea in / straw sandals throw (wish) / hat winter-rain この海に草鞋踏てん笠時雨
1684—winter. Toyō (1653–1712) was the leader of the renga group in Atsuta, Nagoya. Some authorities translate the verse as implying that Basho throws his old sandals and hat into the sea as a purification ritual or simply because they were old and worn. Others believe only the sandals were thrown away while he stood barefoot in the rain. If one thinks of the associative technique, Basho could be saying that both his sandals and the rain dripping from his hat are going into the sea.

220.  **biwako no / yo ya samisen no / oto arare**
lute song of / night <> banjo of / sound hail 長琴行の夜や三味線の音鶴
1684—winter. “The Song of the Lute” was a poem composed by the Chinese poet Po Chü (777–846) when he was transferred to a lower political position in the countryside. Basho could be comparing himself to the exiled Chinese poet or saying that instead of having the luxury of listening to a lute, all he has is the hail on the roof.

221.  **shinobu sae / kare te mochi kau / yadori kana**
fern even / withered and rice cake buy / rest stop <> 忍さへ枯れて餅買ふ宿り哉
1684—winter. At the time Basho visited this place, the shrine had not been renovated since 1600 and was in a dire condition. Evidently the rice cakes were served on withered ferns, which fit the impoverished mood of the place. Basho could have been feeling as withered as the ferns, or as stale as the cookies, or as decrepit as the shrine. It is interesting to note that the shrine has fallen into disrepair, but the teahouse, for which Basho uses a more impressive term than it deserves, is still functioning.
222. *ichi bito yo / kono kasa urō / yuki no kasa*
market folks society / this hat will sell / snow of umbrella
1684—winter. The word *kasa* appears twice in the verse because it can mean both “hat” and “umbrella.” The associative technique is evident here as both the conical hat and umbrella, dusted with snow, look like snow-covered mountains.

228. *akebono ya / shira no shiroki / koto issun*
dawn <> / ice fish white / to-the-degree-of one inch
1684—winter. One of the three kinds of fish related to the sardine or goby; ice fish were supposedly the subject of a local proverb: “An inch long in winter; two in spring.”

224. *yuki to yuki / koyoi shiwasu no / meigetsu ka*
snow on snow / tonight December of / full moon <>
1684—winter. While Bashō was staying with the rice merchant Tokoku in Nagoya, two members of the renga group had a grave difference of opinion. Bashō, as acknowledged leader, was in charge of easing the tension. The message seems to be that radiance is everywhere.

225. *tsuki hana no / kore ya makoto no / aruji tachi*
moon flowers of / these <> true of / master (plural for persons)
1684—non-seasonal. These “three venerable old men” are the previous masters of haikai-no-renga, Matsunaga Teitoku (1571—1653), Yamazaki Sōkan (1460—1540), and Arakida Moritake (1460—1549). However, Bashō is saying in his verse that the real masters are not people but the moon and the flowers for inspiring linked-verse poetry. Again Bashō is saying he values renga, or linked verse, over single verses.

226. *kyōku kogarashi no / mi wa Chikusai ni / nitaru kana*
comical-poetry winter-wind of / I as-for Chikusai in / whom look like <>
1684—winter. *Kyōku* (“comical haika”) and *kyōka* (“comical tanka”) are two different genres, but *kyōka* is the older term because waka is older than haikai. These verses were considered comical or mad because they referred to the job of writing and did not contain much evidence of wit. Chikusai was a poor poet-physician in a story who traveled around making up funny verses to amuse patients at the expense of pompous poets.

227. *nenohi shi ni / miyako e ika n / tomo no gana*
day-of-the-rat to do in / capital to go (speaker’s will) / friend also (speaker’s wish)
1685—New Year. The New Year’s festival that Bashō refers to is literally “The Day of the Rat,” the first zodiacal animal day of the year. This is the day nobles of the court enjoyed an outing in the country to dig up a small pine tree, the symbol of longevity, and gather young, wild greens for soup.
228. *taga muko zo / shida ni mochī ou / ushi no toshi*
whose bridegroom <> / ferns with cakes carry / ox’s year
1685 — New Year. It was a New Year’s Day custom in Iga for a new bridegroom to take rice cakes displayed on fern leaves on a wooden stand to his parents-in-law. In this year of the ox, the new son-in-law comes burdened with cakes and ferns. The ferns traditionally used were called *uraširo* (“black and white”) because the leaves were dark on one side and light on the other. There is also the implication that marriage had its dark and bright sides, as did the coming year.

229. *kaza mo naki / ware o shigururu ka / ko wa nanto*
hat also without / me (object) winter shower falls / do as-for what
1685 — winter.

230. *toshi kurenu / kasa ki te waraji / haki nagara*
year ending / hat war and sandals / to put on (indicates two actions done simultaneously)
1685 — New Year.

231. *kaza makura / ini mo shigururu ka / yoru no koe*
grass pillow / dog also winter rain <> / night of voices
1685 — winter. The phrase “grass pillow” indicates a journey and sleeping outdoors.

232. *umi kure te / kamo no koe / honoka ni shiroshi*
sea darkens and / duck’s voice / faintly in white
1685 — winter. Scholars are fond of pointing out that the sound unit count in this poem is 5–5–7 and it would be easy to rearrange the lines to read “sea darkens / it is faintly white / duck’s voice” to achieve an accurate count of sound units. However, the use of four “k” sounds in the beginning produces a stuttering effect similar to the sound of ducks and could be why Bashö preferred this arrangement. This poem is an example of sense switching because sound is a color. There is also a paradox. During a nautical twilight, the sea seems brighter, or whiter, than the sky.

233. *tabi-garasu / furu su wa ume ni / narini keri*
wandering crow / old nest as-for plum tree in / has become <>
1685 — spring. The head note was added by Dohō in his book *Shō Ō Zen-den.* In this poem Bashō compares himself to the crow painted on the screen. Instead of lodging in the simplicity of a crow’s nest, he sleeps among plum blossoms because he is staying with an elegant friend. Crows are not usually considered a migrating bird, but the idea of a wandering crow means a bird of passage or a priest on a journey.
284. omoi tatsu / Kiso ya shigatsu no / sakura-gari
plan / Kiso <> April / flower viewing
1685—spring. Kiso was the name of a mountain region and river. Because of the altitude the cherry trees bloomed later.

285. haru nare ya / na no naki yama no / nsu-gasumi
spring (with assertion) <> / name even without mountain's / thin haze
1685—spring. To get from Nagoya to Nara, Bashô had to cross over a range of mountains. In the spring mountains along the sea gather moisture and fill the valleys with a warm haze. Thinking of it calls forth many feelings of love and longing.

286. mizu tori ya / kôri no sô no / kutsu no oto
water draw <> / ice of monk of / clog's sound
1685—winter. There was a Water-Drawing Ceremony, usually held in the first two weeks of the second month of the lunar calendar, now March, in Nara at the Tôdaiji Temple. When the monks walked around the altar in their night ambulations, their cedar clogs sounded as though they were walking on frost-hardened earth. The conclusion of the ceremony involved drawing up water from the Akai, now Asakai, spring.

287. shoshun mazu / saké ni ume uru / nioi kana
early spring first / rice-wine in plum sell / fragrance <>
1685—spring. This unnamed saké brewer held a renga party. When the root of sweet flag is cut into tiny pieces and used to sweeten saké, the drink is called plum wine. Unspoken here is a riddle: what sells plum, the fragrance or the season of plum blossoms?

288. yo ni nioe / baika isshi no / misosazai
world in fragrance / plum blossoms one branch of / wren
1685—spring. Akashi Genzui was a doctor who wrote under the name of Isshi-ken ("House of One Branch"). The misosazai ("winter wren," Troglodytes troglodytes) has a complicated and cheerful song. The verse uses association because on one branch of plum blossoms is "a world of fragrance" and a wren.

289. ume shirosi / kinô ya tsuru o / nusuma ne shi
plum white / yesterday as-for crane (object) / steal was (past)
1685—spring. Mitsui Shûfu (1646–1717) was a poet of the Danrin school whose father was a wealthy merchant in Kyoto. Bashô used a legend about a Chinese hermit, Lin He Jing, who loved plum blossoms and cranes as the basis for his verse. Bashô’s host had many plum blossoms, but the crane was missing. By saying that the crane was stolen, Bashô suggests that his host lives in a crime-ridden area. Bashô’s school of poetry opposed the Danrin poets.
240. kasli no ki no / hana ni kamawaru / sugata kana
oak of tree of / flower to care not / a pose
1685—spring. This was composed as a greeting verse for Mitsui Shūfū. Bashō compares his host to *Quercus glauca*, a hardy evergreen species of oak that grows in the mountains, implying that he is a manly man in contrast to the showiness of flowers.

241. waga kinn ni / Fushimi no momo no / shizuku seyo
my silk robe on / Fushimi’s peach’s / sprinkle do
1685. The Priest Ninkō (1606—86) was known for his virtue. Fushimi was known for its sweet, juicy peaches and sake.

242. yamaji ki te / nani yara yukashi / sumiregusa
mountain path come and / something maybe charm / wild violet
1685—spring. *Sumiregusa* (“wild violet,” *Viola mandshurica*) is a 3-inch (7.5-cm) high perennial with deep purple flowers that blooms in April and May.

243. Karasaki no / matsu wa hana yori / oboro nite
Karasaki’s / pine to flower / than / hazy owing-to
1685—spring. The pine at Karasaki on Lake Biwa was so famous it was referred to in ancient poetry. Lake Biwa is a scenic place near Mount Nagara known for its cherry blossoms. In early spring, moisture rising from the warming lake could obscure the view of the famous pine tree.

244. tsutsuji ikete / sono kage ni / hidara saku onna
azalea arrange / this shadow in / dried codfish tear woman
1685—spring. The contrast between the elegance of azaleas and a woman nearby cutting open a dried codfish, *Gadus macrocephalus*, supplies the wit for this verse. Even the Latin name helps the humor.

245. na-batake ni / hanami-gao naru / suzume kana
kale farm on / flower viewing face as-if / sparrow
1685—spring. The Chinese colza (“rape” or “kale,” *Brassica campestris*) is a plant of the mustard family. In spring, fields are covered with the spikes of the small yellow flowers suitable only for flower viewing by sparrows.

246. inochi futatsu no / naka ni ikitaru / sakura kana
life two of / between in lived / cherry blossom
1685—spring. The friend of Bashō was named Hattori Doho (1657–1730). Bashō had last seen him when he was nine years old. Minakuchi, in modern Koga-gun, Shiga Prefecture, was a post station on the old Tōkaidō Highway.
247. *cho no tobu / bakari nonaka no / hikage kana*

*Butterfly of flying / only in a field / sunshine*

1685—summer. This verse suggests that the field was made of sunlight. The bright yellow flowers of kale plants could have seemed like sunshine on the earth.

248. *kakitsubata / ware ni hokku no / onoi ari*

*rabbit-ear / iris / me in poem's / idea is*

1685—summer. The understanding of this poem is complicated by the reference to a waka in chapter nine of *The Tales of Ise; kara goroma / ki tsutsu nare n i shi / tsuna shi are ba / harubaru ki nuru / tabi o shi zo omou.* The first sound units in the five lines spells “kakitsubata” or “rabbit-ear iris.” The translation of the waka by Tosiharu Oseko is: “A Chinese robe is good / Once used to it / But, my wife is much closer / Now I will miss her on my journey / Far away from her.”

249. *funa ashi mo / yasumu toki ari / hama no momo*

*Boat landing also / when stopping for a rest happens / beach of peaches*

1685—spring. This poem could have been referring to actual peach petals blown from trees and washed up on the beach or to small, pinkish shells that looked like peach petals in the sand.

250. *iza tomo ni / ko mugi kurawa n / kusa makura*

*now together in / ears of wheat graze (speaker's will) / grass pillow*

1685—summer. Inbe Rotsū lived from 1651 to 1738. Bashō uses an animal term for eating, which also implies eating the barley off the stalk instead of cooked as a food. There is an association between the ears of barley and the grass pillow, since they both bear grains.

251. *yamagatsu no / otogai tozuru / mugura kana*

*Mountain woodcutter's / lower jaw closed / bedstraw*

1685—summer. The grass called *mugura* is of the Galium family and is sometimes called “bedstraw” or “goose-foot grass.” The plant could grow as tall as a person’s chin.

252. *ume koite / u no hana oganu / namida kana*

*Plum miss / bush clover blossoms bow to / tear*

1685—mixed seasons. The Priest Daiten lived from 1629 to 1685. Kikaku was one of Bashō’s disciples. The poem seems to be saying that since the plum flower (the priest) is missing not only on the journey, but also now in life, Bashō bows in grief and worship before the bush clover. The *denzia,* often translated as “bush clover,” was one of the seven autumn grasses associated with longing, sadness, and grief.

253. *shira-geshi ni / hane mogu chō no / katami kana*

*White poppy in / wing torn butterfly of / keepsake*

1685—summer. This verse suggests that the field was made of sunlight. The bright yellow flowers of kale plants could have seemed like sunshine on the earth.
1685—summer. Tokoku, a rice-dealer in Nagoya, was one of Bashō's favorite disciples. Poppy petals are triangular and fall one at a time, so it might look as if butterfly wings are falling from the flower.

264. botan shibe fukaku / wake izurn hachi no / nagori kana

1685—summer. Bashō had stayed with Tōyō in 1684. The tree peony is sometimes called “the plant of wealth,” which could have been why Bashō chose this flower for his compliment. Bashō lets an insect represent his actions and feelings, which is a good technique to avoid the personal reference. The sound unit count is 8–8–5. Often the technique of miscounting the number, hachō, is used as a sign of grief. In other words, the author is too upset at the parting to keep to the rules of the form.

265. yunuki kama no / mugi ni nagusamu / yadori kana

1685—summer. The black horses of Kai were famous as gifts to the emperor. The word kama is an elegant, poetical term for “horse.” Again, the subject of this verse could be Bashō. The horse (Bashō) had to be satisfied with grass as food instead of rice dishes. The head-note refers to Bashō's stay in Tanimura in Kai Province (modern Yamanashi Prefecture) in 1682 and 1683 after his house in Tokyo had burned down on December 28, 1682.

266. natsu-goromo / imada shirami o / tori tsukusa zu

1685—summer. This verse ends the travel journal, Weather-Beaten Diary. The book contained forty-five single verses, but approximately sixty-five poems are accredited to this time period. Some authorities consider this poem a metaphor for Bashō's revisions of poems and travel notes rather than evidence that he had picked up lice on his journey.

267. torisashi mo / kasa ya sute ken / hototogisu

1685—summer. Bashō wrote this verse on a fan with a picture of a bird-catcher. This verse could indicate that Bashō was very tired of traveling.

268. uchiwa mote / aoga n hito no / ushiro muki

Year unknown—summer. Bansai (1621–74) was a poet, calligrapher, and scholar of Japanese classical literature.

269. sakazuki ni / mitsu no na o nomu / koyō kana

破にみつの名を飲む今宵かな
1685—mixed seasons. Reiganjima was a place near Bashō's cottage on the Fukagawa river. In Li Po's poem, he raises his cup to salute the full moon and notices a shadow on the ground as well as in the cup. He counts these as if there were three people in the party. Bashō considers the three people with the same name as three parts of one person in the same way Li Po's poem describes. This verse was included in Bashō's essay "Three Names."

260. **kumo ori ori / hito o yasumeru / tsukimi kana**
cloud now and then / people (object) test themselves / moon viewing<br>
今をりり人をやすめる月見かな
1685—autumn. This poem is supposedly based on Saigyō's poem in his book Sankashū: nakanaka ni / tokidoki kono no / kakaru koso / tsuki o motenasu / kazari narikere (not quite / now and then / clouds cover / to entertain the moon / and decorate it).

267. **medetaki hito no / kazu ni mo ira n / oi no kure**
happy person / counted in also number (conjecture) / old person end-of-the-year
目出度き人の数にもいらん老の朽
1686—New Year. Bashō was no longer a tenja ("one who grades poems for a fee") and was now totally dependent upon his disciples to supply his needs. He supposedly said, "One should become a beggar before being a tenja." Bashō was now forty-two years old and considered himself an old man.

262. **iku shimo ni / kokoro base o no / matsu kazari**
many frosts in / heart beats (object) of / pine decoration
深雪に心はせをの松飾り
1686—New Year. The matsu kazari is a New Year's decoration made of pine boughs arranged around upright stalks of obliquely cut bamboo stalks that is placed outside the front door. The verse contains several hidden puns and wordplays with matsu ("pine tree") and base-o, which sounds like bashō ("banana tree"). Thus there are several possible readings of the poem. It could mean that in spite of the frosty weather, the pine decoration still lives. Or it could mean that in spite of palpitations and New Year's excitement, Bashō is still alive, or that in spite of his many years he still gets excited over the end of the year.

263. **furu kata ya / nazuna tsumi yuku / otoko domo**
fallow field <> / shepherd's purse greens go out pick / man (plural)
古畝やなざな摘みゆく男ども
1686—New Year. On January 7 people used to eat a porridge containing "seven spring jewels," herbs good for their health. One of them was nazuna ("shepherd's purse," Capsella bursa-pastoris). The low-growing plant has tiny white flowers on racemes that grow up to 16 inches (41 cm) long. The joke is the idea that a fallow field grows nothing, yet in its uselessness it produces one of the "seven jewels of spring."

264. **yoku mire ba / nazuna hana saku / kakine kana**
closely if I look / shepherd's purse bloom / fence <>
よく見れば雑花咲く垣根かな
1686—spring. It is thought that this verse was based on a Chinese poem by Cheng Hao (1032–85) that Bashō quoted in his essay “Postscript for the Essay on the Bagworm” (Minamushi no Setsu Batsu). The idea is that if we observe closely enough, we will find everything we need.

266. **Mafukuda ga / hakama yoson ka / tsukuzukushi**
legendary person / pleated skirt wear / horsetail sprout

1986—spring. The *hakama* is a garment for men worn for formal occasions. It is a pleated skirt that is often made of striped material and tied at the waist. Horsetail rush or scouring rush, *Equisetum*, has short, downward-turning spikes that reminded Bashō of these pleated skirts. The black tops of the plant reminded him of the shaved heads of priests. Mafukuda was the young serving boy who decided to become a priest in a story. The daughter of the family, who became the Priest Gyōki in her next life, was so impressed she sewed one of these pleated skirts for him for formal occasions. The story is told in Tales of Long Ago (Konjaku Monogatari).

266. **wazume ba / mochi o no kuwa zu / momo no hana**
since I am ill / rice cake (object) also eat no / peach blossoms

1686—spring. Bashō cannot eat the bar-shaped rice cake for Girls’ Day because he is ill, but neither can the peach blossoms eat cake.

267. **Kannon no / iraka miyari tsu / hana no kumo**
Kannon’s / roof-tile look-out / blossom of cloud

1686—spring. Bashō could see the Kannon Temple of Asakusa, in Tokyo, from his home in Fukagawa. Like most temples, it was surrounded with cherry trees. Kannon was another term for Avalokitesvara, the name of a Bodhisattva, or Kuan-Yin, who is also called the Goddess of Mercy.

268. **hana saki te / nanuka tsuru miru / fumoto kana**
cherry flowers bloom / seven day crane looks / foothill <=

1686—spring.

269. **furusu tada / aware naru beki / tonari kana**
old nest just / lonely (speaker’s conjecture) / house next door <=

1686—non-seasonal. Sōha was a priest of the Ōbaku Zen sect who lived close to Bashō’s cottage. By saying the house will be lonely, Bashō implies that he, too, will miss the priest.

270. **chi ni taore / ne ni yori hana no / wakare kana**
ground on fall / root in approach flower of / bid farewell <=

1686—spring. This can refer to the proverb “a flower goes back to its root,” meaning the petals fall to the ground to become reabsorbed by the tree and make new petals.
There is also the image of a person prostrate on the ground with grief. There is no documentation about who Priest Tandō was.

271. higashi nishi / awaresa hitotsu / aki no kaze
east west / elegance same one / autumn’s winds
1686—autumn.

272. meigetsu ya / ike o megurite / yomosugara
full moon <> / pond (object) walk around / all night
1686—autumn. The poem can be read with the idea that the moon “walks” around the pond as it seems to go from east to west or that the author walked around the pond the whole night enjoying the full moon. There is an association between the bright, flat surface of the moon and the light-reflecting surface of a round pond.

273. zatō ka to / hito ni mirarete / tsukimi kana
blind person (quotation) / other people in regarded as / moon viewing <>
1686—autumn. The humor comes from the idea that a blind man can’t see the moon, but Bashō is blind to everything else because he so intently looks at the moon.

274. ake yuku ya / nijiishichiya mo / mika no tsuki
dawn to go <> / twenty-seventh night also / new-crescent moon
1686—autumn. Seeing the moon from a boat is very different from seeing it from on land because one has no directional orientation.

276. mono hitotsu / waga yo wa karoki / hisago kana
thing one / my world as-for light / rice gourd <>
1686—autumn. Bashō’s disciples Sanpū (1647–1732), a wealthy fishmonger, and Bunrinn were responsible for supplying Bashō’s needs. Rice was stored in a dried gourd hung from the rafters. The light color of the gourd made it look like a lantern, but it also contained the energy that kept Bashō alive and glowing. There is also the idea that due to Bashō’s poverty he had no lantern other than the rice gourd.

276. hana mina karete / aware o kobosu / kusa no tane
flower all wither / sadness (object) drop / grass-weed’s seed
1686—autumn.

277. mizu samuku / neiri kane taru / kamome kana
water cold / fall asleep unable (affirmative) / sea gull <>
1686—winter. Bashō compares himself to a cold gull floating on the waves. He is also saying that with only cold water to drink, he cannot go to sleep. Implied is the idea that the gift of wine will help him sleep better.
278. **hatsu yuki ya / saiwai an ni / makariaru**
first snowfall <> / luckily cottage at / to be exist

1686—winter. This verse gives the impression that Bashô’s cottage on the river was more of a summer place and that he stayed in town with wealthier students during cold weather. The poem is in the essay “First Snowfall.”

279. **hatsu yuki ya / suisen no ha no / tawamu made**
first snowfall <> / narcissus of leaves of / bend as much

1686—winter. Bashô wrote this poem on the left side of a painting in which narcissus are shown with bent leaves. The traditional practice would have been to associate the whiteness of the flowers and the snow. Bashô took his own advice and wrote about the less showy aspects of the scene.

280. **kimi hi o take / yokimono misen / yukimaruge**
you fire (object) burn / good thing show (speaker’s will) / huge snowball

1686—winter. Both the head note and the poem reflect the influence of reading Chinese poems that used the parallel technique.

281. **tsuki yuki to / nosabari kerashi / toshi no kure**
moon snow (quotation) / arrogantly-ignore-each-other (conjecture) / year’s end

1686—winter. One cannot know if Bashô’s poem meant that there was no moon and no snow or that there was one but not the other. It can also mean that Sora and Bashô were ignoring each other. Though the poem was written during the New Year festivities, Bashô uses the phrase, “end of the year.”

282. **kame waruru / yoru no kōri no / nezame kana**
jar crack / night of ice of / awaken from sleep <>

1686—winter. The cracking of the jar and the coldness of the frost awaken Bashô, but the reader can also view the jar as “awakening” and making the sound as it emerges from its “sleep of being a jar.”

283. **tsuki shiroki / shiwasu wa Shiro ga / nezame kana**
moon white / December as-for Shiro himself / awake from sleep

1686—winter. Shiro was Zi Lu (542–479 B.C.), one of the ten important disciples of Confucius (551–479 B.C.). He was noted as an upright, pure, and self-sacrificing person with a strong sense of justice. In the battlefield the strings of his helmet came untied. Saying that a soldier should always be correctly attired, he stopped to tie the strings and was decapitated. This verse also works because in winter, the past came alive, or “woke up,” again.
284. **saké nomeba / itodo nerarene / yoru no yuki**
saké drink (confirmed condition) / more and more sleep not / night of snow. 酒めばいと上と寝られぬ夜の雪
1686—winter. “More and more” can apply to wine, sleeplessness, or snow.

285. **toshi no ichi / senkō kai ni / ide baya na**
year-end market / incense buy for / to go (speaker’s wish) <- 年の市練査ひに出でばやな
1687—New Year. Incense sticks came from China in the middle of that century. Bashō did not really need anything but, perhaps, he got the idea of going to a fair to ease his loneliness and to buy this new faddish item.

286. **tare yara ga / katachi ni ni tari / kesa no haru**
whose (uncertainty) / figure-appearance looks like (affirmative) / New Year’s Day 誰やらかたちに似たり今朝の春
1687—New Year. Ransetsu (1654–1707) was one of Bashō’s disciples in Tokyo. The *koode* (“robe”) was padded with quilted silk and was originally a type of underwear. Part of the New Year festivities was the giving, receiving, and wearing of new clothes. The phrase *kesa no haru* actually translates as “morning of spring,” but indicates the first day of the new year.

287. **sato no ko yo / ume orinokose / ushi no muchi**
village of children <- / plum don’t break all / cattle’s whip 里の子よ梅折り残せ牛の鞭
1687—spring.

288. **kō no su mo / mi ranuru hana no / hagoshi kana**
white stork’s nest also / see possible blossom of / through leaves <- 鶴の巣も見るる花の葉越し故
1687—spring. There are now over a hundred varieties of cherry trees grown in Japan. Their leaves and blossoms appear at the same time, which is usually not true in varieties grown for their fruit.

289. **kō no su ni / arashi no hoka no / sakura kana**
white stork nest in / untouched by storm of / cherry blossoms <- 鶴の巣に風の外の桜故
1687—spring. This is considered a revision of another poem on the same subject as the previous one.

290. **Kasa-dera ya / mora un iwaya mo / haru no ame**
hat temple <- / to not leak cave also / spring’s rain 笠寺や洞らぬ岩屋も春の雨
1687—spring. Bashō was evidently visiting the temple Tenrinsan Ryūfukuji in Nagoya. According to legends, the temple once fell into disrepair, and the statue of Buddha was exposed to rain leaking through the roof. Touched by the situation, a poor woman gave her hat to cover the Buddha’s head. Later she made a fortune and donated a fine new building. The second part, the Non-Leaking Cave, was a sacred place in Shugendō, for the Mountain
Buddhists, devotees of a kind of mountaineering asceticism. Bashō is making a comparison between the two. The words for “hat,” “leak,” and “rain” have a connection in Japanese.

291. rusu ni kite / ume sae yoso no / kakiho kana
absence in to come / plum even someone else’s / hedge ← 留守に来て梅きへよその垣をかな
1687—spring. The word ume is traditionally translated as “plum” even though the Japanese word for plum is sumomo. The ume looks more like an apricot but cannot be eaten unless it is pickled.

292. ka o saguru / ume ni kura miru / noki ba kana
scent (object) tracing / plum in storehouse look for / under eaves ← 香を探る梅に蔵見る軒端哉
1687—spring. New granaries or warehouses are dedicated with formal ceremonies.

293. kaki yori wa / nori o ba i no / urï mo se de
oyster than (comparison) / dried laver-seaweed (object) to get old / sell not to do ← 牡蠣よりは海苔をば老の売りもせず
1687—spring. This verse was written when Bashō was forty-four years old. The fact that oysters are considered an aphrodisiac gives this verse even more sense.

294. wasurina yo / yabu no naka naru / ume no hana
forget (negative) / thicket in (assertion) / plum blossoms ← 忘るなよ動の中なる梅の花
1687—spring. The first line of this verse was originally mata mo toe (“visit me again”). According to the essay “Plum in a Thicket,” Bashō wrote this verse for a Buddhist monk who he had met on a previous journey. Bashō gave the monk the poem after the monk visited him at his home.

295. hana ni asobu / abu na kurai so / tomo suzume
flower in to play / horsefly not allowed to eat / friend sparrow ← 花に遊ぶ蝶な喰ひそ友雀
1687—spring. The title, “Everything is satisfied with what it is,” is a quotation from a Chinese poem by Cheng Hao (1032–85), expressing Chuang Tzu’s philosophy of self-realization. The idea is that the sparrow should be a friend of both the horsefly and the flowers. By not eating the horsefly, the sparrow becomes Bashō’s friend also. An earlier version of this poem had “to eat” instead of “to play.”

296. hana no kumo / kane wa Ueno ka / Asakusa ka
flowers of clouds / temple bell as-for Ueno <> / Asakusa <> ← 花の望郷は上野か浅草か
1687—spring. From his home in Tokyo Bashō could see the roof of a famous temple in across town in Asakusa. Also nearby was a park, in another district of Tokyo, known as Ueno. Both areas had temples, bells, and many cherry trees. Ueno, in Ehime Province, was Bashō’s birthplace. The Japanese cherry blossoms hang on tiny stems so that the opened flower resembles a bell and seems to be ringing when the wind blows.
297. monozuki ya / niowa nu kusa ni / tomaru chô

curiously <> / to smell (negative) grass on / lands butterfly

1684—87—spring. The double meaning is that the butterfly lands on the grass because it is curious, and it is a curious thing to see a butterfly on grass.

298. sazaregani / ashi hainoboru / shinizu kana

clear river crab / leg climbs up / clear water <>

1687—spring. This poem uses the associative technique, since both the rising waters and the crab are creeping up Bashô’s leg.

299. hototogisu / naku naku tobu zo / isogawashi

cuckoo / cry cry fly <> / restless

1687—summer. The Japanese use a word twice to convey importance. Bashô has broken with literary history again, because normally the cuckoo only called once. This makes the use of “repeatedly” even more significant in this verse.

300. katsuo uri / ikanaru hito o / yowa su ran

skipjack fishmonger / what kind of person (object) / get drunk (causative) (conjecture)

1687—summer. *Essays of Idleness*, written by Yoshida Kenkô (1283–1350), contains a story that describes how the upper classes of Kamakura believed that the *katsuo* (“skipjack fish”) contained a poison that made people drunk. However, by Bashô’s time, people in Tokyo enjoyed eating the fish and no one worried about getting drunk.

301. youte nen / nadeshiko sakeru / ishi no ue

drunk lying down (speaker’s will) / wild pink bloom / stones of on

1687—summer. The wild, straggly way that carnations grow is similar to the way a drunk sleeps. Both lie down across the stones with abandon.

302. u no hana mo / haha naki yado zo / susamajiki

tofu pulp also / mother without house <> / dreary

1687—autumn. Kikaku’s mother, Myômuni, died at the age of fifty-seven, on April 8, 1687. *Unohana* or *okara* is the residue pulp left from making tofu. Considered a byproduct, the pulp is used to thicken vegetable stews. *Unohana* is also the name of *Deutzia scabra*, a briar thicket with tiny white flowers that bloom in thick clusters that look similar to the tofu pulp.

303. inazuma o / te ni toru yami no / shisoku kana

flash of lightning (object) / hand into take dark’s / paper candle <>

1687—summer. Rika was considered a very sharp and talented poet. In a preface to
the published poem, Hattori Dohō (1657–1730) commented that Bashō was praising Rika’s talent and brightness with this verse.

804. nagaki hi mo / saezuri taranu / hibari kana
long day also / sing enough negative / skylark<> 永き日も釣り足らぬひばり哉
1687—summer. This verse uses the pseudo-scientific technique. As always, the science is neither correct nor entirely wrong.

805. haranaka ya / mono ni mo tsukazu / naku hibari
field middle<> / something to also cling not / sing skylark 原中やものにもつかず鳴く穀雀
1687—summer.

806. samidare ni / nio no uki su o / mi ni yuka n
summer rain in / grebe’s floating nest (object) / look at for to go (speaker’s will) 五月雨に場の浮巢を見にゆかん
1687—summer. The grebe is a water bird, Podiceps ruficollis, that builds its nest with reeds and oat grass straw so that it floats. Bashō said, “A willow tree in spring rain belongs completely to the world of traditional renga. A crow digging mud-snail is entirely in the realm of haikai. My grebe poem has no haikai in its subject matter, but when it says, ‘I’ll go and see the floating nest,’ there emerges something of haikai.”

807. ide ya wara / yoki nuno ki tari / semi-goromo
now <> I / good cloth wear (perfect tense) / cicada robe いでやよき布着たり蠔衣
1687—summer. A “cicada robe” was as thin as a cicada’s wing, and thus suitable for summer wear.

808. uri tsukuru / kimi ga are na to / yūsuzumi
melon growing / you are (imperative) (wish) (quotation) / cool off in the evening 瓜作る君があれなと夕涼み
1687—summer. This poem is based on a waka by Saigyō: matsuri ga ne no iwata no kishi no / yūsuzumi / kimi ga are na to / omohoyuru kana (by the roots of a pine / on the banks of Iwata River / cooling off in the evening / wish you were here / is what I think). To make the change from a pine tree, a noble subject, to melons is the kind of change Bashō was working to make in poetical subject matter.

809. uri no hana / shizuku ikanaru / wasure-gusa
melon’s flower / drip-drop what kind of / forgetting grass 瓜の花冷いかなる忘れ草
1687—summer. Bashō was invited to a tea ceremony by the master Kōno Shōba. Shōba put a melon flower in a dried gourd at the place of honor. The gourd had a crack in it and the water slowly dripped out, hitting an old stringless lute with a musical ping-ping sound. The name of the flower was wasure-gusa (“forgetting grass”) or the Hemerocallis, the orange or tawny day lily.
810. samidare ya / oke no wa kirurn / you no koe
summer rain <= / wooden-pail's hoop as-for breaks / night's voice
1687—summer. The slats of wooden buckets were held in place by a hoop of twisted bamboo. If the bucket was left out in the rain, the wooden sides could swell to the point that the bamboo hoop would break and the bucket would pop apart.

811. kami haete / yogan aoshi / satsuki ame
hair grown / face bluish-pale / rainy season rain
1687—summer. This verse uses the associative technique. Basho's face, with long hair and a pale bluish cast, looks the same as, or even is, the face of the continuous rain.

812. asagao wa / heta no kaku sae / aware nari
morning glory as-for / unskilful at drawing even / charming (assertion)
1687—summer. Ransetsu (1654—1707) was one of Basho's disciples.

813. kari kakeshi / tazura no tsuru ya / sato no aki
harvest not-yet-finished / rice paddy surface crane <= / village of autumn
1687—autumn. One can interpret this poem to mean that the crane is part of the harvest not yet taken in.

814. shizu no ko ya / ine suri kakete / tsuki o miru
peasant's child <= / rice hull leave / moon (object) viewing
1687—autumn. Moon viewing was considered as reserved for the noble or educated classes and not for peasants or their children.

815. imo no ha ya / tsuki matsu sato no / yaki-batake
taro's leaves <= / moon waiting village of / burn fields
1687—autumn. In Basho's time fields were burned after the harvest to remove discarded vegetation. Both Basho and the taro leaves remain after the burning of the fields.

816. tera ni nete / makoto-gao naru / tsukimi kana
temple at sleep / true face (assertion) / moon viewing <=
1687—autumn. The image of makoto-gao ("true face") connotes one's original being, before emotions are added to one's life.

817. tsuki hayashi / kozue wa ame o / mochi nagara
moon quick / treetop as-for rain (object) / hold still
1687—autumn. In "The Record of a Journey to Kashima" Basho wrote: "The sky of dawn had cleared a little... In the light of the moon, the sound of the raindrops was deeply moving; our breasts were full, but no words could express it."
818. hagi hara ya / hito yo wa yadose / yama no inn bush clover field <> / one night as-for lodging / mountain's dog
1687—autumn. There is an earlier version of this verse that uses the word okami ("Japanese wolf"), but this published version of the poem uses yama no inn ("mountain dog"). The idea is that even a wild dog would become gentle and cultured if it slept on bush clover.

819. tabine shite / waga ku o shire ya / aki no kaze
journey sleep to do / my poem (object) understand <> / autumn of wind
1687—autumn.

820. kono matsu no / mibae seshi yo ya / kami no aki this pine of / sprouted-from-a-seed did age <> / god of autumn
1687—autumn. The shrine of Kashima was one of Japan's oldest known shrines. The idea can be that the pine, sprouted so long ago in the dim ages of the gods, is now in its autumn of life, as is Basho.

821. okiagaru / kiku honokanari / mizu no ato
to rise up / chrysanthemum faintly / water of trace
1687—autumn. Several scholars have speculated that this poem means that the mums are righting themselves after the rain and still have traces of water on them. There is also the idea that the mums can be seen only faintly in the mists after the rain. The poem can also mean that the flowers are righting themselves after the hard rain and leaving their faint image in the pool of water still on the ground.

822. yase nagara / warinaki kiku no / tsubomi kana
become slender while / pitiful chrysanthemum of / bud <>
1687—autumn. Due to the rigors of his journey and his chronic digestive ailment, Basho had grown much thinner but still considered himself virile and productive. Other scholars see the image as a poetical expression of subtle beauty in sorrowful loneliness.

823. koe sumite / hokuto ni hibiku / kinuta kana
sound to-become-clear / Big Dipper in echo / pounding block <>
1687—autumn. One of the methods the poor had to clean their clothes was to stretch the fabric over a block of wood and pound out the dust and dirt. Here Basho is mixing images to give the idea that the clarity of the stars purifies the sound of clothes being cleaned.

824. nanigoto mo / maneki hatetaru / susuki kana
everything-everyone also / beckon die-end / pampas grass <>
1687—autumn. Dokukai was an old priest who died under Basho’s care at his cottage. In the wind the plumes of pampas grass look like a person waving or beckoning. After a storm, the long stalks that hold up the plumes break and fall to the ground.
NOTES

325. minomushi no / ne o kiki ni koyo / kusa no io
straw-raincoat bagworm's / voice (object) listen in come / grass of hut
1687—autumn. At that time farmers had raincoats made of thatched straw that were very similar to the thatched roofs of their homes. The bagworm moth would silently burrow in the thatched straw. After Sei Shōnagon wrote in her Pillow Book, in 1002, of bagworms crying, “Father, father!” it was a fashionable literary joke to give the bagworms a voice.

326. yono naka wa / ine karu koro ka / kusa no io
the world's inside as-for / rice harvest time <> / grass of house
1687—autumn. Because he was living in a house with a rice straw—thatched roof and was given some rice, Bashō made this unusual connection.

327. tabibito to / waga na yobare n / hatsu shigure
traveler (emphasis and change) / my name be called (conjecture) / first shower of winter
1687—winter. This is Bashō’s first verse in Knapsack Notebook (Oi no Kobun), an account of his journey from Tokyo to Nagoya, Iga, Ise, Yoshino, Kōya, Wakanoura, Sana, and Akashi during the years 1687–88. The idea of the poem is that the first winter rain will baptize Bashō with a new name for his trip.

328. hito one wa / shigururu kumo ka / Fuji no yuki
one ridge as-for / shower cloud <> / Fuji of snow
1687—winter. What looks to be one of the ridges on Mount Fuji is really a low-flying cloud of snow.

329. Kyō made wa / mada naka-zora ya / yuki no kumo
Kyoto to as-for / still middle sky <> / snow’s cloud
1687—winter. Both Bashō and the clouds are in the middle of a journey.

330. Hoshizaki no / yami o miyo to ya / naku chidori
Hoshizaki (location) = star cape / darkness (object) look at (quotation) <> / chirp plover
1687—winter.

331. go o taite / tenugui aburu / samusa kana
dried-pine-needles (object) burn / hand towel dry / coldness <>
1687—winter. In Mikawa Province the term go was a local name for “dried pine needles.” A tenugui is an all-purpose cloth used for a headband, emergency pocket, hat, or towel.
1687—winter. Bashō cleverly combines his name with *bashō ni* ("on horseback"), so we can assume the priest is actually Bashō. When Bashō traveled he dressed as a priest as protection against robbers. The reader can decide if the person is frozen while riding or if it is the shadow of the person that froze to the horse’s back.

1687—winter. On November 10, 1687, Bashō and his disciple Etsujin (1656–1739) stayed at an inn in Toyohashi on their way to visit Tokoku, a once-rich rice dealer, who had been exiled to Cape Irago for fraudulent business dealings. An account of this journey, *Knapsack Notebook*, containing fifty-four verses by Bashō and four by Tokoku, was published in 1709.

1687—winter, Cape Irago is located at the tip of Atsumi Peninsula. It was noted for its scenic beauty and had long been associated with hawks.

1687—winter. Tokoku was very depressed. Bashō valued him as a student and as a person, so he made the 56-mile (90-km) detour to visit him. The several verses were an attempt to raise Tokoku’s spirits. The connection between a hawk and a dream comes from the importance of the first dream of the new year. The best dream one can have is of Mount Fuji; second best is of a hawk.

Bashō’s reference to “a single hawk” is considered to be a reference to Tokoku.

1687—winter. Bashō’s reference to "a single hawk" is considered to be a reference to Tokoku.
1687—winter. Bashō had heard that his disciple, the wealthy Tokoku, was in reduced circumstances but he had no idea he was living in such a poor place.

389. ume tsubaki / haya-zaki home n / hobi no sato
plum camellia / early-blooming praise (speaker’s will) / to-praise-the-beauty of village

1687—mixed seasons. Bashō was trying to cheer Tokoku while at the same time making a pun on the town’s name.

390. mugi haete / yoki kakurega ya / Hatake Mura
barley grow / fine shelter <> / farm field

1687—summer verse written in winter. Tokoku had moved from the village of Hobi to Hatake (“farm field”), which could be considered another step down the social ladder.

391. mazu iwae / ume o kokoro no / fuyu-gomori
first celebrate / flowers (object) heart of / winter confinement

1687—winter.

392. kusuri nomu / sarademo shimo no / makura kana
medicine take / even without frost of / pillow<>

1687—winter. While in Hoshizaki, Bashō had an attack of lumbago and received medicine from his doctor/student Ranboku. “Frost on the pillow” could indicate actual frost or could be a euphemism for white hair or old age.

393. Hakone kosu / hito mo aru rashii / kesa no yuki
Hakone cross / people also to be (conjecture) / morning of snow

1687—winter. Hakone is still a popular tourist spot. The gusts of snow blowing from ridge to ridge seemed like people crossing in the air.

394. omoshiroshi / yuki ni ya nara n / fuyu no ame
interesting / snow into <> becomes (conjecture) / winter’s rain

1687—winter. Dewa no Kami Ujikumo was a master swordsman who belonged to the group of writers around Shimosato Chisoku (1640–1704). The wit of this poem works with the idea that rain usually turns into snow, but here the snow warms to become winter rain due, perhaps, to the warmth of the welcome by the host.

395. togi naosu / kagami mo kiyoshi / yuki no hana
polish again / mirror also clear / snow of flowers

1687—winter. This shrine was in disrepair for many years until the shogun government ordered repairs that began in 1686 and ended in 1687. Military rulers allowed the shrine to disintegrate because these treasured sites were closely connected to the wor-
ship of the emperor. However, the military discovered that the treasures were important to the people, regardless of who was ruling, and quickly repaired the shrine. “Snow of flowers” refers to the huge, fluffy snowflakes that fall out of a clear blue sky. There is also the idea that the cold, hard snowflakes polish the mirror.

346. tametsuke te / yuki mi ni makaru / kamiko kana
smooth out wrinkles / snow-viewing-party to attend / paper robe
1687—winter. Paper robes were made of oiled paper that was crunched and re-oiled. Bashō’s robe was even more crumpled after being packed. The smoothness of snow contrasted with the wrinkles of the paper robe.

347. iza saraba / yuki mi ni korobu / tokoro made
now farewell / snow viewing for falling down / until we go there (speaker’s invitation)
1687—winter. A snow-viewing party was held on December 3, 1687, at Yūdō’s, a bookseller in Nagoya. This version of the poem was published in Hanatsumi.

348. iza yuka n / yuki mi ni korobu / tokoro made
now let us go [suggestion] / snow viewing while falling down / until we go there (speaker’s invitation)
1687—winter. This is another version of the previous poem. It was published in Knap sack Notebook.

349. tsuyu itete / jude ni kuniho su / shimizu kana
dew frozen / brush draw dry / clear water
1687—winter. Bashō took the words kuniho su / shimizu (“drawing up dry / clear water”) from a waka by Saigyō. In ink paintings, the white of the paper is used to indicate water. Because the dew is frozen, Bashō cannot moisten his ink and brush and thus can only draw clear water on his painting.

350. kachi nara ba / Tseutsuki-zaka o / rukuba kana
walking affirmative (conditional clause) / walking-stick use hill (object) / falling-off-a-horse
1687—mixed seasons. This is a clever example of two sentences creating a third sense. Tsueutsuki-zaka (“Walking Stick Hill”) is the name of a steep slope on the Tōkaidō Highway near Yokkaichi between Uneme and Ishiyakushi where Yamoto Takeru, a legendary hero of the Kojiki, was so tired that he used his sword as a walking stick.

351. tabine yoshi / yado wa shivasu no / yūzukiyo
sleeping on a journey touching / lodging as-for year’s end / evening moon
1687—winter.
362. *tabite shite / mi shi ya ukiyo no / susu harai*

sleeping on a journey / see (past perfect) <> world of / soot brush-off

1687—New Year. *Susu harai* was the annual cleaning done before the New Year holiday.

363. *saru sato ya / heso no o ni naku / toshi no kure*

home town <> / navel cord at (object) weep / year's end

1687—New Year. Bashō composed this verse when he revisited the place of his birth. In Japan each child’s umbilical cord and the string it was tied off with are wrapped in paper and saved as a personal treasure of the family for generations.

364. *futsuka ni mo / nukari wa seji na / hana no haru*

second-day on also / fail as-for to-do not / flowers of spring

1688—New Year. It is customary in Japan to greet the first sunrise of the year in a worshipful manner. Both the flowers of spring and Bashō would face the sun. As in other societies, the New Year in Japan was a time of making resolutions to do or be better.

365. *yomo ni utsu / nazuna mo shidoro / modoro kana*

all directions in chop / herb also / confused <>

1688—New Year. This is the day when people traditionally added seven varieties of chopped herbs to a rice porridge for breakfast with the hope of good health in the new year. It was a poetic device in waka to describe nature as “confused” when something was tossed wildly about. This was similar to the mixed-up feelings of being in love. Bashō also uses *shidoro modoro*, a colloquial expression for “confused.” The herb nazuna (*Capsella bursa-pastoris*) is also called “shepherd’s purse.”

366. *haru tachi te / mada kokonoka no / noyama kana*

spring begin and / still ninth day of / field mountain <>

1688—spring. Some assert that the idea behind this poem is that the warmth of the host’s welcome caused the mountain fields to show signs of the coming spring. It can also mean that spring, which officially began nine days earlier, is just now arriving.

367. *Akokuso no / kokoro mo shira zu / ume no hana*

(the childhood name of a famous poet) of / heart also know not / plum’s blossoms

1688—spring. “Akokuso” was the childhood name for the poet Ki no Tsurayuki (868–945). The poem Bashō refers to is: *hito wa isa / kokoro no shirazu / suru sato wa / hana zo mukashi no ka / ni nioi k eru* (the hearts of people / we do not know / yet in my native village / the plum blossoms still / give off their scent). Bashō’s greeting to Fūbaku was revised from *Akokuso no / kokoro wa (as-for) shira zu / ume no hana to Akokusuo no / kokoro mo* (even, also) *shira zu / ume no hana.*
858. *ka ni nioe / uni hori oka no / ume no hana*
smell to smell / peat dig hill of / plum blossoms
1688—spring. The locals used the name *nui*, which usually meant “sea urchin,” for the peat-like material they dug from the hill and used for burning. As a visitor Basho found that the whole area had a pungent odor.

859. *tehana kamu / oto sae ume no / sakari kana*
nose blow / sound even with plum of / blossoms *<>
Handsome / nose and / plum’s flower.
1688—spring. Some scholars think Basho was trying to see how vulgar, or lifelike, he could make his poem in opposition to the more proper waka, where such an image would never be used. *Hana* can mean both “nose” and “flower.” The image of a man blowing his nose onto the ground and using his fingers to wipe away the snot is very graphic.

860. *okorago no / hitomoto yukashi / ume no hana*
shrine maiden / only one elegant / plum blossoms
御人良子の一本ゆかし / 梅の花
1688—spring. Basho uses the old name for the maiden of the Grand Shrine at Ise, the single woman of royal birth who was in charge of making food offerings to the national gods and dancing in the ceremonies. An earlier version of this poem is: “plums so scarce / just one so lovely / shrine maiden.”

861. *kobai ya / ni nu koi tsukuru / tamasudare*
red plum *<>/ look at not love create / bead blinds
赤梅や見ぬ恋作る玉簾
1684—94—spring. Women of nobility were not supposed to be seen, even in their own homes, so they were kept behind screens or curtains. Even courtships took place with screens between the couple for as long as possible. Basho associates red plum blossoms and the blinds of a noble lady because both cause thoughts of withheld love.

862. *nan no ki no / hana to wa shira zu / nioi kana*
what of tree of / flower and as-for know not / smell *<>
何の木の花とは知らず句ひ哉
1688—spring. Basho wrote this when he visited the Outer Shrine of Ise. Some see a connection between Basho’s poem and one written by Saigyō, also about the shrine: “I do not know / what divine being / graces this place / yet feeling so grateful / tears gush forth.”

863. *kono yama no / kanashisa tsuge yo / tokorohori*
this mountain’s / sorrow tell <> / old yam digger
この山の悲しさ告げよ野老掘り
1688—mixed seasons. Basho was visiting the Bōdai Buddhist Temple when he wrote this verse. One version of this poem begins with *yamadera* (“mountain temple”). This version was published in Basho’s *Knapsack Notebook*. 

864. *kami gaki ya / omoi mo kake zu / nehan zō*
god fence *<>/ thought also unexpectedly / Buddha icon
神垣や思ひもかけず涅槃像
1688—spring. Bashō wrote this verse at Japan’s leading Shinto shrine, where someone had hung a picture of Buddha in paradise on the fence. The two religions were very different but seemed to tolerate each other.

365. sakazuki ni / doro na otoshi so / mura tsubame
wine cup in / mud drop not (imperative) / village swallows

1688—spring. This poem refers to a rest Bashō took in a teahouse at Kusube, about 1.2 miles (2 km) north of the Outer Shrine. Instead of saying “a flock of sparrows,” Bashō uses mura (the old word for “village”), which originally indicated a hole dug in the earth where people either lived or stored their supplies. This poem had two other versions using tobu tsubame (“flying swallows”) and mau tsubame (“fluttering swallows”). The version Bashō chose to publish has overtones that reflect the ruggedness of both the whole place and the swallows.

366. kami ginu no / nuru tomo ora n / ame no hana
paper robe of / get-wet even-if break (speaker’s will) / rain of flowers

1688—spring. This was Bashō’s greeting verse at a renga party hosted by Rosō, a high-ranking priest of the Outer Shrine at Ise. Kamigimu or kamiko is a “paper robe” originally used by Buddhist priests of the Ritsu sect, but later used by others because it was windproof. Bashō’s verse implies that in spite of the rain he chose to wear a paper robe because of its association with the shrine.

367. nōren no / oku mono fukashi / kita no ume
door drapes / interior things deep / north-wife of plum

1688—spring. Shiba Ichiyū was a doctor and poet who lived in Ise Yamada with his wife, Sonome (1664–1726), who was also a poet. The nōren (“curtains”) are hung at doorways between rooms, or in commercial places at the entrance. Kita (“north”) was the honorable term for wife or important person who lived in the back of the building.

368. ume no ki ni / nao yadorigi ya / ume no hana
plums’ tree on / another mistletoe <> / plum’s blossoms

1688—spring. Ajirō Minbu Setsudō, also known as Hirokazu (1659–1717), was a high-ranking priest at the Grand Shrine at Ise as well as a scholar of literature and a poet. Some think that Bashō was comparing the man to his own father, Hiroji (1640–83), who Bashō had known. If one considers that yadorigi can mean either “mistletoe” or “parasite,” Bashō’s meaning is open to speculation about his true feelings.

369. mono no na o / mazu tou ashi no / wakaba kana
thing of name (object) / first ask reed of / young leaves <>

1688—spring. This greeting verse bowed to the priest’s knowledge by asking the name of the reed because reeds in different areas had different names. At Naiwa the
term was ashi, but on the peninsula of Ise they were called hama ogi.

370. *hana o yado ni / hajime owari ya / hatsuka hodo*
flower (object) lodging in / beginning end <> / twenty days about
1688—spring. Bashō stayed at a villa owned by Okamoto Taiso, a military man and poet, of Iga-Ueno.

371. *imo uete / kado wa mugura no / wakaba kana*
taro planted / corner as-for bedstraw's / young leaves <>
1688—spring. This was the greeting verse to Nijō Ken, a host who lived such a simple life that he allowed bedstraw, *Gallium spurium*, to grow among the taro he had planted.

372. *hadaka ni wa / mada kisaragi no / arashi kana*
new body into / not-yet-second-month of / storm <>
1688—spring. Bashō used the character for kisaragi, which can mean either “to wear more clothes” or, when pronounced, “February.” Supposedly this is based on the legend of Saint Zōga (917–1003), a Buddhist priest who gave away his clothes and went naked after receiving a divine message from the god of Ise Grand Shrine that he should throw away fame and wealth.

373. *kono hodo o / hana ni rei in / wakare kana*
things past (object) / flowers in thanks give / farewell <>
1688—spring. Some think this verse is an attempt at humor because Bashō is thanking the flowers instead of his host for the hospitality. The poem could also be showing Bashō’s gratitude for the flowers and lives shared with him.

374. *Yoshino nite / sakura mishō zo / hinoki-gasa*
Yoshino in / cherry-blossoms will-show <> / cypress hat
1688—spring. Yoshino, in the southern part of Nara, is the most famous place in Japan to see the blooming cherry trees. The preface refers to the fact that Bashō was joined on his journey by Tokoto, a friend he had visited in Kashima in the previous year.

375. *sama zama no / koto omoidasu / sakura kana*
many of / things come to mind / cherry blossoms <>
1688—spring. As a young man, Bashō served a feudal lord, Yoshitada, until his death at the age of twenty-five. Yoshitada had a son, Tanganshi (1666–1710), who later invited Bashō, the now-famous poet, to view the cherry blossoms at his villa.

376. *haru no yo ya / komorido yukashi / dō no sumi*
spring of night <> / in-retreat someone admirable / temple’s corner
1688—spring. It was fashionable for noble women to “go into retreat” at a temple for
a period of worship, and often this adventure of getting out into the world was part of their stories (like The Tale of Genji) and diaries. Temples and spring nights were romantic topics for poems because the temples were far from one’s family and an ideal place for lovers to tryst.

877. *hatsu-zakura / orishimo kyō wa / yoki hi nari*

First cherry blossoms / just happen today as-for / good day is

1688—spring. This was Bashō’s greeting poem to the party.

878. *hibari yori / sora ni yasuran / tōge kana*

Sparrow than / sky in rest / mountain pass

1688—summer. Another version uses *ue ni* (“above”) instead of “in the sky.” This version is a paradox because it allows the reader to think that both Bashō and the sparrow can “rest in the sky.” It is probable that Bashō, resting at the top of the mountain pass, was higher than the bird in flight.

879. *sakénomi ni / katara n kakaru / taki no hana*

Drinking friends to / talk (speaker’s will) like this (or hang over) / waterfall of blossoms

1688—spring. Bashō wrote this at Ryūmon Falls at the southern foot of Mount Ryūmon-dake in Yoshino, a province of Nara. The word *kakaru* can mean “like this” or “to hang over.” Bashō is comparing how a drunk person leans over in the shape of a waterfall with the way blossom-laden branches hang.

880. *Ryūmon no / hana ya jōgo no / tsuto ni se n*

Ryūmon—dragon gate of / flower <> drinkers of / gift to do (speaker’s will)

1688—spring. Chinese has the same name for several types of falls. The ideogram for waterfall is made from the radical for “water” and the character for “dragon,” so a waterfall is “water with a dragon in it.”

881. *ōgi nite / saké kumu kage ya / chiru sakura*

Fan with / wine drink shadow <> / falling blossoms

1688—spring. In Nō plays the actors mime drinking wine by holding an extended fan horizontal to their lips with an exaggerated motion.

882. *koe yokuba / utaō mono o / sakura chiru*

Voice if-I-had-a-good / chant person (object) / blossoms fall

1688—spring. This is another reference to a Nō play. The poems, considered messages to or from the gods, are always chanted in a special way that is different from the delivery method of dialogue.
388. *hana no kage / utai ni nitaru / tabine kana*
flower of shade / Nō song in look like / journey sleep

1688—spring. Incidents of the lonely traveler staying overnight with a farmer were popular subjects for all kinds of songs, but Bashō is saying something more in his poem. Being in this strange place under familiar blossoms was like hearing a well-known song in a play. He was sensitive to these differences.

389. *sakura-gari / kidoku ya hibi ni / go ri roku ri*
blossom viewing / something admirable every day in / ten miles twelve miles

1688—spring. A *ri* is about two miles. Bashō states he walked five or six *ri*. When only reading the first two parts of the poem, the reader thinks “the admirable” thing will be something gorgeous, but Bashō twists this to say that the truly admirable thing is how far he has walked.

390. *hanasame no / koshita ni tsutau / shimizu kana*
spring rain of / under tree in trickle down / clear water spring

1688—spring. This is another verse about a spring near the site of Saigyo’s former retreat in Yoshino. (Previously Bashō wrote poem 206)

391. *ite toke te / fude ni kumihosu / shimizu kana*
melting / brush draw dry / clear water

1688—spring. This is considered to be a rewrite of verse 349. Bashō was probably rethinking his older poem after seeing Saigyo’s famous waka: “trickling down / over mossy rocks / clear water spring / not enough / for this hermit life. In this poem, instead of the ice releasing enough water to wet a brush, the spring is so tiny that sticking the brush in it dries it up.

392. *hana-zakari / yama wa hisoro no / asaborake*
blossoms full bloom / mountains as-for always of / day break

1688—spring. Bashō’s verse uses the riddle technique. How can the mountain be the same as usual when the cherry trees bloom? The answer: just at daybreak before the light appears to show the flowers.

393. *nao mitashi / hana ni ake yuku / kami no kao*
still more I want to see / flower in dawn passing / god’s face

1688—spring. This poem can be read several ways. It could mean “I still want to see more of the cherry flowers at dawn,” or “at early dawn one can see God in the face of a flower,” or, by people who know the legend of the place, “I want to see the face of the god of this place who disappears at dawn.” According to a story in the early chronicles of Japan, there lived in this place a helpful god named Hitokotonushi, who built a rock bridge between the two mountains. He was so ugly he only worked at night.
889. horo horo to / yamabuki chiru ka / taki no oto
patter patter and / mountain-weapon flowers fall <> / waterfall of sound
1688—spring. There is debate about which waterfall and which river this was. Some
think it was not a waterfall but the rapids on the upper section of the Yoshino River.
Tamabuki (Kernera japonica) is a fast-growing thorny thicket with tiny yellow flowers that
look more like the double cherry blossom than a “rose,” which is the usual English
translation. The yamabuki flowers drop their tiny petals, one at a time, but a bit of
breeze can cause them to shower down.

890. hi wa hana ni / kurete sabishi ya / asunaro
day-sun as-for flower in / darkens sadness <> / tree name [or tomorrow-I-will-become]
1688—spring. The tree asunaro (Thujaops dolabrata) is similar to the cypress but its
wood is not as valuable, so it is often called the “false cypress.” Its name can mean
“tomorrow I will become,” which implies that tomorrow the tree will become a limoki
(“cypress,” Chamaecyparis obtusa).

891. chichi haha no / shikirini koishi / kiji no koe
father mother of / very much missed / pheasant’s voice
1688—spring. Bashō was visiting the mausoleum of Kūkai (774–835).

892. yoku haru ni / Waka-no-ura nite / oitsuki tari
passing spring in / poetry of beach at / catch-up with
1688—spring. Waka-no-ura (“Bay of Poetry”) is a famous place on the coast of Waka-
yama (“Poetry Mountain”) that has cliffs and perpendicular wind-shaped pine trees.

893. hitotsubu u ni de / ushiro ni oi nu / koromo gae
one taking-off / behind in place / change of clothes
1688—spring. Since the turn of the first millennium, it was the custom in Japan to
change seasonal garments on April 1, May 5, August 15, September 9, and October 9.
By Bashō’s time this fashion custom had been simplified to April 1 and October 1.
Since Bashō is on a journey he has to carry all his changes of clothing.

894. Kanbotsu no / hi ni umareau / kanoko kana
Buddha’s birthday / day on born happens / baby deer <>
1688—spring. Buddha’s birthday is celebrated on April 8 by pouring a sweetened tea
made of hydrangea flowers over his image.

895. shika no tsuno / mazu hito fushi no / wakare kana
deer’s horn / now branching joint / farewell <>
1688—spring. Bashō’s old friends from Iga were Ensui, Takutai, Baiken, and Risetsu.
The phrase *Into fushi no rrakare* can mean the “joint of a horn where the branch begins” or “ending a meeting with friends.”

1688—spring. According to legends, the Chinese Priest Ganjin of Shōdaiji Temple attempted to come to Japan from China five times in twelve years. He is said to have lost his sight due to the salt wind blown into his eyes.

The hanging clusters of pale purple wisteria look like a weary traveler draped over the front of an inn. There is also the idea that Bashō on his journey and the flowers on their journey, from bud to withering, are both borrowing the inn for a short time.

This verse is built on the association of cherry blossoms with bells and implies that it is the fragrance of the flowers that strike the bell.

Some think Bashō is saying that the songs of villagers are the rice plants they tend.

Yamazaki Sokan was a renga poet. Konoe-dono (1536—1612), an influential court noble, had written: Sokan ga sugata o mire ba / gakitsubata (Sōkan / has the figure of / a skinny iris). Bashō changed one letter in gakitsubata (“skinny iris” or “hungry ghost”) to kakitsubata (“rabbit-ear iris”), a change that is often made in Japanese because the sound is easily slurred from one to the other. This was a haiku technique in vogue at the time that is called “para-rhyme” or “frame rhyme.” An example would be “him—hem—ham.”
402. **hana ayame / ichiya ni kare shi / Motome kana**  
flower-iris / overnight wither (perfect past) / Motome <=  
花あやめ一夜に枯れし求馬哉  
1688—summer. Yoshioka Motome was an actor who typically played the roles of beautiful young men. Because Motome died on Boys’ Day, Bashō uses the image of the iris.

403. **kare shiba ya / yaya kagerō no / ichi ni sun**  
withered grass <= (a little) heat shimmer of / one-two inch  
枯芝やややかげろうの一ニ寸  
1688—mixed seasons. The heat shimmer and withered grass are the same height and are therefore similar in size and temperature. Shiba (Zoysia japonica) is “lawn grass,” so it is shorter than the grasses or weeds in the fields.

404. **jōroku ni / kagerō takashi / ishi no ne**  
fifteen feet over / heat shimmer high / stone’s over  
丈六にかげろう高し石の上  
1688—summer. The idea of the poem is that the heat shimmer over the pedestal seems to be the moving image of the Buddha as much as the actual sculpture.

405. **hototogisu / kie yuku kata ya / shima hitotsu**  
cuckoo / disappear go-to direction <= / island one  
ほととぎす消え行く方や島一つ  
1688—summer. According to the account in Knapsack Notebook, this is a view from Tekkaisen Hill, 259 yards (237 m) high, in the western part of Kobe, the old site of a battle between the Genji and the Heike clans. The island is Awaji.

406. **tako tsubo ya / hakanaki yume o / natsu no tsuki**  
octopus jar <= / short-lived dream (object) / summer’s moon  
蛸ありきな夢を夏の月  
1688—summer. This verse is reported to have been composed at Akashi on the coast of Japan’s Inland Sea. Captured octopi were kept in the unglazed earthenware jar that had been used as a trap, and they probably looked like white moons floating in the water. In the summertime dreams were shorter because the night was shorter. The poem also carries a powerful awareness of the shortness of life, even for an octopus.

407. **kakusa nu zo / yado wa najiru ni / tōgarashi**  
conceal not <= / lodge as-for green-vegetable soup in / red pepper  
隠さぬぞ宿は薬汁に唐辛子  
1688—summer. Some see this verse as saying that the host was not ashamed to serve simple food, like a vegetable soup, in the same way the red pepper was not ashamed to appear in the soup among the greens.

408. **fuku kaze no / naka o uo tobu / misogi kana**  
blowing wind of / in it (object) fish jumps up / purification <=  
吹く風の中を魚飛び御縄かな  
1688—summer. The Shinto rite of purification, *misogi*, is held on June 30. Before entering any shrine people purify themselves by rinsing out the mouth, washing the hands, or smudging the body with smoke. Because purification rituals often involve
water, Bashō sees the fish using wind for its purification rite.

409. **musubu yori / haya ha ni hibiku / izumi kana**
scoop hands as soon / as quickly in shock / spring 1688—summer. This verse uses the riddle technique. What can I hold in my hands that would shock my teeth? Anyone who has had a cracked tooth will appreciate this verse.

410. **tanoshiya ya / aota ni suzumu / mizu no oto**
delight / green-rice-field in cooling-oneself / water’s sound 1688—summer. The idea could be that the sound of water delights in the coolness of the rice paddy or that the person delights in such coolness.

411. **tsuki wa are do / rusu no yo nari / Suma no natsu**
moon as-for the-the / absent it-is-like / Suma in summer 1688—summer. Suma is about 4.3 miles (7 km) west of Kobe and is famous for being the lonely place where Genji was exiled in *The Tale of Genji*, written in early 1000 by Murasaki Shikibu. Therefore, poetically one should visit this place in autumn for the lonely feelings and associations. Normally, the use of the “moon” would put this verse in autumn’s poetical category, but use of the word “summer” overrides that.

412. **tsuki mite no / mono tara wazu ya / Suma no natsu**
moon see also / thing not-enough / Suma’s summer 1688—summer. Some think this is an earlier version or rewrite of the previous poem.

413. **Suma no ama no / yasaki ni naku ka / hototogisu**
Suma’s fishermen’s / arrowhead ahead of its cry / cuckoo 1688—summer. Some consider this verse to reflect Bashō’s disappointment between the elegance associated with Suma, due to *The Tale of Genji*, and the reality of fishermen killing birds, which was against the precepts of Buddhism. Because “crows” is an autumn season word, Bashō uses “cuckoo” to make the verse fit into summer.

414. **ama no kao / mazu ni raruru ya / keshi no hana**
fishermen’s faces / first-of-all see possible / poppy’s flower 1688—summer. The flowers were the opium poppy (*Papaver somniferum*), which had been imported from China in the beginning of the fifteenth century. It could be that the faces of the fishermen were a weather-beaten red and, thus, the same color as the poppies.

415. **Suma-dera ya / fika nu fie fie kiku / koshita yami** 1688—summer. The official name of this temple is Fukushōji because it is famous for possessing the flute named *Aoba no Fue* (“The Flute of Green Leaves”). The rustling of
the leaves sounded like flute music and the passing air felt as if it was coming from a flute.

416. *katatsuburi / tsuno furi wakeyo / Suma Akashi*
lant snail / horn wave divide / Suma Akashi
1688—summer. In *The Tale of Genji*, Genji is exiled to Suma and is frightened by a terrible storm. He then moves to Akashi, and the reader gets the impression that Genji had been very far from civilization in Suma. Upon visiting the actual places, Bashō finds the two famous spots are only about 7.5 miles (12 km) apart—so close together that a land snail could point his “horns” in two directions and touch both places.

417. *ashi arōte / tsui ake-yasuki / marone kana*
foot wash / soon short-summer-night / sleep-without-removing-one’s-clothes
1688—summer.

418. *kono hotaru / Tagoto no Tsuki ni / kurabe mi n*
these fireflies / rice fields of moon in / compare try (speaker’s will)
1688—summer. At that time Seta was known for its exceptionally large and abundant fireflies. Tagoto no Tsuki (“Rice Paddies of the Moon”) was the name of a place on the side of Mount Kamurigi where Bashō was headed. Here, the flooded rice fields seemed to have many moons reflected in each paddy.

419. *me ni nokoru / Yoshino o Seta no / hotaru kana*
eye in remain / Yoshino (object) Seta of / fireflies
1688—summer. In his verse Bashō only mentions the place name of Yoshino. The translation contains “cherry blossoms,” for which places like Yoshino were famous. Bashō had to leave out the words for cherry blossoms because the image did not belong in a summer verse.

420. *kusa no ha o / otsuru yori tobu / hotaru kana*
grass of leaves (object) / drops as-soon fly / firefly
1688—summer. The firefly drops to a blade of grass and then flies away in the same way a piece of dried grass would do.

421. *samidare ni / kakure nu mono ya / Seta no hashi*
summer rain in / disappear not thing / Seta’s bridge
1688—summer. The verse is asking when the rain will disappear and if the bridge will disappear if it keeps raining. The Seta Bridge, built in Chinese style, was one of the Eight Famous Scenes of Ōmi Province.
422. yo no natsu ya / kosui ni ukamu / nami no ue
world of summer <=> lake in float / wave of over

1688—summer. One published version of this verse has the title “At Otsu,” but another publication contains the preface, “Having a good time at the house of Ikari Sakuboku.” This was a greeting to Bashō’s host, who had a house on Lake Biwa.

423. umi wa harete / Hie furi nokosu / satsuki kana
lake as-for clear / Mount Hiei rain falls as-it-is / May <=

1688—summer. The Japanese associate heavy rains with the beginning of summer. From Bashō’s point of view, the lake was still in the midst of spring, but the rain on the mountainside was like the weather in summer. Thus, from this site he could not only see a far distance, he could see two seasons at once.

424. yūgao yo / aki wa iroiro no / fukube kana
gourd flowers <= / autumn as-for varieties of / gourds <=

1688—summer. According to one source this verse was written on a charcoal container made of a dried gourd in admiration of the flowers painted on it. The different varieties of gourds have very similar flowers. Only when the fruit appears can one distinguish their differences.

425. hirugao no / mijika yo neburu / hiruma kana
bindweed of / short night sleep / daytime <=

1688—summer. This verse is thought to have a dreamy face because the summer nights are so short it has to take a nap when it opens in the afternoon.

426. hirugao ni / hirume shō mono / toko no yama
bindweed in / nap to-do thing / bed of mountain

1688—summer. This verse was enclosed with a letter to Riyū Kono (1662–1705), a Buddhist priest in Hikone. The letter was written at Ōbari near the town of Toko no Yama (“Bed of the Mountain”). The Japanese name for bindweed (“noon face”) had a connection to naps and thus to “Bed of the Mountain.”

427. yadori se n / akaza no tsue ni / naru hi made
lodge to do (speaker’s will) / goosefoot of walking stick in / become day till

1688—summer. This was a greeting verse to Kihaku, a Buddhist monk, when Bashō stayed at the Myōshōji Temple. Monks ate the young leaves of akaza (“goose-foot plant,” Chenopodium album). When the plants became old their stems were strong enough, and long enough, to be used as walking sticks.
428. **yamakage ya / mi o yashinawa n / uri-batake**

mountain shade <> / body (object) rest (speaker's will) / melon field

1688—summer. Mount Inaba, the old name of Kinkazan Hill, was only 359 yards (328 m) high. Rakugo was the pen name of a wealthy cloth merchant. Bashō wants to lie sprawled out like the melons in the field. Melons were associated with coolness.

429. **moriki hito ni / tatoe n hana mo / natsu no kana**

fragile one in / compare (speaker's will) flower also / summer field <>

1688—summer. The preface was added by the editor of *Travel Diary (Oi Nikki)*. Some scholars think the idea of the verse is an expression of sadness—the way one would feel in a summer field without flowers. The poem can also mean that the lives of children, and of summer flowers, can be very brief.

430. **tsuki-gane mo / hibiku yōnari / semi no koe**

temple bell also / ring something-like / cicada’s call

1688—summer. The shrill sound of the cicada’s voice creates a ringing in one’s ears the same way a bell does.

431. **shiro ato ya / furui no shimiwara / mazu towa n**

castle ruins <> / old well spring’s water / first visit (speaker’s will)

1688—summer. The reference is to the Gifu Castle, originally built by Nikaidō Yukimasa, expanded by Saitō Dōsan, and later occupied by Oda Nobunaga in the late 1500s. The castle was rebuilt in 1956.

432. **mata ya tagui / Nagara no kawa no / ayu namasu**

there-is-nothing-else <> / Nagara’s river of / sweet smelt pickled

1688—summer. The Nagara River runs by the foot of Mount Inaba and was famous for its sweet smelt fish, which were caught by cormorants. The raw fish were pickled in a sweet sour sauce with vegetables. The poem describes that the river still flows in the fish, even when they are eaten.

433. **omoshirō te / yagate kanashiki / u-bune kana**

exciting and / when-it-is-over sad / cormorant boats <>

1688—summer. The birds (*Phalacrocorax capillatus*) are trained to follow their natural instinct to catch fish, but metal collars are put on their necks so they cannot swallow their meal. The fact that cormorant fishing takes place at night, in the light of lanterns hung from the boats, makes the operation even more bizarre and unusual.

434. **kono atari / me ni miyuru mono wa / mina suzushi**

this neighborhood / eye in see thing as-for / everything cool

1688—summer. This was a greeting verse to the old oil merchant in Gifu whose house
faced the Nagara River and where Bashô had watched men fishing with cormorants.

185. *natsu ki te mo / tada hitotsuba no / hito ha kana*
summer come also / only tongue fern's / one leaf
1688—summer. The *hitotsuba* ("tongue" or "felt fern," *Pyrrosia lingua*) has only one leaf in summer when most plants are abundant with leaves. Bashô may have felt diminished among so much abundance and made a connection between himself and the plant.

186. *nani goto no / mitate ni mo ni zu / mika no tsuki*
nothing of / simile in also like not / third day moon
1688—summer. In Japanese poetry the crescent moon was often compared to boats, swords, bows, or fishhooks. Bashô wanted to say the real moon was more marvelous than any comparisons.

187. *kari nato ya / wase kata kata no / shigi no koe*
harvested field <> / early rice one side of / sandpiper's voice
1688—autumn. The (iso) *shigi* (*Actitis hypoleucos*) is the common sandpiper. Their tiny voices sound like rice being poured from one container to another.

188. *ano kumo wa / inazuma o matsu / tayori kana*
that cloud as-for / lightning [or rice wife or god] (object) wait-for / sign-message
1688—summer. The word *inazuma* can mean "lightning" or "wife" or "mate of rice." It is known that lightning was considered a good omen for a plentiful crop of rice because the storm would bring water.

189. *yoki ie ya / suzume yorokubi / sedo no awa*
good house <> / sparrows rejoice / backdoor's millet
1688—summer. The house was that of a younger brother of Shimosato Chisoku, one of Bashô's disciples in Narumi.

190. *awa hie ni / toboshiku mo ara zu / kusa no io*
foxtail millet Japanese millet in / meager also to be not / grass of house
1688—summer. Chôkô was the priest at Yakushidô Temple in Nagoya. Bashô was praising him for raising millet around his humble dwelling in an effort to be self-sufficient. There was the "weedy millet" as well as the cultured species, and Chôkô's hut was thatched with millet straw.

191. *hasu ike ya / ora de sonomama / tamamatsuri*
lotus pond <> / pick not as-it-is / ancestor's festival
1688—summer. Tamamatsuri, also called the "Bon Festival," used to be held on July
15 of the lunar calendar. Now the festival is from August 13 to 16 in most places. The festival is celebrated with bonfires and offerings at the graves of ancestors who are thought to have come back to earth to check up on their offspring. The offerings of food were laid on lotus leaves. Most temples have a lotus pond on their grounds.

442. *naki hito no / kosode mo ima ya / doyō-boshi*
deceased one’s / small-sleeved robe also now <> / hottest-season dry
1688—summer. *Doyō* usually refers to the period of eighteen days before the beginning of autumn, similar to our dog days of summer. At this time, clothes and books are laid out in the sun to air before being packed away for the winter.

443. *hatsuaki ya / umi no aota no / hitomidori*
eary autumn <> / sea also green rice paddy / one green
1688—early autumn. In the view from the town of Narumi, one can see rice paddies in the foreground and the sea in the Inlet of Narumi in the background.

444. *kusa iroiro / ono ono hana no / tegara kana*
grass various / each each flower’s / achievement <>
1688—summer. This verse was a response to the collection of poems given to Bashō by his students when he left Gifu for Sarashina. He meant that each verse, and author, had its own charm. The Japanese version of the poem, with its repeats of *iroi* (“various”) and ono ono (“each”) reinforces the sameness.

445. *asagao wa / sakamori shi ra nu / sakari kana*
morning glory as-for / drinking party pay attention not / in full bloom <>
1688—summer. Both the flowers and the party-goers are “in full bloom” in spirits and in dress, but the flowers seem to ignore the people while the people admire the flowers. Some see the subject as typically haikai because it is typical to view cherry blossoms or chrysanthemums, but nobody wrote about going to view morning glories because they were so common.

446. *hyoro hyoro to / nao tsuyu keshi ya / ominaeshi*
trembling-feeble and / still more dewy <> / lady flowers
1688—autumn. *Ominaeshi* ("lady flower," *Patrinia scabiosaefolia*) is a perennial plant that grows about a foot tall and has many tiny, yellow flowers that bloom from August to October on a slender stalk. It could have gotten its name because it cured the ills of women. The flowers, wobbling under the weight of dew, could appear as feeble as Bashō felt after a night of drinking.

447. *tabini akite / kyō ikuka yara / aki no kaze*
travel weary / today how many / autumn’s wind
miokuri no / ushiro ya sabishi / aki no kaze
seeing one off / the back <> lonely / autumn’s wind

Kiso’s horse chestnuts / weary world of people of / souvenir <>
Kiso’s horse chestnuts / weary world of people of / souvenir <>
protective covering, they are compared to priests and thus are a food associated with monks. It was believed that a hermit gained his spiritual power from eating chestnuts. It is customary to bring one's host a gift. Since tochi ("horse chestnuts," *Aesculus hippocastanum*) grew especially well in the area around Kiso and were now ripe and falling on the ground, they were easy for Bashō to gather and take with him.

464. fuki tobazu / ishi wa Asama no / nowaki kana
blow away / stones as-for Asama of / typhoon

1688—autumn. Mount Asama remains an active volcano. Some think that Bashō is referring to pumice, the lightweight stone often found ejected from a volcano.

465. aki o hete / chō mo namern ya / kiku no tsuyu
autumn (object) passing through / butterfly also licks / chrysanthemum dew

1688—autumn. Autumn was the normal end of a butterfly’s life span, but one is seen sipping the dew on a chrysanthemum. According to common folklore, the dew gathered from mums would extend one’s life. Some butterflies, the monarch and mourning cloak, migrate to warmer climes and live through the winter.

466. izayoi no / izure ka kesa ni / nokoru kiku
Sixteen night moon of / which better / morning in / remaining chrysanthemum

1688—autumn. Chōyō no Sekku ("The Chrysanthemum Festival") is celebrated on September 9 when mums are considered to be at their peak. The moon was considered to be at its best on the night of the full moon, the fifteenth. On the morning after the day of the full moon, the moon sets nearly an hour later, so it is visible well after dawn. Due to the light of dawn the moon seems pale, which suggests the fading colors of the flowers on the day after the festival. Bashō seems to be saying that both things past their prime are not only worthy but are competing for beauty and meaning.

467. izayoi mo / mada Sarashina no / kōri kana
sixteen night moon also / still Sarashina of / county

1688—autumn. Sarashima, the name of the area, sounds like saru-nu, which means "not to leave."

468. hōzuki wa / mi mo ha mo kara mo / momiji kana
lantern plant as-for / fruit also leaves also shell also / autumn colors

1684-94—autumn. The *hōzuki* (*Physalis alkekengi*) is called the "Chinese lantern plant," "bladder plant," or "winter ground cherry." The fruit is enclosed in a papery shell that looks like a tiny lantern.
459. *ano naka ni / maki e kaki tashi / yado no tsuki*
that middle in / sprinkled painting draw wish / moon’s inn

1688—autumn. In the text Bashō writes of being served a large lacquered cup with a picture on it. The incongruity of such a fancy cup in the rustic inn under the glittering moonlight formed a strange combination.

460. *kakehashi ya / inochi o karamu / tsuta kazura*
swinging bridge <> / life (object) entwine / ivy vines

1688—autumn. Originally, this suspension bridge in Kiso was made of branches held together with ivy vines (*Parthenocissus tricuspidata*). By the time Bashō went there the bridge had been rebuilt with chains and stone piers, but it was still a scary experience to cross it. Bashō’s use of “intertwine” makes connections because the lives of the people are intertwined with the ivy when they cross the bridge and the ivy is twined to make the bridge.

461. *kakehashi ya / mazu omoi izu / uma makae*
swinging bridge <> / first recollection / horses meeting

1688—autumn. The Kiso area was known for the high quality of the horses raised there, and August 15 was the customary date for the emperor to inspect his horses. All the horses from this district had to cross this bridge to come to Tokyo.

462. *tsuki kage ya / shimon shishū mo / tada hitotsu*
moon light <> / four gates four sects also / just one

1688—autumn. Since its beginning in the seventh century the Zenkō-ji Temple had a long and stormy history that resulted in three different sects evolving. The temple had a gate for each cardinal direction.

463. *tsuta no ha wa / mukashi meki taru / momiji kana*
ivy’s leaves as-for / antiquity gives feelings / autumn leaves <>

1688—autumn.

464. *nani kūte / ko ie wa aki no / yanagi kage*
what poor folks eat / small house as-for autumn of / willow shade

1684—94—autumn. This is only one of a series of poems Bashō wrote in various autumns when he speculated on how life was for his neighbors.

465. *Kiso no yase mo / mada naoranu ni / nochī no tsuki*
Kiso’s thinness also / yet recovered not in / late of moon

1688—autumn. It is assumed that Bashō suffered from ulcerated colitis, a condition made worse by stress, alcohol, and spicy foods. One month after his trip to see the full moon rise over Mount Obasute he was still recovering from the debilitating attacks
that had made him lose weight in Kiso. The "late moon" would be less round each night in the same way he was losing weight.

466. *yuku aki ya / mi ni hikimatou / mino-butor*  
departing autumn <> / body on to pull / single quilt  
1688—autumn. The quilted bedding functioned either as a mattress or as a covering. Because the thick padding makes it a bit stiff, it was hard to get the narrow bedding to fold around the body properly.

467. *karite ne n / kakashi no sode ya / yowa no shimo*  
borrow (speaker's will) / scarecrow's sleeves <> / midnight of frost  
1684—94—autumn. The idea of wanting to borrow the ragged, castoff clothes of a scarecrow was considered funny. It is also an indication of the life of poverty that Bashō led that the clothes of scarecrows were enough to keep him warm.

468. *kono tsuchi no / mukashi tsubaki ka / ume no ki ka*  
this mallet of / originally camellia <> / plum tree <>  
1684—94—mixed seasons. The *kine* is a dumbbell-shaped pestle used to grind grain, hull rice. If broken in the middle, it becomes two mallets. The *one* part of the name indicates that this pestle was broken. Usually mortars and pestles were used by women in the country. When this mallet was no longer usable, it was used as a flower vase by one sensitive to the many hours of work that had been performed with the tool.

469. *mono ie ba / kuchibiru samushi / aki no kaze*  
something when I say / lips cold / autumn's wind  
1684—94—autumn. Bashō gets two meanings out of the word "cold." Speaking moistens the lips, which makes them feel colder when the wind blows, but the lips can seem cold and cruel when speaking of others.

470. *meigetsu no / izuru ya gojū / ichi kajō*  
full moon of / appears up fifty-one article law / feudal lord  
1688—autumn. According to Etsujin, the editor of *Miwakamado*, the group had met for a day of composing and chose a great ruler or wise advisor as the theme. Here we can see that even political haikai always included a season word so that the human action was connected to the world of nature, as in tanka writing.

471. *eiryō nite / nigiwau tami no / niwakamado*  
(emperor's) generosity owing to / thrive people's / cooking fires  
1688—New Year. According to legend, Emperor Nintoku stood on the veranda of his palace and noticed that the citizens were not lighting their customary New Year's fires. He surmised that they were too poor and exempted them from taxes for three
years. Then he noted with satisfaction that they again had their outdoor fires.

472. kiku keitō / kiri tsukushi keri / Omeikō
chrysanthemums cockscombs / cut used up <> / memorial service for Saint Nichiren

1688—autumn. The Omeikō was a memorial service held on October 13 commemorating the death of Saint Nichiren (1222–82), the founder of a sect of Buddhism.

473. fuyu-gomori / mata yorisowa n / kono hashira
winter confinement / again lean on (speaker’s will) / this post

1688—winter. The roof beams of houses were supported by center posts close to the fire pit.

474. itsutsu matsu / cha no ko ni narabu / irori kana
five six / tea cakes sit side by side / fireplace <>

1688—winter. The irori was a fire pit dug in the dirt floor in the center of the room. If there was a wooden floor, it surrounded this pit on all four sides. Above it, from the rafters, hung a chain or rope for lowering the cooking kettle or pot. This poem uses a comparison technique. Bashō found the small group gathered around him having tea and cakes as warming as a fireplace.

475. e no mi chiru / muku no haoto ya / asa arashi
hackberries fruit fall / gray starling’s wing sound <> / morning storm

1684—94—winter. The Japanese hackberry, Celtis sinensis, is also called the Chinese nettle tree. The gray starling is the Sturnus cineraceus.

476. kogarashi ya / take ni kakurete / shizumari nu
withering wind <> / bamboo into hide / calmed down

1684—94—winter. A “withering wind” was the cold, freezing wind that caused plants to wither.

477. futari mishi / yuki wa kotoshi mo / furikeru ka
two persons having seen / snow as-for this year also / fall <>

1688—winter. Bashō gave this note to Etsujin in memory of the trip the two of them took to see Tokoku, the disciple who lived on Cape Irago who Bashō had visited earlier in the year. Etsujin had also accompanied Bashō on a trip to Sarashina and then stayed with him for two months afterward, but he was now returning to his own home.

478. asa yosa o / tare Matsushima zo / kata-gokoro
morning evening (object) / who waits Pine Island <> / one-sided heart

1684—94—mixed seasons. The conventional wordplay with matsu (“pine” or “longing”)
is employed. Some scholars claim Bashō wrote this verse only as an example of how to use a famous place without a season word and not as the result of his feelings.

479. sono katachi / mi haya kareki no / tsue no take
his figure / see wish dead tree’s / walking stick’s length
1688—winter. This verse uses the associative technique. Bashō wishes to see the priest’s figure and his walking stick, both of which could be in a dead tree.

480. kazuki fusu / futon ya samuki / yo ya sugoki
over the head lying down / quilt <> cold / night <> extreme
1688—winter. The wife of Rika, the disciple who had given Bashō the banana tree, died that summer.

481. uzumi-bi mo / kiyu ya namida no / niyuru oto
charcoal fire covered with ashes also / tears <> put out / boiling sound
1688—winter. Scholars disagree on who Bashō might have been mourning.

482. kome kai ni / yuki no fukuro ya / nage zukin
rice buy in / snow of empty bag <> / cloth hood
1688—winter. According to one of Bashō’s students, Hasomura Rotsu, the Eight Poor Poets of Fukagawa (the river on which Bashō lived) enjoyed an evening during which they drew lots for various themes on which each of them then wrote a poem. The themes were: buying rice, buying firewood, buying wine, buying charcoal, buying tea, buying tofu, boiling rice, and drawing up water. The cloth bag was similar to a cloth hood used by dancers, puppeteers, candy vendors, and people out in the snow.

483. mina ogame / Futami no shime o / toshi no kure
everyone bows / wedded rocks sacred rope (object) / year’s end
1688—New Year. At Futami, on the coast of Ise, there are two offshore rocks known as “the wedded rocks.” One is considered male and the other female, and they are revered in the Shinto religion. They are connected by a sacred rope made of rice straw with paper lightning bolts hanging down. This rope was replaced at the end of each year. On New Year’s Day people gather before the rising sun to pray for a happy year.

484. utagau na / ushio no hana mo / ura no haru
to doubt not / sea water’s flowers also / bay’s springtime
1689—spring. The picture may have been one of the wedded rocks as referenced in the poem above. The white water roiling at the top of a wave was called the “flower” of the wave. While poems in translation often lose a lot of their ambiguity and depth, English also has many homonymys, and in this case, they give another meaning to the poem. It can mean that the white “flowery” tops of waves easily dissipate into
the air and fall like rain to bring the springtime rains to the bay.

185. Kohōgen / de dokoro aware / toshi no kure
famous artist / the source of sadness / year’s end
1684–94—New Year. The idea for the poem came from the custom in Japan that the end of the year was the time to pay off one’s debts even if it meant selling a famous painting. Kohōgen (1476–1559) was the son of the founder of the Kanō school of painting.

186. funbetsu no / soko tataki keri / toshi no kure
discretion of / bottom hit <> / year’s end
1688—New Year. When one had no money to repay debts, it was necessary to make up excuses.

187. ganjira wa / Tagoto no hi koso / koishi kere
New Year’s Day / Tagoto’s sun (emphasis) / longing <>
1689—New Year. Tagoto was famous for the view of the moon reflected in the many layers of water in the elevated rice paddies. At New Year’s these paddies were dry, so Bashō would prefer to have sunshine, which would help on this cold day more than the highly esteemed moon. Bashō was now forty-six years old.

188. nani ni kono / shiwasu no ichi ni / yuku karasu
what in this / year-end market in / go crow
1689—New Year. It seems Bashō was surprised to find himself going off to shop at the end of the year like everyone else. He often wore black robes and therefore called himself a crow.

189. sashi komoru / mugura no tomo ka / fuyu na uri
staying indoors / bedstraw of friend <> / vendor of winter greens
1688—winter. Bedstraw, also called goosegrass \((Galium spurum)\), was used to stuff mattresses for the poor. In winter, Bashō had two reliable friends to keep him well, and both were green plants.

190. mugura sae / wakaba wa yasashi / yabure ie
bedstraw even / new leaves as for tender / dilapidated house
1689—spring. Shikin (1673–1735), a warrior of the Ōgaki Clan, asked Bashō to write a haiku on the painting of a ruined house. At this time, Bashō was preparing to sell his home, and nothing looks more dilapidated than a house one wants to sell.

191. omoshiro ya / kotoshi no haru no / tabi no sora
enticing <> / this year’s spring also / journey’s skies
1689—spring. According to Kyorai, Bashō sent this poem to him in a letter to inform
him of the planned journey. The last line, tabi no sora (“journey’s skies”), may reflect
that Bashō’s companion for the trip was Sora, whose name means “sky.”

492. kagerō no / waga kata ni tatsu / kamiko kana
heat haze of / my shoulders from rise / paper robe <>

1689—spring. The robe was made of paper that was oiled to make it windproof. On a
breezy day in February it would be appropriate for Japan’s climate. It is possible that
the sun felt very hot in spite of the cold wind.

493. hibari naku / naka no hyōshi ya / kiji no koe
skylark sings / in-the-middle-of instrumental-music <> / pheasant’s voice

1689—mixed seasons. The word hyōshi is a technical term used in Nō theater to design-
ate the passages of the performance played by the flute and drums or instrumental
music.

494. tsuki hana mo / nakute saké nomu / hitori kana
moon flowers also / without saké drink / alone <>

1689—mixed seasons. The expression “moon and flowers” is considered kana (“mixed”)
because the season-indicating words, “flowers” for spring and “moon” for autumn,
both appear in one verse.

495. kusa no to mo / sumi kawara yo zo / hina no ie
grass of door also / resident change for-a-time <> / doll’s house

1689—spring. This is the first verse in Bashō’s book, Narrow Road to the Deep North.
When he decided to leave his cottage, he sold it to Heiemon, a married man with
daughters. Thus, already, in Bashō’s bachelor quarters was the red ramp used for the
girls of the family during the Festival of the Dolls. Bashō was replaced not only by
another family of people, but by a family of dolls. The conventional term kusa no to
(“grass of door”) was a euphemism for a humble dwelling. It was common for people
to depreciate their belongings by making them sound humble or poor. From this point
the poems in Oku no Hosomichi are numbered. ONH #1.

496. ayu no ko no / shirauo okuru / wakare kana
sweet-smelt of baby of / ice-fish bid / farewell <>

1689—spring. This was composed when Bashō and his companion Sora left Fukagawa
river at Senju on their way north for the journey that was used as the story for the
book Narrow Road to the Deep North.

497. yuku haru ya / tori naki uo no / me wa namida
departing spring <> / birds cry fishes’ / eyes as-for tears

1689—spring. This verse was Bashō’s gift to his disciples when he departed for his
journey to the province of Michinoku in the far north. Some scholars grapple with the idea of fish having tears, but if one considers that the eyes of fish are always wet, the simile works. ONII #2.

498. itoyü ni / musubî tsukitaru / kemuri kana
heat shimmer-haze-threads in / tie are attached / smoke <>
1689—summer. This is one of the famous poetic places that Bashō wanted to visit on his trip. It is now called the Ōmiwa Shrine, in the city of Tochigi. The word “smoke” is associated with this place because, according to Japanese legend, the consort of the deity Ninigi no Mikoto, the Princess of the Blooming Trees, was suspected of being unfaithful. She became pregnant so quickly he thought the child could not be his. While she was locked in the birthing house she set it on fire to prove the divine nature of her child.

499. iri kakaru / hi mo itoyu no / nagori kana
setting start / sun also heat haze’s thread / remnant <>
1689—summer. On a hot day the light shimmers over the land due to rising air currents. As the sun gets lower in the sky it seems to enter this shimmering air and its image of intense heat enters the actual heat of the earth. The Japanese word for this heat shimmer is “thread” or “string play,” which makes a wordplay with strings and tying things together possible. One gets an additional wordplay in English with nagori, which can mean “trace” or “remnant” and calls to mind fabric remnants made of threads.

600. iriai no / kane mo kikoe zu / haru no kure
sunset’s / bell also hear not / spring’s evening
1689—spring. This verse was composed near Kanuma. Some see a connection to one of Nōin’s tanka in the Kokinwakashū: yamazato no / haru no yūgure / ki te mire ba / iri as no kane ni / hana zo chiri kera (mountain village / on an evening in spring / I came to see / the bell at sunset / flowers scattering). Sora recorded this verse in Sora’s Travel Diary (Sora Tabi Nikki).

601. kane tsuka nu / sato wa nani o ka / haru no kure
bell ring not / village as-for what (object) <> / spring’s evening
1689—spring. This poem is another of Bashō’s verses recorded by Sora.

602. ara tōto / aoba wakaba no / hi no hikari
how glorious / blue leaves young leaves of / sun’s flash
1689—spring. The city of Nikkō is about 90 miles (150 km) north of Tokyo. The Chinese characters that designate the name of the city and the area have the same meaning as “flashing sunshine.” Many societies have trouble distinguishing between green and blue. Here Bashō uses the word for blue even though the leaves are green. ONH #3.
508. shibaraku wa / taki ni komoru ya / ge no hajime
short time as-for / waterfall at secluded <> / summer’s retreat
1688—summer. This verse was written on May 20 at Urami Falls, about four miles
(six km) west of Nikkō. The waterfalls were previously accessible from behind, but
an earthquake and flood in 1905 made the path inaccessible. In the poem Bashō is refer­ring
to the ninety-day period of ascetic seclusion prescribed for Buddhist monks each
summer. In that year the event started on June 3. ONH #4.

504. hototogisu / Urami no Taki no / ura omote
cuckoo / backside falls of / both sides
1689—summer. The name of the falls in Nikkō, Urami no Taki, is literally “waterfall
to be seen from the back.” Bashō is playing with the idea of being able to see only one
side of a thing at once. From the back of the waterfall he can see both sides of the
cuckoo.

505. magusa ou / hito o shiori no / natsu no kana
hay carry / man (object) marker of / summer field <>
1689—summer. Kanokobata Toyoakira (1662–1728) was the brother of a military gov­ernment official at whose house Bashō stayed. This verse was the starting verse for a
renga party he hosted, and his waki (“response verse”) was: aoki ichigo o kobose / shiu no ha (green strawberries sprinkled / on pasania leaves). Sora responded to that with:
murasame ni / ichi no kariya o / fukitorite (in a passing shower / blowing over one / of the
fair booths). One sees that by April, on our calendar, the summer had begun for renga.
This verse is recorded in Sora’s Travel Diary.

506. yama mo niwa ni / ugoki iri ya / natsu zashiki
mountain also garden in / move let <> / summer room
1689—summer. The summer room was the grass mat—covered room with sliding doors
that opened to the outdoors. In Chinese garden architecture it was popular to make
small hills look like mountains, but evidently this host’s garden incorporated a view of
the mountains beyond.

507. ta ya mugi ya / nakanimo natsu no / hototogisu
field <> barley <> / especially summer of / cuckoo
1689—summer. This was composed eleven days into the trip during Bashō’s stay in
Kurobana.

508. natsu yama ni / ashida o ogamu / kadode kana
summer mountain in / high clogs (object) pray to / departure <>
1689—summer. Bashō visited the Gyōja Dō of Kōmyōji Temple and saw the image of
the legendary priest En no Gōja wearing wooden clogs. Because the saint was very
strong when climbing mountains, Bashō prays to the clogs, not the saint, to help him climb the mountain. Normally Japanese wooden clogs have two horizontal bars that raise the foot above the mud. These clogs had only one bar, so it was much like walking on ice skates. ONII #5.

509. tsurn naku ya / sono koe ni Bashō / yare nu beshi

6/4.

1689—mixed seasons. Bashō wrote this verse on the painting. Sora recorded the verse and event in his book, Sora’s Travel Diary.

510. kitsutsuki mo / io wa yabura zu / natsu kodachi

stoner’s associative technique

1689—summer. Bashō's poem could be saying that, for him, a grove of trees is enough of a hut. Because trees constantly renew themselves, a woodpecker could not inflict the same damage it could on a building. Bashō reveres the priest so much he equates his hut with a temple. Bashō states that he pinned this impromptu verse on the post of the hut. ONII #5.

511. no o yoke ni / uma hiki mukeyo / hototogisu

6/4.

1689—summer. On the way to see the Sesshōseki Stone, or Killing Rock, Bashō records that he went on horseback, and the man leading the horse asked Bashō if he would write a poem for him. Bashō was greatly touched by the man’s elegance and wrote this verse for him. ONII #7.

512. ochi kurn ya / Takaku no shuku no / hototogisu

6/4.

1689—summer. Michinoku is in northern Honshū. The Sesshōseki Stone, or Killing Rock, is a pyroxene andesite rock about 7 feet (2.13 m) square and 4 feet (1.2 m) high that seems to have been situated partially over a vent that spewed forth sulfurous gases. Bashō wrote the original preface in the style of a parody of Nō theater verse: “Oh, it’s falling down, falling down, a bird has fallen on that stone!” This starting verse uses the associative technique because both the inn is falling down and the bird is falling out of the sky. The verse and preface were handwritten on a paper.

513. ishi no ka ya / natsu kusa akaku / tsuyu atsushi

6/4.

1689—summer. Sora recorded this verse from Bashō in his diary.

514. yu o musubi / chikai mo onaji / iwashimizu

6/4.

1689—summer. Bashō's poem could be saying that, for him, a grove of trees is enough of a hut. Because trees constantly renew themselves, a woodpecker could not inflict the same damage it could on a building. Bashō reveres the priest so much he equates his hut with a temple. Bashō states that he pinned this impromptu verse on the post of the hut. ONII #5.
1689—summer. One shrine had hot springs and the other one had cold springs. This verse is in Sora’s Travel Diary.

515. **ta ichi mai / uete tachisaru / yanagi kana**
paddy-field one patch / plant depart / willow<br>
1689—summer. It is thought that Bashō was honoring the poet Saigyō because once he had written a tanka included in the imperial anthology *Shinkokinmanakashū* about resting under a willow: “along the way / where water is running / in the willow shade / I have stopped to rest / for a little while.” Bashō evidently stayed as long as it took the rice planters to finish one section. This poem was faulted because it is written in the past tense. *ONH* #8.

516. **nishi ka higashi ka / mazu sanae ni mo / kaze no oto**
west <> east <> / first young rice in also / wind’s sound<br>
1689—summer.

517. **seki mori no / yado o kuina ni / toou mono**
border guard’s / house (object) / water rail at / knock (speaker’s will) / regret<br>
1689—summer. This was a greeting to Ka-un, a warrior of the Shirakawa Clan, sent in Bashō’s letter. The *kuina* (*Rallus aquaticus*) is the “water rail,” a bird whose call sounds like someone knocking at a wooden door. Ka-un was compared to a border guard because he lived in the town that was one of the checkpoints for travelers going from district to district.

518. **samidare wa / taki furi uzumu / mikasa kana**
early summer rain as-for / waterfall falling cover up / amount of water<br>
1689—summer. The Ishikawa Falls on the Abukuma River are about 15 feet (4.6 m) high and the water falls in a Z shape.

519. **fiyrü no / hajime ya oku no / ta ne uta**
culture of / beginning <> / far north of / paddy-field plant song<br>
1689—summer. This was the greeting verse to the host, Sagara Tōkyū, in Sukagawa, and the beginning verse for a renga written at his house. *ONH* #9.

520. **yo no hito no / mitsuke nu hana ya / noki no kuri**
world of man of / find not flower <> / eaves of chestnut<br>
1689—summer. This poem was a greeting verse and the first link to a renga done at the house of Kashin, a Buddhist priest. Chestnut trees were associated with priests and hermits, but it also could have been that one grew by the priest’s house. Perhaps because the sun sets in the west, many religions view the mythical lands of their faith to be in the west. *ONH* #10.
621. **kakurega ya / medatun hana o / noki no kuri**
hide-a-way <> / see in buried flowers (object) / eaves of chestnut

1689—summer. Both the flowers and the house were hidden away. Sora wrote in his journal that this was the original version of the previous poem. The original was used to begin the completed renga, but Bashö chose the revision for his book.

622. **sanae toru / temoto ya mukashi / shinobu zuri**
rice seedling pick-up / hand movement <> in the past / fern rub

1689—summer. Bashö and Sora were seeing the “Hare’s Foot Fern Rubbing Stone.” The area’s name, “Hare’s Foot Fern,” can also mean “to think of someone in the past.” There is an actual stone that is about 12 by 7 feet (3.65 by 2.13 m) on top, 2 feet (60 cm) high on one side, and more than 6 feet (180 cm) high on the other side. The legend was that people spread cloth over this rock and rubbed ferns on it to pick up the impressions of letters on the rock. This rubbing motion would echo the fast back-and-forth movement of the hands of people planting rice. ONH #11.

623. **oi mo tachi mo / satsuki ni kazare / kami nobori**
backpack also sword also / May in decorated / paper fish banners

1689—summer. The fifth day of the fifth month is Tango no Sekku, or “Boys’ Day.” If they had a boy in the family, people celebrated by hanging fish banners on strings from their roofs, so the colorful carp, a symbol of virility and long life for the clan, appeared to swim in the air. On this day, Bashö visited the home and temple of the famous Satō brothers and saw relics from their lives, a sword and backpack. ONH #12.

624. **Kasashima wa / izuko satsuki no / nukari michi**
Rainhat Island as-for / where May’s / muddy road

1689—summer. *Kasa* (“hat” or “umbrella”) and *shima* (“island”) form an interior associative connection with the heavy rains that normally occur in May. The flattish, conical hats made of cypress wood strips look very much like a distant island. In Narrow Road to the Deep North the preface to this poem reads: “Because of the May rains of the past several days, the road was in terrible condition and I was also tired, but we walked ahead, to villages in the distance. I decided that both their names, Raincoat Ring and Rainhat Island, were in agreement with the May rains.” ONH #13.

625. **sakura yori / matsu wa futaki o / mitsuki goshi**
cherry blossoms after / pine as-for two trees (object) / three months over

1689—summer. The Pine of Takekuma was famous in poem and fact because it was split into two trunks. In an earlier version of this poem the first five sound units were: *chiri-useru* “cherry blossoms have completely fallen away.” ONH #14.
326. ayamegusa / ashi ni musuba n / waraji no o あやめ草足に結ばん草履の結

iris / feet on tie (speaker’s will) <> / straw sandal’s cord

1689—summer. “Ayame” is the old name for “sweet flag” (Acorn calamus). The leaf is sharp and sword-shaped with a firm mid-rib and is one of the decorations used for Boys’ Day. The pointed leaves were attached to the eaves of houses or put into bath water to drive away evil spirits; boys played with them as make-believe swords. According to Bashô’s account in Narrow Road to the Deep North, a man named Kaemon drew pictures of places in Matsushima and Shigama and gave them to the travelers as gifts. He also gave them two pairs of straw sandals with indigo-dyed thongs as a farewell gift. This verse was Bashô’s thank-you gift. It was believed that indigo cords on sandals would scare away pit vipers, the only poisonous snake in Japan. ONH #15.

327. shimajima ya / chiji ni kudakite / natsu no umi 鳥々や千々に静きて夏の海

many islands <> / broken into pieces / summer’s sea

1689—summer. This verse uses the associative technique since both the sea waves and the land are broken into pieces.

328. natsukusa ya / tsuwamono domo ga / yume no ato 夏草や兵どもか砂の跡

summer grass <> / soldier common of / dream of trace

1689—summer. It seems that Bashô, looking over a former battleground now covered with grass, felt that he was seeing the old soldiers hurrying toward battle and victory. Another element is the old poetic expression “pillow of grass,” which signifies “being on a journey” in Japanese poetry. The grass cut and folded for pillows for the poorest soldiers would still contain a trace of their dreams, perhaps enough to make the dream of war rise up and grow again. Sora wrote in his diary that after writing this verse, Bashô sat down on his hat and wept. Bashô wrote the same in his account. ONH #16.

329. samidare no / furi nokoshite ya / hikari dō 五月雨の降り残してや光堂

early summer rain of / fall remain <> / light hall

1689—summer. The Hikari Dō (“light hall”) is also called the Golden Hall, a part of the Chûsonji Temple. The walls and floors were covered with gold. Even when it rained, the hall seemed filled with sunlight. ONH #17.

330. hotaru-bi no / hiru wa kie tsutsu / hashira kana 頭火の昼は消えつつ柱かな

firefly fire’s / daytime as-for disappear (progression) / pillar <>

1689—summer. Sora includes this verse of Bashô’s in his account of the journey to the far north, but Bashô elected to leave it out of his book. According to Sora the poem was written in the Golden Hall of the Chûsonji Temple.

331. nomi shirami / uma no shitosuru / makura moto 幽風馬の尿する枕もと

fleas lice / horse’s pissing / pillow close by
1689—summer. Bashō composed this verse at Shitomae. Some scholars see a connection between shita ("to piss") and the name of the place. Others point out that in the rustic northern parts of Honshū, it was normal for animals and humans to share a dwelling space. ONH #18.

582. suzushisa o / waga yado ni shite / nemaru nari
coolness (object) / my lodging in make / sit comfortably (assertion) 空しさを我が宿にしてねまるなり
1689—summer. This verse was the greeting to Bashō's host, a wealthy safflower merchant. ONH #19.

583. hai ideyo / kaiya ga shita no / hiki no koe
crawl out / keep shed of under of / toad's voice これも出でよ倒屋が向の暮の声
1689—summer. The debate on this verse centers on what to call the shed. The actual translation of kai would be "to keep or to raise," in the sense of raising an animal, but it can also mean "to buy," which works with the idea of the place where something to be sold would be kept. Nowhere is the idea of silkworms, but all the translations call this a shed for raising silkworms. The toad image places the poem in summer. ONH #20.

584. mayuhaki o / omokage ni shite / beni no hana
eyebrow brush (object) / image into make / rouge's flower 眉掃きを頰にして紅粉の花
1689—summer. The safflower (Carthamus tinctorius) is beni no hana or "rouge flower" in Japanese. It was called this because the plant's earliest use was for coloring rice as well as the faces of women. The flowers, very similar to thistles, look like the brushes that women would use for applying makeup. ONH #21.

585. shizukasa ya / iwa ni shimi iru / semi no koe
calmness <> / rock into pierce enter / cicada's voice 静かさや岩にしみ入る蝉の声
1689—summer. This verse has been problematic for many scholars because they think that neither silence nor a shrill noise could emanate from the rock. Yet the verse is admired because it works with what is sensed rather than rationalized. ONH #22.

586. yamadera ya / iwa ni shimitsuku / semi no koe
mountain temple <> / rock in deeply stain / cicada's voice 山寺や石にしみつく蝉の声
1689—summer. This is considered to be another version of the previous poem.

587. sabishisa ya / iwa ni shimikomu / semi no koe
loneliness <> / rock seep / cicada's voice 寂しさや岩にしみ込む蝉の声
1689—summer. This verse is another version of the same poem.

588. samidare o / atsume te hayashi / Mogami-gawa
early summer rain (object) / collecting and quick / Mogami River 五月雨をつめて早し最上川
1689—summer. In his journal Bashô writes that they had hoped to go down the river by boat but they had to wait for good weather at Ôishida, so he got together with some of the poets and tried to teach them renga. ONH #23.

649. **mizu no oku / hinuuro tazunuru / yanagi kana**

water’s interior / ice cavern if ask / willow <>

1689—summer. At that time in Japan winter ice was sawed into blocks and stored in caves for use in summer. These ice-storage places were celebrated in a festival on June 1. It was customary for rich and poor to enjoy chilled rice on this day.

650. **kaze no ka mo / minami ni chikashi / Mogami-gawa**

wind’s fragrance also / south not far from / Mogami River

1689—summer. This verse was a greeting to the poet Seishin. Bashô was admiring his residence near the Mogami River.

651. **arigata ya / yuki o kaorasu / minami dani**

admirable <> / snow (object) give scent / south valley

1689—summer. This verse was the beginning link of a renga done at a party hosted by the Priest Ekaku at the Nyakuôn Temple. Minami (“South Temple”), a branch temple, is located halfway up Mount Haguro (“Black Feather”). ONH #24.

652. **arigata ya / yuki o kaorasu / kaze no oto**

admirable <> / snow (object) given fragrance / wind’s sound

1689—summer. This verse is another version of the previous poem.

653. **arigata ya / yuki o megurasu / kaze no oto**

admirable <> / snow (object) go around / wind’s sound

1698—summer. This is a third version of the verse.

654. **suzushisa ya / hono mikazuki no / Haguro-yama**

coolness <> / faintly seen crescent moon of / Black Feather Mountain

1689—summer. This verse uses the contrast/association technique. The image of the white crescent moon rising over the curve of Black Feather Mountain changes the meaning of a name to a real thing. The curve of the feather is similar to the curve of a three-day-old new moon, but the color is the opposite. The moon’s whiteness, as well as the fact that it best appears at night, gives a sense of coolness. ONH #25.

655. **sono tama ya / Haguro ni kaesu / nori no tsuki**

this jewel [or soul] <> / Black Feather in to return / sacred law of moon

1689—autumn. Bashô was asked to offer a poem to the Chief Priest Ten Yû Hôin (1594–1674), who got caught up in politics between the government and religion and
was exiled to Ōshima Island, where he died. Earlier Bashō had written an essay in praise of this priest titled "A Memorial Essay for the Priest Ten Yū Hōin," and it seemed fitting that a poem should accompany it. The poem is handwritten on a piece of paper.

646. tsuki ka hana ka / toe do shisui no / ibiki kana
moon <> flower <> / ask (conjecture) four sleepers' / snoring <>

1689—mixed seasons. Bashō wrote this verse on a picture titled "The Four Sleepers." The painting, by Priest Ten Yū Hōin, shows two hermits and a priest asleep with a tiger.

647. kumo no mine / ikutsu kuzurete / tsuki no yama
cloud's peak / how many crumble / moon of mountain

1689—summer. The ideogram for Mount Gassen reads "mountain of the moon." The word tsuki ("moon") can also mean "ended," "crumbled," or "exhaustion," and in this verse Bashō works with several ideas at once. How many clouds have crumbled into rain on this mountain and how many people have crumbled here? It is easy to imagine Bashō being very tired while climbing this mountain. ONH #26.

648. katana re nu / yudono ni nurasu / tamoto kana
tell possible not / bathroom in moist / sleeves <>

1689—mixed seasons. Mount Yudono ("bathroom"), where Bashō was when he wrote this verse, featured a spectacular waterfall that had been a Shinto place of worship since early times. Before being allowed to view this wonder, each man had to swear never to reveal what he witnessed. In modern times the secret of Mount Yudono has been revealed: with the wearing away of a crack in the rock and the reddish minerals in the thermal-warmed water, the waterfall looks exactly like the private parts of a woman. Knowing this, the name of the mountain becomes clear. Even clearer is the earlier name for the mountain, Koi no Yama ("Mountain of Love"). ONH #27.

649. mezurashi ya / yama o ideha no / hatsu nasubi
how rare <> / mountain (object) leaving upon / first eggplant

1689—summer. The word ideha can indicate Dewa Province or mean "upon leaving."

650. atsuki hi o / umi ni ietari / Mogami-gawa
hot day [or sun] (object) / sea into put / Mogami River

1689—summer. The sunset viewed from a hill above the mouth of the Mogami River, on the south side in summer, supposedly does look the way Bashō described it. ONH #29.

651. Kisagata ya / ame ni Seishi ga / nebu no hana
Kisagata <> / rain the Chinese beauty Xi Shi / sleeping of flowers

1689—summer. The reference is to Seishi, Xi Shi, a Chinese beauty of the fifth century B.C., who was given as concubine to King Fu Cha. According to legend, the king loved
her so much he neglected his duties and lost his kingdom. The play of words comes with
nebu ("to sleep"), which sounds like nemu ("silk," "mimosa," or "parasol tree," *Albizzia
julibrissin*, which has leaves that fold up, as if asleep, at night or when touched). ONH #30.

652. *Kisagata no / ame ya Seishi ga / nebu no hana*
Kisagata's / rain <> name of the Chinese beauty / sleep of flower
1689—summer. This is a variation on the previous poem.

653. *yūbare ya / sakura ni suzumu / nami no hana*
cleared up evening <> / cherry trees in coolness / waves of flowers
1689—mixed seasons. Kisagata, located in the southwestern part of Akita Prefecture, was, at the time of Bashô's visit, a bay with many small islands covered with pine trees. Authorities say Bashô is not referring to actual trees but to the cherry trees mentioned in the famous waka supposedly written by Saigyô: *Kisagata no / sakura wa nami ni / uzumorete / hana no ne kaga / ama no tsuribune* (Kisagata's / cherry blossoms buried / under the waves / a fisherman rows his boat / on the blossoms).

654. *shiogoshi ya / tsuru hagi nure te / umi suzushi*
tide crossing <> / crane shank get wet / sea cool
1689—summer. *Shiogoshi* ("tide crossing") was on the shore to the west of Kisagata where at low tide one could cross over to the other side. Bashô uses the older word hagi for leg instead of *ashi*. ONH #31.

655. *Atsumi-yama ya / Fukiira kake te / yū suzumi*
Mount Atsumi <> / Blowing Beach over-to / enjoy the cool breeze
1689—summer. The wordplay comes from the beach known as Fuku ("to blow") and the place name of Atsumi ("hot"). The two places are about 50 miles (80 km) apart. This verse uses the paradox technique. Mount Atsumi cannot go to the beach for its cooling breezes, but it feels as if it has done just this. However, Bashô can make such a trip and probably has. ONH #28.

656. *yakuran ni / izure no hana o / kusa makura*
herb garden in / which of flower (object) / grass pillow
1689—summer.

657. *Kumasaka ga / yukari yaitsu no / Tama Matsuri*
Kumasaka at / relatives <> at any time / memorial service
1689—summer. Kumasaka Chôhan (1159–89), a famous bandit whose life-story was popular in theater plays, lived in Kumasaka. In one of the plays, the bandit asks the spirit of Kumasaka for a memorial service. Tama Matsuri is the festival for consoling the souls of the dead, then held in July, now observed in August.
558. *sfunzuki ya / muika mo tsune no / yo ni wa ni zu*
July <> / sixth day also ordinary of / night in as-for-resemble not
1689—summer. The Star Festival is celebrated on July 7. At Imamachi, where Bashō
and Sora were visiting, people were already celebrating the night before. *ONH* #32.

559. *ara umi ya / Sado ni yokotau / Ama-no-gawa*
rough sea <> / Sado of stretching-over / heaven's river
1689—summer. "River of Heaven" is the Japanese name for the Milky Way. In sum-
mer, when the Milky Way is directly overhead, one has the feeling of looking at the
underside of a bridge across the sea to Sado Island. *ONH* #33.

560. *eda huri no / higoto ni kawaru / fuyô kana*
shape branches of / everyday in change / hibiscus <>
1689—summer. The hibiscus flowers bloom and wither in one day, so each day the bush
looks different because the opened flowers are in a different arrangement.

561. *hato no koe / ni ni shimi wataru / iwato kana*
dove of voice / body in pierce my / rock door <>
1689—summer. According to the preface added for publication, Bashō visited the
Shinto shrine of the Goddess of the Sun at Akasaka in Ōgaki on August 28. While the
verse uses the expression of “rock door,” most consider the meaning to be the “door of
the rock” or cave entrance.

562. *hatsu makuwa / yotsu ni ya tata n / wa ni kira n*
first melon / four into <> cut (conjecture) / round slice cut
1689—summer. There may be some question as to whether this is one of Bashō’s
poems; though it was never published as such, Oseko includes it in his collection.

563. *kodai sasu / yanagi suzushi ya / ama ga tsuma*
small sea bream-fish skewered / willow cool <> / fisherman’s wife
1689—summer. This poem uses the associative technique. The fish are pierced by the
coldness of the willow twigs and the heartlessness of the fisherman’s wife.

564. *hitotsu ya ni / yūjo mo ne tari / hagi to tsuki*
one house <> in / prostitute also lie down to sleep / bush clover and moon
1689—autumn. This verse is prefaced by a long explanation about Bashō meeting two
nuns he overhears talking in the next room. The next day, one of them asks him if they
might travel together (figuring they would be safer from bandits with two men who
look like priests). But Bashō refuses her and tells the women to trust in the gods of the
Ise Shrine for their safety. Because Sora, Bashō’s companion, does not mention the inci-
dent in his diary, it is suspected that Bashō inserted this incident in the same way one
would have a love-verse in a renga. However, Bashô’s reaction is the same as when he was confronted by the abandoned child in his book Nozarashi Kikô. He refused to help and went on his way. ONH #34.

666. *wase no ka ya / wakeiru migi wa / Ariso-umi*

early (ripening) rice of smell <> / divide enters right (side) as-for / Ariso Sea 早稲の香や分け入る右は有識海

1689—autumn. The Ariso Sea, a famous place in poetry, is near the port of Fushiki on Toyama Bay. Kaga, the area around it, is Japan’s largest rice-growing region. *Wase* is a variety of rice that ripens early and *okute* is the late-ripening kind. Originally *ariso* meant “a sea that is rough in the area of the beach” but it later came to designate “rough seas” or “open waters” beyond the port. ONH #35.

667. *tsuka mo ugoke / waga naku koe wa / aki no kaze*

tomb also shake / my cry voice as-for / autumn’s wind 墓も動け我が泣く声は秋の風

1689—autumn. Kosugi Isshô (1653–88), a tea dealer, was the most famous poet in the town and had wanted to meet Bashô. When Bashô arrived to meet him he found out the man had already been dead for a year. This verse was his condolences for the brother. ONH #36.

668. *aki susushi / te goto ni muke ya / uri nasubi*

autumn coolness / hand each in peel <> / melon eggplant 秋涼し手毎にむけや瓜茄子

1689—autumn. This was a greeting verse for a renga party held on July 20. ONH #37.

669. *aka aka to / hi wa tsurenaku mo / aki no kaze*

red red (increasing) / sun as-for indifferent in spite of also / autumn’s wind あかあかと日は焼面くも秋の風

1689—autumn. Normally the autumn wind was thought of as white. ONH #38.

670. *shiorashiki / na ya komatsu fuku / hagi susuki*

lovely / name <> / little pine blow / bush clover thatch reeds しらしき名や小松吹く萩藪

1689—autumn. This was a greeting verse to the host, Kosen, the chief priest of the Hiyoshi Shrine at Komatsue (“Little Pines”), who held a party to write a *yoyoshi* (“a renga of forty-four links”). ONH #39.

671. *nurete yuku ya / hito mo okashiki / ame no hagi*

get wet passing by <> / man also interesting / rain of bush clover 淋れて行くや人もをかしき雨の秋

1689—autumn. The euphemism “to get wet” was often used in tanka where the reader could decide how this happened, from rain, dew on flowers, tears, or sexual activity.

672. *muzan ya na / kabuto no shita no / kirig irisu*

pitiful <> / (exclamation) / helmet of under of / cricket むざんなや甲の下のきりぎりす

1689—autumn. When Bashô visited the Tado Shrine, he saw a helmet of Saitô Sanemore
(1110–83), who at 73 years old had wanted to seem young enough to fight and had dyed his white hair black. Only after he was beheaded did people discover his ruse. Purists claim that Bashô, in the museum, saw a real cricket under the helmet. The *kirigirisu* of Bashô's time was the “cricket” or *kôrogi* of today. The *kirigirisu* is today's “grasshopper” or “katydid.” Both kinds of insects make the characteristic chirping we hear on autumn nights. This is the version of the poem Bashô presented to the temple. ONH #40.

579. *ana muzan ya / kabuto no shita no / kirigirisu*

alias cruel [or pitiful] <> / helmet of under of / cricket

1689—autumn. This is the original first line of the poem Bashô used as verse 571. The line was a shortened version of *ana muzan ya na*, a quote from *The Tale of the Heike* (*Heike Monogatari*), written around 1240.

578. *Ishiyama no / ishi yori shiroshi / aki no kaze*

Stone Mountain of / stone than white / autumn's wind

1689—autumn. According to Chinese legend, the color of the wind was white, especially in autumn when the weather was frosty. ONH #41.

579. *Yamanaka ya / kiku wa taora nu / yu no nioi*

mountain-in-the-middle (a place name) <> / chrysanthemum as-for break off not / hot water of fragrance

1689—autumn. According to the Chinese legend of the Chrysanthemum Hermit, there was a magical flower that would grant longevity to anyone who could sip the dew from its petals. Bashô gave the poet-innkeeper's fourteen-year-old son, Kumenosuke, the name of Tôyo. This name was composed of *tô* (“peach”) and *yô* (“the young beauty of peaches”). ONH #42.

576. *momo no ki no / sono ha chirasu na / aki no kaze*

peach of tree of / its leaves scatter not / autumn's wind

1689—autumn. This verse is like a prayer or blessing on the young son of the innkeeper, who had attracted Bashô's attention.

576. *isaribi ni / kajika ya nami no / shita musebi*

fishing flare in / fish <> / ripples of / choked with tears

1689—mixed seasons. People confuse the fish known as *kajika* (*Cottus pollux*), a bottom-dwelling sculpin, with the singing torrent frog that often appeared in old tanks. The fish were caught when they were attracted to torches at night. Because the frogs were calling, it was thought that their sound was sobbing from the trapped fish.

577. *yu no nagari / koyoi wa hada no / samukara u*

hot springs of miss / tonight as-for skin of / cold (conjecture)

湯の名残り今宵は肌の寒からん
1689—autumn. Bashō gave this verse to Tōyō, the son of the innkeeper, as he was leaving.

678. ゆのながり / いくたびみるや / キリノモト
hot springs of missing / how many times look at => / mist of origin

1689—mixed seasons. This verse was not included in Oku no Hosomichi. Bashō had the opportunity of including the verses as “love links” if he was using the renga plan, but he chose to add the meeting with the prostitutes, which may or may not be true.

679. きよよりや / かきたすけけさに / かさのつゆ
from today <> / writing erase (speaker’s will) / hat of dew

1689—autumn. This was Bashō’s parting verse to his travel companion, Sora. Sora had been ill with stomach troubles and decided to go on alone to Nagashima to recover while living with relatives. The writing on the hat, to which Bashō refers, was a motto often written on the hats and staffs of travelers: kenkō mujū dogyō nin (between heaven and earth / without a fixed abode to live in / traveling by two). The motto refers to Buddha accompanying the traveler, but Bashō changes the meaning to refer to the two friends. ONH #43.

680. にわはいて / いでおうしager ni / ちんうやなぎ
garden to sweep / leave (speaker’s will) temple in / scattered willow (leaves)

1689—autumn. When travelers stayed in a temple, they were expected to perform work such as sweeping their rooms or the garden as payment. As Bashō was leaving the temple, some monks stopped him in the courtyard with inkstone and brush to insist on the payment of a poem. After the poem Bashō wrote: “I scribbled this in a hurry while still wearing my sandals.” ONH #44.

681. もののかへ / おぎへぎわくrun / はかくかね
something write / fan tear excitedly / parting <>

1689—autumn. It was considered an elegant and delightfully impulsive act to write a verse on a fan and then tear the fan into two parts so each person would have a keepsake.

682. もののかへ / おぎひきさく / ながりかね
something write / fan pull tear / miss someone <>

1689—autumn. Revised version of ONH #45.

683. 月見つる / みどきとわに / たびねせ
full moon of / place name visit (speaker’s will) / sleep on a journey to do (speaker’s will)

1689—autumn. On the night of August 15, 1689, Bashō wrote fifteen verses on the subject of the moon. The verses were published in Bashō Ō Tsuki Ichiya Jügo Ku, but one verse is missing so now there are only fourteen.
584. **Asamutsu ya / tsukimi no tabi no / ake-banare**

Asamutsu [Shallow Water] <> / moon viewing of journey of / dawn parting

1689—autumn. *The Pillow Book of Sei Shōnagon* is a famous book written by a female poet, Sei Shōnagon, who lived at the court between 996 and 1008. A strong-willed woman, her book is filled with opinions on what was good and bad in society and her life. Her designation of what was fashionable or not lingered six hundred years later to influence Bashō. A longer translation of *ake-banare* would be to say “to leave the darkness of night by going into the light of morning.”

585. **asu no tsuki / ame uranawa n / Hina-ga-dake**

tomorrow's moon / rain forecast (speaker’s will) / Mount Hina

1689—autumn. Mount Hina, now known as Mount Hino; the *hi* ("sun") of the mountain’s name provides the wordplay.

586. **tsuki ni na o / tsutsumi kane te ya / imo no kami**

moon in name (object) / cover up unable to <> / yam of god

1689—autumn. There is a complicated pun on *imo no kami* where it can mean either “the sweet potato of a god” or the name of the “God of Smallpox.” The second line of “difficult to cover up” can refer to the moon, which seems closer and brighter in autumn, and to the scars from smallpox. A teahouse at this mountain pass at Imajō, in Nanjō County, was famous for selling a rice scoop that was used as a charm against smallpox.

587. **Nakayama ya / Koshi ji mo tsuki wa / mata inochi**

Nakayama <> / sea coast road also moon as-for / again life

1689—autumn. This place has the same name as another town where Saigyō, a favorite poet of Bashō’s, had written a verse about the moon. This Nakayama ("middle mountain") is on the Koshi Route, later called the Hokuriku Highway, which runs along the coast of the Japan Sea.

588. **kuni-guni no / hakkei sara ni / Kehi no tsuki**

many provinces of / eight famous scenes in / Kehi’s moon

1689—autumn. Kehi is the old name of Tsuruga, which has a beautiful shrine in a pine grove by the beach.

589. **tsukimi seyo / Tamae no ashi o / kara nu saki**

moon viewing (imperative to do) / Tamae of reeds (object) / cut not before

1689—autumn. Tamae was the area just south of Fukui known for the reeds grown in shallow water that are used for roof thatching.
§90. tsuki kiyoshi / Yugyō no moteru / suna no ue
moon clear / Saint Yugyō's carried / sand of over
1689—autumn. According to legend, the Priest Ippen, Saint Yugyō, carried sand to
the muddy grounds of the Kei Myōjin Shrine. Later they celebrated this with a cere­mony called sunamochi (“sand-holding”). ONH #46.

§91. Yoshinaka no / nezame no yama ka / tsuki kanashi
Yoshinaka of / awakening of mountain <> / moon sad
1689—autumn. Yoshinaka (1154—84) was a general of the Minamoto Clan whose tragic
life is described in the The Tale of the Heike Clan (Heike Monogatari).

§92. meigetsu ya / hokkoku biyori / sadame naki
harvest moon <> / northern provinces’ weather / unsettled
1689—autumn. The reference is to the Hokuriku district, which includes the present­day prefectures of Toyama, Ishikawa, Fukui, and Niigata, on the Japan Sea coast. ONH #47.

§93. tsuki izuku / kane wa shizumeru / umi no soko
moon where is / temple bell as-for has sunk / sea’s bottom
1689—autumn. This was still on the night of the full moon, which could not be seen
due to rain. Both the moon and the bell are hidden at the bottom of the sea.

§94. tsuki nomi ka / ame ni sumō mo / nakari keri
moon only not / rain owing to wrestling match also / not <>
1689—autumn. This verse uses the riddle technique: what do the moon and a wrest­ling match have in common? Both are canceled by rain.

§95. furuki na no / tsunuga ya koishi / aki no tsuki
ancient name of / deer horn <> / missing something / autumn’s moon
1689—autumn. This verse uses a wordplay with tsunuga (“deer antler”) and the name
of a port city on the Japan Sea. Tsunuga was named for the area’s founder, a man from
Korea who, according to the Chronicles of Japan (Nihon Shoki), had a horn growing from
his forehead like a unicorn. The crescent moon was also referred to as a horn. On the
night of the full moon one could long for the crescent moon as well as for the old name.

§96. koromo kite / ko-gai hirowa n / iro no tsuki
robe put on / pick up small shell (speaker’s will) / color of moon
1689—mixed seasons. According to the text in Ooku no Horonichi, the rain that had
spoiled the moon viewing cleared out the next day and Basho went to the local shore,
which was called Colored Beach because of the many shells that washed up. Saigyō had
written a tanka at the beach: shio somuru / Masuho no kogai / hirou tote / ironohama to wa
its.
of
soon
high.
as
either
of
guri
wave
Colored
loneliness
als
small
beach
and
a
imply
can
<>
6b2.
1689—autumn.
The verse is notable for using ko (“small”) three times. The fallen petals of the bush clover and the red clay seashells could both be tiny cups for wine.

1689—autumn. Suma, the name for the lonely coastal area where the hero of The Tale of Genji was in exile, can also mean “clarity.” Hama is the short name of Iromohama or Colored Beach, which was near Tsunuga. ONH #48.

wave of between <> / small shell in mixed / bush clover of bits
1689—autumn. There was a similar look to the small shells and the pieces of flowers washed up on the beach. ONH #49.

1689—autumn. This is the last verse in Narrow Road to the Deep North. The poem is difficult to translate due to its many wordplays. Hama can mean “beach” or “clam” and guri can mean “chestnut” or “pebble.” Futami, the port where the famous Wedded Rocks are located, gets its name from futa (“lid,” “cover,” or “shell”) and mi (“body,” “meat,” “fruit,” “nut,” “berry,” “seed,” “substance,” or “contents”). Wakare can mean either “to part” or “to split” or “to leave.” In the last line, the use of the word yaku can imply that either autumn or a person is departing. ONH #50.

1689—autumn. Ibuki Mountain, just northeast of Lake Biwa, is 4,500 feet (1,377 m) high.

soon bloom / festival also approach / chrysanthemum’s flower
1689—autumn. Kunichi was the chrysanthemum flower festival held on the ninth day of the ninth month. It was also celebrated at court as a ceremony to drive out evil spirits. Others considered the festivities necessary for a long life.
608. komori ite / ki no mi kusa no mi / hirowa baya
stay indoors be / tree’s fruit grass’s seeds / gather wish

1689—autumn. Bashō’s host’s name was Toda Gondayū, a retainer of the feudal lord of the Ōgaki Clan. This verse was then used as the starting verse for a renga party by six poets on October 17.

609. fuji no mi wa / haikai ni se n / hana no ato
wisteria of beans as-for / poetry make (speaker’s will) / flower of result

1689—autumn. Sōgi (1421–1502) was a famous renga poet Bashō admired. When Sōgi had passed through this same area, he had seen some white wisteria growing on the slope and had written: Seki koe te / koko mo fujishiro / Misaka kana (crossing Seki / still white wisteria / in Misaka). Wisteria seed pods are about 6 inches (12.5 cm) long and look much like green beans. Bashō is using a metaphor in this poem. In the same way that flowers make seeds after blooming, poems are the fruit of the poet’s experiences.

606. Saigyō no / waraji mo kakare / matsu no tsuyu
Saigyō’s / straw sandals also hang / pine tree’s dew

1689—mixed seasons. This was written on a painting of a pine tree dripping with dew. Both dew drops and Saigyō’s straw sandals are hanging in the pine.

607. tsuki sabiyo / Akechi ga tsuma no / hanashi se n
moon sad look / Akechi’s wife of / story tell (speaker’s will)

1689—autumn. Akechi (1528–98) was a military man who planned a renga party when he was too poor to pay for it. His wife secretly cut off her hair and sold it to give her husband the money he needed to buy the food and drink. He was so grateful that he promised he would make her the wife of a general in fifty days. He kept his promise by killing Oda Nobunaga, becoming a general, and riding in a jeweled palanquin. A short time later, he was killed.

608. uki ware o / sabishi gara seyo / aki no tera
weary (object) / lonely pretend (cause) / autumn’s temple

1689—autumn. The priest of this temple was the uncle of Sora.

609. aki no kaze / Ise no hakahara / nao sugoshi
autumn’s wind / Ise’s graveyard / more dreadful

1689—autumn. What Bashō leaves unsaid in his verse is the connection between autumn wind and something dreadful. In Ise, the province of the Great Shrine, death
was seen as defilement, so people who were near death were carried to the grave before they stopped breathing. This practice, *hayagake*, seemed even more gruesome in autumn.

670. **tōtosan ni / mina oshi ai nu / go sengū**
holiness in / everyone push each other / shrine renewal

1689—mixed seasons. The Grand Shrine of Ise, which was to be rebuilt and reinstalled with each emperor, became too expensive, so the custom became to rebuild the wooden structure every twenty years. Bashō saw the dedication of the Outer Shrine on September 13 but missed the dedication of the Inner Shrine on September 10. The Outer Shrine is dedicated to the goddess Toyouke no Ômikami, a hearth deity for food, dwellings, and clothing. The Inner Shrine is dedicated to Amaterasu Ômikami, the Goddess of the Sun, and therefore, ancestor and protector of the Imperial Family. The ceremony will be repeated in 2013.

671. **mon ni iie ha / sotetsu ni ran no / nioi kana**
gate into enter / sago palm in orchid of / scent <=

1689—mixed seasons. This was Bashō’s greeting verse when he visited the Shuei-in Temple at Ise, which was famous for its sago palms.

672. **suzuri ka to / hirou ya kuboki / ishi no tsuyu**
inkstone <= (quotation) / pick up <= hollow / stone’s dew

1689—autumn. The famous poet Saigyō used a hollowed beach rock as an inkstone.

678. **hatsu shigure / saru mo ko mino o / hoshi ge nari**
first winter rain / monkey also small straw-raincoat (object) / want it seems (affirmation)

1689—winter. This was the first verse of the now-famous renga *Monkey’s Raincoat* (*Sarumino*).

674. **kochō ni mo / nara de aki furu / namushi kana**
butterfly into also / become not autumn pass / caterpillar <=

1689—mixed seasons. Starting verse for a renga party at Jokō’s house in Ōgaki.

676. **hitobito o / shigureyo yado wa / samuku tomo**
these people (object) / early-winter-shower house as-for / cold in spite of

1689—winter. This was a verse used as a link in a renga written at the party of Sugino Kanbei, a warrior of the Tōdō Clan.

676. **fuyu niwa ya / tsuki mo ito naru / mushi no gin**
winter garden <= / moon also string thin / insects’ singing

1689—winter. This verse was the opening stanza for an eighteen-link renga written at a party hosted by Yamagishi Hanzan, a warrior, at the retreat of Ichinyū of Iga.
677. byōbu ni wa / yama o egaite / fuyu-gomori
folding screen in / mountain (object) painted / winter confinement
1689—winter. Though it’s unconfirmed, there is a note in Shō Ō Zen’den that Bashō composed this verse at the house of Heichū, a man of Iga.

678. take-gari ya / abunaki koto ni / yū shigure
mushroom gathering <> / dangerous thing in / evening shower
1689—winter. There is the danger of picking a poisonous mushroom, but Bashō is saying that the real danger is getting wet in the rain.

679. iza kodomo / hashiri arikan / tama arare
now children / run (invitation) about / jewel hailstone
1689—winter.

680. hatsu yuki ni / usagi no kawa no / hige tsukure
first snowfall in / rabbit’s skin of / beard make
1689—winter. This refers to the mountains around Ueno, Bashō’s hometown.

681. hatsu yuki ya / itsu daibutsu no / hashira date
first snowfall <> / what Buddha statue’s / columns erect
1689—winter. When Bashō visited the Tōdaiji Temple at Kamakura, he was sad to see that in the last war between clans the structure covering the great Buddha of Light had been destroyed so that now the snow fell on the statue’s head. The Priest Kōkei got permission for a fund-raising campaign to rebuild the temple, but work had not yet begun when Bashō was there. Bashō envisioned the snow as the new roof. All it needed was columns to hold it up.

682. Chōshō no / haka no meguru ka / hachitataki
Chōshō’s / grave also visit <> / bowl ringer
1689—winter. The practice of hachitataki was a Buddhist ritual that started on the Saint Kūya’s Day, November 13, and lasted for forty-eight nights. The lay-mons would walk through the city beating on their dried gourds or metal bowls. On this night, December 24, Bashō stayed at Kyorai’s house and waited until almost dawn for the bell ringers.

683. Yamashiro e / ide no kago karu / shigure kana
mountain white to / leave-for of palanquin borrow / wintry shower <>
1689—winter. Yamashiro (“White Mountain”) is the name of a town and province south of Kyoto. In this province is a town by the name of Ide, which can also mean “to depart” or “to leave from.” The palanquin was a means of transportation, usually for one person, consisting of a covered box carried by poles resting on the shoulders of several men. It seems likely that Bashō was not in the best of health, so one of his
wealthy patrons rented this transportation when the weather turned bad.

624. Shōshō no / ama no hanashi ya / Shiga no yuki
Shōshō of / nun of story <> / Shiga’s snow

1689—winter. Chigetsu was the mother of Otokuni, one of Bashō’s students who had become a nun. Shōshō no Ami was a famous female poet whose poems were included in an imperial anthology. She had served as the second consort to the Emperor Gohorikawa (1212–34). When she retired from this position, she became a nun and lived in seclusion in the small hamlet of Ōgi in Shiga. She was called Ono-ga-ne-shōshō because the poem she was famous for began “ono ga ne ni” (“its own crowing”). Shiga Province is near Lake Biwa.

625. kore ya yo no / susu ni somara nu / furu gōshi
this <> world of / soot in stained not / old covered bowl

1689—winter. Rotsü (1649–1738) wrote a forward to this verse in his book Kanjin chō. “When I traveled to Tsukushi—the old name of Kyūshū, I left a wooden bowl with a lid behind at the inn in Naniwazu, but the set was sent over to Awazu without any damage seven years later. When I told Bashō about this, he was impressed so much by the heart of the sender, and so composed this in praise of it.”

626. arare se ba / ajiro no hio o / nite dasa n
hail to do / fish trap of ice fish (object) / cook serve (speaker’s will)

1689—winter. Ajiro was a fish trap made of bamboo or reed screening set in rivers. Hio were “the young” ayu (“sweet smelt”), also called “ice fish.” The poem equates hailstones with ice fish.

627. komo o kite / tarebito inasu / hana no haru
straw mat (object) to put on / who to be / flowers of spring

1690—New Year. In winter plants and trees are wrapped in mats of woven straw to protect them from freezing. People also wore straw raincoats. This is a good example of the riddle technique because it is the tree that is wrapped but it is done for the protection of the flowers, which have no physical shape. In the earlier, more elegant, period of Japanese history the word inasu (“to be”) was used instead of naming the name of a famous or important person. This poem surprised the poets of Tokyo because Bashō combined in a New Year’s poem, which was supposed to be quietly elegant, images of beggars and the poor who wore straw garments. Yet because of the twist in the poem, the being within the straw is also the very greatest one, the creator of the flowers. Here is the entity so great that no name fits.

628. kawauso no / matsu-ri mite koyo / Seta no oku
otter of / festival go see it / Seta’s behind

The reference to the small hamlet of Seta is a reference to the famous hamlet of Seta, famous for its otters and samurai families.
1690—winter. The Festival of the Otters was celebrated January 16–20. The name came about because otters would lay out the fish they had caught on the banks of the river. It looked as if they were making offerings to their ancestors in the same way people do during the Bon Festival.

629. **harusame ya / futaba ni moyuru / nasubi dane**

spring rain ← / seed leaf in sprout / eggplant seed

1690—spring. The three kinds of seeds were eggplant, green pepper, and yam. The first leaves on the sprouts were as tender as a spring rain.

630. **kono tane to / omoi konasaji / tōgarashi**

this seed and / think underrated / red pepper

1690—spring. The red pepper (*Capsicum annuum*) was a popular vegetable of this time. Another version of this verse reads: *tōgarashi / omoi konasaji / mono no tane* (red pepper / do not belittle / things like seeds).

631. **tane imo ya / hana no sakari ni / uri aruku**

seed yam ← / blossoms of cherry in / sell walk

1690—spring. The year of the horse was 1690. The combination of yams and cherry blossoms was considered unusual, but Bashō skillfully uses yam seeds to keep the verse in its season.

632. **dote no matsu / hana ya ko bukaki / tono-zukuri**

bank of pine / flowers ← / trees deep / mansion make

1690—spring. Bashō praised the thick woods surrounding the residence of the host in this first verse of a renga.

633. **niawashi ya / mame no ko meshi ni / sakura-gari**

well matched ← / roasted soybean’s flour rice ball in / cherry flower gathering

1690—spring. This verse uses the comparative technique. The rice balls dusted with roasted flour resemble the delicate tints of the cherry blossoms.

634. **hatake utsu / oto ya arashi no / sakura asa**

farm-field plow / sound ← / violent storm’s / blossom hemp

1690—spring. The words *arashi* (“a violent wind”) and *sakura* (“cherry blossoms”) are usually combined in tanka with the fear that the blossoms will blow away in a storm. The joke here is the combination of these words with the idea that the sound of a storm is necessary for hemp flowers (*Cannabis sativa*) to bloom.

635. **kusa makura / makoto no hanami / shite mo koyo**

grass pillow / the right way of cherry blossom viewing / to do also to come

Bashō's joke here is the combination of these words with the idea that the sound of a storm is necessary for hemp flowers (*Cannabis sativa*) to bloom.
1690—spring. Rotsū (1649–1738) was leaving to follow Bashō’s route of the previous year to the far north.

686. *ki no moto ni / shiru mo namasu mo / sakura kana*

tree of things under / soup also vegetables in vinegar also / cherry blossoms

1690—spring. It was Bashō’s belief that a haiku without a verb is “lighter.” It is true that the verb often carries with it great emotion. Without it, the poem is more matter of fact and detached. This poem uses the associative technique. Both the blossoms and the soup and pickles are under the trees.

687. *chō no ha no / ikutabi koyuru / hei no yane*

butterfly’s wings of / how-many-times fly-over / wall’s roof

1690—spring. The mud-brick walls surrounding wealthy residential compounds had small tile roofs to prevent rain from draining down into the mud.

688. *kimi ya chō / ware ya Sōji ga / yume-gokoro*

you <> butterfly / I <> Chuang Tzu <> / dreaming heart

1690—spring. Chuang Tzu was the famous Chinese philosopher who dreamed he was a butterfly and then woke up and wondered if the dream was true and this life was only a dream. There is some debate over whether this poem is really Bashō’s.

689. *hito sato wa / mina hanamori no / shison ka ya*

person village as-for / all flower guards of / descendant

1690—spring. This verse is based on the legend that Empress Ichijō, who was served by Murasaki Shikibu, the author of *The Tale of Genji*, once wanted to transplant a double-petal cherry tree from a temple to her garden. The monks opposed the plan so strongly she was forced to back down. She was so impressed by the monks’ attitudes that she gave them the small village of Hanagaki no Shō (“Village with the Flower Fence”). Imperial guards were sent here by the emperor to protect the tree during cherry blossom season.

690. *shihō yori / hana fuki irete / nio no nami*

all directions from / flowers blow in / grebe’s [or Lake Biwa’s] ripples

1690—spring. This was a greeting verse for Hamada Chinseki, a physician, at his home, Sharaku Dō, which had majestic views of Lake Biwa and its surroundings. There is a wordplay on *nio*, which can mean “a grebe” (*Podiceps ruficollis*) or “a plentiful water bird on the lake.” It is also an abbreviation for the lake.

691. *kagerō ya / saiko no ito no / nisu gumori*

heat shimmer <> / medicinal herb’s sprout’s / slightly hazy

1690—spring. *Saiko* (“hare’s ear”) is a traditional medicinal herb used to treat irritable bowel syndrome, hepatitis, and liver cirrhosis. It is possible that Bashō was attracted
to the plant because he was being treated with it by Hamada Chinseki.

642. *yama-zakura / kawara fuku mono / mazu futatsu*
mountain cherries / tile-roofed thing / first of all two
1690—spring. The so-called “mountain cherry” (*Prunus jamasakura*) was the most popular wild cherry tree at Yoshino in Nara and Arashiyama in the Kyoto area. “Two buildings with tiled roofs” is a reference to a poem by Kinoshita Chôshôshi (1569–1649), whose grave is referred to in poem 622.

648. *uguisu no kasa otositaru / tsukaki kana*
bush warbler’s / hat to drop / camellia <>
1690—spring. In earlier poetry, a favorite cliché was that the bush warbler was stitching a hat of plum blossoms. Camellia plants drop whole flowers rather than petals. The fallen flower seems as if it has been stitched together and therefore must be the hat of a bush warbler.

644. *yuku haru o / Ōmi no hito to / oshimikeru*
departing spring / Ōmi’s people with / missed <>
1690—spring. The province of Ōmi was on the shore of Lake Biwa. The idea in this poem is that Bashô was so intent on looking at the lake that he, like everyone else, failed to note the departure of the season.

646. *akebono wa / mada murasaki ni / hototogisu*
spring dawn as-for / not yet lavender / cuckoo
1690—spring. The legend is that Murasaki Shikibu, whose first name also means “lavender,” began writing her famous book, *The Tale of Genji*, in a room at this temple.

646. *hitori ama / wara ya sugenashi / shiro tsutsuji*
living alone nun / straw-thatched house <> cold-hearted / white azalea
1690—spring. This poem uses the associative technique. The nun, the poor house, and the white azalea all share a certain cold-heartedness. One of the reasons for becoming a nun was to emotionally detach from the affairs of the heart and the world.

647. *tsuma koute / nezasa kazuku ya / . . .*
wife to miss / bamboo grass put on / (unfinished)
1690—mixed seasons. This was written on the same sheet as two other poems, 637 and 645, but this one is missing the last line.

648. *natsukusa ni / füki o kazare / hebi no kinu*
summer grass in / wealth (object) to adorn / snake’s castoff skin
夏草に富貴を飾れ蛇の衣
1690—summer. Bashō composed this at Genjū Cottage. He also wrote a letter to Otokuni complaining about the snakes and centipedes. This verse uses the twist technique. After reading the first two lines the reader expects an image of grass and seeds, but the last line provides an unexpected picture.

679. natsukusa ya / ware saki dachite / hebi kara n
summer grass <> / I go ahead / snake hunt (speaker’s will)

1690—summer. Bashō lived alone at the Genjū Cottage.

680. hebi kū to / kikeba osoroshi / kiji no koe
snake to eat (quotation) / hearing dreadful / pheasant’s voice

1690—summer. The cry of a pheasant is a shrill and rather dreadful screech. The associative technique describes two things that are dreadful to hear: pheasants’ voices and the fact that they eat snakes.

681. mazu sanotnu / shii no ki mo ari / natsukodachi
first of all depend / chinquapin tree also exist / summer grove

1690—summer. Shii (“the chinquapin,” Castanopsis cuspidate) is a smaller type of chestnut tree called the “sweet acorn” tree.

682. yūbe ni mo / asa ni mo tsuka zu / urinohana
evening in also / morning in also belong / melon’s flower

1690—summer. This was written on one of Bashō’s own paintings. The verb tsuka can mean “to stick to,” “be attached to,” “pound,” “push,” or “possess.” The admiration of the melon’s flower was more closely allied with haikai because its flower was not romantic, but useful.

683. hi no michi ya / aoi katamuku / satsuki ame
sun’s path <> / hollyhock leans toward / early summer rain

1690—summer. The weight of raindrops causes the tall hollyhock plant to bend as though it is trying to follow the unseen orbit of the sun across the sky.

684. tachibana ya / itsu no nonaka no / hotogisu
orange <> / when into field of / cuckoo

1690—summer. This poem uses the associative technique. Both birds and oranges come silently into the field. Even though one usually assumes the presence of a single bird in Japanese, this poem uses the plural form. Tachibana was a general word indicating “citrus fruits,” including the mandarin orange.

685. hotaru ni ya / sendō youte / obotsukana
firefly viewing <> / boatman drunk / unsteady

1690—summer. This poem uses the associative technique. Both birds and oranges come silently into the field. Even though one usually assumes the presence of a single bird in Japanese, this poem uses the plural form. Tachibana was a general word indicating “citrus fruits,” including the mandarin orange.
1690—summer. The area's fireflies are a popular tourist attraction and boats are often used for better night viewing.

636. onoga hi o / kigi no hotaru ya / hana no yado
one's own light (object) / trees of firefly <> / flowers of lodge

1690—summer.

637. kawa kaze ya / usu-gaki ki taru / yū susumi
river breeze <> / light persimmon put on perfect / enjoying summer breeze

1690—summer. It is assumed there was a picture made that depicted Bashō enjoying this scene in a persimmon-colored robe.

638. Kyō nite mo / Kyō natsukashi ya / hototogisu
Kyoto at also / Kyoto long for <> / cuckoo

1690—summer.

639. ware ni niru na / sutatsu ni ware shi / makuwauri
me in resemble not / two into split (past tense) / melon

1690—summer. While Bashō was in Kyoto he stayed with a medicine seller named Tōko who was asking for admission into Bashō's school. Bashō gave him this advice along with the poem: “The two halves of melon look alike, just as we are both alike in loving haikai, but you should not imitate me. You are a young merchant, so you should live in a different way than I do. I am useless, being away from the secular world.” This poem is often used to tell people not to write like Bashō, but the advice Bashō was giving was that the young merchant need not live like Bashō in order to write poetry.

640. tonbō ya / tori tsuki kane shi / kusa no ne
dragonfly <> / settle or lands difficult to do / grass of on

1690—autumn. Some interpret this verse as indicative of how Bashō perceived his indecision regarding where to live.

641. inoshishi mo / tomo ni fukaruru / nowaki kana
wild boar also / together in be blown / typhoon <>

1690—summer. This verse also reflects Bashō’s inability to settle down.

642. waga yado wa / ka no chiisaki o / chisō kana
my house as-for / mosquito’s tiny (inversion) (object) / treat <>

1690—summer. Bashō had returned to the “Abode of Illusion.”

643. yagate shinu / keshiki wa miezu / semi no koe
soon to die / indication as-for to look not / cicada's voice

1690—summer. This verse also reflects Bashō’s inability to settle down.
1690—summer. The title of this poem, “Mujō Jinsoku,” was a phrase that Bashō liked very much.

667. nebu no ki no / hagoshi mo itoe / hoshi no kage
silk of tree of / leaves-through also dislike / star’s light
合欲の木の葉越しも眼への影
1690—summer. Bashō has written an internal rhyme in this poem with hagoshi (“through leaves”) and hoshi (“star”).

665. tama matsuri / kyō mo yakiba no / kemuri kana
soul festival / today even crematorium of / smoke <>
1690—summer. In Japan the festival is still celebrated on August 16. Huge piles of wood are laid out on the mountains in the shape of the character for “large,” which looks like a person walking with outstretched arms. At night the piles are set on fire and people meditate on the lives of those who lived and died before them.

666. meigetsu ya / chigo tachi narabu / dō no en
full moon <> / acolytes form a line / temple’s veranda
名月や覇立ち並ぶ堂の縁
1690—autumn. At this time Bashō was living in a house just behind the temple. The acolytes were the young pages who served the monks.

667. meigetsu ya / umi ni mukaeba / nana Komachi
full moon <> / ocean in welcome / seven Komachi
名月や海に向へ七小町
1690—autumn. The reference is to the famous waka poet and beauty Ono no Komachi, who lived around 850. Her legendary life was the basis of a famous Nō play that portrayed her transition from a beautiful girl, to a famous poet, to a poor ugly nun living in seclusion.

668. tsukimi suru / za ni utsukushiki / kao mo nashi
moon viewing / party in pretty / face also without
月見する座に美しさ顔もなし
1690—autumn.

669. tsuki shiro ya / hiza ni te o oku / yoi no hodo
moon whitening <> / lap in hands (object) lay / evening’s about
月代や膝に手を置いて宵の為
1690—autumn. Tsuki shiro (“moon whitening”) refers to the glow of the night sky just before the moon rises.

670. tsuki shiro ya / hiza ni te o oku / yoi no uchi
moon whitening <> / lap in hands (object) lay / evening of inside
月代や膝に手を置いて宵の内
1690—autumn. One can translate hiza ni as “on the knees” or “in the lap.”
671. *tsuki shiro ya / hiza ni te o oku / yoi no yado*
moon whitening / lap in hands (object) lay / evening of house
1690—autumn. Bashō compares the poets waiting for the party to begin to the brightening night sky. This is the version of the poem that was used in the renga.

672. *kari kiki ni / miyako no aki ni / omonuka n*
wild goose hear in / capital’s autumn / go to (speaker’s will)
1690—autumn. After Bashō’s journey to the far north, he stayed at Dosui’s cottage, Genjū (“Abode of Illusion”), which was just behind Ishiyama-dera (“Stone Mountain Temple”) on Kokubuyama hill. The capital here refers to Kyoto rather than Tokyo. Some books classify this as an “unconfirmed” poem by Bashō.

673. *kirigirisu / wasure ne ni naku / kotatsu kana*
cricket / forgotten and faint voice chirping / foot warmer
1690—autumn. The Japanese “foot warmer” is a low table set over the fire pit or charcoal container in the floor. A quilted blanket is laid over the table to trap the heat underneath. *Wasure ne* is the faint chirping of a cricket at the end of the season. This is the time to get out the foot warmer. The “clicks” of burning charcoal sound a bit like a cricket.

674. *shiraga nuku / makura no shita ya / kirigirisu*
white-hair pull-out / pillow’s underneath / cricket
1690—autumn. This verse was the beginning of an eighteen-link renga composed with Shidō and Chinseki at the “Abode of Illusion” near the Gichūji Temple at Zeze.

675. *ama no ya wa / koebi ni majiru / itodo kana*
fisherman’s house as-for / small shrimps in mixed / camel crickets
1690—autumn. Here Bashō uses the older name, *itodo*, for the “camel cricket” (*Diastrammena apicalis*) instead of kamado uma. This verse uses the associative technique to convey how much crickets look like shrimp.

676. *chō no kite / su o sūkiku no / namasu kana*
butterfly also come / vinegar (object) to sip chrysanthemum’s / salad
1690—autumn. Bashō was staying at Bokugen’s cottage in Zeze.

677. *shimo no nochi / nadeshiko sakeru / hioke kana*
frost of after / wild carnations still bloom / brazier
1690—autumn. The *hioke* is a round wooden tub, usually made by hollowing out a tree stump. It was used as a portable stove for charcoal fires. In Bashō’s time it was considered classy to have flowers painted on the outside of the tub. Bashō’s poem uses the pseudo-science technique. After the frost, flowers continue to bloom on the brazier.
678. asa cha nomu / só shizukanari / kiku no hana
morning tea drink / monk is quiet / chrysanthemum’s flower
1690—autumn. This verse uses the associative technique. Both the monk and the
autumn flower embody quiet acceptance and elegance. The dew-covered flower drinks
in moisture like a monk sipping from his cup.

679. kusa no to o / shire ya hotade ni / tōgarashi
grass of door (object) / recognize <=> smartweed in / red pepper
1690—autumn. The terms “grass gate” or “door” indicate a simple hut or cottage
with a door made from bundled grass or straw. The fact that each line of the poem has
a plant in it conveys the sense that Bashō is at one with this element. The house is sur-
rounded by smartweed (Polygonum), a hot spice, and red peppers. This implies that
Bashō is a very spicy “hot” guy.

680. kiri no ki ni / uzura nakunaru / hei no uchi
paulownia of tree by / quail call [or cry] (conjecture) / wall of inside
1690—autumn. The paulownia (Paulownia tomentosa) is a deciduous tree with large leaves.
The tree grows rapidly and provides good wood for building furniture and shoes. In Bashō’s
time wealthy people kept quails (Coturnix coturnix) just to hear their cries and calls.

681. kochira muke / ware no sabishiki / aki no kure
this way turn / I also lonely / autumn’s evening
1690—autumn. Unchiku (1632–1703) was a priest at Tōji Kanshi-in. Bashō wrote this
verse during his stay at the Abode of Illusion.

682. byōgan no / yosanu ni ochite / tabine kana
sick wild goose of / night coldness owing to fall / journey sleep <=>
1690—autumn. The poem is titled “At Katada” because “a falling wild goose at
Katada” was one of the Eight Famous Scenes of Ōmi as designated by Kanpaku Konoe
Masaie (1443–1505). Bashō had taken a chill and fallen ill.

683. kogarashi ya / hōbare itamu / hito no kao
cold blast of wind <= / swollen face [or cheek] pain / man’s face
1690—winter. The pain of the swollen cheek is as uncomfortable as a blast of cold air
hitting one in the face.

684. shigururu ya / ta no arakabu no / kuromu hodo
early winter shower <= / rice paddy’s new stubble of / darkened to the degree of
1690—winter.
1690—winter. Bashō was criticizing the disciples in Ōmi for their complacency and corruption. Bashō praised Kyokusui in the letter for his sincerity and strong character. Of all Bashō’s surviving letters, the most are to Kyokusui.

1690—winter. Some of the monks of the Kongōbuji Temple on Mount Kōya traveled around the country selling prayer beads and religious icons from lacquered boxes made to be worn like backpacks. The wordplay comes with *oi no iro*, which can mean “the old age of color.” The shabby appearance of the monk’s clothes is a sharp contrast to the bright snow.

1690—winter. Pampas grass stalks were used as reeds to make temporary thatched-roof huts for the festival of the seventh month at the Suwa Shrine in Shinano.

1690—winter. The traditional hearth in homes consisted of a hole cut in the floor so the fire could be made on the bare earth. The *gotatsu* or *kotatsu* was a portable heater made by putting burning coals into a tub or bucket. A low table was often set over this so the heat would warm the floor. People would often put a quilt over the table to collect the heat and warm their feet.

1690—winter. Kūya (903–72) was a famous ascetic pilgrim. Monks who followed his precepts wandered in the Kyoto area for forty-eight days at the end of the year reciting his writings and commemorating his death. *Kan* was during the coldest thirty days of the winter when monks practiced particularly rigorous spiritual training.

1690—winter. *Natto* is a traditional food made from fermented soybean. Finely chopped onion leaves, mustard greens, and seaweed were often added to the soybeans. The bowl beaters were the lay monks of the sect started by Kūya. They would beat on their bowls in time with their recitations.
sekizoro no / kure ba füga mo / shiwasu kana
entertainers of / to come when elegance also / December <>
1690—winter. The sekizoro, literally “the year end has come,” was a group of two to four entertainers who would go from house to house. They wore masks of red cloth over their faces that left only their eyes showing. Their hats were decorated with fern leaves so they looked like spirits of nature or the woods. As they chanted wishes for an auspicious new year, they beat on small drums or rattled shredded bamboo sticks. Bashō found a certain elegance in their eagerness and earliness.

susu haki wa / sugi no ko no ma no / arashi kana
house cleaning as for / cedar’s tree’s space’s / windstorm <>
1690—winter. It was customary to give the house a thorough cleaning before the New Year. Housecleaning is like a violent storm blowing through the house as well as through the garden.

sun jiku no / yama mo arashi no / ko no ha kana
three feet of / mountain also storm of / tree of leaves <>
1690—winter. The comparative technique uses the idea that the storm is equal in a mountain of trees or even on a small hill in a garden, or in a small tree.

Ishiyama no / ishi ni tabashiru / arare kana
Stone Mountain’s / stones in shower / hail <>
1690—winter. Bashō wrote this at Ishiyama-dera (“Stone Mountain Temple”), near the southern tip of Lake Biwa. The area was noted for outcroppings of wollastonite, a very white stone.

Hira Mikami / yuki sashiwata se / sagi no hashi
Mount Hira Mount Mikami / snow between carry across / white egret’s bridge <>
1690—winter. The idea of birds building a bridge comes from Tanabata, the summer “Festival of the Stars,” where legend has it that magpies form a bridge over the Milky Way. The mountains mentioned in Bashō’s verse are Mount Hira, 4,000 feet (1,214 m), and Mount Mikami, 1,400 feet (432 m), near Lake Biwa. The mountains were connected by snow and the line of snowy white egrets that seemed to form a bridge.

higoro nikuki / karasu mo yuki no / ashita kana
usually hateful / crow also snow of / morning <>
1690—winter.

han jitsu wa / kami o tomo ni ya / toshi wasure
half a day as-for / god (object) friend into <> / year to forget <>
1690—New Year.
698. hito ni ie o / kawase te ware wa / toshi wasure
man in house (object) / buy (causative) me as-for / year to forget
1690—New Year. Kawai Otokuni, a wealthy shipping agent in Ōtsu, bought a new house and let Bashō stay in it during the holiday festivities. The verse was Bashō’s thank-you note.

699. Ōtsu e no / fude no hajime wa / nani botoke
souvenir pictures’ / brush of start as-for / what Buddha image
1691—New Year. Ōtsu pictures were sold at roadside stands to pilgrims coming to nearby Miidera Temple. New Year festivities include an awareness and celebration of the first occurrence of everyday things.

700. kakure keri / shiwasu no umi no / kaitsubnri
disappeared <> / end of the year’s lake of / little grebe
1691—New Year. Kaitsubnri is the Podiceps ruficollis, or “little grebe.” Both the bird and the end of the year have disappeared into the lake.

701. yama-zato wa / manzai ososhi / ume no hana
mountain village as-for / holiday carolers late / plum blossoms
1691—New Year. The manzai were similar to present-day Christmas carolers. On this night, the carolers were late. Because of the high altitude, the plum blossoms were also late.

702. chidori tachi / juke yuku shoya no / hieoroshi
plover fly away / grow late 8 p.m. of / Mount Hiei’s cold winds
Year unknown—winter. Bashō wrote this verse on his own brush drawing. Chidori is in the family of Charadriidae or plover, a shore bird with a very distinctive shrill cry.

703. tōto sa ya / yuki fura nu hi mo / mino to kasa
preciousness <> / snow rain fall not day also / straw raincoat and hat
1691—spring, Bashō was discussing a painting of the famous poet and beauty Ono no Komachi in which she was depicted as an ugly hag in a story by Kan-ami (1333–84). Bashō seems sympathetic and chides the priest for his misogynistic attitude.

704. ume wakana / Mariko no shuku no / tororo-jiru
plum young greens / Mariko’s post town’s / grated yam soup
1691—spring. Kawai Otokuni was the merchant who owned the house Bashō was staying in on Lake Biwa. Mariko was the name of one of the stage stops on the Tōkaidō Highway near Shizuoka.

705. Kiso no jō / yuki ya hae nuku / haru no kusa
Kiso’s high spirits / snow <> keep growing / spring’s grass
木曾の情雪や生えぬく春の草
1691—mixed seasons. Kiso can refer to the town, river, gorge, highway, or the famous general of the area, Yoshinaka.

706. **ume ga ka ya / shirara ochikubo / kyōtarō**

plum’s scent <> / storybook titles / for children

1691—spring. The three last words of the poem, *shirara*, *ochikubo*, and *kyōtarō*, are titles of children’s books.

707. **tsuki machi ya / ume katage yuku / ko yamabushi**

moon waiting for <> / plum leans to go / child mountain ascetic

1691—mixed seasons. Bashō had been invited to a waiting-for-the-moonrise party at the home of Takitai in Iga-Ueno. The party was more of a religious gathering than a moon-viewing party. A young monk carrying a branch of flowers passed by before the party began. He was a *yamabushi* (a member of a particular branch of Buddhism that never quite forgot its roots in the Shinto religion). They lived a rugged life and were both admired and feared for their strength.

708. **magi aeshi ni / yatsururu koi ka / neko no tsuma**

boiled barley in / grown thin love <> / cat’s wife

1691—spring. A popular poetic idea was that girls in love grew wan and thin with longing. The middle line seems to be setting up this scenario, but the twist comes in the last line, when it describes a cat in love.

709. **toshi doshi ya / sakura o koyasu / hana no chiri**

year after year <> / cherry trees (object) nourished / fallen blossoms

1691—spring. Echoes the proverb “Flowers return to the roots.”

710. **yamabuki ya / kasa ni sasu beki / eda no nari**

yellow flowers <> / hat in put appropriate / branch’s appearance

1691—spring. The *yamabuki* (*Kerria japonica*) is called the “Japanese rose,” but it is much more like our spirea with yellow flowers. The bush is a thorny thicket with long, elastic canes that bend gracefully.

711. **nomi akete / hana ike ni sen / nishō daru**

drink empty / flower arrange into make (speaker’s will) / two liters barrel

1691—spring. Bashō was borrowing the idea from a poem written by the Chinese poet Tu Fu (712–70) that described an empty wine vessel that was made into a flower vase.

712. **yu no hana ya / mukashi shinoba n / ryōri no ma**

lemon’s flowers <> / olden times recall (speaker’s will) / serving room

1691—spring. The flowers of *yuzu* (“Chinese lemon”) were used in various dishes. The
peel was often put into clear soup. The *ryōri no ma* was a room between the dirt-floored cooking area and the dining area. This wooden-floored room was where the food was arranged before serving. The smell of citrus fruits has long had the function of recalling times of the past.

713. *bushōsa ya / dakiokosaruru / haru no ame*

laziness <> / helped out of bed / spring’s rain

1691—spring. This was supposedly written at Bashō’s brother’s home at Iga-Ueno. It could be that Bashō was so feeble he had to be helped out of bed by his brother.

714. *bushōsa ya / kakiokosareshi / haru no ame*

laziness <> / jerked awake / spring’s rain

1691—spring. This was the revision to poem 713.

715. *otoroi ya / ha ni kuiateshi / nori no suna*

becoming weak <> / tooth in bite or hit / seaweed’s sand

1691—spring. Dried and pressed seaweed was often wrapped around boiled rice or used in sushi.

716. *samidare ya / shikishi hegitaru / kabe no ato*

summer rain <> / poem card peeled off / wall of trace

1691—summer. *Shikishi* are squares of cardboard used for painting a picture or writing a poem. Rakushisha (“The Hut of Fallen Persimmons”) was a cottage in Sagano on the western edge of Kyoto owned by Bashō’s disciple and close friend, Kyorai (1651–1704). Bashō stayed there in the spring. The mark on the wall could be from the rain leaking through the roof or the sun’s damage around a poem card. The use of “summer rain” not only sets the season but also emphasizes Bashō’s sadness in leaving.

717. *chimaki yū / katate ni hasamu / hitai gami*

dumpling wrap / one-hand with pushing-back / forehead hair

1691—summer. *Chimaki* are a kind of rice dumpling that are wrapped in bamboo leaves. The leaves of the *chimaki-zasa* (*Sasa palmata*) are about a foot long (thirty cm) and up to 8 inches (20 cm) wide. This popular garden-variety bamboo is considered very beautiful, and its wide root system retains the soil during the rainy season. The leaves not only give the dumplings a special flavor but also help to preserve them. This is a traditional dish for Boys’ Day on the fifth day of the fifth month.

718. *takenoko ya / osanashi toki no / e no susabi*

bamboo shoot <> / child when time’s / picture of play

1691—spring. Bashō made ink paintings when he did not feel well enough to write. If he added a poem to the painting it was called “*hanga,*”
719. **shibaraku wa / hana no ue naru / tsukiyo kana**
for a while as-for / flower of over (affirmation) / moon night

1691—spring. There were debates over whether the moon verses or the flower verses in a renga were more important. Here Bashō seems to put forth the idea that the moon and the flowers are constantly changing position.

720. **hototogisu / ō takeyabu o / moru tsuki yo**
cuckoo / dense bamboo grove (object) / leak moonlit night

1691—summer. Both bird song and moonlight are leaking through the bamboo thicket.

721. **hito hi hito hi / mugi akaramite / naku hibari**
day by day by / barley ripens / sing skylark

1691—summer. The *hibari* is the *Alauda arvensis*, or “skylark.” As the barley ripens the skylark’s song changes from its early spring version, when nesting, to the sharper cries of summer when caring for its young.

722. **kaze katoru / haori wa eri mo / tsukrowa zu**
wind cool / jacket as-for neckband also / in order not

1691—summer. Ishikawa Jōzan (1583–1672) wrote poems in the Chinese style and was called the Japanese Li Po. Bashō, Kyorai, Sora, and Jōsō visited his home on June 1.

723. **yamabuki ya / Uji no hoiro no / niou toki**
yellow flowers <> / Uji’s dryer’s / smell time

1691—summer. Roasted tea leaves have a pleasant, almost burned aroma. Since the *yamabuki* flowers have no fragrance, they have to borrow smells from the roasted tea.

724. **ina suzume / cha no ki-batake ya / nige dokoro**
rice paddy sparrow / tea of plant field <> / run away shelter

1691—summer.

725. **minazuki wa / fukubō yami no / atsusa kana**
June as-for / cold sufferer’s / heat <>

1691—summer. This verse seems to imply that the month of June is like a cold sufferer who has a fever, both hot and cold. *Fukubō* is an old word for the flu that Bashō probably borrowed from an incident in *The Tale of Genji*. Bashō also experimented with another first line for this poem: “hiru wa nao” (“at noon greater”).

726. **uki ware o / sabishigara seyo / kankodori**
sad I (object) / lonely make (command) / mountain cuckoo

1691—summer. The *kankodori* (*Cuculus canorus*) is the mountain cuckoo. It was seldom seen and its song was very prized. This is a revision of poem 608, which was written in 1689.
727. natsu no yo ya / kodama ni akuru / geta no oto
summer's night <> / tree spirit in follows / wooden shoes of sound
夏の夜や木魂に明くる下駄の音
1691—summer. Geta are wood-soled flip-flops that make a hard, clacking sound on the ground.

728. te o uteba / kodama ni akuru / natsu no tsuki
hand (object) clap when / echo with to dawn / summer's moon
手を打てば木魂に明くる夏の月
1691—summer. The echo of clapping hands is the summer moon.

729. nōnashi no / nemutashi ware o / gyōgyōshī
good-for-nothing's / sleepy I (object) / reed warbler (or too loud)
能なしの眠たし我を行行子
1691—summer. The wordplay is with gyōgyōshī, which can mean either “too loud” or “reed warbler.” Both Bashō, who is too sleepy to work, and the loud bird are “good-for-nothing.”

730. uki fushī ya / take no ko to naru / hito no hate
sadness joint <> / bamboo’s shoot become / people at the end
憂き箏竹の子となる人の果
1691—summer. The generations of a family were often compared to the joints of bamboo. Each comes from previous growth; each is slightly different, yet all are bamboo.

731. shūkaidō / suika no iro ni / saki ni keri
begonia flowers / watermelon same color as / have bloomed <>
秋海葵西瓜の色に咲きにけり
1691—summer. Shūkaidō (Begonia grandis) is not the begonia Westerners know, which came from Brazil. This species was brought from China to Nagasaki in 1641. This verse shows a contrast between the color of the flowers on the outside and the color of a watermelon on the inside.

732. yami no yo ya / su o madowashite / naku chidori
darkness of night <> / nest (object) lost / cry plover
闇の夜や巢をまどはして鳴く鶉
1691—summer. One can read this poem in two ways. Because the night was dark, the plover lost its nest; or in the darkness of night the plover could not find its nest. At this time Bashō was moving from house to house and the verse could indicate his own feelings of displacement.

733. ushi-beya ni / ka no koe kuraki / zansho kana
cattle shed in / mosquito’s voice dark / summer heat!
牛舎屋に蚊の声暗き残暑哉
1691—summer. This is the haiku technique of switching senses by giving sound a color.

734. hatsu aki ya / tatami nagara no / kaya no yogi
early autumn <> / folded up of / mosquito net’s blanket
初秋や畳にながらの蚊屋の夜着
1691—autumn. In his poverty, Bashō folds up the no-longer-needed mosquito net to use as a blanket.

785. aki kaze no / suke domo aoshi / kuri no iga
autumn wind of / blow even though green / chestnut’s burr
秋風の吹けども青し栗の橋

1691—autumn. The leaves of the kiri (Castanea crenata) change color and begin to fall, but the thick burrs covering the nuts often remain a bright green. Normally the autumn wind is pictured as white. This verse seems to suggest that the autumn wind is green, but the twist in the last line tells the reader that it is the chestnut burrs that are green.

786. ogi no ho ya / kashira o tsukamu / Rashōmon
reed’s plumes <> / head (object) grasp / Rashōmon
葦の梗や頭をつかむ羅生門

1691—autumn. Rashōmon was the official gate to the Imperial Palace in both Kyoto and Nara. A horror story by Kanze Nobumitsu (1435–1516), rewritten by Akutagawa Ryūnosuke (1892–1927), tells of a man who cut off the arms of a demon at this gate. The story was made into a movie that won first place at the Venice Film Festival in 1951.

787. aki no iro / nukamiso tsubo mo / nakari keri
autumn color / pickling jar also / was not <>
秋の色醃味噌壷もなかりけり

1691—autumn. Bashō is suggesting that the beauty of autumn color comes whether or not one has the luxury of a pickling pot.

788. sabishisa ya / kugi ni kaketaru / kirigirisu
loneliness <> / nail on hang / cricket
淋しさや針掛けたらりぎりす

1691—autumn. Bashō could be referring to the portrait of Kenkō or a cricket cage. In autumn, people gathered insects from fields and put them in bamboo cages that hung in their rooms. Though the words do not say it, it is assumed that Bashō was writing about an insect in a cage and not one impaled on the wall. Some interpret this verse as describing only a picture of a katydid or a cricket.

789. yone kururu / tomo o koyoi no / tsuki no kyaku
rice give / friend (object) this evening / moon’s guest
米くるる友を今宵の月の客

1691—autumn. Bashō held a moon-viewing party at the Abode of Illusion in Gishūji on the full moon night of August 15. According to a thank-you note written by Bashō, Masahide, a merchant, and a disciple from Zeze had given him over one hundred pounds (forty-five kg) of rice. The poem is ambiguous regarding who the actual guest at the party is—the moon, the friend, or Bashō.

790. yasu yasu to / idete izayon / tsuki no kumo
easily easily and / appear hesitate / moon’s cloud
安々と出でていざよぶ月の雲
1691—autumn. This verse appeared at the end of an essay written on the night of August 16 at Katada.

741. Mii dera no / mou tatakabaya / kyō no tsuki
Floating Temple's / gate knock (speaker's wish) / tonight's moon

1691—autumn. Onjōji was the official name of Floating Temple in Ōtsu on the southern shore of Lake Biwa. The temple was built on pilings in the lake so that it appeared to be floating above the water. The ambiguity of the poem leaves open whether the moon will knock on the temple door or if the temple door is the moon.

742. jō akete / tsuki sashiireyo / ukimido
lock open / moon let come in / floating temple

1691—autumn. The Floating Temple can be reached by bridge, but Bashō and his friends took a boat from Zeze to Katada to see the moon from this special temple. Bashō's account of this trip is in an essay, "At Katada on the Sixteenth Night." The full moon would have been on the fifteenth, so they were one day late and probably were at the temple alone. It could be that they had the key to unlock the temple.

743. meigetsu wa / futatsu sugite mo / Seta no tsuki
harvest moon as-for / twice to pass also / Seta's moon

1691—autumn. In 1691 August occurred twice to correct the intercalary months of the lunar calendar. Seta was the name of a village, a river, and a bridge on the southern shore of Lake Biwa.

744. izayoi ya / ebi niru hodo no / yoi no yami
late moon <> / shrimps cook as-much-as / evening’s darkness

1691—autumn. With the moon arriving later, there was just enough time to cook a batch of shrimp. The verse was written at the home of Narihide at Katada.

745. soba mo mite / kenarigara seyo / nora no hagi
buckwheat also look-at / envy (causative) / field of bush clover

1691—autumn.

746. ori ori wa / su ni naru kiku no / sakana kana
sometimes as-for / vinegar into become chrysanthemum / relish specialty <>

1691—autumn. Sakana is an appetizer to be eaten with sake.

747. nyūmen no / shita takitatsuru / yosamui kana
boiled noodles of / under build-up-a-fire / night cold <>

1691—autumn. The ambiguity of the poem allows one to think that the noodles build
warmth inside of a person, underneath the outer cold, or that the fire is built up in order to heat the noodles.

748: momo tose no / keshiki o niwa no / ochiba kana
hundred years of / indication (object) garden’s / fallen leaves <> 白の変化の色を庭の落葉は
1691—autumn. Bashō wrote this greeting verse to the chief priest of Menshōji Temple at Hirata, Hikone, when he stayed with him on his way from Zeze to Tokyo.

749: ōji oya / mago no sakae ya / kaki mikan
grandfather parents / grandchildren’s prosperity <> / persimmons oranges 祖父親鸞の栄えや柿蜜柑
1691—autumn. The prosperity of the grandchildren came from two generations of parents and two kinds of fruit.

750: Arashiyama / yabu no shigeri ya / kaze no suji
Storm Mountain / thicket of dense growth <> / wind’s line 風山の蔓や風の筋
1691—autumn. Arashiyama, “Storm Mountain,” was a hill about 1,230 feet (375 m) high on the western side of Kyoto. I would not have known what “a line of wind in thickets” was except for an experience at the Zuiunkyo Suishoden (“The Crystal House”) in Atami. As I looked out the 180-degree windows over the gardens of azaleas, the sun sank to my right, and a strange wind came up. I watched, fascinated, as it streaked over the bushes, drawing a line with bended leaves and branches as if a great unseen finger was being dragged across them.

751: kusa no to ya / hi gurete kureshi / kiku no saké
glass of door <> / sun ends give / chrysanthemum’s wine 草の戸や日暮れくれし菊の酒
1691—autumn. Bashō’s disciple Otokuni brought a cask of wine to him one evening. The poem has the ku sound in it four times (including the change from ku to gu). The contrast is between the day’s end and chrysanthemum wine, which was believed to extend one’s life.

752: taka no me no / ima ya kurenu to / naku uzura
hawk’s eye also / already <> darkened (quotation) / call quail 鷹の目も今や暮れぬと鳴く筋
1691—autumn. The “darkness” is the desire to kill for food and the end of a quail’s life.

753: hashigeta no / shinobu wa tsuki no / nagori kana
bridge girder’s / a fern or to recall as-for moon’s / remains <> 橋桁の忍は月の名残り故
1691—autumn. Bashō wrote this when he visited Ishiyama Temple to see the moon with Shidō and Shayō, who were from Osaka. The bridge was the famous Seta Bridge. The fern, shinobu, and the verb “to recall” sound the same. Ferns remind Bashō of the past as well as other evenings under the thirteenth-night moon. Because the moon is not completely full it is missing something, and the something Bashō is missing is the past.
754. kokono tabi / okite no tsuki no / nanatsu kana
nine times / wake up also moon’s / seven <>
1691—autumn. The expression kokono tabi literally means “nine times,” but it can also be read as “many times.” The word nanatsu can be read as “seven times” or “four o’clock in the morning.” The idea is that Basho woke up nine times and the moon only woke up seven times because it had “set” or gone to sleep during two of the times Basho had awakened.

755. matsudeke ya / shiranu ko no ha no / hebaritsuku
pine mushroom <> / unknown tree’s leaf / adhere
1691—autumn. The matsudeke (“pine mushroom”) is often found under the Japanese red pine. The joke in Basho’s poem, with a variant spelling, is that the mushroom is named for the tree it grows under but the leaf that falls beyond its tree is unidentified.

756. aki kaze ya / kiri ni ukokite / tsuta no shimo
autumn wind <> / paulownia in move / ivy’s frost
1691—autumn. Kiri (Paulownia tomentosa) has large leaves. Basho is describing how the movement of the leaves blows the frost off the ivy. Tsuta is Parthenocissus tricuspidata, which is similar to our Boston ivy.

757. nebuka shiroku / araiagetaru / samusa kana
deep-rooted-leek white / wash finished / coldness <>
1691—autumn. Basho painted a picture of three leeks on a chopping board to accompany this poem. He gave it to the Priest Kigai of Honryūji Temple at Tarui in Mina Province. The area was noted for large leeks that grew over a foot (thirty cm) long.

758. suisen ya / shiroki shōji no / tomo utsuri
narcissus <> / white paper screen’s / together reflect
1691—spring but written in autumn. Basho wrote this verse as a greeting to Baijin of Atsuta when he stayed with him on October 20, 1691.

759. tsukurinasu / niva o isamu / shigure kana
tastefully designed / garden (object) enliven / winter shower <>
1691—autumn. This verse was also given to Priest Kigai of Honryūji Temple.

760. kogarashi ni / nioi ya tsukeshi / kaeri-bana
withering wind in / fragrance <> yet attached / late-blooming flower
1691—autumn. The idea behind the first version of this poem is that the cold, strong wind should have blown away something as delicate as the scent of the flower. Nioi can also be translated as “color,” hence the second version of the poem. Traditionally, the cold autumn wind is described as white.
1691—autumn. Bashō gave this verse to the Kitamura family, wealthy farmers near Hikone, when he stayed at their house overnight. One could consider the rice plant at threshing time as being in its “old age,” and the chrysanthemum symbolized longevity.

1691—autumn. Bashō gave this to Priest Riyū (1662-1705) of Menshōji Temple at Hikone. Momiji can indicate the Japanese maple tree (*Acer palmatum*) or all the colored leaves of autumn.

1691—winter. Bashō left Kyoto on September 28 and arrived in Tokyo on October 29. The month of October was known as “gods absent” month because it was thought that the gods left their temples to go to the Grand Izumo Shrine. Bashō is joking that he and the gods were all on a journey and have been counting the days until they can return home.

1691—winter. The associative technique ties together the three things Bashō is tired of: Kyoto, the cold winds, and winter life.

1691—winter. Saké is often heated to bring out the flavors and it is a special treat to sip this hot drink on a cold night. In a few places in Japan there will often be lightning just before the snow begins to fall. The poem compares the bright, expectant faces of the drinkers to the flash of lightning.
1691—winter. Bashō wrote this when he visited the Hōrai Temple, with 1,425 stone steps, located about 9 miles (15 km) northeast of Shinshiro. Mount Hōrai, 2,250 feet (684 m) high, is covered with Japanese cedars and jagged rocks.

1691—winter. Bashō regularly suffered from abdominal pain and lumbago. His disciple Hakusetsu made arrangements for a yogi healer to come to Bashō, but Bashō jokes that since this temple was a holy place, the yogi healer came in answer to his prayers.

1691—winter. This was the greeting verse to Tsukamoto Joshi (1641-1724), who employed hundreds of men on the Shimada side to carry people across the Öi River on their backs.

1691—winter. The Öi River flows through Shizuoka Prefecture from the north to the south into Suruga Bay. During Bashō’s lifetime the only way to cross the river was to be carried over on the backs of men. The name Öi can also mean “Hello,” as people had to stand on the shore calling for a carrier. The poem seems to suggest that the driver of pack animals, who brought Bashō and then left, did not know the misery of waiting in the rain for someone to carry him across the river.

1691—winter. This was a greeting to Bashō’s friends and students at his home on the Fukagawa river. The house, the third cottage built by his disciples, was still unfinished. There is also the idea that when the gods leave the area, the leaves fall off the trees.

1691—winter. The implication is that Bashō did not die on his journeys as he always thought he would. The image of snow on withered pampas grass could be seen as a metaphor for himself.

1691—winter. The implication is that Bashō did not die on his journeys as he always thought he would. The image of snow on withered pampas grass could be seen as a metaphor for himself.
1691—winter. *Kazu* (*Pueraria lobata*) is a parasite vine that grows very quickly and chokes out other plants. Normally the underside of the leaf is whitish, but on this morning both sides are white. According to an account in *Letters between Kyorai and Tabe* (*Kyo Ta Shōoku*), published in 1785, the disciple Ransetsu, known as Hattori (1654–1707), argued against the Fukagawa group and criticized them very severely. Bashō became angry with Ransetsu, but forgave him when he apologized. This verse is claimed to have the hidden message: “I throw away resentment and show my face.”

774. *kuri sawagu* / Toba no tazura ya / kan no ame

野鶏の働き/野鳥のたれ/かんな雨

1691—winter. Shikō (1665–1713) says in one of his essays that this was composed by Bashō on the theme of “the coldest rain.” Toba was a place south of Kyoto famous for wild geese. Because wild geese were such a beloved motif for poetry, this place was named in many poems.

775. *no tori no* / kokoro wa shirazu / toshi wasure

鶏の心は知らず/年忘れ

1691—New Year. Some believe that Bashō meant that in the same way we do not understand the heart of a bird or a fish, others cannot know how our hearts are at a year-end party.

776. *uguisu ya* / mochi ni funsuru / en no saki

夜鶯の働き/まちに松つる/室の先

1692—New Year. Rice cakes were a New Year’s tradition. In fine weather these were set out on the porch to cool and harden. In a letter dated February 7, 1692, Bashō wrote to his disciple Sanpū: “This is what I have been striving to compose.” Bashō saw this poem as a good example of the tone he was aiming for called karumi (“lightness”).

777. *hito no mi nu* / haru ya kagami no / ura no ume

人見の実/春や鏡の裏/裏の梅

1691—spring. This is similar to the riddle technique: though one cannot see spring in a mirror, this one has plum blossoms behind it as decoration.

778. *sono nioi* / momo yori shirosi / suisen ka

その匂いより白し水仙花

1692—spring. This was the greeting verse given to Hakusetsu, the village headman of Shinshiro, at a renga party for twelve poets. Hakusetsu had two sons, fourteen and eleven years old. Bashō gave one of the sons his previous *nom de plume* (“Green Peach”), a sign he was attracted to him. The Japanese peach is prized for its white flesh.
729. neko no koi / yamn toki neya no / oboro-zuki
cat's love / stop time bedroom's / hazy moon
1692—spring. In Japan, spring is often accompanied by a gentle haze due to the moisture rising from the surrounding seas. Haziness is a symbol not only for spring, but also for love.

780. urayamashi / ukiyo no kita no / yama-zakura
enviable / secular world of the north's / mountain cherry
1692—spring. Bashō included this verse in a letter to Kukū, a hermit disciple in the precincts of a Buddhist temple. This is an example of haikai using an implied metaphor: the mountain cherry tree was like the hermit monk.

781. ryō no te ni / momo to sakura ya / kusa no mochi
both of hands in / peach and cherry <> / herbs of rice cakes
1692—spring. The grass or herb in the rice cracker was chopped yomogi ("mugwort," Artemisia indica). On this occasion Bashō was visited by his longtime disciples Kikaku and Ransetsu. The wordplay is built on the proverb "ryō no te ni hana," which literally means "to have flowers in both hands" or a "double advantage." It is often used to describe a man who sits between two pretty women. The word hana ("flower") is dropped but is implied.

782. kono kokoro / suiseyo hana ni / goki ichigu
this heart / surmise flower in / five bowls with lids
1692—spring. This verse was given to Shikō with a set of covered bowls as he set out to travel over the same territory Bashō had traveled in his journey to the far north. Bashō was preparing him for the self-sufficient life of a mendicant friar.

783. kazoe ki nu / yashiki yashiki no / ume yanagi
count come / villa villa of / plum willow
1692—summer. Supposedly Bashō took a walk through a residential part of town and amused himself by counting the willow and plum trees.

784. hototogisu / nakya ya go shaku no / ayamegusa
cuckoo / sing five feet of / iris leaves
1692—spring. This verse is a two-word variation and truncation of an anonymous tanka taken from the imperial poetry anthology Kokinwakashū: hototogisu / nakuya satsuki no / ayamegusa (the cuckoo / sings of May / iris leaves), but the tanka has the valuable addition of ayame mo shira nu / koi no suru kana (losing my reason / I wish for a passionate love).

785. mikazuki ni / chi wa oboro nari / soba no hana
crescent moon under / ground as-for hazy is / buckwheat's flowers
三日月に地は臨なり穂姿の花
1692—summer. Buckwheat blooms with thick, whitish flowers that grow low over the ground. With only the weak light from a crescent moon, Bashō has very accurately described the scene.

1692—summer. For the third time, Bashō’s disciples rebuilt his cottage near its former site on the Fukuagawa river at the edge of Tokyo, and he moved into it in the middle of May. At this time there were no banana trees around the house, so Bashō is suggesting they hang a leaf on the post to represent the tree. There is also the idea that the moon dwells here—perhaps because the house was unfinished and therefore open to the moon.

1692—summer. In summer the young rats leave their nests to crawl around in the walls of the house. Bashō may have been suggesting that he, like the birds and rats, would rather stay in his new house than travel again.

1692—summer. Fuboku was a friend of Bashō and Kinpū. The calling of the cuckoo bird was supposed to make a person miss the past. The cuckoo is a metaphor for Fuboku. There is also the idea that the voice of the bird is in the old box and the words no longer written by the man remain in the inkstone.

1692—summer. The katsuo (“skipjack tuna,” Katsuwonus pelamis) was highly prized as a summer delicacy, and people in Tokyo were eager to taste the first batch of the season. Kamakura is a city about fifty miles (eighty km) south of Tokyo. In 1192, the first government not under the emperor was established here by the military. The image of the fighting tuna and the rebellious samurai warriors had traditional literary connections.

1691—summer. Sea bream was considered a special fish and its Japanese name, tai, meant “auspicious,” “happy,” or “congratulatory.” Salted whale was made of thin slices of white fat, with a rind of dark skin on one end. This was covered with boiling water and then chilled in vinegar and miso, fermented soybean paste. This was a summer specialty enjoyed by the common folk.
NOTES

291. hafuguchi ni / hikage ya yowaru / yū suzumi
gable on / sunlight <> dims / evening coolness
1692—summer. Here Bashō uses the word for the common gable found on most houses.

292. kara hafu no / iri hi ya usuki / yū suzumi
Chinese gable's / sunset light <> thin / evening coolness
1692—summer. Here Bashō uses the name of the Chinese gable that was popular from 1560 to 1600. It was used on the gate or entrance of large homes and Shinto shrines.

293. nana kabu no / hagi no chimoto ya / hoshi no aki
seven plants of / bush clover of a thousand plants <> / stars of autumn
1692—summer. This was for the festival of Tanabata, celebrated on the seventh day of the seventh month. The seven poets of China were all over seventy years old. The Seven Autumn Flowers as described in the early poetry anthology, Man'yōshū, were the bush clover, pampas grass, kudzu vine, pink or carnation, valerian, boneset, and morning glory.

294. nadeshiko no / atsusa wasururu / no-giku kana
pinks' / heat forgotten / field chrysanthemum <>
1692—mixed seasons. The pinks (Dianthus) bloomed in the hot, dry part of summer and the wild chrysanthemum bloomed in the beginning of autumn. The Man'yōshū had designated pinks as an autumn flower, but Bashō seems to be suggesting that in reality pinks bloom in the heat of summer.

295. kiri same no / sora o fuyō no / tenki kana
foggy rain's / sky (object) hibiscus's / weather <>
1692—summer. This verse was written on the painting of a hibiscus flower that had been painted by Kyoriku (1656–1715). Fuyō (Hibiscus mutabilis) is an old-fashioned shrub hibiscus known in America as the “rose of Sharon” or the “Dixie rosemallow.”

296. meigetsu ya / mon ni sashikuru / shio gashira
full moon <> / gate in comes / salt creston tide
1962—autumn. Bashō’s cottage was near the mouth of the Sumida River where it flowed into the bay. Shio gashira is literally “salt tide,” meaning the foaming crests of high tide. The brightness of the waves and the brightness of the full moon both came to Bashō’s gate.

297. aki ni soute / yuka baya sue wa / Komatsu-gawa
autumn in go-along / go (speaker’s wish) eventually as-for / Little Pine River
秋に添って行かばや末は小松川
1962—autumn. Bashō took a boat trip with Tōkei and Shadō up the Onagi River Canal, a distance of about 3 miles (5 km), to see the fall leaves.
798. **kawa kami to / kono kawa shimo ya / tsuki no tomo**

upstream and / these downstream <> / moon’s friend

1692—autumn. The village of Five Pines was on the Onagi River Canal, which connects the Sumida River in the west with the Naka River in the east. What Bashō referred to as upstream and downstream were the rivers to the right and left of this point. Some scholars think the reference is to actual poets like Sōdō and Senna.

799. **yuku mo mata / sue tanomoshi ya / ao mikan**

depart also but / future hopeful <> / green orange

1692—autumn. Bashō gave this to his disciple Otokuni as a farewell gift. The green of the citrus fruit was unlike the browns and ochres of autumn. Its greenness promised the golden ripeness of the fruit in winter. Bashō seems to be saying that he had high hopes that this writer, who was still green, would ripen into a bright, golden poet.

800. **yuku aki no / nao tanomoshi ya / ao mikan**

departing autumn of / still hopeful <> / green orange

1692—autumn. Technically, the mikan (Citrus reticulata) is the common mandarin orange.

801. **aoku te mo / arubeki mono o / tōgarashi**

green and also / should be thing (object) / red pepper

1692—autumn. This poem was the opening verse for a renga written with Ranran and Taisui in honor of Shadō, a physician from Ômi. He stayed at Bashō’s new home from September to the following January. This verse is often considered an allegorical reference to Shadō. Red was associated with showiness, hotheadedness, and ambition. “Green” could mean either a “newcomer to poetry” or the “natural state of growing things.”

802. **sode no iro / yogorete samushi / koi nezumi**

sleeve’s color / seems-stained dreary / color rat

1684—94—autumn. Senka, one of Bashō’s students, was wearing the gray robes of mourning. Traditionally, the more closely one was related to the deceased, the darker the color of the mourning robes. Even if one wore a lighter shade of gray, the sleeves would become darker when wet with tears. Here the rat-gray mourning robe is darker, not because of tears, but because it is dirty.

803. **hatsu shimo ya / kiku hie somuru / koshi no wata**

first frost <> / chrysanthemum feel chilly start to / waist’s cotton

1692—autumn. This verse was enclosed with a letter to Ukō, the wife of Bashō’s student Bonchō. Bonchō (?–1714) was a doctor. Bashō was thanking Ukō for her gift of a waist warmer, a quilted cotton wrap tied around the waist for additional warmth in cold weather. The small joke in the poem comes from the practice of tying balls of unspun cotton over chrysanthemum flowers at night to protect them from frost.
804. kyō bakari / hito no toshi yore / hatsu shigure
today indeed / people also get old / first wintry shower
1692—winter.

805. rohiraki ya / sakan o yuku / hin no shimo
opening fireplace <> / plaster old get / sideburns of frost
1692—winter. The ceremony of opening the fireplace was held during either the first fire of the winter season or the first fire after the fireplace was newly plastered.

806. kuchi kiri ni / Sakai no niwa zo / natsukashiki
mouth open in / Sakai's garden <> / longed for
1692—winter. Kuchi kiri literally means “to cut a mouth,” which meant “to open a new jar of tea.” Sakai was the name of a garden designed by Sen no Rikyū (1522—91), the great tea master in Osaka.

807. shio dai no / haguki mo samushi / no no tana
salt sea bream's / gums also cold / fish of shop
1692—winter. By this time Bashō had probably lost several teeth.

808. o meiko ya / abura no yōna / sakē goshō
memorial service <> / oil of like / sakē five gallons
1692—winter. October 13 was the annual memorial service for the founder of the Nichiren sect, the Buddhist Priest Nichiren (1222—82). Bashō was referring to a thank-you note the priest had written for some high-quality sakē in which he compared it to oil.

809. tsuki hana no / gu ni hari tate n / kan no iri
moon flower of / stupidity in a needle prick (speaker’s will) / cold season entering
1692—winter. The expression tsuki hana ("moon flowers") was a way of referring to renga writing because of the way these two aspects of nature were used to give structure to the poem. It seems Bashō felt he should be cured of renga writing through acupuncture. The associative technique suggests that the sensation of a needle entering the skin is similar to how a person feels entering the cold season.

810. niwa hakite / yuki o wasururu / hahaki kana
garden sweep / snow (object) forget / broom<>
1692—winter. This verse is handwritten on a drawing by Bashō of Han Shan, a Chinese poet and hermit who lived in the ninth century. Bashō's drawing shows Han Shan from the back with a broom.
871. uzumi-bi ya / kabe ni wa kyaku no / kageboshi
banked fire <> / wall on as-for guest's / shadow
1692—winter. This verse was composed when Bashô visited Kyokusui, a high-ranking warrior of the Zeze Clan, at his house at Minami-Hatchôbori in Tokyo.

872. uchi yorite / hana ire sagure / ume tsubaki
a bit come closer / flower vase look at / plum camellia
1692—winter. The humor in this verse comes from the invitation to note the vase instead of the flowers.

873. naka naka ni / kokoro okashiki / shiwasu kana
very much in / heart amusing / end of the year <>
1692—end of the year. Bashô sent this verse as a thank-you to Kyokusui for a keg of sake.

874. sekidoro o / suzume no warau / detachi kana
carolers (object) / sparrow's smile / appearance <>
1692—end of the year. The sekizoro were groups of entertainers who went from house to house singing and dancing as they begged for food and wished the family a happy new year. They covered their lower faces with red cloth and decorated their hats with ferns to look mysterious and spooky.

875. hamaguri no / ikern kai are / toshi no kure
clams’ / survived valuable to be / year’s end
1692—end of the year. The wordplay comes with kai, which can mean either “worthy” or “valuable” and “shell” or “shellfish.” The clams have survived because they have hard shells, and they have become valuable at the end of the year for the traditional clam soup.

876. toshi doshi ya / saru ni kisetaru / saru no men
year after year <> / monkey in dressed up / monkey’s mask
1693—New Year. Animal shows were part of the holiday festivities. According to Dohô, Bashô said, “Man regrets that he stays at the same place, and repeats the same errors every year.” In the Japanese zodiac the years were assigned to twelve animals.

877. haru no yaya / keshiki totonou / tsuki to ume
spring also gradually / appearance be arranged / moon and plum
1693—spring.

878. konnyaku ni / kyô wa urikatsu / wakana kana
jelly noodles in / today as-for sell win / young greens <>
1693—spring. What we call “jelly noodles” are made from konnyaku, which is made
from the bulb of the elephant foot plant (*Amorphophallus rivieri*). On the seventh day of
the first month of the new year, the tradition was to make a stew of seven herbs.

829. *konnyaku no / sashimi no sukoshi / ume no hana*
jelly noodles / raw fish also a few slices / plum’s blossoms
1693—spring. This poem was enclosed in a letter of condolence.

820. *tōki yori / aware wa tsuka no / sumire-gusa*
goldenrod than / sadness as-for grave’s / violet grass
1693—spring. *Tōki* ("angelica," *Angelica acutiloba*) grows up to a foot (thirty cm) tall and
blossoms with umbels of tiny white five-petalled flowers. It is used as a food, flavoring,
medicine, or ingredient in teas. The ideogram for *tōki* can be read as “you should return
home.” The fact that Bashō had met this man on a journey and the fact that he had
now died on a journey provided an association with the herb angelica.

827. *hatsu muma ni / kitsune no sorishi / atama kana*
first day-of-the-horse on / fox of has shaved / head <=
1693—spring. Zekitsu was Kikaku’s student and attendant. *Hatsu muma* is an annual
celebration of the Inari faith. Inari is the Shinto patron god of farmers and merchants
with fox attendants. The fox is reputed to bewitch people and to shave their heads.

822. *shira no ya / kuroki me o aku / nori no ami*
white fish <= / dark eyes (object) open / law’s net
1693—spring. A Chinese Zen legend from the tenth century referred to the priest as
"Shrimps," because he went to the river every day to fish for shrimp. A popular motif
for painters showed him casting his net because of the association with the concept
that Buddha rescued people from the "net of the law" or dharma. In this poem, Bashō
exchanged the shrimp for ice fish (*Salangichthys microdon*), a type of transparent smelt.
Their open eyes were considered a sign of enlightenment.

828. *tsuru no ke no / kuroki koromo ya / hana no kumo*
crane’s feathers’ / black robe <= / blossoms’ cloud
1693—spring. Sengin was a priest and poet of Fukagawa who was leaving for a pil-
grimage to the shrines at Ise and Kumano. To Bashō he looked like a crane. The Japanese
crane (*Grus japonensis*) is white with black on the neck and wings.

824. *sasa no tsuyu / hakama ni kakeshi / shigeri kana*
bamboo grasses’ dew / pleated skirt on moisten / bush <=
1693—spring. Okada was the second son of Miyazaki Keikō. Okada’s job was to walk
ahead of the lord in order to clear the way, protect him, and make a good impression.
The *hakama* is an ankle-length pleated skirt worn by men for formal occasions.
1693—spring. The phrase *jugetsu no zai* ("moon-wind's talent") means "literary abilities." The poem seems to be the simple advice that one should just enjoy life and forget about any aims and goals to be a poet.

1693—spring. According to Bashō’s letter, dated April 29, to Miyazaki Keikō, a disciple in Ōgaki, this poem has a connection to "A Poem of Chi Bi," composed in 1082, by Su Tung Po (1036-1101). The Chinese poem was: "The moon has risen over the eastern mountain / It hovers over the stars / The mist stays over the river / The brightness of water reaches the heavens."

1693—summer. Bashō seemed unsure which of these two versions he preferred. There is also a third version that is identical to the first one but uses different ideograms. Three of Bashō’s students favored the previous version and only Kyoriku strongly disagreed with his admiration for this version.

1693—summer. Bashō has removed the reference to Kiso and taken the personification of the tree out of the poem. The meaning is the idea that the traveler should have a heart, and not the flowers of the tree.

1693—summer. *Uki hito* ("a melancholy person") can also mean "one who is above trifles" or "a hardened traveler." The ambiguity of the poem allows the reader to think that the flies are also above such trifles as people traveling through their territory.
kono tera wa / niwa ippai no / bashō kana
this temple as-for / garden full of / banana trees

1684-94—summer. Basho’s disciples had again planted banana trees around his new house. In this poem, Basho refers to his dwelling as a temple rather than a grass hut.

yūgao ya / youte kao dasu / mado no ana
evening faces <> / drunk face put out / window of hole

1693—summer. This verse was composed at Basho’s cottage at Fukagawa in Tokyo. The bottle gourd plant was called either “moonflowers” or “evening faces” for its large, white, squash-like flowers that opened in the evening.

domora yo / hirugao sakinu / uri mukan
children (plural) (address) / bindweed bloom / melon peel (speaker’s will)

1693—summer. The uri (C. melo) is the “musk melon” or “cantaloupe.” The hirugao (“noon faces,” Calystegia japonica) is called Japanese “bindweed.” These three plants all have the word “face” in their names: asagao (morning faces, morning glories); hirugao (noon faces, bindweed); yūgao (see note for poem 832).

iza kodomo / hirugao sakaba / uri mukan
hey children / bindweed bloom if / melon peel (speaker’s will)

1693—summer. This is another version of the preceding poem.

madonari ni / hirune no dai ya / take mushiro
window by / afternoon nap of bed <> / bamboo mat

1693—summer. Tao Yuan-Ming, or Tao Qian (365-427), was once a provincial governor in China, but quit his job to return home to become a hermit when a smaller, younger man from his area became his superior inspector. He said he could not bend his knees to someone just for money.

namagusashi / konagi ga u no / hae no wata
fishy smell / waterweed on top of / carp’s guts

1693—summer. Konagi (“waterweed,” Monochoria vaginalis) invades rice paddies and reduces the yield. Hae is a freshwater fish related to the carp. Knowing the Latin name of the plant and the many jokes about fishy smells, one wonders if there is another layer to this poem.

takamizu ni / hoshi mo tabine ya / iwa no u
flood water in / stars also sleeping on a journey <> / rock of top

1693—summer. Tanabata is the festival on July 7 that celebrates the legend that the Weaver Girl star, Vega, was to meet the Cowhearder or the star Altair for one night of love. They would cross the heavens on a bridge of wings of magpies. If it rained they
could not meet and people could not enjoy an outdoor picnic. On this night it rained so hard there was flooding.

888. *hatsudake ya / mada hikazu henu / aki no tsuyu*

mushroom <> / still number of days to pass not / autumn’s dew

1693—autumn. *Lactarius hatsudake* bleeds a reddish liquid that changes into green when broken. In spite of this spooky attribute, the mushroom is edible. One does not know from the poem whether the autumn dew that Bashō mentions is actual dew or this fluid.

889. *matsudake ya / kabureta hodo wa / matsu no nari*

pine mushroom <> / scratched surface (state of being) / pine tree’s shape

1684—94—autumn. The *matsudake* is named “pine mushroom” because it often grows under pine trees.

890. *natsu kakete / meigetsu atsuki / suzumi kana*

summer extends / full moon hot / enjoy coolness <>

1693—autumn.

891. *izayoi wa / wazukani yami no / hajime kana*

waning moon as-for / a little darkness of / beginning <>

1693—autumn. Formerly when one wrote of the waning moon the emphasis was on the decreasing amount of light. Bashō looks at the other side of the situation to see the increasing amount of darkness.

892. *akikaze ni / orete kanashiki / kuwa no tsue*

autumn wind in / broken sadly / mulberry’s staff

1693—autumn. Ranran, a military leader of the Itakura Clan, died suddenly on August 27 while returning from the moon-viewing trip to Kamakura. The age of forty-eight was called the mulberry age. Ranran died at forty-seven, so the staff wood had to be mulberry.

893. *mishi ya sono / nanuka wa haka no / mika no tsuki*

have seen <> / seventh / day ceremony as-for grave’s / crescent moon

1693—autumn. This is the second poem in the essay “Lamenting the Death of Matsukura Ranran,” written in honor of Bashō’s disciple who suddenly died on August 27.

894. *iru tsuki no / ato wa tsukue no / yosumi kana*

disappear moon of / after as-for desk of / four corners <>

1693—autumn. This verse was written in condolence to Kikaku for the death of his father, Tōjun, who had died on August 29, 1693. It appears at the conclusion of Bashō’s
essay "Tōjun no Den" ("About the Life of Tōjun"). Some people find additional meaning in the fact that the moon is round and the desk is square or rectangular.

845. *tsuki ya sono / hachi no ki no hi no / shita omote*

moon <> that / a famous No play of day of / face without a mask

1693—a, autumn. Koshōgen was a famous No performer, the eighth master of the Hōshō school, who was the father of Senpo, another No performer and the tenth master, who was Bashō's student. Because the warrior in the story, played by Koshōgen, was an actual person rather than a ghost or divinity, he did not wear a mask. Thus Bashō could see the moon-like beauty of his face.

846. *asagao ya / hiru wa jō orosu / mon no kaki*

morning glories <> / daytime as-for lowered lock / gate's fence

1693—a, autumn. During parts of the months of July and August, Bashō closed his gate to visitors. Because the morning glory flower closes up during the day, Bashō associated its action with his.

847. *asagao ya / kore mo mata waga / tomo nara zu*

morning glories <> / these also either my / friend are not

1693—a, autumn.

848. *oi no na no / ari tomo shira de / shijūkara*

growing-old of name of / to-be-even-if-to-know not / after forty [or chickadee]

1693—a, autumn. Hōshō Sadayū's pen name was Senpo. The wordplay allows two distinct haiku—one with a nature reference and one without.

849. *shira tsuyu mo / kobosa nu hagi no / uneri kana*

white dew also / spill not bush clover of / to sway <>

1693—a, autumn. This verse was a description of the hedge around Sanpū's house.

850. *kiku no tsuyu / ochite hiroe ba / nukago kana*

mum's dewdrop / to fall to pick up when / yam nodule <>

1684—94—a, autumn. *Nukago* are small dark brown nodules that grow on yam plants. These are edible and impart a special flavor to boiled rice. The contrast is between the vertical movements of the dewdrops falling and the nodules being picked.

851. *kagemachi ya / kiku no ka no suru / ōtsugushi*

sunset party <> / chrysanthemum's scent to do / tofu kabob

1693—a, autumn. On certain days in January, May, and September, it was customary to invite friends and customers to all-night parties of eating and drinking together in order to worship the sunrise. White squares of tofu were skewered on green slivers of
bamboo, brushed with miso, and heated over open fires. The smoky flavor was similar to the fragrance of chrysanthemums.

852. kiku no hana / saku ya ishiya no / ishi no ai
chrysanthemum's flower / blooms <> stonemason's / stone's between

1693—autumn. Bashō was visiting a stonemason and was surprised to see flowers blooming between the unworked blocks of stone so late in the season.

853. koto-bako ya / furumono dana no / sedo no kiku
harp case <> / old-things store's / back-door's chrysanthemums

1693—autumn. Ōmon dōri was the street leading to the gate before the red light district of old Tokyo. The strangeness of this poem comes from the contrast between the red light district and the harp, an instrument usually played by the daughters of wealthy families. Mums and antiques also have an association.

854. Musashino ya / sawaru mono naki / kimi ga kasa
Musashino Plains <> / touch thing not / your hat

1684—94—autumn. The Musashino Plains were the vast prairie grasslands that are now Tokyo.

855. yuku aki no / keshi ni semarite / kakure keri
departing autumn's / poppy in urge / hide <>

1693—autumn. Keshi (Papaver somniferum) is the opium poppy. It is planted in autumn.

856. asa na asa na / tenarai susumu / kirigirisu
every morning / practice improve / cricket

1684—94—autumn. This is a pun on the name of the cricket that is also called fude tsu mushi (“the writing brush insect”).

857. kangiku ya / ko nuka no kakaru / usu no hata
cold weather mums <> / flour rice bran fall on / hand mill nearby

1693—winter. This is considered another example of karumi (“lightness”) and was used as the starting link of a renga done by Bashō and Yaba. This verse sets up a paradox. It is almost impossible that rice flour has been sprinkled on both flowers and the grinder, but it is possible to see the frost on the flowers as rice flour.

858. kiku no nochi / daikon no hoka / sara ni nashi
chrysanthemum of after / radish of besides / again in not

1684—94—autumn. The daikon (“big root”) tastes like a radish or turnip and has the shape of a carrot. A poetical way of referring to the passing seasons was to mention the flower currently blooming. When the mums finished there was nothing to write about.
until the first plum blossom, but for these poets, there were the radishes.

869. kuratsubo ni / ko bōzu noru ya / daikon hiki
saddle in / small boy [or priest] ride <> / radish pull

1693—winter. These radish-flavored, carrot-shaped vegetables grow up to 2 feet (60 cm) in length. This verse uses the maekuzuki or "twist technique": it leads the reader’s mind in one direction and then abruptly changes direction and image with the addition of the third line. The suggestion of sexual innuendo is consistent with the maekuzuki.

860. saru hiki wa / saru no kosode o / kinuta kana
monkey pull as-for / monkey’s sleeves (object) / fulling block <>

1684—94—autumn. Part of the wordplay comes with hiki, which can mean "to pull," "to be the master of an animal," or "the one who pulls it along."

863. saru hiki no / saru to yo o furu / aki no tsuki
monkey’s master / monkey and life (object) quiver / autumn’s moon

1684—94—autumn. This is not a hokku but a tsuke ("a verse linked to another"). The same verse is also used in the renga The Monkey’s Raincoat.

862. yosugara ya / take kōrasuru / kesa no shimo
through night <> / bamboo frozen / morning’s frost

1684—94—winter. This verse was handwritten on a strip of fancy paper.

863. mina idete / hashi o itadaku / shimoji kana
everyone comes out / bridge (object) to appreciate / frosty road <>

1693—winter. This bridge, Shinhashi ("New Great Bridge"), over the Sumida River in Tokyo, was completed on December 7, 1693, after five months of construction work. Even in a light frost, bridges become whiter because of the coolness of the water below and lack of contact with the warmer earth.

867. hatsu yuki ya / kake kakaritaru / hashi no ue
first snowfall <> / almost finished / bridge’s on

1693—winter. Here the middle line applies to the image in the first and third lines and acts as a pivot, a tanka writing technique.

865. Naniwazu ya / tanishi no futa mo / fuyu-gomori
Naniwa—rapid waves <> / mud snail’s lid also / winter confinement

1693—winter. Basho’s disciple Shado, who used to live at Zeze on the shores of Lake Biwa, was moving to the larger city of Naniwa. Tanishi ("small stone," Heterogen longispira) was a species of mud snails that lived in rice paddies.
866. **zōsui ni / biwa kiku no ki no / arare kana**  
rice gruel in / lute listen eaves of / hailstones <>  
1684—94 Winter. The sound of the *biwa* ("Japanese lute") has often been compared to the sound of hailstones falling on a thatched roof. The idea of the poem is to show that Bashō was content with the simple things of life like rice-vegetable gruel and the sound of hailstones.

867. **Suma no ura no / toshitori mono ya / shiba ichiwa**  
Suma's beach's / New Year's celebration things <> / brushwood bundle  
1684—94—New Year. This verse was written on the painting of a bundle of brushwood lying by the sea. When bad weather confined Bashō indoors, he turned to paintings for inspiration. The beach at Suma could refer to the time the hero of *The Tale of Genji* was exiled to this place during winter to live in poverty.

868. **kinbyō no / matsu no furusa yo / fuyu-gomori**  
gold-leaf screen / pine's antiquity <> / winter confinement  
1693 Winter. Shida Yaba (1662—1740) had first been a student of Kikaku but became Bashō's disciple in this year.

869. **kiku no ka ya / niwa ni kiretaru / kutsu no soko**  
chrysanthemum's scent <> / garden in worn-out / sandal's sole  
1693—winter. The normal festival of the chrysanthemum was on the ninth day of the ninth month, but Sōdō had invited Bashō and his friends to a party on the ninth day of the tenth month. Is there a connection between the scent of mums and an old sandal?

870. **kangiku ya / amazake tsukuru / mado no saki**  
winter chrysanthemum <> / sweet wine makes / window's front  
1693 Winter. *Amazake* is a sweet, unfiltered, milky-colored drink made from rice. The association is between the milky liquid and the small white winter chrysanthemums, which were probably covered with oiled white paper.

871. **hito tsuyu no / kobosanu kiku no / kōri kana**  
human dew also / spill out not chrysanthemum of / ice <>  
1693 Winter. *Sankashū*, an imperial anthology of waka, contained one of Saigyō's tanka, "The Heart of the Eldest Son of Fan Li." It refers to a Chinese legend about a man whose second son murdered someone. The eldest son was sent out to take gold to the bereaved family to pay to avoid the murder charges. The elder son was so stingy he kept the gold and murdered his brother.

872. **hatsu shigure / hatsu no ji o waga / shigure kana**  
first wintry-shower / first of written word (object) my / wintry-shower <>  
初時雨初の字を我が時雨哉
1684—94—winter. Ippō explained this verse in his book *Haikai Awazu Hara*: “This was a greeting to a certain host who invited Bashō to his residence. Bashō met him for the first time, and that’s why he emphasized the character of the ‘first.’” Ippō had accompanied Bashō to this meeting.

**872. ha ni somoku / tsubaki no hana ya / yoso gokoro**
leaf in opposition / camellia’s flower <> / indifferent

1684—94—winter. A note in *Hanashi Dorishū*, published in 1701, describes that when a disciple told Bashō that a similar poem had been composed by Kosai, Bashō threw his poem away. Kosai’s poem was *urameshi ya / achi mukitaru / hana tsubaki* (how regrettable / facing the other way / camellia flowers).

**874. kegoromo ni / tsutsumite nukushi / kamo no ashi**
down-filled robe in / wrap warm / wild duck’s foot

1693—winter. In English, the verse is an excellent example of the twist technique. Feathers that warm a person once warmed a duck.

**876. furi uri no / gan awarenari / Ebisu kō**
peddler’s / wild duck pitiful / Ebisu festival

1693—winter. The festival of Ebisu, one of the seven gods of good fortune, was held on November 20. Friends and families gathered together to celebrate Ebisu and wish for prosperous business in the coming holiday season. Bashō seemed to be saying that the good fortune did not extend to the many ducks killed for this feast.

**876. monohoshi ya / fukuro no uchi no / tsuki to hana**
thing wanted <> / sack’s inside of / moon and flower

1684—94—mixed seasons. Hotei is one of the seven gods of good fortune. He is potbelled and carries a large bag over his shoulder. Most people wanted Hotei to give them material things, but Bashō wanted poems and more seasons of moons and flowers, or a longer life.

**877. Ebisu kō / su uri ni hakama / kiseni keri**
god of good fortune festival / vinegar peddler formal skirts / dress up <>

1693—winter. This is about another vendor for the festival of Ebisu, the god of good fortune and business prosperity. The hakama was a pleated skirt that men wore on formal occasions. The incongruity of the poor peddler’s formal dress would have the same effect as seeing a top hat on a chimney sweep.

**878. osana na ya / shira nu okina no / maru zukin**
childhood name <> / know not old man of / circular cap

1684—94—mixed seasons. Teitoku (1571—1653) was the leader of the Teimon school of
poetry, which preceded the Danrin school. Bashō is making fun of Teitoku because he changed his name to Chōzu-maru at the age of sixty-three. *Maru* was a popular name for children in Japan. The cap is like a skullcap or beanie.

δ79. *ko ni aku to / mōsu hito ni wa / hana mo nashi*  
child in tired (quote) / say person in as-for / blossom also not  
1684—94—spring.

δ80. *mononofu no / daikon nigaki / hanashi kana*  
warrior’s / radish bitter / talk-story <>  
1693—winter. The daikon is a large radish that is often pickled. It is hotter than most pickled vegetables, but Bashō uses the word *nigaki*, which means ”bitter.” Both the pickles and the military man’s stories left a bitter taste. The reference to eating roots refers to the proverb “the ambitious strong man eats roots.”

δ87. *seri yuki ya / suso wa no ta i no / hatsu gōri*  
parsley baked duck <> / around-the-foot-of-the-mountain of irrigation pond / first ice  
1693—winter. *Seri* is the “water dropwort” or “Japanese parsley” (*Oenanthe javanica*). It was baked with duck or pheasant in a soy sauce and vinegar marinade. The dish of cooked parsley and meat looked like the first ice on an irrigation pond.

δ82. *iki nagara / hitotsu ni kōru / namako kana*  
live (current action) / one block into freeze / sea cucumber <>  
1693—winter. *Namako*, of the Holothuroidea family, is the “sea cucumber.” It has been debated whether Bashō was referring to one animal or more.

δ88. *ariake mo / misoka ni chikashi / mochi no oto*  
dawn moon also / last-day-of-the-month in near / rice cake’s sound  
1693—winter. The word *ariake* indicates the last phases of the moon before the new moon. In the pre-dawn light the slender moon rises in the east. *Mochi* are traditional New Year’s rice cakes. The rice is steamed and then pounded into a smooth mass. It is assumed that the sound Bashō was referring to was the noise of pounding the rice.

δ89. *setsukare te / toshi wasure suru / kigen kana*  
being urged and / year-end party to do / mood <>  
1684—93—New Year. One cannot know if it was Bashō’s good mood that motivated him to hold a party or if he was in a good mood because someone else suggested he hold a party.
1693—New Year. In preparation for the New Year people traditionally did a major housecleaning. Bashō saw this verse as another example of karumi (“lightness”).

1694—New Year. The hōrai is a small wooden stand to honor the sacred mountain in the Eastern Sea in the Chinese legend of a Taoist superman who enjoyed eternal life. Ise was the place where the Grand Shrine with the holiest of holies for the Shinto religion was kept.

1693—New Year. The question is whether Bashō is really recalling a break-in in his house or if he is referring to the idea that someone has stolen not only the night from him, but also a year.

1694—New Year. Nazuna (Capsella bursa-pastoris) is the common weed called “shepherd’s purse.” Part of the New Year celebration was to make a party of going out into the fields to gather the newly sprouted grasses or weeds. During the rest of the year the plant was considered a weed, but on this day it was gratefully and respectfully gathered.

1684—94—spring. The udo (Aralia cordata) is also called the “Japanese spikenard.” It is commonly found on the slopes of wooded embankments. The 3 to 6 feet (1 to 2 m) high plants have large leaves and small, white flowers that are produced in large umbels 12–18 inches (30–45 cm) in diameter in late summer.

1684–94—spring. “Young grass” is a euphemism for young girls. Young boys often had all their hair shaved off except for a patch of it above the forehead.

1684–94—spring. It is possible that the rat’s nest was in the wall and the sparrows’
nest was on the outside. There is a similarity between the voices of a bird and a rat when they are young.

892. haremono ni / yanagi no sawaru / shinae kana
sore or boil on / willow's touch / bend

1694—spring. This was the original version of the following poem that was sent in a letter to Kyorai.

893. haremono ni / sawaru yanagi no / shinae kana
sore or boil on / touch willow's / bend

1694—spring. Again there is a question of whether this really happened or if the verse uses a simile.

894. kara kusa ni / oshi wake mitaru / yanagi kana
oiled-paper umbrella under / push divide see [or try] / willow

1694—spring.

895. ume ga ka ni / mukashi no ichiji / aware nari
plum blossom's scent in / long-ago of one character / sorrowful it is

1694—spring.

896. ume ga ka ya / mi nu yo no hito ni / gyoi o uru
plum blossom scent <> / see not this of person in / honor (object) get

1684-94—spring. This was a greeting poem to Sochū when Bashō met him for the first time. The juxtaposition suggests that the plum scent is a person Bashō has not yet had the honor of meeting and also describes the situation and season for which the poem was written.

897. ume ga ka ni / notto hi no dern / yamaji kana
plum blossom scent / suddenly sun of rise / mountain road

1694—spring. The pseudo-science technique suggests that the sun shines because of the scent of the flowers. Actually the opposite is true. The sun warms the air and this increases the scent of the flowers.

898. ume ga ka ni / oi modosa runu / samusa kana
plum blossom of scent in / chase-away bring-back (passive) / cold

1684-94—spring. This verse works with the idea that the blossoms warm the air. The middle line shows contrasting images for the poem’s technique.
899. ka o nokosu / ranchō ran no / yadori kana
scent (object) leave / curtain orchid of / private room <>
1684—94—spring. There is no current documentation on this priest and therefore the
poem cannot be accurately dated.

900. nehan e ya / shiwade awasuru / juzu no oto
Buddha's death day memorial <> / wrinkled hands join / rosary's sound
crinoid or wreath hanging / destruction of the rosary's sound
1694—spring. Buddha's death is celebrated on February 15. The last two lines have
several possible meanings. The person's hands are joined together in prayer, of wrin-
kled hands join other wrinkled hands; or three, all the hands join with the clacking
sound of prayer beads being counted off.

901. kanbutsu ya / shiwade awasuru / juzu no oto
Buddha's birthday <> / wrinkled hands join / rosary's sound
sacred or holy / destruction of the rosary's sound
1694—spring. Basho is said to have written this second version because he found the
death day of Buddha to be too sad. The literal meaning of kanbutsu is kani ("to pour")
and butsu ("Buddha"). On April 8, it was customary to pour a tea made of hydrangea
flowers over statues of Buddha to celebrate his birthday.

902. kōmori mo / ideyo ukiyo no / hana ni tori
bat also / emerge this world of / flowers in birds
black robe / earrings / flower in birds
1684—spring. The black robe of the priest suggests a bat hiding in a dark cave. The
idea in the poem is that all the birds and people are already out seeing the cherry
blossoms, so why don't you also come out to see them?

903. yo ni sakaru / hana ni mo nebutsu / mōshikeri
world in bloom / flowers in also hail-Buddha / chanted <>
world in bloom / flowers in also hail-Buddha / chanted <>
1684—94—spring. The nebutsu ("greeting to the Buddha") was different for the differ-
ent sects. The Jōdo sects say, Namu Amida butsu ("Glory to Amitabha") and the
Nichiren sects say Namu Myōhōrengekyō ("Glory to the Lotus Sutra").

904. aoyagi no / doro ni shidaruru / shiohi kana
green willow of / mud in drooping down / low tide <>
1694—spring.

905. hakkō ken / sora de ame furu / yanagi kana
eight or nine feet / sky from rain fall / willow <>
1694—spring. The question here is whether the rain is falling from the sky or if it has
stopped raining but raindrops continue to fall from the willow tree.
906. harusame ya / hachi no su tsutau / yane no mori
spring rain <> / wasp's nest trickle down / roof's leak
1694—spring. Both the rain and the leaky roof contribute to the trickle of water over a wasp's nest.

907. uguisu ya / yanagi no ushiro / yabu no mae
bush warbler <> / willow of behind / thicket of in front
1693—spring. Rarely are haiku concerned with spatial concepts, yet Basho has managed to show the movement of the bird in very few words.

908. hana mi ni to / sasu fume ososhi / Yanagihara
flower-viewing for-the-purpose-of / punt boat slowly / Yanagihara
1694—spring. Yanagihara (“willow belly”) was the name of a section of the Kanda River about 0.6 mile (1 km) long. Basho made a boat trip from his residence on the Fukagawa river, across the Sumida River, and up the Kanda River. He had been invited by Todo Genko to view the cherry blossoms.

909. harusame ya / mino fuki kaesu / kawa yanagi
spring rain <> / straw rain cape blows back / river willow
1684—94—spring. The wind blows aside the willow the same way it blows open a rain cape made of straw.

910. suru kawa ni / kobite me o haru / yanagi kana
old river in / flirt eye (object) open wide / willow <>
1684—94—spring. The wordplay comes with me o haru (“to open the eyes wide in a coquettish manner”) and me (“sprout or bud”). Eyebrows and willows have often been compared to each other. If one sees the old river as making eyes at the willow, the river is personified, but the truth is that the old river does cause the willow to sprout.

911. haru no yo wa / sakura ni akete / shimai keri
spring of night as-for / cherry blossoms in dawn / to end
1684—94—spring. It is unusual for haiku to end with a verb.

912. saki midasu / momo no naka yori / hatsu-zakura
blooming wildly / peach’s among from / first cherry blossoms
1684—94—spring.

913. cho tori no / uwatsuki tatsu ya / hana no kumo
butterfly bird of / restlessly rise up <> / flowers of clouds
1684—94—spring. The verse is ambiguous enough that the reader does not know if the butterflies and birds look like a cloud of flowers or if they fly up into a cloud of blossoms.
974. matōdo na / inu sumitsukete / neko no koi
seriousness / dog trampled on / cat's love
1684—94—spring. The meaning is that the cat in love is so determined to find a mate that it no longer fears the dog.

975. yotsu goki no / sorowa nu hanami / gokoro kana
nested bowls of / be complete not cherry blossom viewing / heart
1694—spring. The mention of nested bowls refers to the things a monk on a pilgrimage would have. Bashō is saying that even without the nested bowls, his preference to sit quietly under a pine tree instead of singing and dancing under the cherry blossoms, means that he was more like a monk at heart.

976. Nara nanae / shichi dō garan / yae-zakura
Nara seven-fold / seven temple building / eight-petalled cherry blossoms
1684—94—spring. Nara, an early capital of Japan, and nanae both have the sound unit na. Combining these na sounds yields nana (“seven”), which reflects the temple’s seven buildings. The punch line comes with the cherry trees, which have eight petals on a blossom and are therefore even greater than the capital or the temple.

977. Saigyō no / iori mo ara n / hana no niwa
Saigyō’s / cottage also be (conjecture) / flowers of garden
1684—94—spring. Lord Rosen (1655—1733) was the second son of the feudal lord of the Iwaki Clan. Saigyō was a poet that Bashō admired, studied, and quoted.

978. harusame ya / yomogi o nobasu / kusa no michi
spring rain <> / mugwort (object) grow taller / grass of path
1694—spring. Tomogi (Artemisia princeps) was an important ingredient in the rice crackers of the New Year festivities. Even later in the year, its distinctive aroma made one think that spring had arrived.

979. samukara nu / tsuyu ya botan no / hana no mitsu
cold not / dew <> / peony of / flower of honey
1694—summer. “Dew” is an autumn season word and therefore implies that any dew is cold like it is in fall. However, the peony blooms in summer, so any dew on it needs to be renamed to something warm like honey.

980. kogakure te / chatsumi no kiku ya / hototogisu
hide oneself / tea picker also hear <> / cuckoo
1694—summer. The combination of tea pickers and the cuckoo bird was a novel pairing.
921. uno hana ya / kuraki yanagi no / oyobigoshi
tofu pulp <> / dark willow’s / bent forward

1694—summer. Oyobigoshi means “bending over so far one is almost prostrate,” as one would be when sitting on the floor and stretching for something that is almost out of reach. Un o hana can be either the pulp that is left over from making tofu, or a tiny white flower on a briar bush.

922. ame ori ori / omou koto naki / sanae kana
rain time time / worry thing not / rice seedlings <>

1684—94—summer. In January, May, and September, friends and customers were invited to an all-night party to offer and pray to the sunrise. Rice is planted thickly in special beds. When the sprouts are about 8 to 10 inches (20 to 25 cm) high, they are transplanted to water-covered fields.

923. ajisai ya / yabu o ko niwa no / betsu zashiki
hydrangea <> / bush (object) small garden of / detached room

1694—summer. Back home, Bashō stayed in a detached room his brother had made for him. Bashō seems to be pointing out that the place is so rustic that the garden is only a thicket of hydrangea.

924. nadeshiko ni / kakaru nanida ya / kusu no tsuyu
carnations on / to drop tears <> / camphor tree’s dew

1684—94—summer. The painting referred to in the preface portrays Kusunoki Masashige (d. 1336) saying good-bye to his son, knowing that the battle would be won by the opposition to his government. The nadeshiko (Dianthus barbatus), or “bearded pink,” is called “sweet William” in Europe. Bashō saw the tree as the warrior father and the low-lying flowering plant as his son. In the Japanese literary heritage, this flower was a metaphor for a love-child. Usually the Japanese poet used either the word for “dew” or for “tears” and implied the other, but here Bashō used both words.

925. mukashi kike / Chichibu-dono sae / sumōtori
old story to hear / feudal lord’s warrior also-only / wrestler

1684—94—mixed seasons. The name Chichibu-dono indicated Hatakeyama Shigetada (1164—1205), who was a leading warrior under the first military government of Kamakura.

926. mugi no ho o / tayori ni tsukamu / wakare kana
barley’s ears (object) / depending on grasp / farewell <>

1694—summer. This version of the poem was published in three publications.

927. mugi no ho o / chikara ni tsukamu / wakare kana
barley of ears (object) / support grasp / farewell <>
1694—summer. The idea of both of these poems is the same, but one can see that the revision made slightly better sense. Bashō was already quite ill and weak.

928. wakare ba ya / kasa te ni sagete / natsu-baori
parting time <> / hat hand in carry / summer vest

1684—94—summer. Evidently Bashō was feeling so hot and exhausted that he carried his hat and sleeveless jacket instead of wearing them.

929. me ni kakaru / toki ya kotosara / satsuki Fuji
eye into come / time <> especially / May Mount Fuji

1694—summer. Bashō had not expected to see Mount Fuji because he was traveling during the rainy season, so when the peak appeared, he found it quite special.

930. donmiri to / ouchi ya aine no / hana-gumori
dimly / chinaberry <> rain’s / hazy weather associated with cherry blossoms

1694—spring, written in summer. This verse was written while Bashō was traveling between Hakone and Shimada. As the weather got cooler in the mountains, he felt like he was traveling back to spring. This feeling was heightened because the drizzling rain gave the scene a softness associated with the blooming of the cherry trees. The word ouchi was the older name for sendan (Melia azedarach), the “chinaberry tree,” which was also called the “Persian lilac,” “the pride of India,” and the “Japanese bead tree.”

931. uguisu ya / take no ko yabu ni / oi o naku
bush warbler <> / bamboo of shoot thicket in / getting old (object) sing

1694—summer. The bush warbler is a traditional spring image, but the time when the bamboo sprouts is much later. Thus, the bush warbler is “older” now and its song is a lament about old age.

932. samidare ya / kaiko wazurau / kuwa no hata
early summer rain <> / silkworm ill / mulberry of farm

1694—summer. Again it was recorded that Bashō was fascinated by the idea of a “sick silkworm” and wanted to use the image in a poem. The silkworms are treated as a mass so it would be unusual to notice that one was ill.

933. tawamite wa / yuki matsu take no / keshiki kana
bent as-for / snow waits [or pines] bamboo of / sight <>

1694—summer. This verse was handwritten on Bashō’s own painting of bamboo. There is a slight wordplay when one remembers that matsu can mean either “to long for” or a “pine tree.”
J34. yo o tabi ni / shiro kaku oda no / yuki modori
life (object) journey in / paddy field plow small patch of / back and forth
1694—summer. This verse was the starting link in a renga done at Kakei’s house in Nagoya on May 22. Bashō stayed in his home for three days.

J35. suzushisa no / sashizu ni miyuru / sumai kana
coolness of / plan in appears / house
1694—summer. This version of the poem was handwritten.

J36. suzushisa o / Hida no takumi ga / sashizu kana
coolness (object) / Hida’s carpenter has / house plan
1694—summer. The area of Hida, in the northern part of Gifu Prefecture, was known for the skill of its carpenters. This is the published version of the poem.

J37. Suruga ji ya / hana tachibana mo / cha no nioi
Suruga road / flower orange also / tea’s scent
1694—summer. Suruga is the name of a province in Shizuoka Prefecture that is noted for its oranges and tea. The tachibana is a cross between a tangerine and an orange and is much more sour. When tea leaves are being steamed and dried they give off a strong smell.

J38. samidare no / sora fukio otose / Ōi-gawa
summer rain of / sky blow down / Hello River
1694—summer. Bashō arrived at Joshū’s house on May 15, where he had to stay for three days because of heavy rain. The only way to cross the Ōi River was to be carried across on the shoulders of men. This could only be done when the water was about 2 feet (60 cm) deep.

J39. chisa wa mada / aoba nagara ni / nasubi-jiru
lettuce as-for as-yet / green leaves in / eggplant soup
1694—mixed seasons. The seasons are mixed because lettuce was a spring vegetable and eggplant was a summer vegetable.

J40. ika uri no / koe magirawashi / hototogisu
squid vendor’s / voice confusing / cuckoo
1684—94—summer. Listening for the cuckoo’s call was an elegant occupation for ladies of nobility. For a common man like Bashō, it was more poetic to hear the voice of the squid vendor.

J41. hana to mi to / ichi do ni uri no / sakari kana
flower and fruit and / at the same time melon of / peak season
1684—94—mixed seasons. In Japanese poetry, flowers are celebrated in spring and fruits
are celebrated in summer or autumn. The melon plant has both flowers and fruits. The unusualness of this makes melons a good subject for haikai.

942. **kuna naku to / hito no ie ba ya / Saya domari**

water rail calls (quotation) / people (subject) say that <> / Saya stopping-over

1694—summer. This was the greeting verse to the hermit Yamada when Bashô stayed with him on May 25 with his two friends—Rosen, a merchant of prayer beads, and Soran, Rosen’s disciple. The **kuna** (*Rallus aquaticus*) is called the “water rail.”

943. **kono yado wa / kuina no shira nu / tohosu kana**

this house as-for / water rail also know not / door <>

1684—94—summer. The water rail makes a call that sounds like someone knocking on a door. This was the greeting to Ōtsu, who lived in a secluded place far from the birds of Lake Biwa.

944. **suzushisa ya / sugi ni no matsu no / eda no nari**

coolness <> / naturally wild pine’s / branch’s shape

1694—summer. It has been suggested that the tree in the poem was a miniature tree in the garden or one brought into the room for the party.

945. **fura zu tomo / take uru hi wa / mino to kasa**

rain not even if / bamboo to plant day as-for / straw rain cape and hat

Year unknown—summer. This verse was handwritten by Bashô on his own painting. Supposedly this was the first time the planting of bamboo was used as a season word.

946. **shiba tsukeshi / uma no morori ya / taue darn**

brushwood load (past) / horse’s return <> / paddy-field transplant cask

1694—summer. Bashô wrote an essay, “Shô Ō Zenden,” in which it is possible to determine that he saw this scene from the house of Ensui. Bashô uses the idea that the horse was transplanting the wine from the house to the field.

947. **shiba no to no / tsuki ya sono mama / Amida bô**

brushwood’s door’s / moon <> / the same as it was / Amida priest

Year unknown—autumn. The preface to this verse is a haibun (“an essay plus poem”) titled “Amida Bô.” Amida was the name of a priest that the poet Saigyô visited at Higashiyama.

948. **midokoro no / are ya nowaki no / nochi no kiku**

touching of / to exist <> / typhoon of / after of chrysanthemum

Year unknown—autumn. This poem was written by Bashô on his own ink painting.
The author and the thing in nature have a similar experience, appearance, or emotion. Here, both have survived the storm.

949. suzushisa o / e ni utsushi keri / Saga no take
coolness (object) / picture in reflected <> / Saga’s bamboo

1694—summer. This was a greeting verse to Yamei at his home in Saga.

950. chiru hana ya / tori mo odoroku / koto no chiri
fallen blossoms <> / birds also astonish / harp’s dust

Year unknown—spring. This verse was handwritten on a painting of a Japanese harp by Kano Tansetsu.

951. kiyotaki no / mizu kuma se te ya / tokoroten
clear cascade <> / water draw (to make someone do) and <> / jelly noodles

1694—summer. This was Bashō’s thank-you note to Yamei for serving him tokoroten. The noodles are made from agar agar, a vegetable gelatin, and served with vinegar. The name of the river was Kiyotaki. Kiyo means “clear.” It was a small mountain stream that flowed through a deep gorge before joining the Ōi River. The name applies to both the water used to chill the noodles and the noodles themselves.

952. kiyotaki ya / nami ni chiri naki / natsu no tsuki
clear cascade <> / wave on dirt not / summer’s moon

1694—summer. Again Bashō uses a play of words on the name of kiyotaki (“Clear Cascade”). This verse works with the idea that the moonlight cascades down like the water in the stream and both are free of specks of dirt.

953. Ōi-gawa / nami ni chiri naki / natsu no tsuki
Hello River / wave on dirt not / summer’s moon

1694—summer. Another attempt with the same poem. According to Kenkichi Yamamoto, the reason this version used the Ōi River instead of Kiyo (“clear”) River was to avoid the duplication of “clear” and “no speck of dust.”

954. rokugatsu ya / mine ni kumo oku / Arashiyama
sixth month <> / peak in clouds to place / Storm Mountain

1694—summer. Arashi (“storm”) yama (“mountain”) was really a hill about 1,230 feet (375 m) high in the western part of Kyoto facing the Ōi River. Bashō wrote a letter on June 24 to his disciple Sanpū explaining why he used rokugatsu instead of the more common word minazuki for “June.” He wanted to heighten the contrast between the calmness of the clouds and the name of Storm Mountain.
965. yanagigōri / katani wa suzushi / hatsu makuwa
wicker trunk / load on one side as for coolness / first melon
1694—summer. Rakushisha ("Hut of Fallen Persimmons") was the name of Kyorai's cottage at Saga in the western part of Kyoto where Bashō stayed in the spring of 1691.

966. asatsuyu ni / yogore te suzushi / uri no tsuchi
morning dew on / stained and cool / melon's mud
1694—summer. Bashō seems to have been working with ideas of cleanliness and dirt.

967. matsu kaze no / ochiba ka mizu no / oto suzushi
pine wind's / falling leaves <> water's / sound cool
1684—94—summer. Once again Bashō is reworking his phrase "sound of water" into a different configuration.

968. natsu no yo ya / kuzurete akeshi / hiyashi mono
summer's night <> / broken dawn / chilled food
1694—summer. This verse was Bashō's greeting and beginning link for a renga done with Kyokusui, Gakō, Izen, and Shikiō at the home of Kyokusui in Zeze. It is thought to be funny that Bashō begins a renga with a verse that describes the end of a party. The word "broken" refers to the night, the food, and the party.

969. meshi augu / kaka ga chisō ya / yū suzumi
boiled rice fan / wife's treat <> / evening coolness
1694—summer. Bashō uses less than elegant terms to describe both the rice dish and the man’s wife. Notice how the sense varies as the second line twists so that there are two meanings. This is what Bashō considered "lightness."

970. sara bachi mo / honokani yami no / yoi suzumi
plates bowls also / dimly darkness of / evening coolness
1694—summer. The middle line is used as a pivot. Lines one and two make sense alone and lines two and three make sense alone, but the subject matter changes abruptly with the two readings.

971. yūgao ni / kanpyō muite / asobi keri
evening face on / dried-gourd peel / try <>
1694—summer. The gourd-bottle plant yūgao ("evening face") blooms in the evening with large, white, squash-like flowers. When these gourds are green they are shaved into thin slivers that are rolled up with vinegar-spiced rice and covered with seaweed to make the dish norimaki. The play of words is on the evening faces, and sour rice, and the hard job of shaving the gourd.
962. uri no kawa / mui ta tokoro ya / Rendaino
melon’s rind / to peel a place <> / a graveyard (name)
1694—summer. Rendaino is a graveyard near the Gold Pavilion in Kyoto. Bashō may be making a macabre joke by comparing garbage to graves, but some insist that Bashō is really referring to the place where he was served the very best melon.

963. matsu sugi o / homete ya kaze no / kaoru oto
pine cedar (object) / praise <> wind of / smell sound
1691—summer. The Jōjakōji temple is at the foot of Ogurayama of Saga in the western part of Kyoto. It is considered the site of the villa of Fujiwara no Teika (1162—1241), the famous poet who compiled One Hundred Poems by One Hundred Poets, which is still used as a card game. This verse crosses the senses with the line “smell the sound.”

964. sazanami ya / kaze no kaori no / ai hyōshi
rippling waves <> wind of fragrance of / corresponding rhythm
1694—summer. Zeze was a town facing the southern shore of Lake Biwa.

965. misazumi ya / atsusa o oshimu / kumo no mine
lake <> / heat (object) miss / cloud of summit
1694—summer. This is the second verse composed at the house of the Nō actor Yūtō at Zeze. The lake is ringed with mountains.

966. hira hira to / aguru ōgi ya / kumo no mine
fluttering / raise fan <> / cloud’s peak
1694—summer. Honma Shume was a Nō actor in Ōtsu and his renga name was Tan-ya. Bashō’s poem describes an aspect of Nō in which the actor raises his fan above his head and waves it with a nervous, fluttering motion. Some see a compliment in Bashō’s wish for the actor’s reputation to go as high as the peak of the clouds.

967. Kagekiyo mo / hanami no za ni wa / Shichibyōe
legendary warrior also / cherry blossom viewing of gathering in as-for / the actor
Year unknown—spring. The legendary warrior was Kagekiyo, who died in 1196. He was the chief of warriors and his life has been dramatized in Kabuki and Nō theater. This verse was found on a fan in Bashō’s handwriting.

968. inazuma ya / kao no tokoro ga / susuki no ho
lightning flash <> / face of place’s / pampas’ plume
1694—summer. The preface and poem were part of a poetic essay, “Preface to Lightning.” The verse refers to the legend about the beautiful and romantic female poet Ono no Komachi. After she died, pampas grass grew up through the eye holes of her skull. Lightning was a metaphor for the briefness of life.
969. *inazuma ya / yami no kata yuku / goi no koe*
lighthing flash <> / darkness direction to fly / heron’s voice 1694—summer. The *goi sagi* (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) was the black crowned night heron. It got its name because the Emperor Daigo (885–930) gave orders to catch one for him. The bird was very obedient and easily caught. The emperor praised the bird and gave it the rank of *go-i* ("fifth class").

970. *hasu no ka o / me ni kayouwasu ya / men no hana*
lotus blossom’s scent (object) / eye in goes through <> / mask’s nose 1694—summer. Bashō had been working with the technique of changing sense sensations within the verse to create paradoxes. When it was explained to him that the actor looked through the nose holes of the mask, it gave his thinking a new reality. The verse was written by hand on a slip of paper.

971. *michi hososhi / sumōtori-gusa no / hana no tsuyu*
lane narrow / wrestler’s grass of / flowers of dew 1694—summer. Bashō composed this when he came back to the Abode of Illusion at Gichūji Temple at Zeze. There is some question about the proper name of the grass. The use of *sumō* ("wrestler") in its name implies that it was a tough grass.

972. *ajisai ya / katabira-doki no / nsu asagi*
hydrangea <> / unlined robe season of / light yellow 1684-94—summer. In late summer the hydrangea flowers change from pink or blue to light tan or yellow, the same color as the fashionable unlined robes made of *Boehmeria nivea*, a leafy plant called "false nettle" that was cultivated for fiber.

973. **Tanabata ya / aki o sadamuru / hajime no yo**
Star Festival <> / autumn (object) defined or set in / first of night 1694—summer.

974. **Tanabata ya / aki o sadamuru / yo no hajime**
Star Festival <> / autumn (object) defined or set in / night of first 1694—summer. The Star Festival, held on the seventh night of the seventh month, was a favorite evening picnic. Only if the clear and cooler air of autumn arrived a bit early could one see the stars.

975. *hiya hiya to / kabe o jumaete / hiru ne kana*
chilly coolness / wall (object) walk on / midday nap <> 1694—summer. This verse was written at Bokusetsu’s house in Ōtsu in the first part of July.
1694—autumn. Rooms in Japan are measured by how many grass mats are used to cover the floor. The line yo jō han is actually a four-and-one-half matted room or the size of the tea ceremony room. This verse was the opening link for a renga party held at the home of Bokusetsu in Ōtsu, Ōmi, on June 21.

1694—autumn. Bashō's older brother, Matsuo Hanzemon, had stayed to live on the family land in Iga-Ueno. He died in 1701.

1694—autumn. There is a question as to whether Jutei was the wife of Bashō's nephew, who had died the year before in Bashō's house, or a previous mistress of Bashō's. She lived near Bashō's house in 1693, and when Bashō left on his trip to Iga, she moved into his house. She died on June 2, during the Tama Matsuri or Bon Festival.

1694—autumn. This verse was the opening link for a renga party that finished only eighteen links out of thirty-six. The party was at Gensetsu-tei on September 5, three days before Bashō's departure for his hometown. The opened chestnut burrs look like cupped hands that have just released the nut and let autumn escape.

1684—94—autumn. The round moon comes into Bashō's house like a square of light due to the shape of the window.

1694—autumn. This was Bashō's greeting verse to Bōsui, that was used as the opening stanza for the renga done at his house on August 7. The kaki ("persimmon," Diospyros kaki) tree was a symbol of prosperity because its bright fruit hangs on the bare branch after all the leaves have fallen.

1694—autumn. Bashō's disciples had built Bashō another house in the backyard of his
brother's place. The new house was given the name Mumyō-an. Mumyō means "ignorance, spiritual darkness, or illusion." "An" is often translated as "hermitage, a hermit's cell, monastery, or retreat," but it is also used in its symbolic sense for houses.

983. meigetsu no / hana ka to miete / wata-batake
harvest moon's / flower <> (quotation) as appears / cotton field
1694—autumn. The ripe cotton looks like little white moons or like flowers from the moon.

984. kazairo ya / shidoro ni ue shi / niwa no hagi
wind color <> / artlessly in plant (past) / garden of bush clover
1691—autumn. There are three versions of this verse. This one was published in Ensui's book Sanzoši.

985. kazairo ya / shidoro ni ue shi / niwa no aki
wind color <> / artlessly plant (past) / garden of autumn
1694—autumn. Here the last word is changed from "bush clover" to "autumn."

986. kazairo ya / shidoro ni ue shi / niwa no ogi
wind color <> / artlessly plant (past) / garden of reeds
1694—autumn. This is the third version of this verse. Only the last word is changed. The revision process shows how important it was to Bashō to find the best image.

987. tōgan ya / tagai ni kawaru / kao no nari
white gourd <> / each other in change / face of looks
1694—autumn. Tōgan (Benincasa hispida) is the white or wax gourd. A favorite pastime was carving faces on gourds and melons. Bashō composed this verse when he came back to Iga-Ueno and met old friends who had changed as much as he had.

988. koyoi tare / Yoshino no tsuki mo / jūroku ri
this evening who / Yoshino's moon also / sixteen miles
1694—autumn. This is the night of the full autumn moon. The distance to the famous town of Yoshino is sixteen ri. A ri is 2.44 miles (3.93 km), which makes about 35 miles (56 km), but this accuracy loses the play of numbers between the fifteenth moon and the sixteen ri.

989. keitō ya / kari no kuru toki / nao akashi
cockscomb <> / wild geese of to come time / still redder
1694—autumn. The Chinese name for cockscomb (Celosia argentea) is yan lai hong, which means "becomes red when wild geese fly over." The tiny florets of cockscomb turn from a bright lime green to a deep burgundy red in autumn.
1694—a spring verse written in autumn. Bashō was using this verse as an exercise in which he gave his students the first two lines and expected them to supply the third line. The idea in this poem is that Bashō thought poetry should have the freshness and promise of a cherry blossom and not be old and tired-looking like the poets.

Buckwheat noodles were one of Bashō's favorite foods.

According to Shikō's journal, Knapsack Diary, Bashō took a walk on the night of September 8 near the Sarusawa Pond in Nara, accompanied by Shikō, Izan, and Jirobei. Jirobei was the seventeen- or eighteen-year-old son of the nun Jutei. Jirobei had returned to Tokyo when his mother died but was now back with Bashō.

Chrysanthemum noodles were one of Bashō's favorite foods.

1694—autumn. Bashō left Iga on September 8, and the next morning he left Nara for Osaka by the Kuragari Pass (“dark pass”). Sekku was a celebration of the chrysanthemum flower held on the ninth day of the ninth month.

This verse uses the associative technique; the three things are similar. The absence of a verb in the poem indicates Bashō's use of “lightness.”
997. kiku ni dete / Nara to Naniwa wa / yoi zukiyo
chrysanthemum in leave / Nara and Naniwa as-for / crescent moon night
1694—autumn. This verse was included in letters to two disciples, Isen and Dohō. On this night Bashō stayed with Shadō, a doctor who originally lived in Zeze but had moved to Osaka.

998. inoshishi no / toko ni mo iru ya / kirigirisu
wild boar’s / bed in also enter <> / cricket
1694—autumn. Bashō was staying with Shadō, a brash friend and disciple he had lived with in Zeze. When Bashō traveled, he wore black robes to look like a priest.

999. omoshiroki / aki no asane ya / teishu buri
pleasurable / autumn of sleeping late <> / host (acting as if)
1694—autumn. This verse was a thank-you gift to Bashō’s host, Shadō.

1000. matsu kaze ya / noki o megutte / aki kuren
pine wind <> / eaves (object) go around / autumn departing
1694—autumn. This was an impromptu verse written for the owner of the restaurant named “Ukamuse” at Shin Kiyomizu in Osaka. Here both the pine wind and the departing autumn go around the eaves of the house.

1001. masu kōte / funbetsu kawaru / tsukimi kana
measure box buy / mind to change / moon viewing <>
1694—autumn. This market is known as the “Treasure” or “Measure Market,” where boxes for measuring grain were sold as good-luck talismans. While Bashō was at the market, he caught a chill and ended up canceling the renga party scheduled for that evening. The next day he felt much better, so they decided to hold the meeting after all. This verse was Bashō’s excuse for calling off the party.

1002. aki mo haya / baratsuku ame ni / tsuki no nari
autumn also already / sprinkles rain in / moon’s shape
1694—autumn. This verse was the starting stanza for a renga done at the home of Kiryū, Bashō’s disciple in Osaka. In the traditional schema for renga written in autumn, the moon appears in the first stanza instead of the fifth. Usually showers were an indication of the beginning of winter, but this year the rain started in autumn.

1003. shin wara no / de some te hayaki / shigure kana
new rice straw’s / first appearance and already / wintry shower <>
1684—94—mixed seasons. Braided rice straw was used in decorations for the New Year. Here, both the winter showers and rice straw appear together.
1004. aki no yo o / uchi kuzushitaru / hanashi kana
autumn of night (object) / broken apart / conversation <>
秋の夜を打ち崩したる嘘かな
1694—autumn. This verse began a half-renga done at Shioe Shadō’s house on
September 21, in Osaka. One of the reasons Bashō had made the trip to Osaka, in spite
of his illness, was to mediate between two of his disciples, Shidō, a merchant from
Osaka, and Shadō, a doctor. When both disciples showed up for this renga, they com-
pleted only eighteen links. Here, with the associative technique, the autumn night, an
abstract idea, and the conversation have been dashed to bits.

1005. hito goe ya / kono michi kaeru / aki no kure
human voices <> / this road returning / autumn’s departure
人声やこの道帰る秋の離
1694—autumn. The phrase aki no kure can be translated as an “evening in autumn” or
the “end of autumn” or “autumn’s passage” or “departure.” Bashō is working with the
idea of treating abstract ideas and reality the same.

1006. kono michi ya / yoku hito nashi ni / aki no kure
this road <> / go man not in / autumn’s departure
この道行く人なしに秋の離
1694—autumn. Knowing that Bashō wrote this verse just weeks before his death gives
added meaning to the idea of departure and the concept of the path of death.

1007. kono aki wa / nande toshi yoru / kumo ni tori
this autumn as-for / why old getting / cloud into bird
この秋は何で年老る雲に鳥
1694—autumn. It is easy to see the connections between the images in this poem and
Bashō’s thoughts about death.

1008. shira-gikun no / me ni tatete miru / chiri mo nashi
white chrysanthemums / to look at closely / dust also not
白菊の目に立てて見る塵もなし
1694—autumn. This was the greeting to the hostess of a renga party, Shiba Sono, at
her home on September 27.

1009. tsuki sumu ya / kitsune kowagaru / chigo no tomo
moon clear <> / a red fox frightens / boy-lover’s friend
月澄むや狐はかる児の供
1694—autumn. On September 28, seven poets gathered at the home of Keishi to com-
pose single verses on the subject of love. Bashō did not feel well but forced himself to
go to the party. The following day he became very ill, went to bed, and never got up.

1010. aki fukaki / to nari wa nani o / suru hito zo
autumn deep / door next as-for what (object) / to do man <>
秋深き隣は何をする人ぞ
1694—autumn. This starting verse was sent to the renga party on October 15 at the
home of Negoro Shihaku (d. 1713) because Bashō was too ill to attend.
1011. *tabi ni yande / yume wa kare no o / kake meguru*
journey on ill / dream as-for withered field (object) / wander around
1694—autumn. After composing this at 2:00 a.m. on October 9, three days before his death, Bashō blamed himself for his deep obsession with composing poems even at this critical moment and said, “This is the last of my obsession!”

1012. *kiyotaki ya / nami ni chiri komu / ao matsuba*
clear cascade <> / wave on scatter get into / green pine needles
1694—autumn. Bashō saw this as a revision to his verse composed in June: *kiyotaki ya / nami ni chiri naki / natsu no tsuki* (clear cascade / no dust on the waves / the summer moon), because it bothered him that the two lines “clear cascade” and “no dust on the waves” were simply a repeat of each other. This verse was carved on a stone and on July 12, 1971, placed where the Kiyotaki River flows into the Ōi River.
APPENDICES
&
BACK MATTER
APPENDIX I

HAIKU TECHNIQUES

TECHNIQUE 1 Association—This method of linking can be thought of as “how different things relate or come together.” In many societies a similar technique is known as parallelism—the method of setting ideas into similar syntaxes with slight variations in information that reveal a connectedness. The Japanese borrowed this principle from the Chinese, who had made it their dominant device, and moved the parallel built on syntax to a new level with an association of images. The Zen aspect of this technique is called “oneness”—showing how everything is part of everything else. One association that has been used so often that it has become a cliché is the Japanese association of dew and tears. One of Bashō’s major objectives was to find new and apt associations that made the reader rethink reality and the connectedness within. Of all the techniques, this is the one Bashō used most.

48. hating flowers
   the mouths of talkative people
   and the wind bag

Here Bashō is saying that the mouths of people who talk too much and the bag of winds, a fanciful expression of the place where the spring winds come from, have something in common. They both must hate the cherry blossoms because each reduces a person’s pleasure in enjoying the flowers. The talkative person distracts from one’s appreciation of the beauty of the scene and the wind blows the petals off the tree. Because of the perfection of this association, the reader can then think of many other associations between these two images.

TECHNIQUE 2 Comparison—This technique is so close to the technique of association that it may seem they are the same. However, there is a vital difference. All comparisons are associations, but not all associations are comparative. Here is a fairly clear example:

7 rabbit-ear iris
   how much it looks like
   its image in water

TECHNIQUE 3 Contrast—Identifying this technique is much easier. The reward of this technique is the excitement that opposites create. Thus, a common haiku idea can
gain added interest. Because many of life’s surprises are the contrasts, this technique is a major one for haiku in our times, but less so in Bashō’s life.

APPENDIX 1

428. clear at the lake
   yet it rains on Mount Hiê
   departing of May

TECHNIQUE 4  Close Linkage—Basically this could come as a subtopic to association, but since it also works with contrast and comparison it deserves its own listing. In making any connection between the two parts of a haiku, the leap can be one that is small or even well known.

44. when planting one
   handle it like a baby
   wild cherry tree

TECHNIQUE 5  Leap Linkage—Due to his renga-writing skills, Bashō was a master at making wild, wide leaps in the linking of the images of his poems.

467. swinging bridge
   first one thinks of
   meeting horses

Here the linkage leap is so wide that it may need a footnote of explanation for readers four centuries and thousands of miles away to follow it. This is one of the problems of making an innovative or wide leap—how to get the reader’s mind to track it over the abyss without getting lost. The important point in creating with this technique is that the writer is always totally aware of his or her truth. Poets of surrealism sometimes made leaps that at first glance seem impossible to follow—an example would be the work of Paul Celan, where the reader must go on faith that the author knew what he was writing about. This is rare in haiku. Usually, if the reader thinks about the words long enough and deeply enough, he can find the author’s truth, or better still, a new one.

TECHNIQUE 6  Metaphor—Until recently many people believed that haiku do not employ metaphor. They came to this incorrect conclusion because the Japanese state their metaphors differently. As you can see, Bashō used metaphor:

448. the gay boy
   a plum and the willow
   a woman
TECHNIQUE 7 Simile—Usually, in English, the reader recognizes a simile when seeing the words “as” or “like.” Occasionally, Basho’s poems will contain a simile with these words, but the Japanese writers, for the most part, have proved to us that this is unnecessary. From them we have learned that it is enough to put two images in juxtaposition, next to each other, to let the readers figure out the “as” and “like” for themselves. The unspoken rule is that you can use simile if you are smart enough to simply drop the “as” and “like” in the Japanese. Besides, this allows the readers an active part in creating the poem within as they discover the unspoken simile.

267. horsetail rush
    as if a legendary person is wearing
    a pleated skirt

TECHNIQUE 8 Rhyme—This is a major component of Western poetry. In Japanese, most of the sound units are built on only five vowels, and rhyming occurs naturally. Yet, haiku translated into rhymed lines often need so much padding to make the rhyme work that the simplicity of the poem gets lost. However, if the reader takes the time to read the romaji version of Basho’s poems, one can see how often the old master employed the linkage of sound in his work. The rhyme occurs here with hagoshi (“through leaves”), hoshi (“star”), and the seven “oh” sounds:

654. nebu no ki no / hagoshi mo itoe / hoshi no kage
    a silk tree
    even through the leaves weary
    of starlight

TECHNIQUE 9 The Sketch (or Shiki’s Shasei)—Though this technique is often given Shiki’s term shasei (“sketch from life”), or shajitsu (“reality”), it has been in use since the beginning of poetry in Asia. The poetic principle is “to depict the thing just as it is.” There are some inspirations for haiku that are best said as simply as possible. Most of Shiki’s haiku were written in this style. Yet, he himself realized in 1893 that the overuse of this technique could produce many lackluster haiku, so it should never be the only method employed in a haiku.

102. a rainy day
    the autumn world
    of a border town

TECHNIQUE 10 Narrowing Focus—This is a device the Japanese master Buson used often because he, as an artist, was a very visual person. Bashō and earlier poets were completely comfortable using this technique.
Technique 11: Riddle—It is apt that the very first of Bashō’s saved poems employs this technique. The riddle is probably one of the oldest poetical techniques as well as a device to preserve and transmit spiritual knowledge. Zen Buddhists retain this lineage with the koan. It takes some explaining of culture and time-keeping to figure out the riddle in Bashō’s poem, but the clarification is in the note. The trick in using this technique is to state the riddle in as puzzling terms as possible. What can one say so that the reader cannot easily figure out the answer? The more intriguing the setup, and the closer the correlation between the images, the better the haiku seems to work. The old masters’ favorite tricks with riddles ran along these lines: “Is that a flower falling or a butterfly?” or “Is that snow on the plum branch or the blossoms?” and the all-time favorite: “Am I a butterfly dreaming I am a man or a man dreaming I am a butterfly?” Sometimes the riddle is not actually set up as a question but makes a statement of improbability. At times the author supplies the answer of how this other reality can be; at other times the reader is left to find the solution.

1. has spring come
   or the year gone away?
   second last day

2. from a treetop
   emptiness dropped down
   in a cicada shell

Technique 12: Paradox—One of the aims of haiku is to confuse the reader just enough to attract interest and engage the mind. Using a paradox will give the reader something to ponder after the last word has been read. Again, the author cannot espouse nonsense but has to construct a truthful paradox connected to reality or even a higher reality. It is not easy to come up with a new subject, but when an author discovers one, the haiku’s briefness adds to the excitement of deciphering the paradox.
black forest
whatever you may say
a morning of snow

TECHNIQUE 13: Double Entendre—Anyone who has read translations of Japanese poetry has seen how much poets delighted in saying one thing and meaning another. Often only translators knew the secret language and thus understood the jokes, which may or may not be explained in footnotes. In some cases a pun covered up a sexual reference through a euphemism or images with double meanings.

the rainy image
of the bottom shining princess
the moon’s face

TECHNIQUE 14: Pun—Japanese poets were master punsters. We have many of the same opportunities for puns in English, but contemporary haiku writers may not be as well versed as the Japanese are in using this technique because there have been periods of Western literary history when this skill has been reviled. And even though the hat of haiku means “joke, or fun, or unusual,” there are still writers who frown when they encounter a pun in three lines. Bashō did not use the technique much because he was against the overuse of the method by the two other haikai schools of his time. Translators shy away from pun verses because they rarely work in the target language and long explanations can be tiresome to write and to read. Fortunately this verse, by Bashō, works in both languages:

put it on to try
in-vest yourself
in a flowered robe

The type of robe was a sleeveless version that could be called a vest.

TECHNIQUE 15: Wordplay—Again, one has to admit the Japanese do this best. Their job of finding wordplays is made easier by the custom of their place and object names having a double meaning. Also, Japanese has many homonyms. Bashō was careful in using this technique for the same reason he avoided puns.

beautiful
the core of the princess melon
is already a queen
TECHNIQUE 16: Humor—Bashō is often remembered as a rather dour old guy with god-like qualities, but this is not accurate. He was a party person who enjoyed the company of all classes. There are no belly laughs in his haikai, but his quirky mind would occasionally come up with a poem that would bring a smile.

\[26\]

rice-cake flower
stuck as a hair ornament
on Lord Rat

TECHNIQUE 17: Pseudo-science—This is very close to paradox but has a slight difference. This technique demonstrates a distorted view of science—one we think is not true, but has the possibility of being true, perhaps when we understand quantum physics or all become poets. When the “other reality” the author was using is explained, the poem becomes absolutely clear. Again, this is an old Japanese tool that was used to make the poet sound simple and childlike but also to confound the reader.

\[6\]
a falling sound
that sours my ears
plum rain

\[26\]
iris leaves
I tie them to my feet
as sandal cords

TECHNIQUE 18: Sense Switching—This is another favorite of the Japanese poetry masters, but one they used with a great deal of discretion. It is simply to speak of the sensory aspect of a thing and then change to another sensory organ. Usually it involves hearing something one sees, or switching between seeing and tasting. Some people have this ability naturally; for them it is called synesthesia. The most famous example of this technique is in Bashō’s “old pond” haiku:

\[62\]
old pond
a frog jumps into
the sound of water

Here, the frog not only jumps into the water but also into the sound of water. The mind-puzzle that this haiku creates is how to separate the frog from the water, the sound of water from the water, the frog from the sound it will make entering water, and the sound from the old pond. It cannot be done because all these factors are one, but the reader arrives at this truth through having the senses scrambled. Other poems using this technique are 733 and 963.
TECHNIQUE 19: Frame Rhyme (kasuri)—This technique, used by the two haikai schools in vogue in Bashō’s time, was also utilized in English poetry, where it was also known as the para-rhyme. An example would be back — buck. This rhyming device had almost completely fallen out of practice in poetry but was recently revived in rap. An extension of this technique is still used in jokes. By taking a known phrase or cliché, and then changing one part of it, it is possible to express a new idea. Examples: “He who laughs last thinks slowest.” or “Change is inevitable, except from a vending machine.” Bashō, by changing only one sound unit, was using the frame rhyme.

1. from Kyoto’s many houses
   a crowd of ninety-nine thousand
   blossom viewing

At the time there was a saying that Kyoto has 98,000 houses. Another phrase is kisen kunjō (“a crowd of rich and poor”). Bashō changed the kisen to kusen to add another thousand to the number and include the concept of all classes of society.

TECHNIQUE 20: Making New Words—One of the reasons for becoming a poet or writer is for the joy of working with words. Fairly quickly one finds out, even in a language as rich as English, that there are not enough words to explain or name everything. The writer must either find images for these unnamed states of being or make up a new word.

14. for the Star Festival
    even when hearts cannot meet
    rainy-rapture

The word uchūten is a compound word made by Bashō incorporating “rain in the middle of heaven” and ecstasy.

TECHNIQUE 21: Twist—This is one of the most common methods used in writing waka poetry. It was also the basis for the maekuzuki (“capping verse”). It works by setting up a situation and leading the reader to believe the author is going to relate a certain situation. In the middle of the verse the writer’s thinking makes a turn or twist and forces the reader’s mind into a completely different situation. Since Bashō had studied the old waka anthologies, he was very familiar with the technique.

137 folly in darkness
    grasping a thorn
    instead of a firefly
Because fireflies appear in the time of the evening when lovers meet, they have the connotation of helping lovers find each other. Thus, the reader is led to think “thorn” is a euphemism, but the addition of the third line swings the poem back around into another situation.

**TECHNIQUE 22: Pivoting**—This technique, also carried over from waka, is a variation on the twist. In the pivot, however, the middle line acts as a gate that can swing in either direction. This results from having a middle line that can have two meanings. The reader is flipped from one way of thinking to another, but here the device is made clear. The reader can draw two conclusions using the same common information in the middle line.

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{first snowfall} \\
\text{almost finished} \\
\text{on the bridge}
\end{align*} \]

To be completely understood, perhaps this poem also needs its title: “When the new Great Bridge at Fukagawa was almost finished.” Here both the snowfall and the work on the bridge were “almost finished.”

**TECHNIQUE 23: Literary References (honki-dori)**—One of the ways writers had of elevating their status was to link their poem with that of a more famous person.

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{pining for flowers} \\
\text{or a tune from Gichiku} \\
\text{Mount Yoshino}
\end{align*} \]

Gichiku, known as Tōzaburō, was a popular flute player in Bashō’s time whose hit song had the title of “Yoshino,” the mountain most famous for its cherry trees and deep snows. The idea was that when the flowers bloomed there would be parties; flute playing would be at its best.

**TECHNIQUE 24: Response to Another’s Poem**—This is a variation on the technique of a literary reference, only here the reference is to a usually well-known poem by someone else. This device is a good one to get poetic inspiration flowing by reading the works of others and then finding something else or new to say. In this example Bashō was referring to a waka he had read in the imperial anthology, *Shinkokinwakashū*: 

\[ \begin{align*}
michi no be ni / shimizu nagaruru / yanagi kage / shibashi to te koso / tachidomari tsure (along the way / where water is running / in the willow shade / I have stopped to rest / for a little while).\end{align*} \]
one patch of a rice field
when it was planted I left
the willow tree

TECHNIQUE 25: Narrating an Admirable Act—This is another very old method of choosing subject material for a poem. The old Chinese poets were the first experts, but the Japanese ran a close second. In the imperial collections of waka, some of these poems with this attribute were categorized as "laments." Usually the poem is polite bragging of one's goodness or elevating one's poverty to an achievement.

burning dried pine needles
to dry my hand towel
such coldness

TECHNIQUE 26: Hiding the Author—Often poets used ambiguity to hide the fact that they were writing about themselves. They would refer to "an old man" or "the traveler," when in fact it was the author having the experience. By doing this, the technique moved the poem from the individual into the universal. Then readers could fit their thinking into the experience. Another reason for using ambiguity was to mix up the action so the readers do not know if nature is doing the acting or if a human is doing it. This device minimizes the impact of the author on the poem and allows an interaction between humanity and nature.

full moon
walking around the pond
all night

Is the poet or the moon walking around the pond? Or are they going together? There is also an association between the roundness of the moon, the pond, and the path.

TECHNIQUE 27: Hidden Subject—A variation on the previous technique was to write about a subject that could not be sensed but only imagined. Asian poets often praised a missing thing. Frequently this was done as a lament for a deceased person, but it was also a way of forcing the reader to think beyond the poem to imagine something that was not expressed in the words. Here are two examples of Bashō experimenting with the technique:

a bell at sunset
also was not heard
a spring evening
501. no bell ringing
what does the village do
on a spring evening

TECHNIQUE 28: Sabi—It is questionable whether this is actually a writing technique, but the concept is so vital to Asian poetry that it needs to be included. The word sabi has been given many meanings over the innumerable years it has been in Japan, and now it is undergoing even new mutations in the English language. As fascinated as Westerners have become with the word, the Japanese have maintained for centuries that no one can really comprehend what sabi is, and thus they change its definition according to their moods. Some say sabi is “beauty with a sense of loneliness in time, akin to, but deeper than, nostalgia.” Daisetz T. Suzuki maintains that sabi is “loneliness” or “solitude” but that it can also be “miserable,” “insignificant,” “pitiable,” “asymmetry,” and “poverty.” Donald Keene sees sabi as “an understatement hinting at great depths.” Using this technique, the writer puts together images and verbs that create this desired atmosphere.

126. dreaming rice cakes
fastened to folded ferns
a grass pillow

TECHNIQUE 29: Wabi—This concept is the twin to sabi. Again, many people have tried to find a perfect definition, but wabi can most easily be defined as the poverty or beauty that is the result of living simply. Frayed, faded, and worn Levis have the wabi that bleached designer jeans can never achieve. Because these two terms are so nebulous, deciding which of Bashō’s poems exemplify the ideas can be debated. However, it is important to be aware of these concepts because their use can bring a deeper sense of life and living.

189. hibiscus flower
naked I wear one
in my hair

TECHNIQUE 30: Yugen—This Japanese word is usually defined as “mystery” and “unknowable depth.” Somehow yugen has not drawn the attention that wabi and sabi have, but since deciding which haiku exemplifies this quality is a question of judgment, there is rarely consent over which verse has it and which one does not. One could say a woman’s face half-hidden behind a fan has yugen. The same face covered with pink goop while getting a facial, however, does not. Haiku writers use yugen in haiku by enticing their readers to think and to delve into the mystery of common things.

699. souvenir paintings
what kind of a brush first drew
the image of Buddha

TECHNIQUE 31: "As Above, So Below"—Though this idea seems to use a religious precept, this technique works to make the tiny haiku a well-rounded thought. The idea is that the reader should be able to read the first line and the third line to find it makes a complete thought. Sometimes an author does not know in which order to place the images in a haiku. When the images in the first and third lines have the strongest relationship, the haiku automatically feels balanced. Take this haiku by Bashō and switch the lines around to see how this factor works, or try reading this haiku without the second line:

224. snow on snow
    this night in December
    a full moon

TECHNIQUE 32: Finding the Divine in the Common—This is a technique that seems to happen without conscious control. A writer will make a perfectly ordinary and accurate statement about common things, but due to the combination of images and ideas about them, or between them, a truth will be revealed about the divine. Since we all have various ideas about what the divine is, two readers of the same haiku may not find the same truth or revelation in it. Here, again, the reader becomes a writer to find a greater truth behind the words. This example from Bashō’s work may seem fairly clear:

276. the one thing
    that lights my world
    a rice gourd

Perhaps it helps to know that rice was stored in a dried gourd. To keep it away from mice, the gourd was hung from a rafter. Though this was the time before electricity and light bulbs, Bashō already had this comparison. Yet there is also a deeper meaning. The rice gourd’s golden yellow color not only brightened the dim room, but the rice in it furnished the energy to maintain his body while endeavoring to reach the goal of enlightenment. One can also see this poem as a riddle: What is the one thing that lights my world?

TECHNIQUE 33: Lightness (karumi)—This is a concept for his poetry that Bashō discovered late in life. His belief in this method of writing was so strong it compelled him to take trips while in ill health in order to bring the concept to a wider audience. Several students abandoned Bashō over their dislike of the method, and others, even though they said they believed in it, found it very hard to define and emulate. Looking
back, it seems Bashō was trying to write poetry that was less emotional. Bashō seems to have believed that it is the verb that carries the emotional baggage of a poem. The poems he considered to exemplify the concept of karumi best are the ones with few or no verbs. In our times this technique of writing a haiku without a verb produces what is pejoratively called “grocery list” haiku.

606  under the trees  
       soup and pickles  
       cherry blossoms

From Bashō’s own comments on his work, he found these poems displayed the technique of lightness: 776, 819, 885, and 923.

Though haiku today has even more rules than it did in Bashō’s time, there is another aspect of the form that he followed that is so basic it must be discussed. The Japanese, due to their reading and memorization of poetry, almost automatically included an aspect of composition that has to be taught to outsiders.

This is the idea that there must be two parts to a haiku. We call these parts “the phrase” and “the fragment.” A correctly translated haiku will make the break between the two parts clear with the use of grammar. Some writers who cannot make the break clear with structure will use punctuation marks—a dash, a comma, ellipsis, or even a period.

There is so much more to say about writing haiku, its rules, and its joys, that I am tempted to add more words. However, Bashō is a much better teacher. Working with his poems has taught me all I know and value about haiku. Therefore, I would prefer you turn back to the poems and leap into the genius of his words.
APPENDIX 2

SELECTED CHRONOLOGY
OF THE LIFE OF MATSUO BASHO

1644  Born at or near Ueno in Iga Province as Matsuo Kinsaku.

1656  Matsuo Yoyaemon, Basho’s father, dies. Basho was probably already in the service of Tōdō Yoshitada, a relative of the local feudal lord for whom his father had been a samurai.

1662  Earliest extant poem.

1666  Sudden death of Tōdō Yoshitada, Basho’s friend, fellow-poet, and employer. Basho resigns his position and begins a time of being unsettled. He may have lived in Kyoto.

1672  Writes his first book, The Shell Game (Kai ō), based on his critical comments judging a poetry contest he composed. This was dedicated to the Shinto shrine in Ueno. He later moves to Edo, now Tokyo.

1675  Participates in various collaborative linked poems (haikai no renga) with other poets. Basho had eight of his verses included in one with Nishiyama Sōin, 1605–82, founder of the Danrin school. He also had his own students, including Sugiyma Sampo (1647–1732) and Takarai Kikaku (1661–1707). Basho was then using the pen name of Tōsei (“Green Peach”).

1676  Participates in two renga containing one hundred verses published as Two Poets in Edo (Edo Ryōgishō). He returns briefly to Ueno in the summer.

1678  Judges and writes critical commentaries for Hokku Poetry Contests in Eighteen Rounds (Jūhachibansōkku Awase).

1680  Saw published Best Poems of Tōsei’s Twenty Students (Tōsei Monotsu Dokugin Nijikkaten) and judged “The Rustic Haiku Contest” and “The Evergreen Haiku Contest.” Moves from central Edo, now Tokyo, to the outskirts where his students built a cottage for him on the Fukagawa river.


1683  In January the neighborhood is ravaged by fire. Basho escapes by diving into the river. With his home destroyed, he takes refuge in Kai Province. Later, his mother dies in Ueno. A new house is built for Basho by his students. Shriveled Chestnuts (Minashigiri) is compiled by Kikaku with Basho’s assistance.

1684  Begins a two-year journey that results in the book The Records of a Weather-Exposed Skeleton (Nozarashi Kikō). While in Nagoya he leads the group in writing five renga, which are published as The Winter Sun (Fuyu no Hi).

1685  After a visit to his native Ueno to celebrate the New Year, Bashō continues traveling and doesn’t return to Tokyo until summer.

1686  Worked on Critical Notes on the New Year Sequence (Hatsukashi Hyōchiru).

1687  Journey to Kashima, which resulted in the A Visit to Kashima Shrine (Kashima Kikō). Had published Collected Verses (Atsukenu), a selection of thirty-four of Basho’s single verses. In November Bashō set off on the
journey that would be described in Knapsack Notebook (Ot no Kobumi).

1688 Travels to Sarashina to see the harvest moon, which results in A Visit to Sarashina Village (Sarashina Kikô). Returns to Tokyo in September.

1689 Leaves in March to begin a journey to the northern provinces of Honshû which becomes the basis for the book The Narrow Road to the Deep North (Oku no Hosomichi).

1690 Visits friends and disciples in the Kyoto area. During the summer he lives at the Abode of Illusion on Lake Biwa. Then he moves to his native town of Ueno.

1691 Spends part of spring at the Hut of Fallen Persimmons in the hills west of Kyoto, where he writes Saga Diary (Saga Nikki). Bashô oversees the publication of Monkey's Raincoat (Sarumino), an anthology of collaborative linked poems. He returns to Tokyo at the end of October.

1692 A new house is built for him by his disciples. Writes an essay on planting banana trees. Makes short trips to do renga with various groups.

1693 His nephew Tôin becomes ill and moves in with him. Tôin dies in April. Bashô also cares for a woman, Jutei, and her three children who live next door. In August he closes his gate and refuses to see visitors for about six weeks.

1694 Though in poor health, Bashô begins another journey to Ueno. He gives his house to Jutei, who later dies there. One of her sons accompanies Bashô as he continues to attend renga sessions from place to place. While in Osaka Bashô becomes ill and dies on October 12. His body was buried, according to his wishes, on the Gichû Temple grounds near Zeze on Lake Biwa.
GLOSSARY OF LITERARY TERMS

A pronunciation key can be found at the end of the glossary.

ageku (ah-GE-KOO)—completing verse—The name of the last stanza of a renga. This is the link that attempts to summarize the whole poem with a reference back to the beginning stanza.

auware (ah-WAIR-RE)—touchingness—The ability of an object to touch one’s emotions, often with pathos or sadness. Your native flag has a auware; another country’s better designed flag does not have it.

baunre (BAH-SHOW not BASH-OH)—banana tree—The pen name of the poet Matsuo Kinryû inspired by his delight in a such a plant given to him by a student. It was outside the window of his new home on the outskirts of what is now known as Tokyo and became the source of his inspiration. Bashõ was Renga Master, Poet of Poets, Legend of Japanese Literature.

chôka (CHOE-KAH)—long poem—A long poem with the 5–7–5 and 7–7 sound unit pattern of the stanzas in a renga but written by one person. This was a favorite genre about a thousand years ago, but since then the chôka has enjoyed only brief revivals at different times.

dai (DAH-EE)—topic—The subject for the poem, which is noted either in the first stanza or in a preface. It also means that the poets have decided to agree to have a topic for the poem.

daisan (DAH-EE-SAHN’)—the third—In renga, the third stanza, which ends, in English, with a verb, often a gerund.

dokugin (DOE-COO-JEHN) A haikai sequence or a renga written by one person.

engo (EHN-GO)—verbal association—These are words that are thought to have an association by meaning, use, or sound. Homonyms and synonyms are the English equivalent.

fusuki (FOO-EH-KEE)—changelessness—One of the goals Bashõ had for his style of writing haikai.

fûga (FOO-GAI) The spirit of elegance and refinement that was expected to be found in art and poetry. Bashõ gave this name to his style of writing single poems in order to elevate it to the status of waka and renga.

fûryû (FOO-ROO-YOO) “Madness” in the sense of the poet or artist who is so dedicated to art that his or her actions appear “mad” to others. A concept that the artist is different and outside of the ordinary world of “sane” people, and thus has the right and obligation to live like that.

furimono (FOO-REE-MOE-NO)—falling thing—A classification of subject matter for renga in which things that fell, like rain, snow, leaves, and dew, were related. The opposite was sobikomono: things that rise up, such as haze, smoke, and clouds.

fushimono (FOO-SHEE-MOE-NO)—directives—In early renga practice certain words were used in the first stanza to direct the composition along certain themes or ways of seeing. For example, using the word “black” would set the theme on dark objects for the following verses.
ga (GAH)—elegance or truly artistic—This was the status term various poets claimed for their work or their school. Bashō also appropriated this classification at a time when his work was not generally considered deserving of the title. However, later, general opinion changed to agree with him. “Ga” is part of “renga,” meaning “linked elegance.”

gagaku (GAH-GAH-KOO)—elegant music—Ritual music usually played on instruments for occasions at the imperial court. It is still performed. The composition of this music was based on the jo-ha-kyu concept that was adopted and adapted for use in renga.

ga no uta (GAH NO OO-TAH)—poems of elegance—This was a classification of auspicious poems used to congratulate or compliment. The concept greatly influenced the tone of the hokku.

gojūin (GO-JOO-E’N) A fifty-link renga.

goshū (GO-SHOO)—later collection—A collection of poems made after the author’s death.

gunsaku (GOO’N-SAH-KOO)—group work—A group of poems on one subject that represents various viewpoints. Each part can be read as a complete poem. In spite of the name, this form can be done by one person.

ha (HAH) The twenty-four-link “body” or middle part of a haisen renga. The renga is divided into three parts. The first page and those six stanzas are the jo. The last page and those six stanzas are the kyū. Each has different attributes. The ha is characterized by many shifts in scene and contains more non-seasonal verses—referring more to people with fewer links about the weather.

haibun (HAH-E-E-BOO’N)—haikai writing—Prose that is poetic in style or theme and is interspersed with haiku. Normally the subjects are autobiographical or theoretical, but when the focus is a journey, this style of writing is called kikō or nikki—travel journal.

haiga (HI-GAH)—painting—Brush and ink drawing done to accompany a handwritten haiku or hokku. It is usually a rough sketch, abstract or simplified in style, like a cartoon. Sometimes referred to as haikusa.

haigon (HI-GO’N)—haikai words—Words not allowed in serious poetry, meaning those words in foreign languages or those too vulgar for polite company. Such expressions used in haikai writing are signposts of the genre.

hajin (HI-GL’N)—haiku or haikai person—A haiku writer.

haikai (HI-K’EYE)—humor or joke or unusual—A designation for humorous poems that was later used to substitute for the phrase haikai-no-renga, which has become a generic word for any poetry in this vein.

haikai jittetsu (HI-K’EYE JEE-TEH-BOO)—ten haikai sages—The ten immortal, most famous, most familiar poets of a particular school. In Bashō’s school—Shōmon—these poets would include Enomoto Kikaku, Hattori Ransetsu, and Mukai Kyoran.

haikai-no-renga (HI-K’EYE-NO-REE’N-GAH)—comic renga—In Bashō’s time it meant vulgar, earthy renga, full of satire and puns, which was the dominant mode at that time. When Bashō spoke of his work, this is what he called it. However, in Bashō’s lifetime he elevated the genre to new heights.

haikaika (HI-K’EYE-KAH)—or hikai no uta—Poems in the nineteenth section of the Kokin-wakashū that were given this name because they were found to have deficiencies or excesses of language or conception. This is the origin of the concept and word “haikai.”

haiku (HI-COO)—a verse of haikai—Haikai
originally meant a verse taken from a renga, but at the end of the nineteenth century, the term “haiku” was coined by Shiki to be synonymous with hokku—the starting stanza. From this came the idea that haiku had to have the elements of the hokku—a kigo and a kireji—but most important was the linking of images completely within the poem without relying on connections with other parts of a poem to make a completed thought. Also a haiku was to be uplifting, edifying, and profound, and indicate the season in which it was written.

Modern poets have reverted back to writing haiku, in style and tone as if they could have been a stanza from any part of a renga. In Japanese the singular and plural are the same.

hairon (H-I-RON) Essays and treatises on haikai theory, practice, and canon. Also called hasho.

hana no ku (HAA-N AH NO COO) The flower stanzas, #17 & 35, in a kasen renga in which cherry blossoms must be mentioned.

hanja (HAA-N-JA) The judge in a poetry contest.

hankasen (HAA-N-KAH-SE’N) Half of a kasen renga or one containing only eighteen stanzas.

hibiki (HHEE-BEE-KEE)—echo—The term used to describe two stanzas that reflect images closely or link in the same way.

hie (HHEE-E) cold—The concept of cold, icy beauty as prized by medieval poets and writers.

hikiage (HHEE-KEE-AH-GEH)—brought forward—The name for a flower or moon link that occurs before its appointed place in a renga.

hiraku (HHEE-RAH-COO) The name for any of the stanzas in a renga that have no name—those other than the starting verse, second, third, and last.

hokku (HOE’K-COO)—starting verse—Name for the first stanza of a renga. As poets jotted down hokku against the day when they might be called upon to start a renga without preparation, there came to be collections of only beginning verses. Now, since Shiki, hokku are called haiku, even in Japan, unless they are used to start a renga.

hokkuwaki (HOE’K-COO-WAH-KEE) Another term for a tan renga that combines the names for the first two stanzas of a renga.

honkadori (HOE’N-KAH-DOE-REE) allusive variation—A stanza that has borrowed images or ideas from literature or refers to a commonly known incident from past writings or writers. Also called honmondori (“borrowing to take over”).

hon’i (HOE’N-EE) essential character—A basic aesthetic principle of renga in which the way certain things were viewed or written about followed certain precepts or rules. Thus love was always unrequited love, journeys always involved suffering and moving away from the capital, flowers meant cherry blossoms, and the moon meant the harvest moon unless otherwise designated.

honzetsu (HOOE’N-ZET-SUE) allusion—This term refers to an allusion to a previously written Chinese poem. Due to his extensive study of Chinese poetry, many of Bashō’s honkadori should be termed honzetsu.

horaku (HOO-AH-RAH-COO) Poems written or given in temples as votives to gods or Buddha.

hosomi (HOSO-MEE) fineness/slenderness—The concept Bashō had for his poetry along with saki and shiori.

hyakunin (H’YAH-COO-EEEN) one hundred verse—A term for a renga of that length. Before Bashō shortened the renga to thirty-six stanzas, the usual length of a renga was one hundred stanzas.
**GLOSSARY**

**iisute** (ee-ee-soo-te) A short sequence with an irregular number of stanzas or a renga that has ended abruptly.

**ji** (jee)—plain—A term to describe the stanzas of a renga that are less impressive. One of the arts of the form is the combining of **mon**, the more striking verses, with less showy ones.

**jiamari** (jee-ah-ma-reh)—hypermetric lines—In the poetry with counted sound units, **kana**, sometimes the line will have more than seven or five units. Bashô's most famous "crow" hokku has two extra units in the second line.

**jiguchi** (jee-goo-chee) Punning talk or wordplay.

**jikawaase** (jee-kah-ah-wah-seh) A poetry match or contest with one author writing all the poems, which are labeled with fictitious names or simply two sides called "left" and "right." This compilation would be given to a poetry master for grading and judgments on the merits of the various poems.

**jo** (joh)—preface—The preparation for ideas or words that will come later in the poem. It is also the name for the first six stanzas of a kasen renga, which are characterized by calm preparatory links using many season words. The renga can be compared to a social evening. The **jo** is like the first half hour when everyone is politely getting acquainted, still talking of the situation that has brought them together—the weather, the host's house, furnishings, the food, how lovely everyone looks. The **ha**, or twenty-four-link body, is the conversation over dinner as the wine soaks in. The **kyo** is reminiscent of those disconnected phrases one hears while saying good-bye, thanks, and don't forget, and remember when.

**jôza** (joe-zah)—appointed place—The appointed links in a renga where mention of the moon or flowers is required.

**kaishi** (kah-eh-shhee)—pocket paper—Small, slim sheets of paper used for writing poems.

**kakushidai** (kah-coo-shih-dee—dah-ee)—concealed topic—By using a system of sounds or words, as in acrostic poetry, various ideas and messages could be hidden in the links of a renga or a sequence of haikai.

**kan** (kahn)—sound units—Two types of phonetic syllabary writing developed in the Japanese language that are based on the sounds instead of using the Chinese ideogram, or **kanji**. These sound units are called **kan** in **katakana** and **gana** in **hiragana**.

**kanji** (kah-nee) Chinese written characters or pictorial ideograms.

**kaori** (kah-oh-reh)—scent or fragrance—A term for describing the relationship between stanzas in which both evoke the same feeling with very different images. The similarity of a puppy lost in the rain and a newly divorced man illustrates **kaori**.

**karabi** (kah-rah-bee)—dryness—The artistic concept of austere, monochrome beauty. A single stalk of sere grass has it.

**karumi** (kah-ruh-mee)—lightness—The quality in writing that Bashô encouraged, especially in his later years. Here it meant the beauty of ordinary things spoken of in a simple way. This idea was the end of puns and wordplays, which were so dear to the hearts of renga writers of the time. Kikaku, Bashô's most brilliant student, left him at this point, feeling that karumi lacked challenge and sparkle. Haiku lacking a verb are often said to have karumi because the active or emotional aspect has been removed.

**kasen** (kah-seh—ne) —immortal poets—Meaning
the thirty-six immortal poets of Japan until Bashō took the phrase and concept to shorten the hyakunin. Kosen is now a term for the thirty-six-verse renga written in the traditional style with moon and flower verses.

**katauta (ka-i-ta-o-ko-tai)**—half poem—A minor kind of waka that employed only the upper stanza, containing 5–7–5 sound units, that was used in music lyrics and with dance. The katauta is the little-recognized forerunner of the independent hokku or haiku.

**kidai (ke-i-da-e)**—season topic—This is an aspect, or indication, of a season that is chosen by poets to be the topic of a collaborative poem or competition. As a teaching tool, groups of poets were given a topic or theme for their poems. If the poets gathered to celebrate wisteria blossoms or the full moon, this was the topic for all the poems written that evening.

**kīgo (ke-i-go)**—season word—Nouns that imply the season because they have been traditionally associated with certain times of the year in Japanese literature and/or real life. As Japanese-genre poems spread around the world, determining which foreign word indicates a season became practically useless. For example, is “coyote” a summer word or an indication of autumn? However, the traditional season words, when known and used skillfully, can impart great depth of emotion to a haiku.

**kikō (ke-i-kō)** Journals or diaries written during a journey. Some of these travelogues included poems and others did not.

**kiiro (ke-i-re-e)**—cutting words—These are words indicating punctuation or breaks between phrases in haikai and renga that were used to indicate the two parts of a hokku—the phrase and the fragment.

**kobore (ko-i-ro-re)**—spilled over—This is a term for instances in renga when a moon or flower verse appears later than its appointed place.

**koi (ko-i)**—love—Love is one of the topics in the schema for a traditional renga. It should always be unrequited love and never openly refer to sex.

**kokorozuke (ko-i-ko-ri-zoo-kei)**—conceptual connection—A description of the connection or linkage between stanzas of a renga that is based on cognitive connections rather than verbal associations. The opposite of kotobazuke.

**kotan (ko-i-tan ‘n)** The simple beauty created by an artist who has mastered all the intricacies of an art and returns, thus enriched, to the very beginning.

**kotobagaki (ko-i-toh-ba-ga-i-kee)**—headnote—A statement or preface to a poem that states the circumstance under which it was written or the source of inspiration for it. These head notes may be factual or fictional, but they usually do have a bearing on the understanding of the poem.

**kotobazuke (ko-i-toh-bai-zoo-kei)**—word connection—The description of the relationship between stanzas of a renga that is based on verbal or sound associations.

**ku (ko-o)**—verse—When used alone, ku means a verse, a poem, or a stanza.

**kusairenga (ko-o-sai-re-e-re’n-gai)**—chain renga—This is the opposite of a ran renga. This is the uncommon name for a renga with many links.

**kuzari (ko-o-zai-re)**—suspension—The lapse of a number of stanzas between the use of certain words in a traditional renga. For example, there should be eight stanzas between the use of “dream.” The subject of
"insects" should be used only once in a hundred verses.

kyōka (kyo-e-yoe-kah)—a mad poem—The kyōka has the tone and feel of a limerick and is occasionally just as bawdy, but it is written in tanka form. More often the subject is about poets or the writing of poems and makes fun of both. Today's standards many kyōka are not funny.

kyoku (kyo-e-yoe-coo)—mad verse—Poems using wordplay or low language to appeal to a popular audience. Included in this category were kyōka, senryū, and mushin haikai, the genre in which Bashō wrote.

maeku (mah-ee-coo)—previous verse—The preceding stanza, the one to which another author is expected to add a verse. Often the meaning of the maeku is not clear or is so ambiguous that only with the addition of the tsukku is the reader able to understand the poem.

maekuzuke (mah-ee-coo-zoo-ke)—joining to the previous verse—A game resulting from renga writing in which one person, usually a poet, writes a maeku and someone else (or each member of a group) responds with a tsukku. It can be a contest with the poet then choosing a winner. A maeku plus a tsukku is a tan renga, the shortest possible kind. The maekuzuke is a sadly neglected practice at the moment, but still it has great possibilities for the enjoyment of linkage on a competitive basis.

maeku awase (mah-e-n-coo ah-wah-se) also called nuinami (T' sue-kee-nah-me) Contests for picking the maekuzuke to be included in anthologies.

mon (moe'n) A term used to designate the impressive verses of a renga. This quality can come from the subject, the way it is handled, or the poetic skill demonstrated. The opposite designation is ji.

mono no na (moe-no no na)—"thing's name"—Acrostic poems.

munon (moo-moe'n)—designlessness, artlessness—A term used to describe the style of a renga when it is written with great simplicity and is unadorned by poetic devices.

mushin (moo-shi-e'n)—without heart—As used in renga the term means the use of images without classical beauty. A gal in torn black lace tights, with neon green sculpture nails and a mouthful of chewing gum, has mushin. The opposite is ushin. The naked country lass surprised while washing her hair in a cold mountain stream has ushin.

nigeku (nee-geh-coo)—escaping verse—Sometimes in renga someone will write a verse that is very difficult to connect to, so the person writing the response will not continue the poem but will write a link to attempt to make the meaning clearer for the next participant.

nikki (nee-kee)—diary—Journals kept as literature. Bashō called his most famous, Oku no Hosomichi (Narrow Road to the Deep North), a michi no niki—diary of the road—instead of the accepted term, kikō.

onji (oh'n-jee)—sound symbol—A non-Japanese word about which American haiku writers were misinformed. For years Americans used the word, which no one in Japan recognized. They have learned their lesson and now refer to the syllable-like units the Japanese count on their fingers when writing traditional poetry simply as “sound units” because the word which the Japanese use is on and that is simply too confusing when combined with English.

ōkukazu (oh-coo-kah-zoo) The title of a collection of haikai consisting of 1,600 verses written by Ihara Saikaku in twenty-four hours in May of 1677. The title is now used to indi-
cate any such feat of stanza production.

oriku (oh-ree-coo) Links in an acrostic renga that reveal hidden words or topics.

renga (re’-nah)—linked elegance—The collaborative Japanese poetry form in which stanzas of 5-7-5 sound units are linked to couplets with 7 and 7 sound units repeated throughout the poem. It had developed from a twelfth-century pastime at waka contests into the primary poetry form of Japan by the fourteenth century. Renga, in Bashō’s time, were often written by two or more people who gathered for a party and shared an evening of writing together. The host would ask the guest of honor, always Bashō when he attended, to write the starting verse—hokku. In his verse Bashō would give his host a complement and indicate the season in which the party was held. The host then had to give a response in a couplet to the master’s poem. These stanzas were recorded by a designated scribe while the other attending poets continued the process of linking verses. Renga can be as short as two stanzas—tan renga—or have thirty-six links as in a kasen renga, or one hundred, one thousand, or even ten thousand links. Renga baffle Westerners because as a poetry form it lacks a narrative or actual time sequence. The secret to appreciating renga is to understand the linkage between images within a stanza and in the empty places between the stanzas.

renga awase (re’n-gah ah-wah-se) A renga contest.

rengashi (re’n-gah-shie)—renga master—The person who supervised the writing of a renga.

renku (re’n-coo)—linked verse—A term invented in the 1740s in Japan to disrupt the lineage of renga from its historical beginning. Some English-speaking people mistakenly use the term in place of renga. Renku can also mean inferior renga-type poems written in Japanese since Bashō’s death. The English term “linked verse,” however, means an experimental or modern renga-influenced work usually written by poets. Bashō and his disciples wrote renku.

rensaku (re’n-sah-coo)—linked work—A sequence of haiku or tanka wherein each stanza is dependent upon the previous one for meaning.

ryogin (ryoe-jeen) A renga written by two authors.

sabi (sah-bee)—aged/loneliness—A quality of images used in poetry that expresses something aged or weathered with a hint of sadness because of being abandoned. A split-rail fence sagging with overgrown vines has sabi; a freshly painted white picket fence does not.

saijiki (sah-jeen-kee)—seasonal index—A list of seasonal topics for use in renga and haikai. Often each word or phrase is illustrated with an appropriate poem. The modern term is kiyose.

sangin (sah’-n-jeen) A renga written by three authors.

sedōka (se-DOE-kah)—head repeated poem—An old verse form used in the seventh century in Japan that consisted of matching stanzas, using a question-and-answer method to reveal riddles. The form’s pattern was 5-7-7 and 5-7-7 sound units. The sedōka is considered the forerunner of renga because of its methods of linking.

senku (se’-n-coo) One-thousand-link renga. In practice, it is composed of ten hyakunin or hundred-link renga, combined into one poem.

senryū (se’-ryoo) The pen name of the most famous poet, Karai, who conducted maekuzuke—linking contests—has been given to this genre in his dubious honor. Because haiku
and senryū are written much alike, often on the same subjects and usually by the same authors, great controversies have ensued over which is which. For a time, in America, senryū were considered to be faulty haiku. Actually, if one must differentiate, the senryū form is satiric, concerned with poking fun at human behavior as opposed to the profound, sublime world of nature in haiku. Some English editors made the error of designating all haiku with the mention of humans as senryū. In Japan the distinction is supposedly easier to establish because all Japanese haiku contain a season word—kigo—and senryū should not, but many do. Haiku are published with the author’s name and senryū are not.

shahon (SHAH-HOE’N) A handwritten text either in the original or in a facsimile.

sharefū (SHAH-RE-FOO)—witty style—The name given Takarai Kikaku’s style of writing after Bashō’s death. Kikaku’s lively wit and impressive writing skills made his work congenial to the masses, but he remained best known as Bashō’s disciple.

shasei (SHAH-SE)—sketch from life—The poetic principle advocated by Masaoka Shiki that recommends the haiku poet use a simple, precise language without overtones or layers or wordplay. Even though Shiki did not aspire Bashō’s work, he alone maintained and fostered Bashō’s style of karumi. This style of perceiving and writing can be brisk and invigorating when used occasionally, but the overuse of it results in somewhat boring haiku, as Shiki proved.

shibumi (SHIH-BOO-ME) A description of poetry typifying subdued, classical, or astringent images. Compare cracked wheat muffins without oil, eggs, preservatives, additives, or coloring to oven-ready frozen croissants.

shikimoku (SHIH-KIH-MOE-COO)—rule book—Books containing the rules and guidelines for renga or haikai composition.

shinku (SHIH-KU)—closely related—Two stanzas that are related by images that fit closely together. This is the opposite of soku.

shiori (SHIH-OH-REE)—bent/withered/tender-ness—A delicate, pathetic quality for an image that requires sensitive observation. This is a major term for the study of the works done by Bashō or his school.

Shōmon (SHOW-MOH’N) The name of Bashō’s school of renga.

shōori (SHOW-OH-REE) The front side of the four pages on which renga were written in Japan. Imagine a sheet of typing paper folded to make a booklet 8½ x 5½ inches (21.6 x 14.0 cm). On these four resulting pages the kasen renga was written. On the first and last pages were six stanzas and on the facing pages in the center were twelve stanzas on each page.

shū (SHOO)—collection—Anthologies of poetry in Japan. In more recent times the term shū is dropped.

shōfū (SHOW-FOO)—right style—The name for Bashō’s teaching, which emphasized a profound, reverent way of relating to the world while still having a gentle humor and certain wise oddities.

shikaku (SHOO-COO) The term used to indicate the stanzas of an outstanding link in a renga. Basically these were verses worthy of being in an anthology.

sobikimono (SOH-KIH-MOH-NO)—rising things—The classification for poetical images of things that rise up, such as clouds, haze, or smoke.

soku (SO-COO)—distantly related verse—Two links in which the leap of ideas from one
to another has been forgotten or perhaps was never made.

sōshi or zōshi (ソシ) This ancient term has always designated paper made especially for composition and writing.

sono mana (ソノマナ)—as it is—To present an image without flourishes or embellishment.

tahi (タヒー)—travel—Travel is one of the main topics in the schema for writing renga. It is sometimes the topic or dai for a poetry competition.

tanka (タンカ)—short poem—The tanka consisting of thirty-one sound units in five groups of 5–7–5–7–7 has existed as a lyrical form since earliest recorded Japanese literature, when it was also called uta or waka. The form is like the first two stanzas of a renga or is a tanka renga written by one person, but in tone the tanka is very different. Tanka is lyrical and uses more poetic devices than renga. The two parts of a tanka must have a pivot to make a change in voice, place, or time and use elevated images and diction. In Japan they refer to haiku writers and tanka poets.

tan renga (タンレンガ)—short linked elegance—A renga written by two people consisting of a stanza with 5–7–5 sound units and a couplet with 7–7 sound units.

tenja (テンジャ)—judge—Another term given the judge in poetry competitions. Beyond picking a winner, the judge was expected to explain his choices and in the process, educate students in the art of writing.

tsukeku (ツケク)—added verse—The second stanza or the one that is linked to the previous one.

tsuki no ku (ツキノク)—moon’s verse—In the kasen renga a mention of the moon occurs at links 5, 14, 27.

tsukinami (ツキナミ) The term used to indicate a monthly meeting of a haikai association during the years 1830–44, which later was the name used for the style of haikai writing of the time.

unou (ウンウ) A description of a thing or a verse in a renga or haikai possessing design or art or a poem that was skillfully written.

ushin (ウシン)—with heart—The serious, professional style of renga. A term meaning a renga that possessed the proper conception and execution. See “mushin” for the opposite.

uta (ウタ)—poetry/song—Because most poetry began in songs, this is the oldest word for Japanese poetry. Later the word “waka” came to stand for all Japanese poetry and uta was used more for songs or poems that were recited in a singsong manner.

utakotoba (ウタコトバ)—poetic words—The Japanese have long idealized certain words, especially those appearing in the first three imperial anthologies of poetry. These words, and only these words, were deemed worthy of being used in a true poem.

utamakura (ウタマクラ) Originally these were phrases codified to stand for certain images to fill the five or seven sound unit requirement for a poem. In time these expressions were created for places, persons, things, and states of being. Learning these terms was an important part of a poet’s education.

utsuri (ウツリ)—reflection—The relationship between renga stanzas where there is a sense of movement or transference.

wabi (ワビ)—poverty—Beauty judged to be the result of living simply.

waka (ワカ) The old name for the tanka.
form that is still used by the imperial court of Japan for their poems.

wakan (Wah-KA'N) Combinations of Japanese and Chinese poetry. In a wakan awase, Japanese poetry was pitted against Chinese poems in a contest. In a wakan renku, Japanese verses were linked to alternating verses in Chinese in the style of a renga.

wakiku (WAH-KEE-COO)—side verse—The official name for the second link in a renga.

yase (YAH-SE) A concept of spare and slender beauty such as that of a plum tree blooming on an especially cold day.

yongin (YO-E-N-JEE-N) A four-partner renga.

yoyoshi (YO-E-YOE-SHEE) A forty-four-stanza renga.

yojō (YO-E-JOE) A concept of sentiment or sentiments evoked but not overtly expressed in a poem. It can also refer to a poetic style that aims to embody this attribute.

yugen (YOU-GE'N)—mystery—A word describing poetry that is so mysterious that many volumes have been written to explain it.

zappai (ZAP-PAH-EE) Miscellaneous, irregular, or very low haikai. Now this is another term for senryū. The Danrin and Teimon schools fostered this style of work, for which Bashō had great contempt. According to legends he is supposed to have said that this style of poetry was not worthy of the true art of haikai and such poems were merely something "that a peasant could enjoy, hoe in hand."

zo (ZOE)—miscellaneous—In haikai this classification indicated the lack of a season word or mixed season words in a link. In a renga this topic designation called for a stanza portraying the activities of humans.

zoku (ZOE-COO)—miscellaneous verse—Verses that were considered low or common and not true art. In time this designation was used for all kinds of writing found to be inferior, including comic plays and entertainment, no matter how serious they became. Haikai was given this pejorative designation, which it is still slowly trying to overcome in spite of the reverence for Bashō and his work.

zōshī. See tōshī.

zuiga (ZOO-EE-GAH) The extra fifty stanzas composed on the fifth day of writing a senku.

In Japanese, vowel sounds are pronounced the same in every word. So each vowel, alone or in combination with another vowel, is pronounced as follows:

"a" like either "a" in "aha"
"e" like the "e" in "bet"
"i" like the "ee" in "see" or "bee"
"o" like the "o" in "toe" or "show"
"u" like the "oo" in "too" or "boo"

Vowel combinations such as "ai" and "ae" represent two syllables. They are often held for two beats but their pronunciation is sometimes run together, so that the "ai" in "haiku" is, for practical purposes, pronounced like the English word "hi."

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Jane Reichhold is one of America’s leading haiku poets. She has written over thirty books, most of them on haiku or poetry, including *Writing and Enjoying Haiku: A Hands-on Guide*. She is a three-time winner of the Haiku Society of America’s Merit Book Award, for *Tigers in a Tea Cup* (1988), *Silence* (1991), and *A Dictionary of Haiku* (1992). She is also a two-time winner of the Literature Award from the Museum of Haiku in Tokyo for her original haiku. In 1998, Ms. Reichhold was honored with an invitation from the Emperor and Empress of Japan to attend the Imperial New Year’s Poetry Party at the palace in Tokyo. Since founding Aha Books more than twenty years ago, Reichhold has aided the spread and understanding of haiku and other Japanese poetry forms with the publication of over fifty books. She started the magazine *Mirrors: International Haiku Journal* (1987–95); edited *Geppo*, a monthly publication for the Yuki Teikei Haiku Society of America; and continues to co-edit *Lynx*, a poetry journal, with her husband, Werner. Reichhold’s Aha Books sponsors the Tanka Splendor Awards, which honors exceptional writing of tanka poetry in English. She holds memberships in haiku societies in the United States, Canada, Japan, and Germany. Her literary papers are housed in American Haiku Archives of the State Library of California.

Shiro Tsujimura is a ceramic artist and painter living in the hills above Nara, Japan. After a short tenure in a Zen temple in his youth, he turned to art. His work is exhibited regularly throughout Japan, and can be found in private and public collections in Japan, the United States, and Europe. His ceramic pieces appear in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, and elsewhere.
"At the time of his death, in 1694, Basho had more than seventy disciples, and about two thousand associates who had accepted and aligned themselves with his teachings. On the one-hundredth anniversary of his death the Shinto religious headquarters honored him by canonizing him as a deity. Thirteen years later the imperial court gave him similar status. He alone is known as a baiset, the saint of haiku. Today he is a recognized genius."

—from the INTRODUCTION

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