

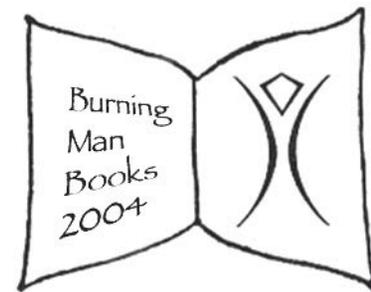
Songs of
Cherry Blossoms Falling
by Bashō

edited by Raymond Soulard, Jr.
& Cassandra Kramer

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Number Thirty-six

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(circa A.D.1667-1694)
by Bashō

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Open out to these songs.
Let their music prime life's mysteries.



Autumn moonlight
a worm digs silently
into a chestnut

The oak tree:
not interested
in cherry blossoms

A bee
staggers out
of the peony

Midfield
attached to nothing
the skylark singing

It's not like anything
they compare it to—
the summer moon

A cicada shell
it sang itself
utterly away

First snow
falling
on the half-finished bridge

The morning glory also
turns out
not to be my friend

All this foolishness
about moons and blossoms
pricked by the cold's needle

The beginning of art—
a rice-planting song
in the backcountry

The spring we don't see—
on the back of a hand mirror
a plum tree in flower

Winter solitude—
in a world of one color
the sound of wind

You could turn this way,
I'm also lonely
this autumn evening

Summer grasses . . .
traces of dreams
of ancient warriors

The sea darkens—
the voices of the wild ducks
are faintly white

I still want to see
in blossoms at dawn the face
of the mountain god

The bush warbler
in a grove of bamboo sprouts
sings of growing old

All day long, singing,
yet the day's not long enough
for the skylark's song

A weathered temple,
blossoming peach, and, hulling rice,
just one old man

Weather-beaten bones,
I'll leave your heart exposed
to cold, piercing winds

Things beyond number
all somehow called to mind by
blossoming cherries

If my voice was good,
I'd sing a song of cherry
blossoms falling

The wandering crow
finds only plum blossoms
where its nest had been

The moon disappears
into darkening treetops
collecting the rain

A harvest moon,
and creeping up to my gate,
the rising tide

Drinking sake
brings on insomnia—
it snowed all night

The cry of the dove
penetrates even the stone
door of this dark cave

In the old cow barn,
dusky sounds of mosquitoes—
summer heat lingers on

A winter garden—
the moon also a thread,
like the insect's song

On the coldest night,
we two sleeping together—
how comfortable!

With clear melting dew,
I'd try to wash away the dust
of this floating world

For today only,
we'll grow old together in
the first winter rain

Freshly reburnished,
the temple mirror is clear—
blossoming snowflakes

The whole household—
each with white hair and cane—
visiting a grave

Even the whitefish
opens black eyes to the law
of Buddha's net

Sick on my journey,
only my dreams will wander
these desolate moors