

HAIKU

Japanese poem consisting of 3 lines, 17 syllables: 5-7-5. Generally written about flowers, insects, birds, the moon, the seasons, festivals. Usually not love poems. "There is in them a perfection of apt phrase, which often enshrines minute but genuine pearls of true sentiment or pretty fancy. Specks even of wisdom and piety may sometimes be discovered upon close scrutiny." "They suggest rather than state a thought or fancy, and often require a world of explanation to be intelligible."

Darkness

Taka toro
Yami hiki-yosete
Kie ni keru.

My lamp's last dying spark
Has flickered out, and I must face
The terrifying dark!

Bunra

Wind in the Pine Trees

Matsu kaze mo
Mada yo fukaki ni
Utai-zome.

The night wind whistles clear
Among the rustling pine-tree tops
The first song of the year.

Seibi

A Cold Morning

Waga neta wo
Kobe agete miru
Samusa kana.

Fresh from the land of dreams
I raise my sleepy head, but, ah!
How cold the morning seems.

Raizan

Snow on the Willows

Furu yuki wo
Suso kara harau
Yanagi kana.

The willows hanging low
Shake from their long and trailing skirts
The freshly fallen snow.

Tsuru (A lady)

The Early Plum Blossom

Kambai ya
Hito no samusa wo
Warau iro.

Mid snow and bitter wind
The plum-tree blooms and smiles upon
The coldness of mankind.

Kansui

Daffodils

Suisen no
Haru made nokoru
Samusa kana.

In spite of cold and chills
That usher in the early spring
We have the daffodils.

Kikurio

Sea Fog

Hama michi ya
Tsumazuku bakari
Usu-gasumi

The fog lies thick today
Alone I wandered on the shore
And now I've lost my way.

Gobutsu

The Soaring Skylark

Ko ya matan
Amari hibari no
Taka agari

Too high the lark has flown;
The young ones long for her return,
Left in the nest alone.

Sampu

Twittering of Swallows

Su no tsubame
Asa-ne no nchi ni
Naki ni keru.

The swallows in their nest
That twitter in the early dawn
Disturb my morning rest.

Shosan

Cherry trees

Hana no kino
Hana wo shimaeba
Wakaba kana

The blossoms all have gone,
But still the trees are lovely, for
The fresh leaves come on.

Dempuku

A Country Lane

Watsu-gusu ya
Komichi kakururu
Ame no kure.

Now that the summer showers
Have passed away, the country lanes
Are hidden in the flowers.

Gosen

Dewdrops on the Roses

Oku tsuyu mo
Sawarana sashi ya
Bara no hana.

No rose could ever rue
The exquisite embroidery
Of sparkling drops of dew.

Riumin

The Iris

Soro iro no
Ashita ni ugoku
Kakitsubata

Ere yet the sun is high,
All blue the iris blossoms wave,
The color of the sky.

Gasetsu

A Dress Blown by the Wind

Usumono wo
Hiku ya tenjo no
Amatsu kaze.

The winds of heaven arise,
My flapping robe seems gently pulled
By angels from the skies.

Meisetsu

Falling Pine Needles

Furu mono wa
Matsu no furuba ya
Hikarakasa

Life's shortness I recall
As on an open parasol
The old pine needles fall.

Shogetsu

Darkness

Taka toro
Yami hiki-yosete
Kie ni keru.

My lamp's last dying spark
Has flickered out, and I must face
The terrifying dark!

Bunra

The Vanity of Life

Odori mi no
Yoru no sudare mo
Uki yo kana.

This life we leave behind
Is like the shadow of a dance
Seen on a window-blind.

Gensui**A Waving Field of Grass**

Hana susuki
Fukire nagara ni
Hi wa irinu.

The wind-blown grasses sway;
Would that the swiftly setting sun
A moment more would stay!

Oyemaru

The Autumn Moon

Matsuge ni mo
Tsuyu oku aki ya
Yowa no tsuki.

In autumn, when I view
The midnight moon, my eyelashes
Are wet with drops of dew.

Kito

Sitting up Late to View the Moon

Tsuki ni nenu ya
Ichi do ni korizu
Ni do ni korizu.

All warnings are in vain;
I've suffered once, I've suffered twice,
Yet do the same again.

The Wagtail

Yo no kaka wa
Seki-rei no o no
Hima mo nashi.

Life's but a fleeting day;
The wagtail flicks its tail, and lo!
Our life has passed away.

Boncho

Autumn

Kyo no gwatsu
Seishi to kiku zo
Urami nare.

Grieve for it as we may,
The autumn comes for one and all
And sweeps us all away.

An Autumn Evening

Mimizuku no
Hitori warai ya
Aki no kure.

The autumn day is done,
A single solitary owl
Smiles at the setting sun.

Kikaku

The Poor Quails

Taka no me mo
Ima ya kurenu to
Naku uzura.

The quail with mournful cries
Complain that nowadays the hawk
Ne'er shuts his cruel eyes.

Basho

Moss

Shiromizu no
Nagaruru sue ya
Koke no hana.

This crystal water's flow
Shall lead you gently on the where
The flow'ring mosses grow.

Kako

The Weary Skylark

Koye mo ha mo
Yasume ni oriru
Hibari kana.

When voice and wings need rest
The little skylark from the sky
Drops down into her nest.

Naganogi