

Tanka for Micro Seasons

Frogs Start Singing

蛙始鳴

かわずはじめてなく

Kawazu hajimete Nakuru



Created for Expo 2025 Osaka
Written by Tanya Davis
Translated by Kotoha Nonohara



OSAKA, KANSAI, JAPAN
EXPO2025

Canada

*Prince
Edward
Island*

CANADA

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Japan

As rainbows begin
arc over the ocean
island to island
I look through winter's window
and think about connection

春の虹 島から島へ 弧を描き 我架け橋に 想いを馳せる
haru no niji/shima kara shima e/ko wo e gaki/ware kakehashi ni/o mo i wo haseru

The baby green reeds
unfurling from their slumber
lean toward the light
like a tender idea
we gently share with others

微睡に 目覚める若葉 陽の方へ まるで秘密を 打ち明けるよう
madoromi ni/mezameru wakaba/hi no hou e/marude himitsu wo/uchiakeru yo u

Frost shines the last time
in this cycle of seasons
as seedlings reach up
and teach us to be patient
with the pace that growing takes

忘れ霜 季節は巡り 苗育つ 見守り忍ぶ 自然の理
wasure ji mo/kisetsu wa meguri/na e sodatsu/mimamori shinobu/shizen no kotowari

The peony bulb
stretches open and petals
so velvet and new
tell us about the softness
enveloped in the process

牡丹花 花片ひらくは 麗しく 秘めたる内の その柔らかさ
botan bana/kahen hiraku wa/uruwashiku/himetaru uchi no/sono yawarakasa

Frogs greet the nightfall
with their throaty croaking tunes
and the din of spring
conversation comforting
after a long winter's pause

蛙鳴く 春の調べ 重なりて 沈黙やぶれし 宵の頃かな
kawazu naku/haru no shirabe/kasanari te/chinmoku yabureshi/yo i no korokana

Prince Edward Island

A sprinkling of green
throughout the sleepy grasses
catches the dew drops
and our breath and our tired eyes
delight in this old surprise

眠たげな 荒野に光る 露翠 私も目覚めて 春も目醒めて
nemutage na/areno ni hikaru/tsuyu midori/watashi mo mezamete/haru mo mezamete

Lilacs peek open
for birds and bees and noses
and the aroma
bids a passer-by to stop
and linger in the moment

紫丁香花 香る小径に 誘われて 甘き香りに 甘き麗かな
rairaku/kaoru komichi ni/sasoware te/a maki kaori ni/a maki wana kana

In the undergrowth
the fiddleheads tightly coiled
are poised to unroll
so we wander to forage
this fleeting taste of forest

山の味 思い出す頃 山菜採り ごとみ螺子巻き 解ける頃に
yama no a ji/o mo i dasu koro/sansai tori/kogomi nejimaki/hodokeru koro ni

The floor of the woods
sprouts up with tiny mushrooms
and more unseen spores
link their arms under the ground
and network all around us

春の森 キノコ顔出す 土の下 イトでつながる 見えない宇宙
haru no mori/kinoko kao dasu/tsuchi no shita/i to de tsunagaru/mi e na i u chu u

Finches' foliage
gleams brightly from the branches
as they flit about
and demonstrate the splendour
of flight and springtime colour

小鳥たち 枝から枝へ 春の色 命の躍動 隠れんぼう
kotori tachi/eda kara eda e/haru no i ro/inochi no yakudou/kakurenbou

七十二候 72 micro-season

Japan

虹始見 first rainbows (April 15 -19)

葦始生 first reeds sprout (April 20 -24)

霜止出苗 (April 25 - 29)

牡丹華 peonies bloom (April 30 - May 4)

蛙始鳴 frogs start singing (May 5 - 9)

PEI

a sprinkling of green in the grasses

lilac buds open

fiddlehead unfurl

small mushrooms sprout

finches plumage brightens

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