

茶

KOBAYASHI ISSA

JAPAN (1763–1828)

LANGUAGE: JAPANESE

父ありて

chichi arite

明ぼの見たし

akebono mitashi

青田原

aota hara



BY Yoshi Canopus

Kobayashi Issa was given the name Kobayashi Nobuyuki (in Japanese the last name is before the first) at birth. “Issa” is a pen name he chose for himself that means “one cup of tea.” One of Japan’s most important poets of *haiku*—a type of poem composed of seventeen syllables—he was considered a kind, compassionate, and humble man who was a great lover of animals and children. His mother died when he was three years old, and he did not get along with his stepmother. He was sent away to the capital, Edo, at the age of fourteen to study poetry. During his lifetime, Issa wrote over 20,000 haiku poems. He wrote this haiku in 1801 about the death of his father, reflecting on what his life would be like without him.

TRANSLATOR'S GLOSSARY			
CHARACTER	RŌMAJI	DEFINITION	POSSIBLE SYNONYMS
明ぼの	akebono (n.)	daybreak, beginning	dawn, morning, sunrise, daybreak, first light
青	ao (n.)	color that comes from mixing blue and yellow, grass-colored	green
ありて	arite (v.)	to be; used to give more information about the subject—its identity, nature, attributes, position of value	to exist, to live, to be
父	chichi (n.)	man who is a parent or acting as a parent	father, papa, dad
原	hara (n.)	area of agriculture, play, or other activity	field, meadow, ground
見	mi (v.)	from the verb <i>miru</i> , meaning “to observe”	see, watch, observe, look at, gaze at, survey
田	ta (n.)	rice field	rice paddy
たし	tashi (v.)	desire something, wish for something	wanting to, wishing to

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

PHRASE BY PHRASE

父ありて

chichi arite _____

明ぼの見たし

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aota hara _____

REFLECTING AND FINDING MEANING

Group Member Names:

Date: _____

Pick a scribe for the group, and work together to answer the questions.

What are the best parts of this translation, and why do you think they are good?

What elements of the original poem did you lose in the translation? What did you manage to keep?

Did you achieve something new with your translation, and if so, does it make sense in the poem or not?
