

ELIZABETH ADAMS

May Haikus

The Grove 2 (1996)

1.
Silver green aspens
Tremble against my window.
Wild weather in May.

2.
In a child's magic painting book
A broad brush stroke converts the pristine page
Swirls of watery colour.

As in a magic painting book
A broad brush stroke changes the bare earth canvas.
Tapestries of living colour.

Haiku is a Japanese verse form consisting of seventeen syllables in three lines of five, seven, and five syllables respectively. Such a poem expresses a single idea, image or feeling. Translations from Japanese attempt to preserve the idea and the image, although it is not always possible to preserve the strict form in English. The form can, of course, be achieved when writing in English, although writers do not always restrict themselves to the pure form and rather focus on conveying the idea and the image clearly and simply. One of the most famous Japanese writers of haiku was Matsuo Kinsaku (1644-94) who later changed his name to Basho in honour of the tree given to him by a disciple. Here is one example by Basho translated by Lucien Stryk.

From the heart
of the sweet peony,
a drunken bee.

Poems

The Grove 9 (2001)

1.
 Draw the mountains near.
 With the touch
 of an outstretched finger
 smooth the blue blanket folds.

2.
 On icy January nights
 Dark giants slumber
 Under cold star blankets
 Patient, petrified.
 Waiting for daybreak.

In icy seas and sand
 Stone giants seem to sleep
 Their fringed green tonsures seen.
 Their feet, fifty fathoms deep.
 Waiting for tideturn.

It breaks. It turns.
 Day breaks. Tide turns
 Day turns. Tide breaks.
 Night turns into day
 Moon turns the tide
 Night day night day
 Light day dark night
 Earth turns
 And turns,
 And turns again.

3.
 Lemon mountains
 Pink mountains
 Blue mountains
 Green
 Near mountains
 Far mountains
 Mystic mountains
 Dream

Seasonal haikus from the garden

The Grove 25 (2018-2020)

Seven tall dark pines
stand guard at the day's portal
marking the first light.

Frosted leaves poem
already penned by winter.
Words fled redundant.

Before dawn, bright moon
still high in sky, two blackbirds
vie with silver songs.

Plum tree awakens
hangs from her boughs a curtain
of pale pink blossom

Blackbird alights on
blossom tree gently a few
pink snow petals fall

Cool breeze caresses
plum tree shivers sighs lets fall
palest pink petals

Pink shawl at her feet
transition almost complete.
Now she wears copper.

Crystal clear water
Invites the light to dance on
its shifting surface.

Comes golden autumn
to celebrate our circuit
around the life source.

Elizabeth (Libby) Adams obtained a degree from the University of Nottingham and went on to teach Art & Design in the UK before going to Morocco to teach English as a Foreign Language in the 1980s. From there she went to Spain where she was a lecturer in English as a Foreign Language and language teaching methodology at the University of Jaén. She was also involved in a wide range of teacher training programmes in a variety of different educational institutions. Throughout the years, running parallel to teaching, she has maintained a strong interest in creativity related to teaching and learning and other areas of life. She has worked in a variety of creative media including painting and collage for many years and had exhibitions of her art work in Morocco, Spain and the UK. Her poems have been published in various journals and publications.