

The Bowl

In February of the 14th year of Taisho, I finally enter the Buddhist order and was put in charge of the Mishu Temple in a backwoods area of the province of Higo. Here was a truly solitary life in the mountains and forests, either peaceful or lonely, depending on your frame of mind.

松はみな枝垂れて南無観世音
Matsu wa mina eda tarete Namu Kanzeon

The lowered branches
of the pines,
Namu Kanzeon. 1)

松風に明け暮れの鐘ついて
Matsukaze ni ake kure no kane tsuite

The temple bell
struck at dawn, struck at dusk,
the pine wind.

ひさしぶりに掃く垣根の花が咲いている
Hisashiburi ni haku kakine no hana ga saite iru

After a long absence
sweeping by the hedge,
flowers blooming.

In April of the 15th year of Taisho, I shouldered my unsolvable doubts and left on a wandering journey of begging.

分け入っても分け入っても青い山
Wakehaitte mo wakehaitte mo aoi yama

Pushing through,
ever pushing through;
the blue-green mountains.